

14th  
EDITION

2019

# Housing is Fundamental

A Report to the Community of Peterborough



United Way  
Peterborough & District

# Community of Contrasts

A well-provided-for child happily indulges in natural, carefree innocence – a bright future might be imagined. Contrast the child with chronic angst borne of insufficiency – an angst that may find its eventual expression in some inappropriate and consequential place.

Poverty often establishes its roots early and can persist to overshadow an entire lifespan. Being real, pervasive and punishing when it's lived, it's easily dismissed by the unaffected who repress or deny its truth.

Housing Is Fundamental 2019 will once again survey housing indicators within Peterborough (City and County) especially as they impact on low-income households. Additionally, it will attempt this probe in the context of widening social and economic disenfranchisement. Housing is one of the social determinants of health. The cost of shelter in the perspective of income and the condition of housing are significant indicators of poverty.

PAUL ARMSTRONG

## Designing the Future..... What's Needed?

An early-intervention, eviction-prevention protocol (see EPIC in this document)



Budgeted additional city and county tax dollars for renter affordability



A municipal poverty reduction strategy (City and County)



Increased funding for housing stability



Increased stock of community (social) housing especially seniors' units and supportive housing



An Official Plan that provides a vision and directions committed to housing affordability for renters and owners



↑ vacancy rate moved to **1.5%** as growth of rental supply outpaced demand

↑ average annual rent increase was **7.1%**; (fastest rate of growth since CMHC started collecting rent data); (2.8% annual increase in 2017) (see Rent Increases in this document)

↑ overall average rent **\$1,027** monthly

↑ 154 units added overall; a **2.6%** increase in units (highest increase since 2007)

↑ **higher rents** in new-build and newly-renovated units brought rents up especially in **1 and 2 bedroom** apartments

↑ **new municipal policy** allowing secondary suites has the potential to increase supply

↑ **international students** increased by **60.1%** in August 2018 adding to demand for rental units

↑ **employment increased** in age **15 – 24** group supporting formation of new households

↓ **employment decreased** in age **25 – 44** group – a deterrent to home purchasing

↑ **home prices increased** – a deterrent to renters wanting to buy

↑ **growing senior population** created rental demand (probability of moving to homeownership diminishes as people age) (see Demographic Notes below)

↓ weaker ownership demand – **18% drop** in home sales

↓ average weekly earning declined by **0.9%**

↑ rent controls do not apply upon turnover – increased potential for **higher rent**

↑ **turnover rate** was **17.8%** in October, higher than Ontario rate of **14.9%**

# Rental Market Highlights

Peterborough Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) 2018



## DEMOGRAPHIC NOTES

Every third person in this region was older than 55. Every fourth person in this region was older than 60.

### Homeownership 2017-2018

13.5% increase in mortgage carrying cost

### Rental 2017-2018

7.1% increase in average rent

### Result

Gap between owning and renting has widened again this year.

**COMMENTARY:** Renter households are stuck not just in terms of being unable to shift into home ownership but also moving into different rental housing.

**COMMENTARY:** Locally, increases in rents for two-bedroom units (9.0%) exceeded the national average increase of 3.5% for a two-bedroom. Planned new rental units in Peterborough should bring some relief to high demand in the rental market.

**SOURCE:** Rental Market Report, Peterborough CMA, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) October 2018

# Do You Know Your Shelter-to-Income-Ratio, (STIR)?

Your shelter costs represent a percentage of your total (before-tax) income. (Example: annual rent \$12,000 with annual income of \$30,000 = 40%)

## Renter Households Spending

More than **30%** of INCOME = **52.5%** or **7,691** households  
(Core Housing Need)

More than **50%** of INCOME = **23.4%** or **3,430** households  
(Severe Core Housing Need)

Nearly half of Canadian renter households are spending more than the recommended 30 per cent of their income on housing while nearly one in five are spending more than 50 per cent of their income on housing, putting a growing number of families and individuals at a crisis level and at risk of homelessness.

Renter household statistics in the Peterborough CMA exceed National averages. (2018 Canadian Rental Housing Index)



## Housing Expenditures

(Within the Social Services Budget 2019)

**100%** TOTAL: **\$16,139,120**

Non-Profit and Native Housing Providers

**44.2%** \$7,140,000

Peterborough Housing Corp.

