

COMMUNITY PLAN ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN KINGSTON

2006

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Executive Summary

Homelessness and the lack of affordable housing is a critical issue in Kingston.

Kingston is a beautiful city with a vibrant downtown, picturesque waterfront, scenic trails and walks. It has an engaged group of citizens and a quality of life that attracts young families, professionals and retirees. Many of the city's residents have stable incomes and a comfortable lifestyle. However, like in many other urban centres, there are a growing number of individuals and families who are struggling to secure adequate housing and pay for essentials such as food and utilities. There are also a number of individuals with mental health and other issues, who continue to need emergency shelters.

Factors Shaping Homelessness in Kingston

Kingston is a regional centre and is the largest city between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. With a large population of public sector employees, it also has a number of private companies and industries. The city's current GDP (gross domestic product, or GDP, is one of several measures of the size of its economy) is 2.1% with a forecast of 2.4% GDP in 2007.

Public sector employees make up 40% of the local workforce.¹ Kingston has a large military base, as well as reputable educational institutions, Queen's University, Royal Military college and St. Lawrence College. It is a regional health centre with three major health institutions – Kingston General Hospital which includes the Regional Cancer Clinic, Hotel Dieu Hospital and Providence Continuing Care Centres, which include Mental Health Services, St. Mary's on the lake and Providence Manor.

Studies on the prevalence of mental illness show that urban centres have a prevalence rate of between 5 to 15% higher than more rural areas. Kingston is the home of a specialty psychiatric hospital and several correctional facilities including a regional treatment center for those living with a psychiatric illness. People tend to gravitate to urban areas, or remain in them, to receive the wider availability of services and also to avoid the potential exposure to stigma that may be harder to do in smaller towns as opposed to the anonymity possible in more urban centers. Discharges from these institutions add stress to the city's services.

Vacancy Rates:

Economists believe that a vacancy rate of 3% is optimum as it allows tenants some choice and forces landlords to compete while allowing enough occupancy that landlords can expect to earn a profit². Kingston has continued to have a vacancy rate below average. Vacancy rates in Kingston are 2.4% compared to Ontario's measure of 3.8%.³

Average Rents:

Average rents have also increased significantly while incomes have not. The waiting period for persons seeking affordable housing continues to be long. As of December 31, 2005, there were 922 active households on the centralized waiting list. The number of households on the centralized waiting list has remained fairly consistent between approximately 900-950 households.⁴

1 Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO)

2 2006-2008 Community Action Plan on Homelessness, City of Ottawa

3 Ontario Not for Profit Housing (ONPHA)

4 Social Housing Registry, City of Kingston

In 2005, each month 100 - 102 approved applicant families are added to the social housing waiting list, while only 30 - 40 families were placed.⁵

Emergency Shelter Usage

Kingston's emergency shelter use has increased by 39%. We have seen an increase from 19,857⁶ total bed nights in 2003 to 27,571⁷ in 2005. A disturbing trend is the increase in the number of youth and families with children who require emergency shelter.

Impact of Poverty

Of great concern is the population at risk of homelessness. The working poor are increasingly stressed, and many would lose their housing if a factor beyond their control, such as illness, job loss or rising interest rates, should come into effect.

Defining Homelessness

The United Nations defines a homeless person as "anyone without a permanent address, or adequate and suitable shelter." The City of Toronto defines homelessness as "a condition of people who live outside (for example, on the street, or in ravines and parks); stay in emergency shelters; spend most of their income on rent; or, live in overcrowded, substandard conditions and are therefore at serious risk of becoming homeless."

There are different patterns of homelessness:

Chronic homelessness: These individuals often have a number of complex issues including mental health, history of hospitalization and/or incarceration, possible substance abuse

Episodic homelessness: These people frequently use shelters, leave when they get income or use shelters seasonally. They may have trouble sustaining employment or housing due to substance abuse or behavioural issues

Transitional homelessness: These individuals or families are homeless for a shorter duration, in times of economic hardship or temporary housing loss for a number of reasons

The Hidden Homeless

Statistics are not available for the number of people who are inadequately housed. Service providers agree that they could outnumber shelter users. While over 80% of shelter users are male, homeless females are more likely to seek shelter from friends and relatives, or to endure a poor relationship to avoid being homeless. Many women with children avoid homeless shelters for a number of reasons. One reason stated is that they fear their children may be taken from them by Children's Aid Society, other reasons include safety. Young people avoid adult shelters, and for youth under 16, shelter staff must notify either the Children's Aid Society or the police of their whereabouts.

Anecdotally, we hear that many people are "couch surfing," i.e. finding temporary shelter with friends or relatives. Because it is very difficult to get subsidized housing, children are frequently moved around among several family members.

⁵ Social Housing Registry, City of Kingston

⁶ City of Kingston, 2004

⁷ Data collected from Kingston Shelter Providers, 2006

2006 Community Plan on Homelessness and Affordable Housing in Kingston

In 2001 Human Resource Development Canada contracted Social Planning Council to develop a Community Plan on Homelessness and Housing in Kingston. Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI) funding was provided by the federal government, based on the priorities identified in this plan.

In order for Kingston to qualify to access the second phase of SCPI funding in 2004, the United Way, in partnership with Service Canada, and working closely with community agencies, updated the Community Plan on Homelessness and Affordable Housing in Kingston. Through this process several priorities and desired outcomes were identified. In 2005, the United Way Board of Directors identified key priority areas including homelessness and inadequate housing, the impact of poverty and isolation as well as children and youth at risk.

As a result, in 2006, the United Way, with support from Service Canada, undertook an update of the 2004 Community Plan to review and modify priorities. Recognizing that services and funding change frequently, the United Way recognizes that this plan needs to be updated every two years.

Plan Objectives

This plan is intended to assess the accomplishments that have been made over the course of the previous two years and to identify what continued efforts need to be made in order to improve the lives of Kingston's homeless population.

The objectives of the 2006 plan are to:

- Outline supports and services required to move individuals and families along the continuum of housing: shelters, transitional housing and affordable housing
- Ensure services are portable, mobile and customized to the needs of the individuals and families served
- Suggest ways of collaboration and coordination among service providers, agencies, support services, funders and levels of government

Plan Recommendations

There has been significant progress over the past few years. It is important to protect what is currently working well, build on these strengths and develop action items to increase housing supply and the amount of supports available to those in need.

Recommendations in this report focus on what the community needs to do to move people along the continuum of supports – from the streets and emergency shelters to permanent, sustainable affordable housing. We believe the key areas of focus are:

- Support services for those on the street or in shelters – including initial assessment of needs, discharge planning, professional counselling services, healthcare and meal services
- Increased transitional beds or units with support services designed to help people transition to affordable housing
- Increased supply of affordable housing
- Children and youth need special attention as there is concern about the growing number of children and youth in need of shelter and services.

We strongly recommend coordination and collaboration among service providers, government, funders, private and public sector organizations and the community at large if we are to address this issue in Kingston.

United Way will work with the City of Kingston and other community partners to review these recommendations, identify action items and develop plans to move forward.

Chapter 2 Process

Funding:

The United Way and Service Canada jointly funded this plan update. United Way received a grant through Service Canada to cover some expenses for 4 months. The United Way provided support, supervision and additional staff from July through December 2006. The process involved extensive interviews, data collection and community consultation. The United Way would like to extend their gratitude to all those who have taken the time to participate in this process.

Data Collection

Using the previous report as a template, data was updated from a number of sources including the City of Kingston, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Province of Ontario, Statistics Canada, Ontario Not For Profit Housing Association (ONPHA). Comparative data was also collected from community plans in Ottawa and Toronto.

Community Consultation

Between July and November, United Way staff consulted with a number of individuals and groups in the city.

- **Key informants interviews**
Key informant interviews were conducted with people from a number of sectors: business, government, education, health services, correctional services, community groups, as well as politicians, funders, City of Kingston staff, shelter and service providers. These interviews helped identify strengths, gaps and potential solutions
- **Public forums**
Three forums were held for shelter providers, support services, community groups and members of the public or clients. The information for these was broadly circulated – newspaper advertisements, broadcast faxes, emails to groups and individuals. In order to ensure accessibility to the public forum, bus tickets were made available
- **Community group input**
A cross sector community group looked at the information gathered through the key informant interviews and forums. This group provided guidance and counsel. A number of people provided feedback and input once the plan was in draft form
- **Priority setting**
Based on our community consultations, a list of services and issues was developed. Shelter providers, support service workers and key informants were asked to assign a priority level to each of these, based on their opinion of how important these are in achieving the objectives outlined. These formed the basis for some of the recommendations in the plan
- **Input from clients/consumers**
It is important to get input from those directly impacted by homelessness. Unfortunately, only a small number of clients and consumers of the services attended the public forums. While service providers do an admirable job conveying some of their clients' issues and concerns, we have identified this as a challenge that we will address over the year.

To obtain direct input from those who are homeless, United Way hopes to involve students from Queen's University. Students in other communities have sought out the homeless in shelters and soup kitchens. They have had success in listening to the opinions and needs of individuals who are homeless. In 2007 we will work with shelter providers and students to implement a similar strategy to get input from those who are directly impacted by services.

Chapter 3 What the data tells us

Considerable time has been spent updating data and analyzing this information to learn what is happening in Kingston. This chapter covers some of the key findings. There are additional charts and information in Appendix 1.

An inventory of services and programs has also been developed. This is available as a separate document from the United Way office or on the United Way website www.unitedwaykfla.ca.

Literacy and Post Secondary Levels in Kingston

There is a strong link between literacy, employment and higher wages. Difficulty with literacy is also linked to complex social issues including poverty, health problems, racism, crime and violence. It is not the case that literacy alone will improve people's financial and employment situation. Breaking out of a cycle of poverty, underemployment and low literacy depends on many factors such as child care and social supports.

A large number of people in Kingston have post secondary education. In fact, 47.2% of Kingstonians between the ages of 20-34 years old have a college education or higher compared to 45.2% of Ontarians. A total of 51.3% of the city's inhabitants ages 35-44 possess a college education or higher compared to the provincial average of 45.5% and 44.7% of those 45-64 years of age have a college diploma in Kingston compared to 38.2% of Ontarians.⁸

In spite of the higher than average rates of people in Kingston with post secondary education, literacy rates in Kingston are low in targeted neighbourhoods. According to the last study 53% of Kingstonians were in lower literacy levels.

