



Brightening Lives Building Community



Now, more than ever, our community needs affordable housing

Like many communities across Canada, St. Thomas is facing a housing crisis with a lack of safe and affordable housing options. Rental prices have skyrocketed.

The waitlist for subsidized housing is over 1100 households translating to a 5-10 year wait.

On any given night 100 youth experience homelessness in St. Thomas-Elgin.

One in five people in St. Thomas-Elgin experience poverty. Every day there are individuals that are faced with the unthinkable choice between buying food or paying for rent. Can you imagine being a parent having to make this choice?

Often women and youth experience violence because they don't have a safe and affordable place to live.

As a #St.ThomasProud resident, you'll agree that we must do more.

That's why we are asking for your support as we launch something extraordinary: a community that provides affordable housing, life stabilization supports, and a welcoming place for youth, women, families and men.

- ▶ The new YWCA affordable housing community is more than just housing, it's a new beginning.
- ▶ In 2021 the YWCA housed **78** people. With Project Tiny Hope we can nearly double that.
- ▶ In 2021 **55** youth & **134** adults experienced homelessness during 2021 as identified on our community By Names List.

Will you join us in brightening lives?

Courtney's Story

Courtney was removed from home at the age of 12. The next several years she moved from place to place - distant relatives, foster placements and group homes. At the age of 18, Courtney again found herself in need of somewhere to lay her head. Feelings of abandonment, guilt, grief, self harm and disappointment consumed the majority of her thoughts. Courtney was connected to the YWCA and accepted a room at Harmony House. Courtney was again faced with a new place. Courtney spent the first a few hours in her room wondering what awaited her on the other side of her bedroom door, fearing the unknown and the unwanted. A history of trauma, abuse, depression and anxiety will do this to anyone. There was a quiet knock on her door. In that moment she would be opening the door to one of her new best friends, standing on the side of the door holding a blizzard from Dairy Queen.

The two roommates sat and ate together sharing stories of the past. It turns out that Courtney was not alone and that there were other youth that had been through similar situations as her. This was comforting and reassuring to Courtney. Courtney was partnered with the housing based case manager who actively worked to develop a youth centred, trauma informed support plan focusing on her unique strengths and needs. Together they focused on life skills, meaningful daily activities and goal setting. Courtney was connected with additional supports within the community that focused on her mental health and well-being. This shows the value and impact of intensive case management.

She Knew she could do more and be more.

Courtney started to notice a change in herself. She started participating in other youth programs led by the YWCA, and her community of friends and support grew. With support and encouragement Courtney applied to and was accepted into the Graphic Design program at Lambton college. Once again she faced the difficulty of moving to a new place. Although Courtney had many homes before, there was something different for her this time. The YWCA led Courtney to discover that home is not a place - it's a feeling and Courtney will carry this with her as her story continues.



The Time is Now

The St. Thomas Mayor has recently set a goal that our community builds 2000 homes by 2026. Tiny Hope will directly contribute to this goal.

Over the last several decades the variety of housing stock available for rent has not kept pace with the need. As a small city and rural community this has greatly impacted access to safe, clean and affordable housing.

YWCA provides housing for youth, women and men with 5 independent apartment units and 42 congregate living units within St. Thomas.

You may be surprised to learn that 28% of women led households are in need of housing.

Families get caught up in the web of homelessness for longer periods of time because of a lack of affordable family units. This then puts their children at risk of delayed child development and a higher incidence of experiencing homelessness later in life.

Two thirds of all mothers who experience homelessness suffer PTSD from this traumatic situation.

The YWCA has been providing communal housing in St. Thomas since 1928. This model works well for many people but not all. Knowing this, the YWCA is excited to be introducing new independent housing options for individuals and families.

That is why the time is now for this Innovative Housing Project.

- ▶ One in Five people in St. Thomas-Elgin struggle every day to make ends meet.
- ▶ This number translate to about **14,000** people.
- ▶ That is enough to fill the seating at the Joe Thornton Centre about 7 times!
- ▶ Picture that for a moment...





Why the YWCA?