**23.2%** \$3,750,000

Rent Supplement Program

**13.5%** \$2,178,250

Special Program Funding "Investment in Affordable Housing" program

**9.6%** \$1,547,000

Housing Administration

**5.9%** \$945,370

Housing Resource Centre

**1.9%** \$308,000

Housing Access Peterborough

**0.9%** \$145,500

Special Program Funding "DOOR" program

**0.8%** \$125,000

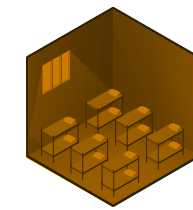
SOURCE: 2019 Social Services Draft Budget, Peterborough Social Services

## O.W. and O.D.S.P. Caseload City & County of Peterborough

Ontario Works (O.W.) **3,599\***  
-4.8% from 2017

Ontario Disability Support Program (O.D.S.P.) **5,484\***  
-0.7% from 2017

2018 (Dec.)



## Peterborough Emergency Shelter Costs

**2018**

Number of bed days

**BROCK MISSION**  
**14,049**  
13,011(2017)

**CAMERON HOUSE**  
**3,793**  
3,605(2017)

**YOUTH & FAMILY EMERGENCY SHELTER**  
**7,821**  
8,453(2017)

**TOTALS**  
**25,663**  
25,069(2017)

**DIFFERENCE FROM 2017**

**2.4% Increase**

Base Funding

**\$975,580**  
\$927,276(2017)

**\$457,600**  
\$404,467(2017)

**\$1,433,180**  
\$1,331,743(2017)

**7.6% Increase**

NOTES: The Brock Mission and Cameron House are operated by one entity or service provider. SOURCE: Social Services Department, City of Peterborough, April 2019

## Average Number Sheltered Per Night

Totals

Peterborough Emergency Shelters

Warming Room

**47**

**57**

**57**

**61**

**63**

**65**

**68.7**

**103.3**

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Custom Calculations

NOTE: 2018 was the first year that the Warming Room was open 12 months of the year. It experienced high usage, with 52% of emergency shelter users\* having stayed there at least once. \*Unique individuals includes those seen at Brock Mission, Cameron House, YES Shelter For Youth and Families and Warming Room. Social Services Department, City of Peterborough, April 2019.

## Renting 56.8% Cheaper than Emergency Shelter in Peterborough

**ONE PERSON**

**Emergency Shelter**

**Bachelor Apartment**

Monthly

\$1,698.77

\$734.00

Annually

\$20,385.25

\$8,808.00

**Savings by Renting**

**\$964.77**

**\$11,577.25**

SOURCE: CMHC Rental Market Stats, Fall 2018; Social Services, City of Peterborough Emergency Shelter Stats and Custom Calculations  
NOTE: Regarding the savings noted above, the cost of supportive services that maintain individuals in their apartments must be considered.



On average **103.3** were housed in shelters each night in **2018**.  
**INDIVIDUALS**

(includes Brock Mission, Cameron House, Youth and Family Emergency Shelter and the Warming Room)

# Regional District of Peterborough

## RENTAL HEALTH CLASSIFICATION

Peterborough's overall rental condition is classified as "SEVERE".

(Classifications: Satisfactory, Moderate, Poor, Severe, Critical)

## NATIONAL RANKING

Peterborough ranks 273 of 284 localities nationwide.

(1 is best and 284 is worst)

## PROVINCIAL RANKING

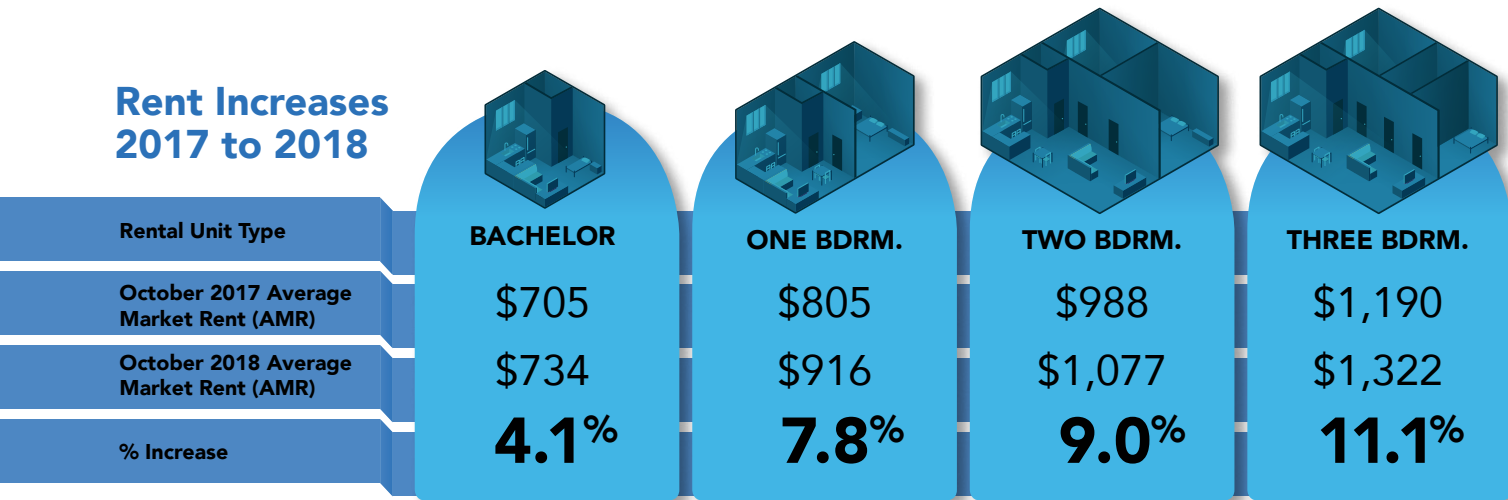
Peterborough ranks 39 of 49 Ontario Localities.