Kingston Has a Wide Income Gap

Kingston's average family income of \$63,700 is slightly higher than the provincial average income of \$62,500 for Ontario and \$58,100 for Canada.⁹ However, the average income varies considerably by neighbourhood in Kingston. The highest average income is \$132,191 in Alwington and the lowest is \$31,729 in Cataraqui Westbrook¹⁰, a difference of over \$100,000.

We also see large discrepancies in family income within Kingston neighbourhoods. The highest median family income in Kingston for families with young children (0-6 years) is found in Kingston West at \$79,642. The lowest median family income for families with young children is \$24,594¹¹ in the North East neighbourhood in Kingston. This is below the Low-Income Cut-Off for a family of four at \$33,251.¹²

Vacancy Rates Remain Low in Kingston

A "healthy" vacancy rate is considered to be 3 to 5%. Vacancy rates rise and fall depending upon a range of factors, such as interest rates, employment growth, demographic changes and net migration.¹³

Economists generally define a healthy rental market as one that has sufficient vacancies to allow tenants some choice and to force landlords to compete to some extent for business while still

8 KEDCO

9 Statistics Canada

10 City of Kingston Neighbourhood Profiles, 2006

11 Statistics Canada, 2001

12 Canadian Council on Social Development

13 Where's Home? ONPHA 2005

permitting high enough occupancy that landlords can expect to earn a profit. For such a market, economists believe that a vacancy rate of 3% is optimum.¹⁴

Kingston's vacancy rate has been below 3% in each of the past 5 years. It has increased slightly over the past few years following extensive declines but has remained below the 3% optimum rate. In 1999 the vacancy rate was as low as 1.8%. It is now 2.4%. As a result, the average rent in Kingston is higher than similar sized communities, which results in the measure of "affordability" being higher than other communities. Shelter allowances are the same throughout the province.

The vacancy rate varies by neighbourhood. The former townships (Pittsburgh and Kingston Townships) have the lowest vacancy rates in Kingston with just 1.3% while City Centre has a vacancy rate of 3.3%

The availability rate, which includes units that may be vacated over the next few months, decreased from 4.3% in October 2004 to 3.9 in October 2005.¹⁵

Average Market Rents for 1 and 2 Bedroom Apartments have Grown since 1999

The average rent for a one bedroom apartment or a two bedroom apartment has grown more than 20% in the last 7 years.¹⁶

Increases in Ontario Social Assistance Programs and Minimum Wage Rates are not Keeping Pace with Rising Costs of Living

There is a gap between the shelter allowance and the average rent in Kingston for those on Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support (ODSP). Shelter allowances range from \$342 to 634 (OW), or \$436 to 808 (ODSP) and average rents in Kingston range from \$513 to 995 for the same units.

Rents have increased 22% in Kingston while the allowances for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Programs have increased 3%.¹⁷ At the same time the consumer price index has increased 13.2 % over this period of time while the minimum wage has gone up 4.4%.¹⁸ Together, all these factors combine to mean that many families and individuals cannot afford rents, whether they are on OW, ODSP or are the 'working poor'.

High Rental Costs are Unaffordable for Low Income Individuals and Families

Dwellings are considered affordable if they cost less than 30% of before tax household income. Families and individuals who pay more than 30% of their income on rent will not have enough money left for nutritious meals and other necessities. According to the most recent Statistics Canada data, 47.8% of Kingstonians are paying 30% or more¹⁹ of their household income on rental costs, up from 42% two years ago.²⁰

In a community like Kingston, since the average rents are high to start with, the amounts identified as 'affordable' in fact are unaffordable for many. By definition, a household spending 50% or more of its income on shelter would fall well below the affordability standard.²¹

14 2006-2008 Community Action Plan on Homelessness, City of Ottawa

15 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation(CMHC)

16 CMHC & City of Kingston

17 CMHC & City of Kingston, Ministry of Labour, MCSS, Where's Home? 2005

18 Ministry of Labour and MCSS, Where's Home? 2005

19 Statistics Canada

20 Statistics Canada

21 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

23.3% of people in Kingston are spending 50% or more of their household income on housing.²² This is higher than the average in Ontario where one in five people are now paying 50% or more of their income on rent and are in real danger of losing their homes.²³

There are almost a thousand individuals or families on the waiting list for affordable housing. The waitlist for them ranges between one year or less and five years. The list includes only those who qualify. To qualify, the threshold of household income is extremely low - \$19,000 for a one bedroom unit and \$44,000 for a four bedroom unit.²⁴ This means that a number of families and individuals with low incomes would not have incomes low enough to qualify for social housing.

There is an Increase in People at Risk of Becoming Homeless

With 47.8 percent of people paying more than 30% and 23.3% paying more than 50 percent of their income on housing, the risk of becoming homeless is real. With a higher than average unemployment and a large number of people on social assistance in Kingston, the risk of people losing their homes is increasing. The number of consumer bankruptcies in Kingston is also higher than the provincial number.

As rents increase, especially if they increase at a faster rate than tenant incomes, fewer units in the existing private rental stock are available at an affordable level; this means more rental units move into the range where tenants will increasingly have to pay more than 30% of their income for rent.

Since increases in social assistance programs and minimum wage rates are not keeping pace with the rising costs of living, many people struggle to keep their housing and feed themselves and their families.

Emergency Shelter Use is Climbing

There are 7 agencies providing emergency shelter beds in Kingston. In their busiest periods, they provide between 90 and 100 beds a night.

Between 2003 and 2005, the number of individuals in emergency shelters doubled. 1,823 individuals accessed the shelters in Kingston, up from 905 in 2003.²⁵

The City of Kingston records the number of bed nights as well. Over the past two years, the number of bed nights in shelters has increased by 39%. This is a significant increase with 27,571 bed nights in 2005, up from 19,857 in 2003.²⁶

Over the past seven years, the number of bed nights has increased dramatically by 322%, from 6,532 bed nights in 1999 to 27,571 in 2005. This is, in part, due to the increase in the number of shelter beds available.

22 Statistics Canada

23 Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association <http://www.onpha.on.ca>

24 Kingston Housing, City of Kingston 2006

25 Kingston Shelter Providers

26 City of Kingston and Local Shelter Providers

Children and Working Poor Food Bank Users is on the Rise

Ontario's poverty rate of 11.7% ranks ninth out of all provinces in Canada. In March of 2005, 338,563 individuals utilized a food bank in Ontario, a 16.3 % increase since 2000. Ontario serves the largest number of food bank clients in the country and food bank use in the province is also up over last year: in 2005, about 15,000 more individuals and approximately 15,000 more children visited a food bank per month compared to 2004. Across Canada, 13.1% of food bank users have jobs, and this is an increasing trend.²⁷

In Kingston, we have seen similar trends, with an increase in the number of working individuals and children accessing the food bank and breakfast programs.

The Partners in Mission Food Bank in Kingston serves approximately 5,800 individuals per year, 40% of these are children under the age of 18. The food bank has also seen an increase in large hampers of goods being requested which suggests more density in shared accommodation.²⁸ This would confirm our assumption that there is a growing number of hidden homeless in Kingston.

The Food Sharing Project, which provides nourishment for students to improve their readiness to learn, currently coordinates breakfast, snack and lunch programs throughout Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington schools, serving more than 3,000 meals everyday. They have seen a huge increase in the need for their services. Just two years ago the Food Sharing Project served 1,500 students per day out of 50 different sites. During the 2006 school year, over 4,000 students received healthy meals or snacks from 97 school sites.²⁹

Services for the homeless are in high demand

Shelter providers and service agencies work well together to identify the services required to provide support to the homeless population. An analysis of the inventory of services shows us the need for more targeted services and programs.

Recommendations in the following chapter are based on this analysis of services, with considerable input from shelter providers. The focus in this area is on ensuring that supportive services are available and are client focused, following clients as they move along the continuum of support, continuing to be accessible when individuals and families are housed.

²⁷ Canadian Association of Food Banks, Time for Action, HungerCount 2005

²⁸ Partners In Mission Food Bank, 2006

²⁹ The Food Sharing Project

Chapter 4 Proposed Solutions

Priorities from 2004

The 2004 community plan identified five priority areas. These formed the basis of additional Federal (SCPI) funding in 2005 and 2006.

Priority 1

The priority in Kingston must be to look at ways to transition homeless youth, aboriginal individuals, adults and families to permanent housing. For this to happen, they must be provided with supports, transitional housing and, eventually, access to affordable housing.

Priority 2

Some individuals are “chronically” homeless. These people are more likely to have a serious mental illness, possibly substance abuse issues, unstable employment histories and a history of hospitalization and/or incarceration. For them, we need to continue to provide shelters and supports.

Priority 3

Day services will provide programs and services i.e. counselling, information, peer support and mentoring, education, recreation and skills development. These services will be accessible, supervised and available to all shelter clients and residents.

Priority 4

Discharge planning, meal services, food services need to be coordinated through community planning and coordinating bodies.

Priority 5

There is a need to coordinate research, services and information, including identification of the number of beds and services.

Priorities in 2006

For 2006, we have divided our proposed solutions into two sections. Section 1 looks at what is required to move individuals and families along the continuum of support into permanent, sustainable affordable housing. Section 2 looks at the coordination and collaboration that is required in Kingston to deal with this issue.

Section 1.0: Moving along the continuum of support

The first priority must be to help those who are homeless and in need of affordable housing move along the continuum of support – from streets and emergency shelters, to transitional and supported housing, and eventually to sustainable permanent affordable housing.

The services required for this are complex. It is important to ensure that we have adequate beds and also that we have sufficient service levels to provide seamless, mobile services that would benefit clients.

1.1 Emergency Shelters

Currently emergency shelters house a mixed population – episodic and chronic homeless people; individuals and families; employed and unemployed people. There are a number of agencies that work well together to ensure the urgent, immediate needs of those in crisis are met. There is cooperation and sharing of space and clients among this group.