We are St. Thomas's oldest and largest organization focused on women and housing stability. We are trusted and respected. We have been providing housing in St. Thomas since 1928.

Nationally, YWCAs are one of Canada's largest providers of women's shelters and affordable housing. Here in St. Thomas-Elgin we offer the only youth specific housing available for those 16-24 years.

As a leader in housing-based case management the YWCA has taken the lead role in the development and implementation of the St. Thomas-Elgin Youth Homelessness Protocol and is leading the way on a community development project focused on ending women and, woman-led family homelessness.

Over 80% of the youth and adults we serve move on to long term affordable housing and improved life stabilization.

We are proud to partner with Doug Tarry Homes and Sanctuary Homes who have been integral in launching Project Tiny Hope. With their generous financial contributions and industry leadership our collaboration is robust and best prepared to launch this new innovative approach to affordable housing.

Tiny Homes with a BIG vision

Project Tiny Hope is determined to be an agent of change for housing in our community.

"Safe and stable housing is the foundation of a healthy and vibrant community. Project Tiny Hope will revitalize 21 Kains Street in the downtown core of St. Thomas and create a thriving community where youth, adults and families live and grow for years to come".

- Lindsay Rice, ED, YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

"Tiny Hope will help fill a critical void in our community's housing supply. Access to clean, safe affordable housing should be recognized as a basic human right. Assisting with this project will help many individuals and families attain this. To be successful, this project will need a significant number of contributors, both large and small, joining in the effort to bring this dream to life."

- Doug Tarry, President



Program House



Our new Affordable Housing Community for Youth, Adults and Families will...



Improve Life Stability and Wellness – By providing wrap around supports and services folks will have increased access to education, employment, income security, food security and preventative health services.



Strengthen Long-Term Mental and Primary Health – Our case managers utilize a trauma informed approach that is judgment free and supports the whole person.



Lower the Number of Youth Experiencing Homelessness – Rapid rehousing is key to ending youth homelessness and by expanding our scope and reach we can provide supports and affordable housing to more youth.



Improve Food Security – With onsite gardens and a commercial teaching kitchen on site the sky is the limit. Residents will have access to cooking classes, collective meal preparation, food budgeting and access to entrepreneurial food start ups.



Be Built to Net Zero Ready Standard – Our tiny homes will be far more energy efficient, have significantly lower energy usage and be more affordable to operate. Our homes will be quieter, healthier and more comfortable.



Provide a Natural Outdoor Environment – A naturalized playground for children and families will be available to play and build friendships. An amenities pad and green space to gather will create opportunities to build community and intentional neighbour relationships.



Build Community and a Sense of Belonging – Our goal is to provide individuals with the stability of a home, and the wrap around supports that will build resources and opportunities to grow and thrive.

The last thing we want to do is turn people away because we don't have space

YWCA Housing is in great demand and each week youth, adults and families reach out to us for support.

“The YWCA has provided me with so much more than just a place to live. I have friends, I feel safe and I am working towards rebuilding my family relationships.”

YWCA Resident



Collaborative Partnerships Build Community!

The YWCA is fortunate to be partnering with Doug Tarry Homes and Sanctuary Homes. As a collective our goal is to build new affordable housing within a supportive environment.

