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Conseil des Services du District de  
**Manitoulin-Sudbury**  
District Services Board

**2013**

# Moving Forward

A Plan to Address Housing and Homelessness within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board Catchment Area over the Next 10 Years



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This plan is intended for use by the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB).

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## Geographic Distinctions Reference

The **catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board** includes 18 municipalities and two unorganized territories, and covers a distance that spans over 45,000 square kilometres. The municipalities represented by the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board are: Killarney, St. Charles, Markstay-Warren, French River, Espanola, Sables-Spanish River, Nairn and Hyman, Baldwin, Burpee and Mills, Gore Bay, Billings, Assiqinack, Central Manitoulin, Gordon/Barrie Island, Northeastern Manitoulin and the Island, Cockburn Island, Tehkummah, and Chapleau. The two unorganized territories are: Sudbury Unorganized North Part and Manitoulin Unorganized West Part. The municipalities in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board catchment area are commonly grouped into four main areas, known as Sudbury East, Lacloche, Sudbury North, and Manitoulin Island. The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board catchment area does not include First Nations reserves.

Data for this report has been derived, for the most part, from Statistics Canada. We have used the most recent data (2011) whenever possible and have used 2006 data where the 2011 data is not yet available. From a Statistics Canada perspective, data for the catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board is represented within the Statistics Canada Census Divisions known as the Manitoulin District and the Sudbury District. The **Manitoulin District** – otherwise known as Manitoulin Island – includes nine townships, towns, and municipalities, one unorganized territory, as well as seven First Nations reserves. The First Nations reserves in the district are not part of the catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. The **Sudbury District** includes the nine municipalities, towns, and townships, one unorganized territory, and five First Nations reserves. It *does not* include data for the City of Greater Sudbury (which is listed on Statistics Canada as a census metropolitan area or CMA).

The catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is a provincially designated area for the purposes of the delivery of social services and does not exist in the Statistics Canada database as such. Therefore data has been manually manipulated to represent the whole Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. While the total populations are represented the numbers for the First Nations reserves have been extracted where possible.

## Executive Summary

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District is the catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board and encompasses 18 municipalities, towns and townships including the Municipalities of French River, Killarney, Markstay-Warren, Gordon/Barrie Island, and St. Charles, the Towns of Gore Bay, Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands, Chapleau and Espanola, and the Townships of Assiqinack, Billings, Burpee and Mills, Central Manitoulin, Cockburn Island, Tehkummah, Baldwin, Nairn and Hyman and Sables-Spanish River. It also includes Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part. The district is geographically widespread, consisting of four main regions – Sudbury North, Sudbury East, Lacloche, and Manitoulin Island and area.

On average, income levels in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area are lower than in the province of Ontario, as is the case with labour force participation levels. Furthermore, unemployment rates are higher on average than they are in the province.

In 2005, Tehkummah, Baldwin, Burpee and Mills, and Sables-Spanish River had among the lowest median incomes for a combination of household types within the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area. In most communities, couples, even with low income, overall fared better than one-person households. The Sudbury East area had the lowest average median income among the areas across the district for couple households with children (\$67,550); Manitoulin Island had the lowest average median income for couples without children (\$48,425), as well as for one-person households (\$17,524). The township of Tehkummah had the highest proportion of people living in low income (indicated by 2005 before tax LICO) at 24.7%, and the highest average among the regions was in Lacloche, at 14%.

In spite of generally lower shelter costs observed in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area than in the province, a culmination of data indicate that residents are certainly not generally better off financially.

This executive summary includes the priorities that are a response to a culmination of data and research pertaining to housing, income, and homelessness gathered from within the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. The priorities overlap and complement one another, as they reflect a whole community focus on addressing housing and homelessness over the next ten years. Many priorities involve continuing and building on existing initiatives that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has in place, as well as increasing its efficiency and capacity as a community partner and innovator around housing and homelessness. Integrated service delivery and enhanced evaluation are frequently emphasized components to many of the priorities.

## **#1 - Understand and Respond to the District's Demographic**

- Overall, more communities within the district have experienced population decreases rather than increases between 2006 and 2011, and this trend is projected to continue over the next few decades.
- Some factors that contribute to the population decrease and to housing and homelessness problems are not independent of one another. The cause of this and addressing this in a comprehensive manner will require a critical look at other factors in the community that are impacting the current demand. For example, participants in the focus groups emphasized that there are very few employment opportunities available to them. They also emphasized their struggles with the cost and availability of food, within their limited shopping options and food bank access. Multi-sector efforts will be required in order to retain the population across the district, and to improve opportunities and services for the whole population.