(1 is best and 49 is worst)

COMMENTARY: Significant rent increases were noted in the Peterborough CMA over one year (2017-2018). Since income increases have not kept pace with rent increases, upward pressure is placed on the 'core housing need rate'.

SOURCE: Canadian Rental Housing Index, [http://www.rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#affordability\\_cd](http://www.rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#affordability_cd)

## Rent Increases 2017 to 2018



INFLATION: (2017-2018) = 1.99% <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>

SOURCE: CMHC Rental Market Reports, Peterborough CMA, 2017, 2018

## Minimum Wage

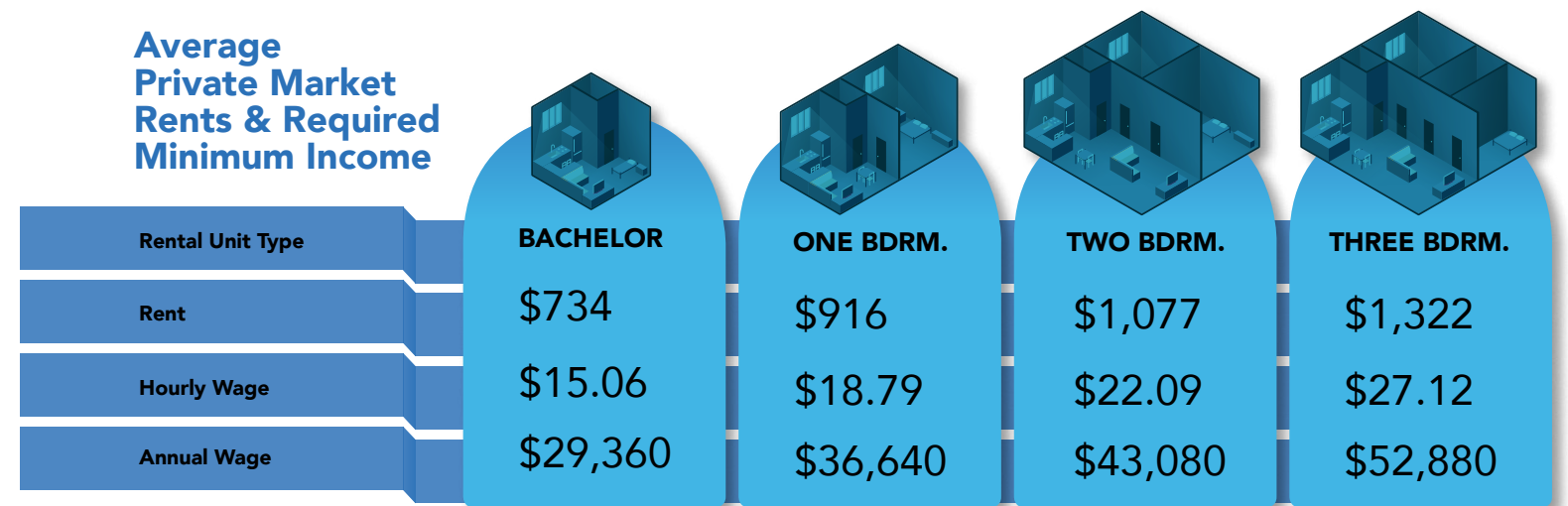
Per hour - \$14  
Annually - \$27,300  
(based on 1,950 hours = full year)

Affordable Rent  
**\$682.50**

NOTE: Most part-time workers do not work a full year.