Doug Tarry Limited



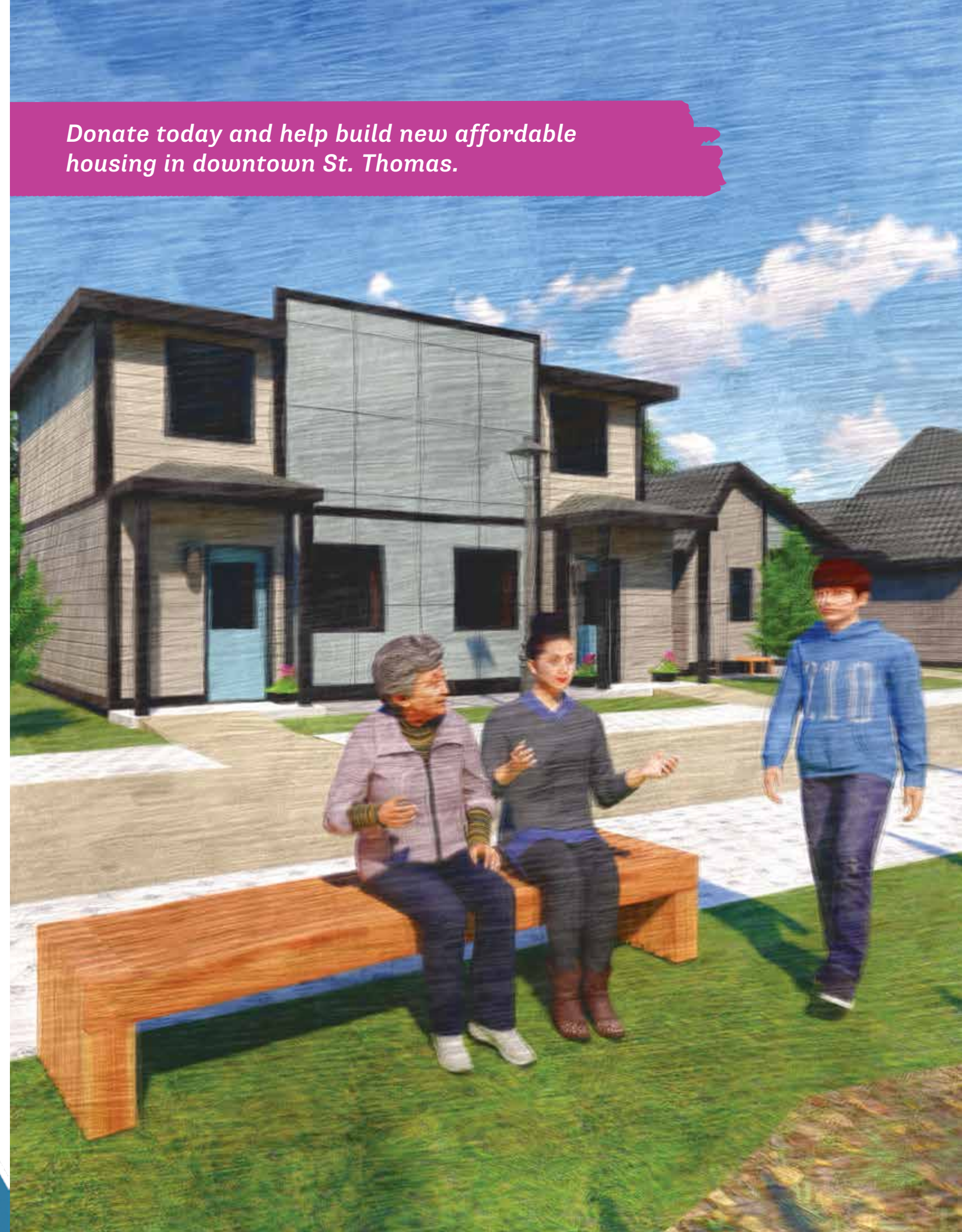
Doug Tarry Limited has been providing housing to individuals and families in St. Thomas since 1954. DTL has spearheaded several philanthropic ventures in an effort to give back to the community and beyond such as the St. Thomas Elevated Park, The Angus McKenzie Trail and Project Hope. Doug Tarry Limited recognizes the state of urgency to provide residents of St. Thomas-Elgin area with more affordable housing options. As a recognized leader in the building industry and a member of several provincial and national decision making tables DTL provides expertise, knowledge and innovation. Doug Tarry Limited is the proud designer and builder for Tiny Hope.

Sanctuary Homes



Sanctuary Homes was established in 2014 by a group of concerned Elgin County citizens who were and remain interested in addressing issues of poverty, homelessness, and adequate housing. As a local, not for profit, faith-based group they strive to provide affordable, safe housing in a supportive community environment with appropriate community resources to improve and sustain the wellbeing of marginalized populations.

Donate today and help build new affordable housing in downtown St. Thomas.



*Please join us right now and help us
Brighten Lives and Build Community.*

<https://ywcaste.ca/project-tiny-hope/>



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