

Housing Needs and Supply Study

*Presentation to
District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board*

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in collaboration with



Overview of study

The Housing Needs and Supply Study (HNSS) undertook robust and detailed research and analysis on the current housing supply and demand throughout the communities that make up the District of Nipissing. The needs across the entire housing continuum, both market and non-market housing, were assessed and the HNSS puts forward a vision, strategies, and actions for the DNSSAB to implement to address the housing needs and gaps in the District.

STUDY PURPOSE

To a HNSS by undertaking detailed research and analysis on:

- current **housing supply and demand**;
- determining **needs and gaps** across the entire housing continuum; and
- making recommendations **for action**.

GOALS OF STUDY

To inform:

- **housing policy and related programs**;
- **investment in residential development**; and
- other steps required to make **meaningful change** in addressing current and emerging **housing needs** in Nipissing.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

In-depth quantitative analysis along with community engagement. Over **800** community, industry, and housing system participants took part in one or more components of this initiative.

Inputs to this strategy included:



Comprehensive **Community and Economic Profiles** for each municipality based on Statistics Canada and municipal data



Widespread **engagement with the local community and municipalities** through focus groups (8) across Nipissing District (41 participants), along with over 700 respondents to a resident survey to determine needs and explore opportunities



Regular **project update and strategy development** meetings with the DNSSAB

Summary of needs and opportunities

THEMES		KEY INSIGHTS/GAPS
<p>FOR PEOPLE</p> 	<p>These themes are at the person or household level. They impact how residents of Nipissing access the types of housing that work for them.</p>	<p>Address social determinants of health</p> <p>Ensure everyone has a home they can afford</p> <p>Lack of affordable housing for younger households and families</p> <p>Need for supports and suitable housing for seniors to age in place</p> <p>Need for supports specific to the Indigenous community</p>
<p>FOR HOUSING</p> 	<p>These are themes related to the housing (stock or supply) available to residents of Nipissing.</p>	<p>Provide a diversity of housing options for all stages of life, including non-market housing, affordable housing, rental housing, and smaller housing options</p> <p>Improve and rehabilitate aging housing stock</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance, upkeep, and overall housing quality are key concerns</p> <p>Increase supportive housing options</p> <p>Address provision of 'worker housing' to allow for economic development</p> <p>Infrastructure limitations and financial barriers are hindering development opportunities</p>
<p>FOR THE SYSTEM</p> 	<p>These themes are at the system level. They impact how residents of Nipissing interact with housing systems and the role of the DNSSAB in these systems.</p>	<p>Desire for a holistic, equitable and inclusive housing system that is easy to navigate</p> <p>Perceived lack of urgency, innovation, and leadership energy around housing</p> <p>DNSSAB should focus on system leadership and be clear on DNSSAB's role</p> <p>Build and repair relationships and trust within the community, including Indigenous community</p> <p>Focus on collaboration and partnerships; spread resources throughout the district</p>

The vision

As part of the District's 2014 Housing and Homelessness Plan, a vision and mission for how the District approaches housing were created. These are still relevant today.

2014 Vision: *Acceptable, safe and affordable housing that meets the needs of citizens in Nipissing District*

2014 Mission: *Through leadership, integration and collaboration, our communities create housing options and solutions to prevent homelessness and help citizens retain a home in Nipissing District*

Through the quantitative and qualitative analysis undertaken as part of this study, vision statements for people, housing, and the system emerged that support and expand on the DNSSAB's 2014 vision for housing in the District:

FOR PEOPLE

People feel..

Safe and supported, treated equitably, are able to remain in their communities if they want to do so

FOR HOUSING

Housing that...

Provides options to meet a diversity of needs through all stages of life and is:

affordable, appropriate, adequate, accessible, available, safe, secure, and healthy for all Nipissing residents.

FOR THE SYSTEM

A system that..

Is equitable, inclusive, takes a holistic approach and is easy to navigate

And where government..

Clarifies their role, takes collective action to reduce barriers to access, and collaborates/undertakes partnerships/coordinates to connect residents with resources and services

The strategies

FOR PEOPLE

Strategy 1 Provide services and supports to nurture safe, healthy and connected communities for those of all lived experiences.

FOR HOUSING

Strategy 2 Provide diverse housing forms/options throughout Nipissing for all stages of life

Strategy 3 Increase the provision of purpose-built rental and affordable housing options across Nipissing.

Strategy 4 Increase the provision non-market housing options for residents along the housing continuum, including Urban Indigenous populations.