## Average Private Market Rents & Required Minimum Income



SOURCE: Canada Mortgage and Housing Rental Market Report, FALL 2018 (Peterborough CMA) and Custom Calculations

Peterborough CMA - FALL 2018

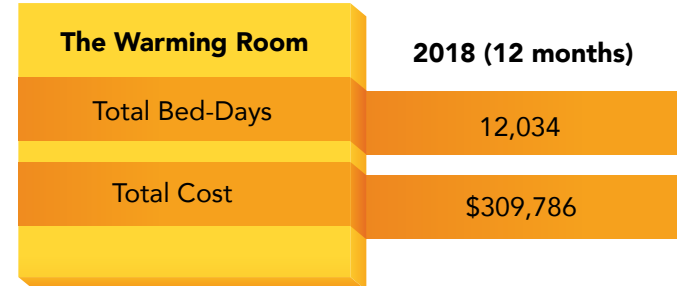
Market rents may or may not include heat and hydro.

Rents are 'affordable' (CMHC definition) when wages are at or above the numbers in the chart.

Rents are deemed affordable when they represent no more than 30% of the gross, combined household income before tax. (CMHC)

Hourly wage based on an individual working 37.5 hours weekly for a full year (1,950 hrs.)

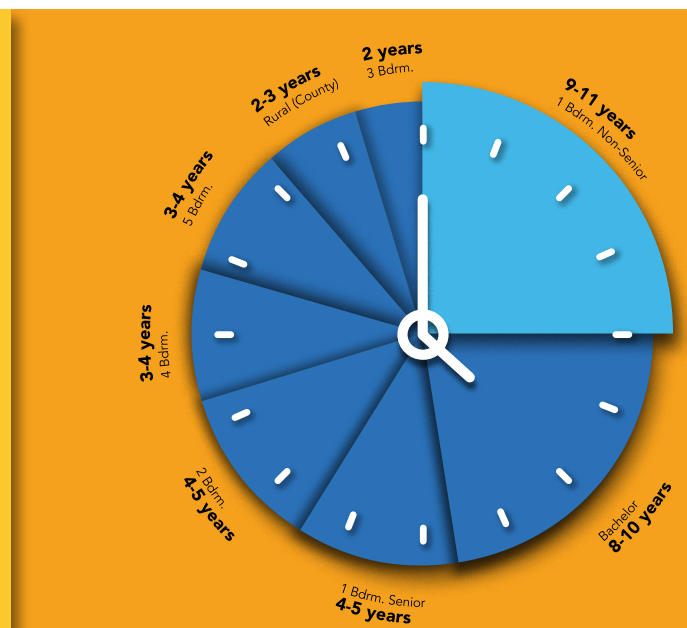
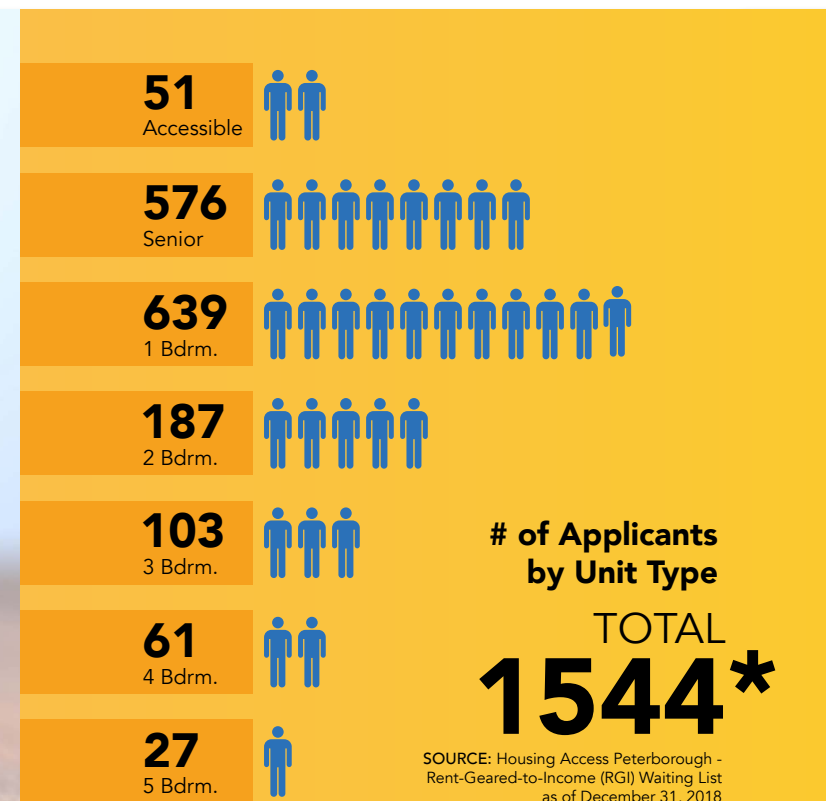
NOTE: Minimum wage in Ontario has been capped at \$14. per hour. A minimum wage earner cannot rent 'affordably' any apartment type in the Peterborough CMA.