Shelter Beds are provided through the following agencies:

Families and Individuals	Women and Children	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ryandale Shelter for the Homeless • Home Base Housing • Salvation Army 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dawn House • Kingston Interval House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingston Youth Shelter

If some of these clients are transitioned to supportive housing or provided affordable housing that is sustainable, it is believed that the pressure on the shelters will be relieved. Rather than investing in additional shelter beds, it would be wise to work closely with clients, identify those that can benefit from support services or affordable housing and move these clients into more permanent shelter.

Services

The following services have been categorized and prioritized based on input from the community:

A. Mental Health Services

Frontenac Community Mental Health Services (FCMHS), Lennox and Addington Mental Health Services and Providence Continuing Care Center, Mental Health Services all have community-based teams that provide supports to individuals living with a severe and persistent mental illness. FCMHS also operates a crisis response team. All of these teams work in the community and provide supports to service recipients in their homes.

Care for individuals with a serious mental illness in Southeastern Ontario is shifting from hospital-based care to community care. As directed by the Health Services Restructuring Commission, Mental Health Services will be reducing its inpatient bed complement from 198 to 104 beds, ensuring that community supports are available to those discharged from the hospital. . Parallel to this reduction in bed numbers, there will need to be an increase in community resources and services to meet the continuing needs of individuals with a serious mental illness

As appropriate residential facilities are identified for the current inpatients at MHS, services must be established in the community to support the successful reintegration of clients. These new opportunities will support clients in all programs at MHS and include supportive housing, specialized support teams and system-wide supports/resources.

As a regional provider of services, Mental Health Services and its community partners will need to continue to work together in transitioning services and resources, and ensuring a continuum of care for individuals with a serious mental illness living in Southeastern Ontario. Most recently, MHS has adopted a recovery model of care, which promotes a holistic view of mental illness that focuses on the person not just the symptoms.

B. Discharge Planning

As a community, it is important that we all work together collaboratively to support people who have been recently release from correctional facilities or from hospitals.

With eight correctional institutions in Kingston and area, the community needs to work closely with Correctional Service Canada to ensure that those released into the community are provided with counselling, support and access to affordable housing.

Kingston is home to a number of excellent healthcare facilities. Many patients, once discharged from the hospital, have no place to go. Some shelters act as home to patients who are discharged after surgery, undergoing chemotherapy or with serious health issues. Shelters do not have the resources to provide this level of care.

Discharge planning from mental health services is an area that Frontenac Mental Health Services (FCMHS), Hotel Dieu Hospital (HDH) and Providence Continuing Care, Mental Health Services (PCCC<MHS) are working on. Currently there is a centralized intake process which include PCCC, MHS and FCMHS for admission to ACT team upon discharge. Plans are underway to facilitate the intake for persons requiring admission to hospital for psychiatric reasons. With the reduction in the number of intake beds over the next couple of years, the community needs to ensure there are adequate supports in place for those who can no longer be accommodated in the facilities.

C. Healthcare and Meal Provision

In order for clients to access and maintain housing, the services identified by the community include nutritious cooked meals, an Infirmary with recovery beds for those who do not have a permanent home, more access to healthcare professionals and assistance with prescription medicines.

There are a number of faith based and community organizations that provide meals. The 2004 plan identified a need for better coordination. The group was pulled together and has been working collaboratively for the past year. However, there are still gaps on certain days and/or seasons.

D. Day Services, Programs and Supports

Day services were identified as a need in the community for those who are homeless and have nowhere to go during the day, when most shelters are closed. It was recommended that there should be support services linked to these day services. These support services include Peer and Family Supports, Drop In Centers, Recreation Programs, Children's Programs, Utility / Rent Bank, Employment, Literacy and Life Skills Training and Credit Counselling.

Currently, the following places are open during the day:

- The Gathering Place
Hours: Summer-8am-3pm, Tuesday:3-8, Saturday: 3-8, Sunday: 3-6 (hoping to expand services one more day and open up earlier on weekends)
- Martha's Table Friendship Room
Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday from 11:00-2:30
- Housing Help Centre Drop In:
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30-2 (7 days) Identified need for a drop-in for women only-safety issues
- Ryandale Shelter and Kingston Youth Shelter
stay open when it is critical for certain clients and if funding permits adequate staffing

All those consulted agreed that day services are important. Many felt that these services need to include more targeted services to help clients move along the continuum of support. Sustainable funding for these services has been identified as an issue that needs to be addressed.

1.2 Transitional Housing

Transitional housing provides those in need of housing with the supports they require to transition from emergency shelters and chronic homelessness to more stable housing. Supportive housing is a type of non-profit housing for people who need support to live independently³⁰.

In 2004 transitional housing was identified as a priority in the City of Kingston. Over the last 2 years there has been significant government and community investment in transitional housing.

In 2006 there are 3 agencies that provide this service from 4 locations. Some of these are new and some were in existence before 2004.

- Ryandale Shelter with 9 beds for men
- Home Base Housing Youth Net with 24 youth beds**
- Elizabeth Fry with 6 units

**These beds will be reduced to 20 in 2007

There are also some permanent supportive units in Kingston, providing housing to individuals in need, along with support services to enable them to continue to live independently.

- Home Base Housing Fresh Start with 14 individual units

Shelter providers have identified a need for additional services for this population. These services include credit and budget counselling, individual, youth and family counselling and employment and skills counselling and training.

1.3 Affordable housing

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is the key to resolving the housing issues. In the United States of America, successful programs, like those in New York City, create new units of supportive housing, which offer services such as mental health counselling and substance abuse treatment. They also offer programs that help people on the verge of losing their homes. Their experience indicates that temporary shelters are far more expensive to operate than supportive housing when factoring in the additional cost of healthcare, shelter and support services.³¹

With a continuously low vacancy rate and a high number of individuals and families on the waiting list, there is a need for more affordable housing units. There have been a number of successful housing initiatives in Kingston, bringing more than 200 affordable housing units since 2004. In addition, there are rent supplement and home ownership programs, administered by the City of Kingston, that will help people access and retain their homes.

30 Ontario Not for Profit Housing Association

31 New Yorker, February 13, 2006 'Million-Dollar Murray' by Malcolm Gladwell. Globe & Mail, 'Big Apple's homelessness model bears fruit' by Gary Mason

Social Housing

There are currently a number of non-profit and co-operative organizations that administer social housing units. These are:

Cataraqui Co-operative Homes Incorporated
Kaye Healey Homes/Elizabeth Fry Society
Kingston and Frontenac Housing Corporation
Kingston Co-op Homes Incorporated
Kingston Home Base Housing
Kingston Municipal Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Lois Miller Co-operative Homes Incorporated
Loughborough Housing Corporation
Marion Community Homes
North Frontenac Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Phoenix Homes
Porto Village Non-Profit Homes
Royal Canadian Legion Villa Kingston
St. Andrew-Thomas Senior Citizen Residence Incorporated
Tipi Moza
Weller Arms Non-Profit Homes Incorporated
Zion United Church Foundation Incorporated

There is a need for approximately 300 affordable housing units over the next 3- 5 years. The City of Kingston staff continue to work with provincial/federal programs to seek funding to build affordable housing units.

Currently there is also a community committee of United Way's Success By 6 initiative, including representatives from all levels of government, developers, financial institutions and community leaders. These individuals are working together to explore alternative ways to increase the supply of affordable housing.

Eviction prevention

Keeping people housed needs to continue to be an area of focus. Once individuals and families are housed, a number of them lose their homes for a number of reasons. It could be inability to pay rent, utility bills, unemployment or other issues that prevent them from sustaining employment or housing. Through Home Base Housing's Housing Help Centre, there is an eviction prevention program that works with individuals and families to avoid eviction.

There are some changes to the Tenancy Protection Act. As a result of the new legislation, it is predicted that more people will be involved in the tribunal process. The new legislation is intended to provide better protection for both, tenants and landlords.

To avoid eviction due to arrears in utility bills, Union Gas and the United Way provide a Winter Warmth fund. This helps those in arrears with Union Gas and Utilities Kingston. This is distributed by staff at the City of Kingston and Kingston Community Health Centres.

In addition, the City of Kingston administers the Provincial Rent Bank and the Utility Bank Program which has funding from the Provincial Emergency Energy Program and municipal contributions. The City of Kingston and Kingston Community Health Centres also have staff members who assist those with eviction issues as a result of utilities arrears.

Employment/Economics

Individuals and families on social assistance or in low paying jobs have a hard time balancing their budget with current rents. Advocacy groups are working to lobby for increasing Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program and minimum wage rates. In the meantime it is important that these individuals find food and shelter.

1.4. Children and families in need of housing

We have a growing concern about the number of children in shelters and inadequately housed. There were 252 children, ages 0-10 years, who were on the waiting list for affordable housing through 2005. In addition to these children there were 223 who are between the ages of 11-20 on the waiting list. The numbers have not gone down through 2006.

Children's Aid Society provides resources to assist parents. However there is a fear among those who are homeless that their children may be taken away from them if they cannot provide adequate housing.

There is a need for counselling services for children and youth who are in the shelter system. This can be set up with agencies like Kingston Community Counselling Centre. However there needs to be a system in place for agencies to provide referrals. There is also a need for additional funding for these services.

For young children of those who are chronically homeless, there is also an identified need for child care. Since the numbers are not predictable, flexible access to licensed child care is important. Providing child care enables children to learn social and other skills.

1.5 Recommendations: Moving along the continuum of support

Emergency Shelters and Related Services

Identification and initial contact:

- An intake/triage system or a coordinator is needed to assess needs of individuals and families as soon as they are identified as needing affordable housing or shelter. They will then be referred to the appropriate network of shelter and support services.
- Outreach workers will continue to work with clients on eviction prevention and access to services

Discharge planning

- A formal discharge community plan needs to be developed for clients of healthcare, mental health and correctional facilities. The United Way can work with Correctional Services Canada as well as with KGH, PCCC to develop a plan over the next year
- Providence Continuing Care Mental Health Services is currently working on a comprehensive plan that would enable those individuals currently residing in the hospital to move to the community with the supports required to live safely and successfully. The community needs to ensure there are adequate supports in place.
- There need to be at least 2 workers in the community to assist former inmates with their immediate needs i.e. food, shelter, employment. In addition, there needs to be a plan to provide treatment and counselling to inmates who are accustomed to these services while they were incarcerated.