Strategy 5 Maintain the existing housing stock through supports to improve and rehabilitate housing.

FOR THE SYSTEM

Strategy 6 Create a better coordinated system of housing and supports.

Strategy 7 Take the lead in advocating for investment and support for housing in Nipissing..

Strategy 1

FOR PEOPLE

Provide services and supports to nurture safe, healthy and connected communities for those of all lived experiences.

Stakeholders identified the need for a **housing-first approach** that recognizes the urgent need to support the approximately 300 unhoused residents and 3,590 households in core housing need in Nipissing.

Feedback through consultations highlighted the need for the DNSSAB to work with municipal, Indigenous, private sector, and community partners to **increase education and improve the coordination of housing services and wrap around supports** to support health and safety for all residents in Nipissing communities.

Goal

To utilize a housing first approach to provide adequate and appropriate services and supports that address range of needs in Nipissing District.

Ensure that housing is secure and maintained at every stage of life, and safety and health is prioritized.

Create supports for landlords to increase their capacity and help ensure those tenants who are currently housed can maintain their health and housing.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Nipissing District is taking a housing first approach with positive results
- Residents say that they feel safer and more connected in their local communities
- New supportive housing is being created with wrap-around services being delivered
- More homes have high speed internet access across the region
- Landlords feel supported and stay in the rental market (positive feedback).

Strategy 2

FOR HOUSING

Provide diverse housing forms/options throughout Nipissing for all stages of life.

Households at a variety of life stages in Nipissing are in need of supports and diverse and affordable housing options to address their specific needs.

As the population across Nipissing ages, **senior households were more likely to be facing housing affordability issues** relative to other age cohorts (20.2%). While homeownership is more common among this age cohort, many of these households may find housing costs unaffordable or lack appropriate supports to age-in-place.

Young households, maintained by those aged 25 and younger, **were the most likely to be considered low-income** in Nipissing (48.3%). Young households, which have decreased in number in recent years (-2.9%), **are moving away due a lack of affordable housing options** in their communities, demonstrating a need for appropriate housing across the District to retain younger households.

Goal

To create housing affordable and appropriate for young people to form households within their communities.

To provide opportunities for older populations to age-in-place, including smaller housing options, co-housing opportunities, and supports to upgrade accessibility of the existing stock.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Increased proportion of housing stock are higher density/diverse housing types
- Increased number of younger households staying/coming to the District
- Increased number of seniors able to afford homes in their communities

Strategy 3

FOR HOUSING

Increase the provision of purpose-built rental and affordable housing options across Nipissing.

The housing stock across Nipissing District has **historically been large and expensive dwellings**. In recent years, the **growth of smaller households** (+4.8%) has exceeded that of larger households (+0.0%). The **mismatch of housing supply and growing demand** has led to unaffordable housing conditions throughout Nipissing, particularly for smaller households.

The **lack of new purpose-built rental options** have caused the rental market to tighten, making purpose-built rental housing **more unaffordable and unavailable to renters**. In 2021, 20.8% of renter households in Nipissing were in core housing need and 36.1% were facing affordability issues.

Goal

To create more purpose-built rental and affordable housing options throughout Nipissing.

To provide secure tenure and affordable housing costs that match the housing demands in communities across the District.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Increased primary rental market universe across communities in Nipissing.
- Increased affordable housing options across Nipissing.
- Housing affordability indicators show a more affordable housing market.

Strategy 4

FOR HOUSING

Increase the provision non-market housing options for residents along the housing continuum, including Urban Indigenous populations.

The unaffordability of housing in Nipissing has had impacts across the housing continuum.

Homelessness in Nipissing has increased in recent years as access to emergency shelters and transitional housing has not kept pace with the increased demand. **Many communities in Nipissing do not have the non-market housing supply needed to support residents in need of emergency housing or deeply affordable housing.**

Nipissing District has a notable Urban Indigenous population, especially relative to the rest of the province. **Indigenous populations in the District were more likely to be low-income, less likely to own homes, and more likely to experience homelessness.**

Goal

To create non-market housing options for those at-risk of homelessness, those in need of supportive housing options, and low-income households.

To create culturally-informed solutions to end homelessness for Indigenous populations.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Increased provision of non-market housing in communities across Nipissing.
- Decrease in homelessness across Nipissing.
- Increase availability of culturally-appropriate non-market housing for Urban Indigenous populations.

Strategy 5

FOR HOUSING

Maintain the existing housing stock through supports to improve and rehabilitate housing.