SOURCE: Christian Harvey, Warming Room Community Ministries

COMMENTARY: The Warming Room is part of a larger picture of homelessness and emergency shelter requirements in Peterborough.

## Rent-Geared-To-Income (RGI) Wait List



## Unit Type/Expected Wait Time

COMMENTARY: There are almost as many applicants on the wait list as there are rent-geared-to-income units. (total RGI units in Peterborough City and County = 1600)

NOTE: Some applicants are on more than one unit-type list.  
SOURCE: <http://ptbohousingcorp.ca/index.php/hap-faq>

## Renter Households Within Canada

Did you know that Ontario ranks:

- **4th** in highest average rents
- **2nd** in spending more than **50%** of income on rent
- **1st** in spending more than **30%** of income on rent among the provinces and territories of Canada?

SOURCE: 2018 Canadian Rental Housing Index Backgrounder [www.rentalhousingindex.ca](http://www.rentalhousingindex.ca)

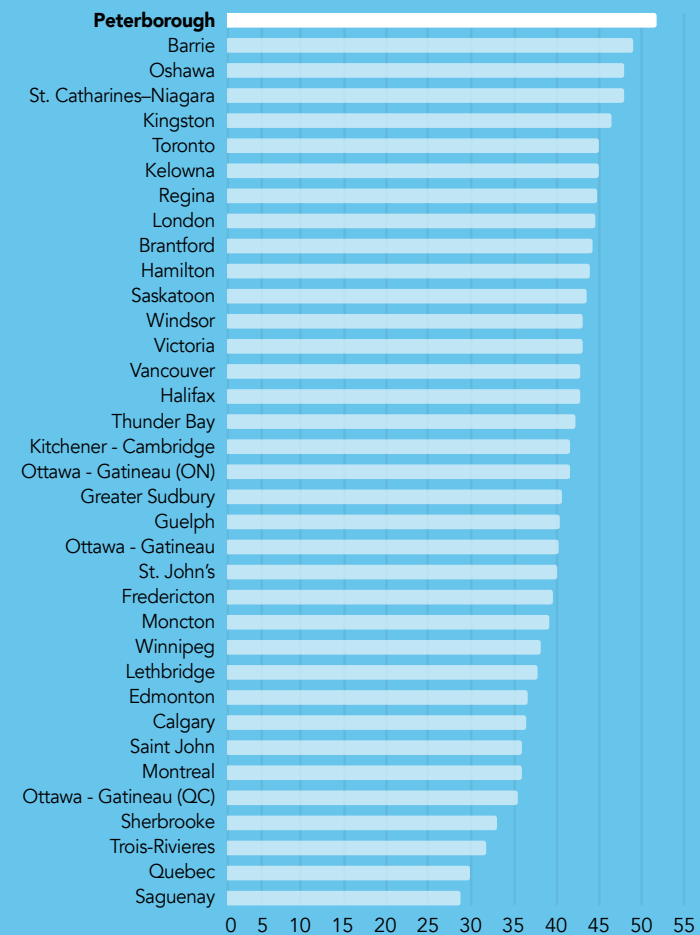
# 8 OF THE 10 ARE IN ONTARIO

metropolitan areas in Canada with the highest percentage of tenants paying unaffordable rents

In Peterborough, Barrie, Oshawa, St. Catharines - Niagara, Kingston, and Toronto close to or over half of renters have **unaffordable shelter costs**.

## PETERBOROUGH HAS THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE IN CANADA.

Percentage of renter households with unaffordable shelter costs



Based on 2016 Census data  
% Of Tenant Households Spending 30% Or More Of Income On Shelter Costs

[https://www.acto.ca/production/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/WhereWillWeLive\\_May2018\\_ACTO\\_Report.pdf](https://www.acto.ca/production/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/WhereWillWeLive_May2018_ACTO_Report.pdf)

# POVERTY:



## How big is poverty?

1 in 7 (or 4.9 million) people in Canada live in poverty.



## Is poverty expensive?

Poverty costs Canada between \$72 and \$84 billion annually. (additional healthcare demands, criminal justice system costs, social supports)



## Why is poverty growing?

- Employment opportunities are eroding.
- Government assistance in times of crisis has declined both in value and availability.
- Over the past 25 years Canada's population has increased while national investment in housing has decreased
- Unaffordable housing in Canada has become epidemic.



## Who's particularly vulnerable?

- Persons with disabilities (mental and physical) are twice as likely to live in poverty.
- 21% of single mothers in Canada raise their children while living in poverty.
- 7% of single fathers raise their children in poverty.
- Women who work full-time earn about 72 cents for every dollar earned by men.
- Women parenting on their own enter shelters at twice the rate of two-parent families.
- 1 in 2 Status First Nations children live in poverty.
- 1 in 5 racialized families live in poverty in Canada.
- 1 in 20 non-racialized families live in poverty.
- All homeless persons live in poverty.