Emotional care/counselling

- More staffing is required in shelters as a result of higher needs clients. This is for the safety for staff and other residents. Each shelter should have a minimum of one support/ outreach worker. Agencies with a higher caseload of clients will require more than one worker
- Shelters need 2.5 full time equivalent professional emotional care workers working with all the emergency shelters to provide support and treatment to those with emotional or mental health concerns
- In addition, shelters need access to training in several significant areas like mental illness, medications and crisis intervention to assist them in successfully meeting the needs of some potential residents.

Healthcare:

- For healthcare needs, hospitals need to work with shelters to establish a recovery/ healthcare room and a visiting nurse or nurse practitioner to support the needs of clients in shelters. There may also be a need for an internal protocol for handling homeless in hospitals as there may be additional health issues.
- Since sustainability has been identified as an issue for day services, funders in Kingston need to work with shelter providers to identify the supports required for day services based on a plan developed by agencies providing these supports

Meal services:

- Coordinated meal services are required to ensure consistent, seamless food and meals to those who are homeless and those on a lower income. There is a need to remedy gaps in services during holidays and summer months. It is recommended that Kingston have a central meal service location (or two) with all organizations selecting certain days/meals for which they would then provide volunteers and food resources. This would ensure a consistent location and meals for the homeless

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing was identified as a priority in 2004. Since then a number of agencies have successfully implemented the model with over 50 transitional or permanent supportive units for men, women and youth.

- The following additional needs have been identified:
 - ✓ 8-12 supportive housing beds/units for women
 - ✓ 15-20 additional supported/transitional beds for youth ++
- Currently there is a need for 15-20 additional permanent supportive housing units in the community
- Agencies will need to work together to explore funding sources to expand the number of beds/units providing transitional housing
- Funders, like the City of Kingston, Service Canada, United Way and Ontario Trillium Foundation need to recognize that this continues to be a priority to address the issue of homelessness in Kingston

++If beds are reduced in 2007, additional beds required will be 19-24

Affordable Housing

- City of Kingston has been very proactive and successful in accessing funding for affordable housing. City staff need to continue to participate in federal/provincial Affordable Housing Program
- The City of Kingston is looking at a number of programs and is working with Provincial and Federal funding opportunities to introduce rent supplement and home ownership programs
- United Way and its Success By 6 initiative have convened a community group of developers, finance institutions and all three levels of government to look at creative ways to grow the housing supply. Their focus is on integration with mixed income levels, scattered throughout the city to prevent high density low-income housing. There are currently two projects they are working on to increase the supply of affordable housing in Kingston
- Some communities ask all developers to set aside a percentage of new development for affordable housing. City of Kingston Council may want to explore the feasibility of this option. For example, City of Ottawa Inclusionary Zoning Policy requires all development sites have a minimum of 25% set aside for affordable housing
- There are models for a voluntary trustee program that have worked well in some communities. It is recommended that this option is explored using examples like the program in Hamilton-Burlington

Children and youth

- Increase access to counselling services for youth and families who are homeless or inadequately housed
- It is recommended that shelter providers work with community agencies like Better Beginnings for Children to develop a plan to provide access and funding for flexible child care for children 0-6 in shelters. If there is a plan in place, funding for this could be accessed through the City of Kingston and United Way Success By 6

Section 2.0: Coordination and collaboration

2.1 Objectives:

Homelessness requires a “systematic and system wide approach” which would require a willingness on the part of all levels of government. There is an urgent need for coordination of services to alleviate gaps that have been identified. Currently there is increased political will and a community impetus to work together. It is important to capitalize on these efforts. This section promotes collaboration and cooperation amongst service providers, all three levels of government as well as among funders within the community.

There is a need for service providers to continue to work together. In the past, shelter and service providers have worked collaboratively towards providing their clients with service. With increasing demands and funding challenges, it is important that this collaboration continue.

There is a need for a systematic approach to access support from all three levels of government. Rather than working at cross purposes, the community needs to ensure that Kingston benefits from all programs and services for the homeless and those who are inadequately housed.

Not for profit organizations need to work closely with funders in the city to identify opportunity and develop partnership models. Funders need to work together to identify funding opportunities.

2.2 Recommendations: Coordination and collaboration

Coordination of community effort

- There are currently approximately 12-15 groups working on the issue of housing and homelessness. It is recommended that an adhoc committee of the City of Kingston and the United Way develop an organizational chart that optimizes the efforts of service providers and advocacy groups, and avoids duplication or overlap.
- It is recommended that this committee take 3 months to work with these groups to identify their mandates, identify how they fit into the strategies to move forward and offer resources to facilitate the development of outcomes and objectives.

Funding Opportunities

- There is an opportunity to review funding priorities and to access funding from all levels of government to create more housing units and to fund support services
- It is recommended that the existing Funders Network be expanded to include funding partners that can provide funds in the area of housing and homelessness. This group can look at the needs and match them with the eligibility and availability of existing funding sources.
- Considerable confusion arose as a result of recent program changes through CHPP funding administered by the City of Kingston. It is recommended that all funding decisions that could impact service delivery in the City should be reviewed by community volunteers before being taken to members of City Council. This would create an inclusionary process, increase transparency, provide accountability and would provide City staff with input and guidance as they work on funding recommendations. The volunteer group could be drawn from the City of Kingston existing affordable housing committee or other similar committees (ensuring there were no members with direct or perceived conflict of interest) or it could be the model currently used by United Way and Service Canada (using community volunteers trained and identified by the United Way to provide input and recommendations)

Appendix 1: Data Analysis

The economics of homelessness

Employment and unemployment

In 2005 there were 2 000 new jobs in Kingston. There were 2,200 jobs created so far in 2006 with an estimate of 3 000 expected by the end of the year. The city's current GDP is 2.1% with a forecast of 2.4% GDP in 2007. Public sector employees make up 40% of the local workforce.³² This includes large institutions and organizations like Canadian Forces Base Kingston, Correctional Service Canada, Kingston General Hospital, Providence Continuing Care Centres. The following chart demonstrates six years of labour force activity between December 2000 and December 2005.

Labour Force Activity Economic Region 3515 - Kingston - Pembroke						
Age 15+						
	Dec-00	Dec-01	Dec-02	Dec-03	Dec-04	Dec-05
Population	340,500	344,100	347,800	350,400	353,200	356,600
Labour Force	198,600	202,900	211,600	210,000	221,400	211,400
Employed	187,900	189,400	196,300	194,900	210,600	200,400
Full-time	142,800	145,100	148,500	150,400	166,100	156,500
Part-time	45,100	44,300	47,800	44,600	44,500	43,900
Unemployed	10,700	13,500	15,400	15,100	10,800	11,100
Not in Labour Force	141,900	141,200	136,200	140,400	131,800	145,100
Participation Rate	58.3	59	60.8	59.9	62.7	59.3
Unemployment Rate	5.4	6.7	7.3	7.2	4.9	5.3
Employment Rate	55.2	55	56.4	55.6	59.6	56.2

Source: Labour Force Survey

2006 labour market conditions in Kingston

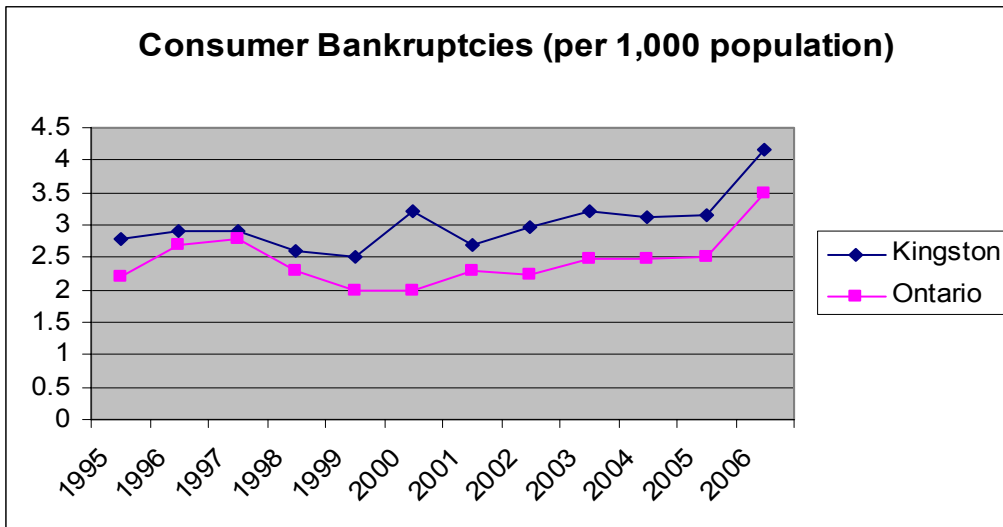
Employment fluctuated in the Kingston-Quinte-Pembroke region. There has been an increase in full time work in the most recent quarter, however there has been a decrease in part time employment. This caused the unemployment rate to rise to 6.6%, which is higher than the provincial average of 6.0%³³

³² KEDCO

³³ Labour Market Bulletin, Kingston/Pembroke Area, Service Canada Centre, Vol. 6, Issue 2 Second Quarter 2006

Consumer bankruptcies

The number of consumer bankruptcies in Kingston was higher than the average in Ontario.



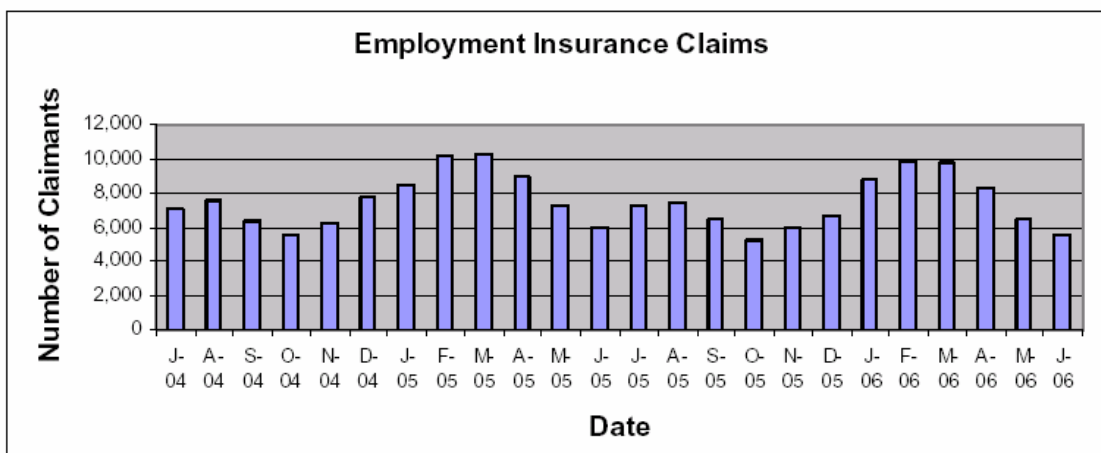
Source: Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy Canada

Employment Insurance

Employment Insurance provides temporary financial help to unemployed Canadians while they look for work or upgrade their skills, while they are pregnant or caring for a newborn or adopted child, or while they are sick. People on regular claims are unemployed and seeking work.