In 2021, municipalities in the DNSSAB reported a **higher rate of inadequate housing** than province-wide rates. The share of households reporting the need for major repairs to their homes was 7.8%, higher than the Ontario proportion of 5.7%.

The need for **major repairs was more prevalent in the more rural communities** of the DNSSAB, where the rates of inadequate housing ranged from 8-15% of the stock.

This was particularly true of households in core housing need - a significant proportion of these households did not meet the standard for adequate housing. This suggests a need for programs and supports to rehabilitate the aging housing stock across the DNSSAB.

Goal

Provide supports to incentivize the rehabilitation of an aging housing stock, particularly in more rural communities in Nipissing.

Improve the quality of the housing stock for low-income households.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Decreased level of inadequate housing throughout urban and rural communities in Nipissing.
- Existing stock is maximized through rehabilitation and additional density.
- Community-based solutions are used to repair and improve existing stock of housing.

Strategy 6

FOR THE SYSTEM

Create a better coordinated system of housing and supports.

To better support the health, safety and housing goals of all residents of Nipissing District, residents and stakeholders identified a need for a centralized and easy to navigate access system to connect residents with housing and other services that they need. This will help to build trust and connection across the housing system in Nipissing District.

It was also identified through consultations that there is a need to connect housing and economic development to encourage job creation alongside the creation of housing for existing residents and potential new employers and employees interested in coming to Nipissing.

Residents and stakeholders also identified a need for private sector and secondary market landlords to learn how best to support tenants as housing providers.

Goal

To remove systemic barriers and obstacles to housing that are present in the system and help tenants maintain housing.

To streamline housing access for those who are in most urgent need.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- Time to find adequate, appropriate and affordable housing is improved
- Employers are able to find or create housing opportunities for staff in the short-term
- Evictions due to complex needs are reduced

Strategy 7

FOR THE SYSTEM

Take the lead in advocating for investment and support for housing in Nipissing.

The DNSSAB currently has limited staff devoted to housing in Nipissing District, which makes clarifying the role of the DNSSAB and identifying partnerships critical to achieving its housing goals.

Feedback from consultations identified the need to advocate to all levels of government to build local, provincial, and national partnerships to explore and pursue housing solutions for Nipissing residents that will reinforce health and safety for everyone in Nipissing's communities.

As part of this strategy, areas where process can be streamlined to reduce red tape and improve service delivery should be identified, as well as areas where shared knowledge and resources can benefit the community and stimulate innovation in housing.

Goal

To clarify the role of DNSSAB in housing in the district.

To establish itself as a trusted partner and advocate across various levels of government and the local housing system in Nipissing District.

To enable affordable housing by reducing red tape, identifying inefficiencies and sharing resources to reduce delays and spur the creation of new homes in Nipissing District.

Success Criteria

We know we are on the right track if...

- The system is engaged, collaborative, and knowledge is being shared with positive effect
- Indigenous leaders and organizations feel included as valuable collaborators
- New pilots and solutions are being created and tested to build new housing solutions in Nipissing

Next steps

As noted in the report, the DNSSAB's vision from 2014 to provide 'acceptable, safe and affordable housing that meets the needs of its citizens' is still relevant today. Over the past 10 years, many of the housing-related needs and gaps in Nipissing have either remained consistent or increased in terms of urgency to address.

Building on work that has been undertaken to address housing needs over the past few years, this Housing Needs and Supply Study (HNSS) puts forth a number of strategies, initiatives and actions that the DNSSAB can implement to make significant progress in addressing the housing needs and gaps across the District and create acceptable, safe and affordable housing for its residents.

The strategies, success criteria, and actions will require a collaborative approach, as they acknowledge the role of the DNSSAB in supporting the development of a wide range of housing options through coordinating efforts between the other levels of government that are responsible for housing, as well as the community, community agencies, and the private sector to effect positive change.

In terms of next steps, it is recommended that the DNSSAB create a **roadmap for implementation** of the strategies and actions provided in this study that can change and adapt as new opportunities and challenges arise, so that Nipissing can ultimately achieve its desired future outcomes for the housing system.

The roadmap should include a timeframe for implementation of the strategies/actions, prioritization of actions based on need, and identification of the resources needed for each action. A monitoring and evaluation approach should also be a part of the roadmap, so that the District can measure progress of the actions and intended outcomes, and adapt the strategies/actions as needed to ensure housing needs and gaps are being addressed.

Thank you!



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