## Conclusion:

With a large portion of our population unable to afford the basic necessities of life, poverty must be seen as a structural, systemic problem requiring structural and systemic solutions. The incidence of poverty will grow as people fail to keep pace with the cost-of-living.



## Dying in Poverty

Do the vulnerable die with dignity?

Homeless and barely-housed people continue to die at an alarming rate, at half the age of the average Canadian. Prohibitive access to end-of-life care assures the suffering and trauma of the impoverished as they approach death.

SOURCE: TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE: How we fail vulnerable Canadians as they die and what to do about it, Kelli I. Stajduhar, Ashley Mollison. University of Victoria, Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health <https://www.uvic.ca/research/groups/peol/assets/docs/too-little-too-late.pdf>



## Denial Is Futile

Changes in the social-political economy (e.g. precarious employment, intelligent technology) amplify poverty.



## Living House-Poor

When individuals and households cannot afford the necessities of life, we call it 'poverty'. When these necessities are not attainable because of housing costs, we speak of 'housing-induced' poverty.

COMMENTARY: Despite rent controls, average market rents continue to increase, thus intensifying the affordability crisis. See "Reno-viction" in this document.



## Federal Government Introducing Anti-Poverty Legislation

New legislation will implement Canada's first-ever official poverty line. The proposed official poverty line will be the Market Basket Measure (MBM) which will be adjusted to the cost of living in 50 communities across Canada. MBM is the cost of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families require to meet basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living.

SOURCE: [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/11/02/canada-poverty-line\\_a\\_23578436/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/11/02/canada-poverty-line_a_23578436/)  
(See: "Government Targets Poverty Reduction" in this document.)



## National Poverty Picture

Census Family Low Income Measure (after-tax)



Number of Persons in Poverty

# 5.8 million

# 16.8%

 Prevalence of Poverty

NOTE: The new Census Family Low Income Measure (after tax) (CFLIM-AT) differs from the Low Income Measure (after tax) in the use of a different method for calculating adjusted family size and median income. This leads to higher CFLIM thresholds and in turn higher rates of poverty compared to the LIM-AT.

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/dt-td/Rp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=110266&PRID=10&PTYPE=109445&S=0&SHOWALL=0&S UB=999&Temporal=2016,2017&THEME=119&VID=0&VNAMEF=&VNAMEF>

SEE: Poverty Trends 2018, Citizens for Public Justice <https://cpj.ca/wp-content/uploads/Poverty-Trends-Report-2018.pdf>

COMMENTARY: This is a country rich in natural and human resources, rich in technology and education, rich in health standards. But this affluence both disguises and contradicts the existence of poverty. We understand the changes and trends that fuel poverty, but are seemingly reluctant to redress them.

All Canadians are entitled to minimal standards of living that ensure health and opportunity.

## Low-Income Renter Realities District of Peterborough

3,430 renters spent more than half of their total household incomes on rent plus utilities ('severe core housing need').

A two-bedroom renter with annual income under \$20,307 would need (on average) 158% of current income to rent affordably.

Two-bedroom renters with incomes below \$20,307 spend (on average) 77% of total income on rent and utilities.

SOURCE: Statistics released in 2018 by Canadian Rental Housing Index based on 2016 Census data. [http://www.rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#affordability\\_cd](http://www.rentalhousingindex.ca/en/#affordability_cd)

## Low Income According to the Low Income Measure, After Tax (LIM-AT)

Peterborough CMA – 2016 Census Metropolitan Area

Census Year	2011	2016
In Low Income Status	15,015	17,900
Percent	13.1%	15.3%
Population Base	114,810	117,355

Statistics Canada. 2013. Peterborough, CMA, Ontario (Code 529) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 29, 2019).

Statistics Canada. 2017. Peterborough [Census metropolitan area], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 29, 2019).

COMMENTARY: The Peterborough CMA has witnessed a growth in low-income prevalence both in actual number of persons and percentage of population.

## Income-Households Below \$30,000 Renter Households in Core Housing Need (# of households)

2016 Census Data	Peterborough City	Peterborough CMA
Households Below \$30,000 Before-Tax ('affordable' rent = \$750 or less)	7,880	9,735
Renter Households in Core housing Need Before-Tax	7,046	7,754

"Affordable" = spending no more than 30% of household income on rent and utilities (CMHC)

9,735 households in the Peterborough CMA cannot 'afford' the current average market rent of \$1,027.