The number of people on Employment Insurance claims in the Kingston/Pembroke area labour market dropped steadily between March and June 2006, as normally occurs in the spring. The number of people on regular claims appears to be consistent between 2005 and 2006.

The following chart shows the number of people claiming regular Employment Insurance benefits from July 2004 to June 2006.



Source: www.1servicecanada.gc.ca

Kingston neighbourhoods by population and family income

	Neighbourhood	Total population	Average family income	Average family size	% homeownership
		114,195	68,396	2.4	58.4
1	Sydenham	2,965	85,636	1.6	31
2	Queen's	1,272	70,769	1.9	22.6
3	Inner Harbour	3,672	45,615	1.9	31.3
4	Cataraqui River E	2,643	101,228	2.4	93
5	CFB Kingston	3,198	63,056	2.9	2.8
6	Alwington	1,202	132,191	1.9	78.7
7	Sunnyside	5,984	71,169	2.1	47
8	Williamsville	2,423	37,692	2	26.9
9	Kingscourt & Novelis	4,957	45,902	2.2	47.4
10	Rideau Heights	6,095	33,585	2.4	28.6
11	Greenwood	1,710	84,694	3	98.2
13	Portsmouth	2,736	63,824	2.1	55.6
14	Calvin Park	3,409	62,284	2.2	43.2
15	Hillendale	2,561	45,089	1.9	22.7
16	Strathcona Park	2,994	81,517	2.5	72.3
18	Markers Acres	2,857	50,685	2.5	61.6
19	Fairway Hills	1,926	58,864	2.1	43.5
20	Polson Park	3,272	45,193	2	27.4
21	Balsam Grove-Grenville	1,703	53,831	2	37.9
22	Reddendale	1,365	91,026	2.5	84.5
24	Meadowbrook	2,738	58,686	1.9	65.1
25	Waterloo village	1,491	66,937	2.8	88.9
26	Cataraqui North	616	71,186	2.4	78
27	Elginburg	2,145	67,552	2.8	90.8
28	Shannons Corners	987	72,563	2.9	95.8
29	Glenburnie	988	87,027	2.5	80.3
30	Kingston Mills	866	62,116	2.5	91.4
31	St. Lawrence	2,300	121,144	2.7	92.4
32	Ravensview	729	50,390	2.6	96.2
33	Henderson	3,504	71,375	2.7	90.5
34	Auden Park	3,866	64,059	2.5	67.4
35	Bayridge East	3,367	68,493	3	81
36	Sutton Mills	4,650	64,308	2.7	64.5
37	Gardiners	587	65,866	2.7	75
38	Cataraqui Westbrook	3,860	31,729	2.2	84.3
39	Sharpton Glenvale	977	76,990	2.8	95.7
40	Joyceville Brewers Mill	2,095	32,551	1.5	89.8
41	Lemoine Point	1,273	86,975	2.5	96.7
42	Bayridge West	3,293	61,104	2.7	93.2
43	Westwoods	4,922	104,576	3.3	96
44	Mile Square	1,956	80,041	2.7	93.7
45	Woodbine	682	76,905	2.8	81.6

Source: City of Kingston Neighbourhood Profiles www.cityofkingston.ca and Statistics Canada 2001

Neighbourhoods #12,17,23 were excluded as these neighbourhoods had no population count (penitentiaries & industrial land)

The Income gap

Kingston's average family income of \$63,700 is slightly higher than the provincial income of \$62,500 for Ontario and \$58,100 for Canada.³⁴

However, we see large discrepancies in family income within Kingston. The average family income in Kingston is \$68,396. The highest average family income is \$132,191 in Alwington neighbourhood and the lowest is \$31,729 in Cataraqui Westbrook. Within neighbourhoods, there are also differences in income levels.

In Ontario the median income of all families is \$60,142. Wide discrepancies exist in the median income of families with young children, aged 0-6 years. The highest median family income in KFL&A is \$79,642 for these families. The lowest is \$24,594³⁵, which is below the Low-Income Cut-Off for a family of four at \$33,251³⁶.

Literacy and Post Secondary levels in Kingston

Kingston has a higher than average percentage of its population with post secondary education.

Post secondary education in Kingston and Ontario		
Age groups	Kingston	Ontario
20-34	47.2%	45.2%
35-44	51.3%	45.5%
45-64	44.7%	38.2%

Source: KEDCO, 2006

In spite of the higher than average rates of people in Kingston with post secondary education, literacy rates in Kingston are low.

A recent study indicates that 48% of Ontarians have literacy skills in Levels 1 and 2.³⁷ This means that people at Level 1 have great difficulty comprehending any printed material, while people at level 2 can read only simple material and do not meet the minimum skills level suitable for coping with the demands of everyday life and work.³⁸ The last study correlating data from the International Adult Literacy Survey (1994) to specific ridings indicated that 53% of Kingstonians were in literacy levels 1 and 2.

In the 2006-2007 Trends, Opportunities and Priorities update report from the 1000 Islands Region Workforce Development Board, literacy, language and soft skills training remain a barrier to sustainable employment for youth and adults.³⁹

Kingston has a bilingual workforce with 15% of the population fluent in both English and French.⁴⁰

³⁴ Statistics Canada

³⁵ Statistics Canada, 2001

³⁶ Canadian Council on Social Development

³⁷ Statistics Canada and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

³⁸ ABC Canada Newsroom (November 2005)

³⁹ Kingston Literacy

⁴⁰ <http://business.kingstoncanada.com>

High rental costs and low income individuals and families

Families and individuals who pay more than 30% of their income on rent do not have enough money left for nutritious meals and other necessities. Forty-two per cent of renters are paying more than 30% of their income on rent, which is outside of affordability.⁴¹ According to the most recent Statistics Canada data, 47.8% of Kingstonians are paying 30% or more of their household income on rental costs, while 23.3% are spending 50% or more.⁴² One in five tenants in Ontario are now paying 50% or more of their income on rent and are in real danger of losing their homes.⁴³ As rents increase, especially if they increase at a faster rate than tenant incomes, fewer units in the existing private rental stock are available at an affordable level; this means more rental units move into the range where tenants will increasingly have to pay more than 30% of their income for rent.

Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before tax household income. By definition, a household spending 50% or more of its income on shelter would fall below the affordability standard.⁴⁴ In a community like Kingston, since the average rents are high to start with, the amounts identified as 'affordable' in fact are unaffordable for many.

Average market rents for 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom apartments have grown since 1999

The average rent for a one bedroom apartment or a two bedroom apartment has grown more than 20% in the last 7 years, as shown in the chart below.

Kingston Housing Statistics: Increase in Average rents

	<u>One-bedroom</u>	<u>Two-bedroom</u>
1999	\$ 542	\$ 658
2000	574	684
2001	608	713
2002	598	727
2003	627	768
2004	646	785
2005	660	807

Kingston Average Rent by type of Unit

	2003	2005
Bachelor	\$ 471	\$ 513
1 Bedroom	627	660
2 Bedroom	768	807
3 Bedroom	851	995

Source: CMHC & City of Kingston

41 Where's Home? ONPHA

42 Statscan

43 Where's Home? ONPHA

44 CMHC

Shelter allowances for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program

There is a gap between the shelter allowance and the average rent in Kingston for those on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support

Shelter allowances for Ontario Disability Support Program recipients

Number of Members in Household	Size of Dwelling	2005 ODSP Maximum Shelter Allowance Per month	2005 Kingston Average Rent Per month
1	Bachelor	\$ 436*	\$ 513
2	1 Bedroom	686*	660
3	2 Bedroom	744*	807
4	3 Bedroom	808*	995
5		871*	
6+		903*	

Shelter allowances for Ontario Works recipients

Number of Members in Household	Size of Dwelling	2005 OW Maximum Shelter Allowance Per month	2005 Kingston Average Rent Per month
1	Bachelor	\$ 342*	\$ 513
2	1 Bedroom	\$ 538*	\$ 660
3	2 Bedroom	\$ 583*	\$ 807
4	3 Bedroom	\$ 634*	\$ 995
5		\$ 683*	
6+		\$ 708*	

Source: <http://perc.ca/library/resources/food/food-security/app-d.en.html>

*=Source: www.gov.on.ca

Increases in Minimum Wage, OW/ODSP, Inflation and Rent for a Two-Bedroom Apartment, 1999-2004

Minimum Wage Increase	OW/ODSP Increase	Consumer Price Index Increase	2-BR Rent Increase
4.4 %	3.0%	13.2%	19%

Source: Ministry of Labour and MCSS websites, and Where's Home? 2005

Renter Households in Core Need and Spending 50% or more of their income on Shelter - 2001

	No of Households	Pct of Rental Households (%)	Annual Income (\$)	Monthly Shelter Cost (\$)	Shelter Cost To Income Ratio (STIR)
Ontario	146,900	11.9	14,587	783	66.2
Ottawa	11,000	9.9	14,490	777	66.5
Kingston	2,400	12.5	12,251	647	65.0
Toronto	64,900	11.9	16,615	903	67.3

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Housing starts

In 2006 Kingston led the country's 27 census metropolitan areas with an increase of 69 per cent in housing starts from the same time last year. The almost 1,100 housing starts in Kingston for this year equals the same number that Kingston had in 2003. However, it is predicted that Kingston housing starts will fall to less than half of this year's. About 500 new homes are expected in each of the next three years.⁴⁵ However, our vacancy rates continue to remain well below that of Ontario's rate of 3.8%.⁴⁶

Vacancy rates in Kingston

A "healthy" vacancy rate is considered to be 3 to 5%. Vacancy rates rise and fall depending upon a range of factors, such as interest rates, employment growth, demographic changes and net migration.⁴⁷

Kingston's vacancy rate has been below 3% in each of the past 5 years. As a result, the average rent in Kingston is higher than similar sized communities, which results in the measure of "affordability" being higher than other communities. Shelter allowances are the same throughout the province.