## The "Gig" Economy: reduced labour costs, job insecurity, labour competition, worker displacement

Professional jobs are now more likely to be packaged as "projects" and contracted-out at much lower costs. Short-term contract jobs are replacing traditional permanent (full-time) jobs. Now a recent study from the Bank of Montreal shows that the country's gig economy is steadily growing—and showing no signs of stopping any time soon.

READ MORE AT: [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/21/basic-income-would-take-canada-one-huge-step-toward-gender-equality\\_a\\_23506497/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/21/basic-income-would-take-canada-one-huge-step-toward-gender-equality_a_23506497/)  
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/rob-commentary/the-gig-economy-is-here-and-we-arent-ready/article36678505/>

COMMENTARY: Automation is changing the way work is done leading to competition and job insecurity. Existing social programs do not address income reduction.

## Behind the Job Losses and Income Decline (Global Dynamics Impact Peterborough)

".....global challenges ..... have contributed to a world of inequality, poverty, and joblessness..... The greatest threat to social and political stability....lies in the rise of automation, which will continue to eliminate jobs,..... To avoid a social and political catastrophe, we will have to find ways of putting real money into the pockets of those who have no work."

Gwynne Dyer, Growing Pains The future of democracy (and work), 2018

SOURCE: [https://books.google.ca/books/about/Growing\\_Pains.html?id=oh5MDwAAQBAJ&source=kp\\_cover&redir\\_esc=y](https://books.google.ca/books/about/Growing_Pains.html?id=oh5MDwAAQBAJ&source=kp_cover&redir_esc=y)

READ: "New report shows average Ontario family facing slowest income growth in Canada", Marieke Walsh, January 31, 2019 <https://ipolitics.ca/2019/01/31/new-report-shows-the-average-ontario-family-facing-slowest-income-growth-in-canada/>

COMMENTARY: Base-line income (i.e. a basic income security) will maintain those without work and those income-persons below the base-line (poverty-line).

## Why A Canadian Basic Income Is Essential

Basic income is not just about welfare reform. It's also about a shrinking middle-class where there's a critical need for a steady income. (See "The Gig Economy" in this document)

The current cost of addressing poverty can significantly subsidize the cost of a basic income which will, in turn, foster consumer spending and economic growth.

SOURCE: Evelyn L. Forget, The Globe and Mail, October 18, 2018 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/commentary/article-why-a-canadian-basic-income-is-inevitable/>

Evelyn L Forget is the author of Basic Income For Canadians: The Key to a Healthier, Happier, More Secure Life for All. She is a health economist at the University of Manitoba and a contributor with EvidenceNetwork.ca based at the University of Winnipeg.

Canadians already benefit from some forms of basic income. (e.g. the Canada Child Benefit and the Guaranteed Income Supplement)

## National Housing Strategy (NHS) Recognizes Right to Housing; Government's Unrealized Obligations Persist

Giving the 'right to housing' meaning will require:

- The development of non-market housing (social housing)
- The expansion of income supports

if housing affordability is to be realized on a scale consistent with the overwhelming national shortfall.

SEE: From housing market to human right: A view from Metro Vancouver, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC Office, May 28, 2018 <https://www.policynote.ca/from-housing-market-to-human-right-a-view-from-metro-vancouver/>

## Basic Income Would Take Canada One Huge Step Toward Gender Equality

READ MORE AT: [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/21/basic-income-would-take-canada-one-huge-step-toward-gender-equality\\_a\\_23506497/](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/21/basic-income-would-take-canada-one-huge-step-toward-gender-equality_a_23506497/)

## Changes to Rent Controls

Control the market and developers leave. Unfettered rental markets make rents competitive, but will they be affordable?

- New units occupied after November 15, 2018 – no legal rent increase limit after one year and each year thereafter
- Units occupied before November 15, 2018 will keep the past control mechanism

Since 1990, Ontario has built:

- 1,075,779 homeownership units
- 410,562 condo units
- 143,091 purpose-built rental apartments

READ MORE AT: <http://www.postcity.com/Eat-Shop-Do/Do/December-2018/Controlling-rent-by-ending-rent-control-in-Ontario/>  
<https://www.acto.ca/ontario-government-goes-back-to-failed-rent-control-policy/>

COMMENTARY: Welcome to a new and poorer society. We are witnessing the growth of low-income households who can no longer survive, even modestly, in an evolving economy of higher prices that outpace their shrinking incomes. With or without rent controls, rents will continue to be unaffordable to half (or more) of renter households simply because their incomes are disproportionately low in respect of real market costs. Even 'competitive rents' will remain unaffordable to low-income households.

The poor cannot live affordably in the present economy. When prices are set by those who can pay, the poor have little influence in markets.

## Long-Term-Care Needs

Prior to five years ago, long-term care homes accommodated a mix of residents with low to very high care needs. Now only people with high or very high care needs are eligible.

In the Central East Local Health Integration Network (CE-LHIN) area:

- just over 7,000 are on the long-stay wait list
- wait time is just over 250 days
- total system demand, including those occupying or waiting for long-stay beds, is 16,500
- long-stay beds currently occupied is 9,514

SOURCE: Ontario Long Term Care Association <https://www.oltca.com/OLTCA/Documents/SectorDashboards/CE.pdf>

THE RESULT: Ontario seniors are entering long-term care homes when they are older, frailer, and in need of more medical and personal care than ever before.

## Peterborough is Trying to End Homelessness

THE TOOLS:

- a By-Name List – a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in a community
- a Coordinated Access System – a process by which people experiencing homelessness access housing and services

THE GOAL:

- "Functional Zero" - three or fewer people experiencing chronic homelessness over three months.

FOR MORE DETAILS: <http://sydenhamcurrent.ca/2019/03/08/built-for-zero-homelessness-initiative/>  
<https://bfzcanada.ca>

The City of Peterborough is undergoing a comprehensive review of its Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan.

## Eviction Prevention

The Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) pilot program helps low-income individuals and families at-risk of eviction by providing financial supports, landlord mediation, and rapid short-term case management. EPIC was a one-year (March 2017) pilot project that provided wraparound eviction prevention services in order to help tenants facing imminent risk of eviction.

## IS THE EPIC PROGRAM EFFECTIVE

97 CLIENTS

90%  
STABILIZED IN  
THEIR HOUSING

8%  
REHOUSED

2%  
EXITED INTO  
HOMELESSNESS

SOURCE: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness <https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/eviction-prevention-community-epic-pilot-program-evaluation>

NOTE: The City of Toronto selected the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) to evaluate the EPIC pilot program.

COMMENTARY: Eviction prevention will always have a significant cost-savings effect.

## Reno-viction

Tenant is evicted during renovations. Upon completion, rent goes up prohibiting reoccupation by the tenant. Reno-viction is a contributing factor in escalating free market rent levels.

## This is the CE-LHIN



SOURCE: <https://www.centraleasthealthline.ca/listServicesDetailed.aspx?id=10665&region=Peterborough>

## Are We Prepared to House Growing Numbers of Seniors?

In a 2015 report, Future Care for Canadian Seniors: A Status Quo Forecast, the Conference Board of Canada estimated that by 2026 over 2.4 million Canadians age 65 and over will require paid and unpaid continuing care support — up 71 per cent from 2011. By 2046, this number will reach nearly 3.3 million.

SOURCE: We're So Far Behind: Canada Unprepared for Housing Needs of Rising Senior Population, CBC <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/seniors-canadian-census-aging-home-care-1.4097293>

COMMENTARY: This is a matter of significant concern in our area where 22% of the population is 65 years or older. Locally, we have an Age-Friendly Plan. Discover more at: <https://www.peterborough.ca/en/city-hall/resources/Documents/Age-friendly-Peterborough.pdf>

# Unspeakable Truths:

- Recent changes to OW and ODSP will remove one billion dollars annually from the most vulnerable Ontarians.
- Cancelling the scheduled \$15 minimum wage will cement the vulnerability of Ontario's "working poor".
- Wittingly or otherwise, governments can contribute to poverty.
- Shrinking (inflation-adjusted) incomes are symptomatic of larger, persistent shifts in the social-economy.

## Fixing the Equation

With the ever increasing growth in precarious employment, the growing gap between those of us with means and those with little, the pressure for affordable housing is increasing with many squeezed out of the market, and indeed a safe, affordable home.

When we reflect on what it means to live in a healthy community one would hope that a shared vision includes safe, affordable housing for all, opportunities to work and give back, and recreation. Yet today, right now the issue of homelessness is front and centre with the emergence of tent city in Peterborough. Furthermore an increasing number of people spend more than 50% of incomes on housing and are one or two paycheques away from losing their homes.

Our system is under strain to serve those who for reasons of mental or physical health, addictions, or life circumstances find themselves without shelter and support. Are we appalled or numb to this situation? Imagine if we believed that housing was a human right, that safe, affordable, where-needed supportive housing was the birthright for all and if we had both the public and political will to fulfill that yearning.

Housing is Fundamental is in its 14th year, and we will continue to report back to the community on the condition of housing in Peterborough. In this, an election year, we urge people to use this report to question politicians on their commitment to end, once and for all, homelessness.

All of us have value and dignity, gifts and dreams which are only enhanced by having a place to call home.

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