Rental Vacancy Rates in Kingston

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
1.8	1.5	0.9	1.9	2.4	2.4

Source: CMHC

Availability rate:

The availability rate, which includes units that may be vacated over the next few months, decreased from 4.3% in October 2004 to 3.9 in October 2005.⁴⁸

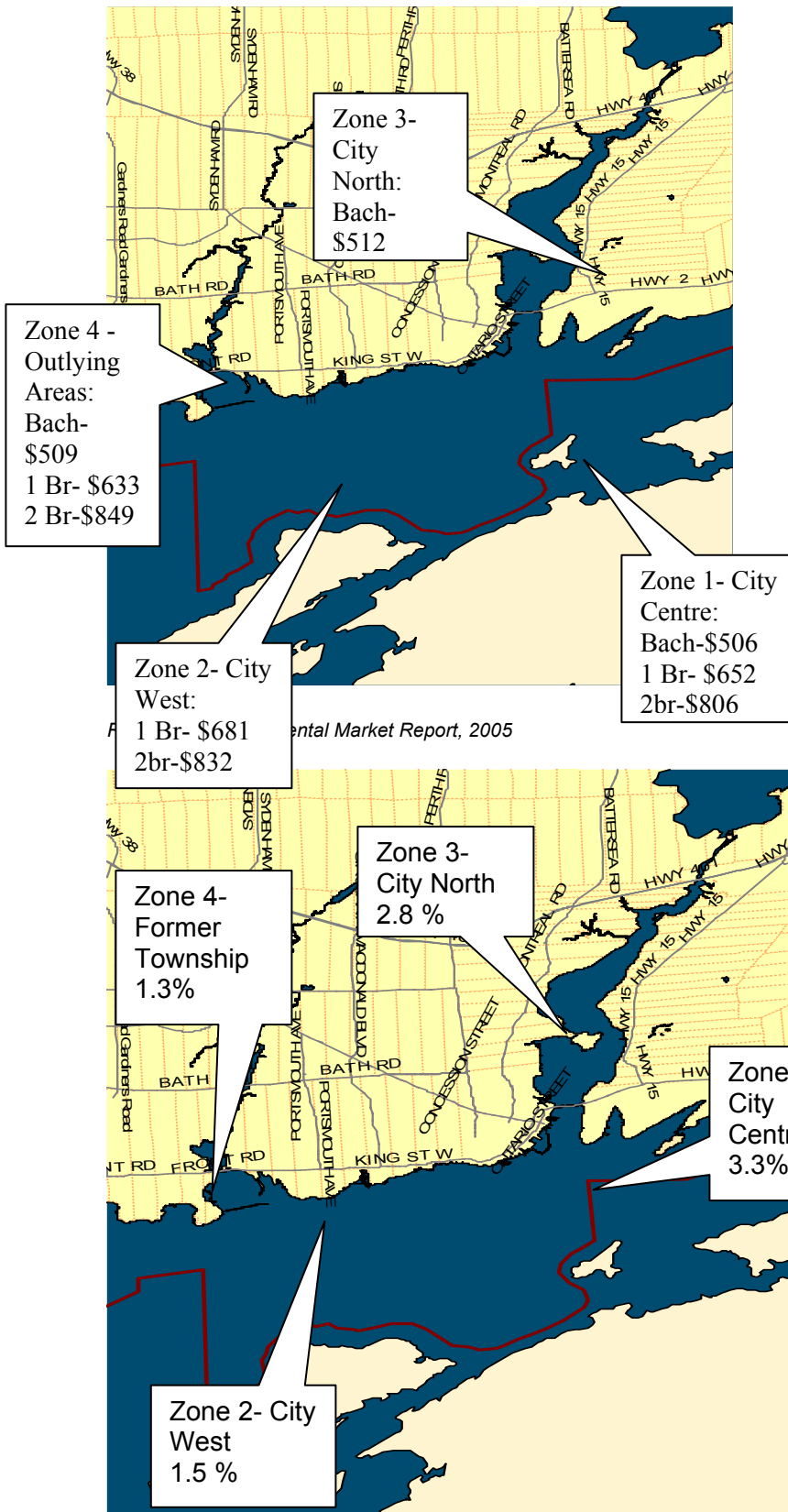
⁴⁵ Kingston Whig Standard

⁴⁶ CMHC

⁴⁷ Where's Home? 2005

⁴⁸ CMHC

2005 Average Market Rent by Rental Survey Zone



Reference: CMHC Rental Market Report, 2005

Vacancy rates overall in Kingston have consistently remained below the provincial rate. Vacancy rates are lowest in Kingston West, the former Kingston Township and Pittsburgh Township and highest in Kingston Centre

Zone 1 City Centre – 3.3%

(South of Railway, East of Montreal, East of Division, South of Joseph, North of Princess, East of Albert, South of Johnson, East of Sir John A Macdonald)

Zone 2 City West – 1.5%

(South of Concession/Bath, South of Princess, West of Albert, North of Johnson, West of Sir John A Macdonald)

Zone 3 City North – 2.8%

(North of Concession/Bath, North of Joseph, North of Division, West of Montreal, North of Railway)

Zone 4 Outlying areas - 1.3%

(Former Kingston Township and Pittsburgh Township)

Social Housing Registry Program

Subsidized units

Year end statistics from the Social Housing Registry show that in 2005 there were 979 applications received which is an average of 81.58 applications per month. There were 383 households that were placed in subsidized units from the centralized waiting list in 2005, averaging 31.17 households per month.⁴⁹

The Social Housing Registry Program was initially established on October 1, 2002, to meet one of the many requirements of the Service Manager (The City of Kingston) under the Social Housing Reform Act, 2000, and corresponding regulations. The Registry manages the application process for rent-geared-to-income assistance for eighteen housing providers participating in the centralized waiting list. They operate under various social housing programs including: public housing, non-profit housing, non-profit co-operative, federal programs, rent supplement agreements with private landlords, rent supplement agreements under Ontario Community Housing Assistance Program and Community Sponsored Housing Program, Aboriginal/Urban Native Program.

Special priority status and homeless priority status

The Special Priority status is reserved for individuals who are or have been abused by another household member. A separate application must be submitted and the Registry requires verification documentation. Special Priority applicants are ranked at the top of the waiting list above all other applicants.⁵⁰

In November 2005 the Social Housing Registry Program introduced the Homeless Priority Status on the centralized waiting list for eligible applicants for Rent Geared to Income assistance. Applicants who are eligible for a unit under local occupancy standards will be offered one in ten vacancies.⁵¹

Average wait times for social housing

The wait list for social housing units is dependent upon the applicant's areas of preference, vacancy turnover and bedroom size.⁵² In some cases the wait is less than one year and in others it can take longer than five years.⁵³ The chart below provides statistics from ONPHA which differs slightly from the City of Kingston's data.

Social Housing Waiting List in Kingston

Active Households 2006	Seniors	Non-Senior Singles	Families	# with Incomes under \$20 000	Time Seniors wait for Housing	Time Singles wait for Housing	Time Families wait for Housing
956	85	627	244	896	2 yrs	3 yrs +	6-12 Months

Source: Ontario Not for Profit Housing Association

49 Social Housing Registry, City of Kingston

50 City of Kingston Housing Division

51 www.socialhousingregistry.ca

52 Social Housing Registry, City of Kingston

53 Social Housing Registry, City of Kingston

Household income limits by type of unit

Not all families or individuals qualify for affordable housing. With a high demand for affordable housing, a number of people are ineligible to be on the list. The chart below lists the maximum income levels for households to be placed on the waiting list.

Type of Unit	Maximum Household Income for eligibility
Bachelor	\$19,000
1 Bedroom	24,500
2 Bedroom	29,500
3 Bedroom	34,500
4 Bedroom	44,500

Source: City of Kingston

Families and individuals who have family incomes higher than \$19,000 - \$44,500 do not qualify for social housing. This results in a number of low income families who may not be eligible for social housing and may be working, but struggle to make ends meet.

Increase in people at risk of becoming homeless

With 47.8 percent of people paying more than 30% and 23.3% paying more than 50 percent of their income on housing, the risk of becoming homeless is real. With a higher than average unemployment and large number of people on social assistance in Kingston, the risk of people losing their homes is increasing.

The Residential Tenancies Act

On June 22, 2006 The Residential Tenancies Act replaced the previous legislation The Tenant Protection Act, 1997 and the Landlord and Tenant Board. The new legislation is intended to provide better protection for tenants and landlords while protection while keeping Ontario's rental housing market strong. The aim is to create rental housing system that protects tenants, helps landlords and promotes investing in Ontario's rental housing market. This legislation will affect approximately 1.35 million renter households in Ontario, representing 32 per cent of Ontario's population.⁵⁴

Currently, the Ontario Rental Housing Tribunal in Kingston views 18-21 cases each week. A total of 80-85% of all applications are brought forth by landlords against tenants. As a result of the new legislation, it is predicted that more people will be involved in the tribunal process.

⁵⁴ www.mah.gov.on.ca

Low Income Families

National Child Tax Benefit Supplement 'Clawback'

The Government of Canada contributes to the National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative through a supplement to its Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) system. This payment is called the NCB supplement. It provides extra support to low-income families with children by topping up the monthly payments they receive under the CCTB system. It was introduced in 1998 with the purpose of aiming to prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty, support parents as they move into the labour market and reduce overlap and duplication of government programs.

Annual Maximum Canada Child Tax Benefit (including National Child Benefit Supplement)

Families that had net income below \$20,435 in 2004 qualify for the maximum base benefit of the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) and maximum National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS). Families that had net incomes between \$20,435 and \$36,378 in 2005 qualify for the maximum base benefit of the CCTB and part of the NCB Supplement. Families that had net incomes above \$36,378 in 2005 qualify for a part of the base benefit of the CCTB.⁵⁵

The NCBS goes to all low-income families but it is taken back from those families who receive social assistance. This is called the NCBS "clawback" by advocacy groups. Manitoba and New Brunswick are the only provinces that do not take back the Supplement. All other territories and provinces take back the Supplement in whole or in part from low-income families receiving social assistance. Low income families with adults who are working do not have the Supplement clawed back. The monies that are taken from families on social assistance are to be reinvested in new social programs for low-income families. Often the money goes to programs they may not access. In 2002-2003 \$2.4 billion reached low-income families through the NCBS. Of that money, \$672.8 million was "clawed back" from poor families receiving social assistance.⁵⁶

In Kingston, City staff and council recommended the creation of the Kingston Entitlement Access Program (KEAP) to provide support to ODSP and OW families. This program is administered by Kingston Community Health since November 2001. This program provides payments to qualified ODSP and OW families for an amount relative to their NCBS "clawback" that they can use for food, utility payments, health or other needs. Since its inception, KEAP has "returned" a total of three million dollars to families in the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac. Annually approximately \$700,000 is given to 1,400 families including 2,300 children. The City of Kingston continues to be one of only a few service managers taking this innovative approach, while the rest continue to support projects and programs in their community with the funds.

This chart shows the benefit for the period July 2006 to June 2007 for low income families

Number of Children	Basic CCTB	NCBS	Total	Monthly Benefit
1st child	\$1255	\$1945	\$3200	\$266.67
2d child	\$1255	\$1720	\$2975	\$247.92
3rd & each additional child	\$1343	\$1637	\$2980	\$248.33

Source: www.nationalchildbenefit.ca

⁵⁵ www.nationalchildbenefit.ca

⁵⁶ www.makepovertyhistory.ca

The Universal Child Care Benefit: Quality Child Care

Best Start programs in Ontario were working to bring more quality licensed child care spaces. Rather than funding more spaces, as of July 2006, the federal government has created the Universal Child Care Benefit. This provides up to \$100 a month per child to families with children under 6 for a maximum of \$1,200 per child per year.

The average annual fees for full time child care in Ontario in 1998 ranged from \$6,492 to \$9,396, depending on the age of the child. With over two thirds of mothers with children younger than 6 in the workforce,⁵⁷ and despite new funding many families will continue to struggle to afford quality day care while meeting other basic living expenses.⁵⁸

When the federal government introduced the Child Care Benefit, people were concerned about how it would affect the benefits of those receiving social assistance. In Ontario, the Child Care Benefit will not be considered as income. This means that it will not affect the eligibility of those applying for social assistance.⁵⁹

57 Child care Resource and Research Unit (2004) Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada, University of Toronto

58 United Way Success By 6 Report, Caring for our children: an update on how KFL&A is doing 2006

59 United Way Success By 6 Report, Caring for our children: an update on how KFL&A is doing, 2006

Ontario Social Assistance Programs and minimum wage rates

Ontario Social Assistance Programs

On May 18, 2004, the Ontario Budget announced a three per cent rate increase to the basic needs allowance and maximum shelter allowance for individuals and families who rely on social assistance. These are the first rate increases since 1993. The rate increase was implemented on February 28, 2005 for Ontario Disability Support Program recipients, and on March 1, 2005 for Ontario Works recipients. Currently there are approximately 400 000 active social assistant cases, representing more than 670 000 Ontarians.⁶⁰ The following are the current annual rates for OW and ODSP, including the shelter allowance.

Family Type	Ontario Works (OW)	Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)	Annual Low Income Cut-offs (2003) ⁶¹ for Kingston	Minimum Wage (\$7.75/hr 40 hr/wk, before taxes)
Single Adult	\$6 576*	\$11 748*	\$17 895	\$16 120
2 Adults	11 388*	21 252* (both disabled) 17 880* (one disabled, one not disabled)	22 276	32 240
1 Adult and 1 Child	12 096*	13 956* (with child 13 yrs.+) 13 356* (with child younger than 13yrs.)	22 276	16 120
2 Adults & 1 Child	12 372*	19 980* (disabled with spouse, one child under 12)	27 386	32 240
1 Adult and 2 Children	13 236*	22 188* (with 2nd child 13 yrs.+) 21 588* (with 2 nd child younger than 13yrs.)	27 386	16 120
2 Adults and 2 Children	15 336*		33 251	32 240
1 Adult and 3 Children	14 376*		33 251	16 120

Source: <http://perc.ca/library/resources/food/food-security/app-d.en.html>=Source: www.gov.on.ca

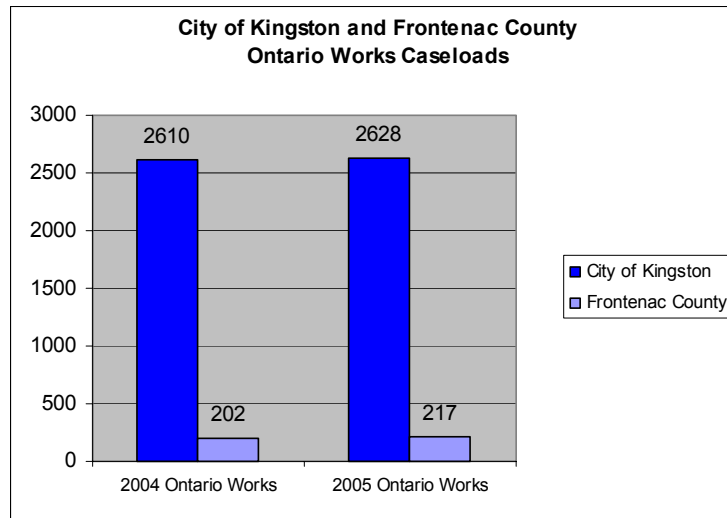
Source: City of Kingston Social Services, 2004. Please note that the figures above include Frontenac County, which the City also serves, and that "families" may have one or multiple members.

Ontario Works

⁶⁰ www.mcass.gov.on.ca

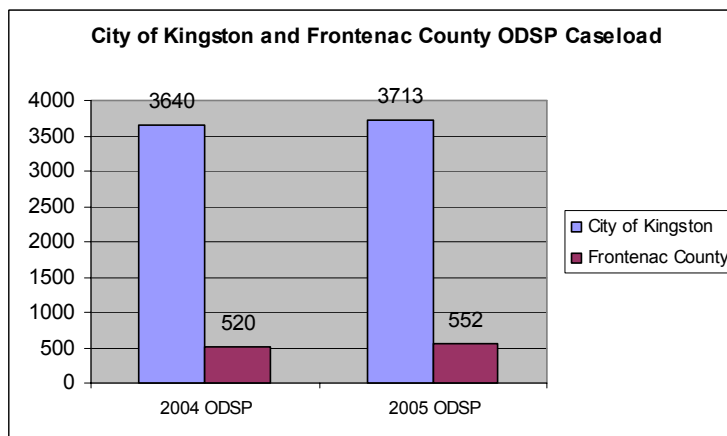
Ontario Works provides employment and financial assistance to people who are in temporary financial need. The employment assistance helps people become and stay employed and includes job search support services, basic education and job skills training, community and employment placement, supports to self-employment, Learning Earning and Parenting program, addiction services and earning exemptions that allow participants to earn income as they move back into the workforce.

The number of people on Ontario Works has not changed significantly between 2004 and 2005



Ontario Disability Support Program

The Ontario Disability Support Program was designed to meet the income and employment support needs of people with disabilities. The employment supports component of the program offers a range of goods and services to help people with disabilities to look for, obtain or maintain jobs on a volunteer basis. Source: www.mcass.gov.on.ca



Minimum Wage

Ontarians saw the first minimum wage increase since 1995 in 2004. Between 1999 and 2006, the inflation rate rose to 16.7% or by 2.2% per year.⁶² The general minimum wage for Ontario workers increased to \$7.75 in 2006. Further increases will follow on an annual basis, bringing the minimum wage to \$8.00 per hour by February 2007. A total of 237,600 (4.3%) Ontarians earned the minimum wage in 2005 compared to 586,900 Canadians.⁶³

Ontario General Minimum Wage Rate/hr	Implementation Year
\$6.85	1995-2004
\$7.15	2004
\$7.45	2005
\$7.75	2006
\$8.00	2007

Emergency Shelter use

Shelters and the City of Kingston track the number of bed nights used in a year. This does not reflect the number of individuals who used emergency shelters in a year.

In 2005, 1,823 individuals accessed the shelters in Kingston, up from 905 in 2003.

The number of bed nights increased to 27,571 in 2005, up from 19,857 in 2003, an increase of 39%. Since 1999, the number of bed nights has increased by 322%, from 6,532 to 27,571⁶⁴. This increase could, in part, be the result of the increase in the number of beds in the city.

The chart below is based on information gathered from surveying shelter providers.

Kingston Shelters

	2003	2005
Total shelter bed nights	19,857	27,571
Number of individuals in emergency shelters	905	1,823

Source: City of Kingston and Local Shelter Providers

The following chart includes information from the City of Kingston for shelter bed nights paid for through Ontario Works Emergency Hostel Per Diems. Per diems are provided for those who qualify based on specific criteria. (These numbers exclude Kingston Interval House)

Kingston Shelter Bed Nights (OW)

	1999	2001	2003	2005
Number of OW bed nights	6,386	10,411	13,540	17,412

Source: City of Kingston

⁶² Consumer Price Index

⁶³ Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2005

⁶⁴ City of Kingston

Emergency Shelter Providers

The following is a list of emergency shelter providers and the number of beds they can provide on any given night.

Shelter	Number of Beds	Client Population
In From the Cold	20	Co-ed (16+)
Ryandale Shelter for the Homeless	11	Men, women & families
Dawn House Inc.	10	Women (16+) & Children
Kingston Youth Shelter	8 (15 if staffing permits)	Youth (16-24)
Bridge House Inc.	10	Women & children from out of town visiting penitentiaries
Kingston Interval House	25	Abused women & their children
Salvation Army Kingston Harbour Light Centre	8	Men (18+)

The above shelters have all experienced significant increases in the demand for their services. For example:

- In From the Cold was once the city's emergency overflow shelter from November to April. In July 2004, the shelter opened early to deal with the increase in homelessness. Since then the shelter has remained open 365 days a year and averaged 17 persons per night during 2005.
- Ryandale shelter reported 100% occupancy for 2005 with 535 requests for service turned down. The population at Ryandale shelter during 2005 included 71% male, 20% female, 10% youth.⁶⁵
- In 2005, Kingston Youth Shelter averaged a 90% occupancy rate. A total of 327 youth, of which 191 were male and 136 were female utilized the shelter in 2005. 320 of these were between the ages of 16-24, with 7 aged 15 (stay dependent upon notifying Kingston Police and/or Children's Aid Society). Kingston Youth Shelter provided services to 105 new youth who had never accessed the shelter before in 2005.⁶⁶

Food and meal programs

Ontario's poverty rate of 11.7% ranks ninth out of all provinces in Canada. In March of 2005, 338 563 individuals utilized a food bank in Ontario, a 16.3 % increase since 2000. Ontario serves the largest number of food bank clients in the country and food bank use in the province is also up over last year: in 2005, about 15 000 more individuals and approximately 15 000 more children visited a food bank per month compared to 2004. Across Canada, 13.1% of food bank users have jobs, and this is an increasing trend.⁶⁷

In Kingston, we have seen similar trends, with an increase in the number of working individuals and children accessing the food bank.

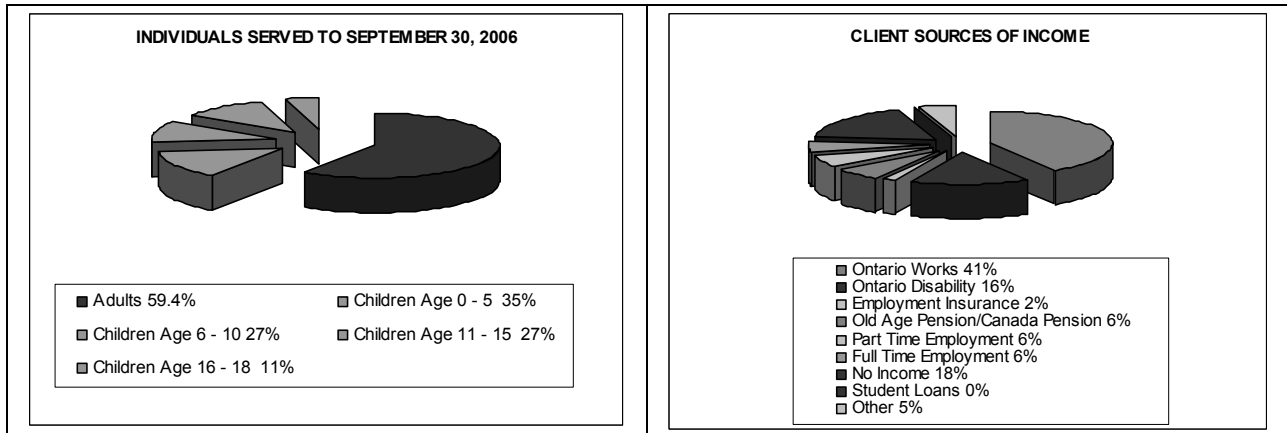
⁶⁵ Ryandale Shelter, 2006

⁶⁶ Kingston Youth Shelter, 2006

⁶⁷ Hungercount 2005

The Partners in Mission Food Bank in Kingston continues to serve about 5,800 individuals per year. 40% of these are children under the age of 18. Five years ago 5-6% of the food bank's client base represented working poor individuals. This rate has since increased to 12%.

In addition, Ontario Disability Support Program and Old Age Pension recipients make up approximately 12% of the food bank's client population. The food bank notes an increase in large hampers of goods being requested which suggests more density in shared accommodation.⁶⁸



Source: Partners in Mission Food Bank, October 2006 Newsletter

The Food Sharing Project, an agency that provides nourishment for students to improve their readiness to learn, currently coordinates 97 breakfast, snack and lunch programs throughout Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington and serves more than 3 000 meals everyday. Just two years ago the Food Sharing Project served 1,500 students per day out of 50 different sites. In 2006, over 4,000 students benefited from this program, which is now offered at 97 school sites.⁶⁹

Nine groups, churches and not for profit agencies, offer free or low-cost meals, serving an average of 1 225 meals per week.⁷⁰ There continues to be a gap in meal programs during the summer, mostly due to a lack of volunteers.

Addiction Services

A number of homeless individuals need addiction treatment as part of their support services. The Kingston Detoxification Centre, as part of Hotel Dieu Hospital, is the only one between Cornwall and Oshawa. The centre is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week offering short-term, non-medical treatment for men and women who want to detoxify from alcohol or other drugs, who are waiting for intake into a treatment program, or who in danger of relapse.⁷¹

Approximately 1,500 individuals are served here on average per year. This is a small increase within the last five years when approximately over 1,400 clients utilized the services offered at the centre. Generally, 12-15 people are living at the centre for an average stay of 4 days with an average of 3 of these who report no fixed address. A typical client would be between 36-44 years old. A wait list is rare, but if one exists, people are moved within 8-12 hours. Ministry of Health has recently been seeking to move towards Community Withdrawal Management.⁷²

68 Partners In Mission Food Bank, 2006

69 The Food Sharing Project

70 Meal Providers

71 www.hoteldieu.com

72 Kingston Detoxification Centre, 2006

The Street Health Centre is part of Kingston Community Health Centres. It is a multi-service clinic offering a range of outreach, education, counselling, prevention, treatment and primary care services. They serve communities that have difficulty accessing mainstream health services and that face multiple barriers to health. This includes individuals who have addiction problems, who are homeless, previously incarcerated, or involved in high-risk activities.

The Street Health Centre has 1,500 active medical patients and serves an estimated client community of 2500. They are open 365 days a year and also provide outreach services, including to local shelters and to the Rideau Heights area.⁷³

Options for Change Community Addictions Treatment Services offers outpatient treatment programs for people with substance use problems or problems with gambling, and family members/ friends concerned about someone’s substance use or gambling. Core services include assessment and referral, individual counselling and an intensive day treatment program.

Addiction services for children, youth and young adults

Kairos is a local agency that provides education, consultation, counseling and prevention in addition to their core treatment services. They offer services through secondary schools and a growing concern is the number of children in elementary schools who require treatment and counseling. Some of these children are as young as 8 years of age. Since 2000, the agency has seen an increase of 44% in the number of clients they serve.

Number of Clients Served by Kairos

	Adults	Children and Youth	Probation	Quinte Detention Centre	Young Offenders Program	Students	Total
2006	94	381	174	153	100	415	872
2005	80	412	165	145	72	444	855
2004	85	412	173	118	n/a	428	806
2003	62	413	144	103	n/a	471	758
2002	68	313	144	81	n/a	425	620
2001	69	289	112	112	n/a	427	627
2000	71	261	100	110	n/a	400	605

Source: Kairos Annual Report 2005-2006

Appendix 2: Participants: Key Informant Interviews & Forums

Bob Pringle-Kingston Police
Cheryl Mastantuone – City of Kingston
Dave Jackson-Molly Brant Foundation
David Wright-Queens University Student Housing
Dianne McCarthy-Kingston Police
Gerry Fast-Kairos
Barb Butler-Town Homes Kingston
Glen Stressman-Community Foundation of Greater Kingston
Harvey Rosen-Mayor, City of Kingston
Hersh Sehdev-Kingston Community Health Centres
Hollis Amey-City of Kingston
Holly Knowles-Corrections
Jason Beaubien-Kingston Youth Shelter
Jeff Garrah-KEDCO
Jennifer Payne Oddie-PCCCMHS
Jennifer Scott-St. Lawrence College Student Association
Jim Docherty-Facilitator
John Donne-Kingston Legal Clinic
John Osborne-Social Planning Council
Kim Donovan-Kincore Holdings Ltd.
Kim McCormick-Housing Help Centre
Laura McLean-Bridge House
Lee Campbell-Kingston Frontenac Housing Corporation
Linda Murray-Kingston Interval House
Linda Murray-Kingston Interval House
Linda Stevens-City of Kingston
Lisa Dwyer-Detox Centre
Mike Murphy/Judy Regis-Independent Living Centre
Mitchell Shewell-Katarokwi Native Friendship Centre
Mila Kolokolnikova-Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Peter Boyle-Kingston and District Labour Council
Rev. Dale Vinkle-Salvation Army
Rob Tamblyn-Downtown Business Association
Ron Shore-Street Health Centre
Ruth Mott- Ontario Trillium Foundation
Sandy Singers-Partners in Mission Food Bank
Scott Black-Adult Services,Northern Frontenac Community Services
Sister Alda Brady-Home Base Housing
Steve Manders-Kingston Rental Property Owners Association
Sue Hendler-Queens University School of Urban and Regional Planning
Tara Kainer-Justice of the Peace Office Sisters of Providence Greg Grange-City of Kingston
Terri Fleming-Ryandale Shelter
Tom Greening-Home Base Housing
Trish Crawford-Elizabeth Fry Society

Forum Participants (total of 46):

Anderson	Kim McCormick
Beth Pater	Larry
Bonita McCourt	Laura MacLean
Brian Brophy	Linda McAllister
Brian Howell	Lisa Finateri
Bryan Metcalfe	Lorie Young
Carol MacIntyre	Lynn Clarke
Carol MacIntyre	Marijana Matovic
Cathy Cleary	Mary-Louise Heroux
Cathy Cleary	Meredith MacKenzie
Chris McBride	Pam Havery
Christina McMillan	Ray Everingham
Cindy Bell	Richard Moore
Cindy Bell	Rob Hutchison
Deborah Melman-Clement	Rob Wood
Diane Carter-Robb	Rod Vankoughnet
Dianna Inisster	Rose Moore
Drew Spark	S. Sadinsky
Francyne Janiuk	Sarah Lovell
George Biro	Sister Pauline Lally
Jamie Johnston	Stephen Fox
Jennifer Payne-Oddie	Tanea Fortin
Jennifer Zuiderveen	Tara Kainer
Jim Stevens	Trish Crawford
John Palmer	
Kathy Burke	

Plan Input

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Jennifer Payne Oddie
Jim Docherty
John Osborne
Linda Stevens
Lynn Clark
Scott Runte

United Way thanks all those listed above as well as those who may not mentioned here, but who provided valuable input and guidance throughout the process.

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