## **#2 - Strong Emphasis on Seniors Required – Housing and Supports**

- The 45-64 age cohort is currently the highest in the district and therefore there is the potential for many people to retire over the next 20 years. The senior population has increased in recent years as well and is projected to continue to increase over the next 20 years. The proportion of seniors is higher in the district than it is in the province of Ontario. Based on these trends, as well as the concerns of citizens across the district, it is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB transition back to a 'seniors-only' social housing portfolio from their existing building stock. The population and consultation data strongly demonstrate demand for this change.
- Age statistics hone in on the municipalities with the highest and lowest population of seniors (i.e. highest in NEMI and lowest in Chapleau), although the concentration is high as a whole across the district. This should be taken into consideration by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB for prospective future housing developments and by municipalities and service partners, for strengthening support services.
- Keeping seniors in their own homes should be a main priority. This was overwhelmingly relayed through focus group input. Housing that is "a halfway point" or 'in between" a nursing home and regular one-bedroom apartment is in high demand. People do not want to give up their homes and do not feel that they need nursing homes, but need extra assistance on a regular basis. Home care services, supported housing, and if possible, live-in supports at (future) seniors-only housing facilities, are a necessity that will only increase with time. A few communities referred to private organizations that provide these types of services but noted that they were expensive. Ensure that the district is taking full advantage of the services offered through the North East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and their Aging at Home Strategy and advocate for

increased services as the aging population grows. Furthermore, get connected with agencies such as Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), which provides services to assist seniors with staying in their homes longer, or helps them get set up with long-term care if needed. Without question, CCAC and the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB share, or should be sharing many of the same clientele. It is worthwhile to explore potential partnerships around homecare and respite care subsidies.

### **#3 - Implement Strategies to Support Overlooked Populations – Aboriginals, Youth, and Individuals who are Homeless**

- A strategy to better understand and address homelessness throughout the district must be put into place. Subcomponents of this strategy should involve hard-to-reach individuals (persons with mental health and addictions), aboriginal homelessness, aboriginal relations, and youth services and outreach.
- **Aboriginal Population and Aboriginal Youth**
  - A lack of knowledge about the importance of culturally sensitive and specific services can be strongly inferred from the consultations. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB would benefit from establishing a plan to improve and increase relations with the aboriginal community both on and off of reserves, and should recognize the importance of offering culturally appropriate services. Efforts to establish contact with Aboriginal organizations that may serve the district (even if they are outside of the district) to explore opportunities in this regard should be made.
  - Maintain aboriginal population records with every census release (starting with 2011).
  - For planning purposes, migration of low-income populations on and off reserves should be better monitored. Migration is common among persons facing homelessness. Service providers and community officials were generally not very aware of the prevalence and factors involved. It was inferred from the consultations that this is under-monitored and that relationships with on-reserve services are generally under-developed. Social housing, social assistance, and other service intake forms should specifically determine aboriginal identity as well as previous place of residence for applicants, including an option of having lived on reserve within the last six months.
- **Youth in General**
  - As a whole, the population of youth ages 10-19 is fairly high in the Manitoulin-Sudbury district (2006 data). There do not seem to be any specific services for youth in the district, which may disproportionately affect the aboriginal



population. Some participants claimed that there were homeless youth within the district who were couch-surfing with their friends. Family breakdown is generally the leading cause of youth homelessness and couch-surfing is a common avenue for many youth who fall into hardship, before ending up on the streets or in a shelter.

- There was no clear understanding among focus group participants if any services were offered to youth experiencing personal and family struggles through the school system. It is critical to get connected with schools to get a better understanding of what they offer and how connected to services they are. There was evidence that children and youth services were not well connected to other services. Sharing information would be the first step in getting a better sense of needs to inform strategies around at-risk youth.

#### ➤ **Homelessness in General**

- Municipalities should have a policy in place to provide temporary shelter and assistance finding housing for people who are homeless. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should continue to establish and build on partnerships with motels/hotels in the various communities for this purpose and engaging service providers in the process. The lack of knowledge about the existence of homelessness and the lack of awareness about how people facing homelessness cope emerged as a clear issue throughout the focus groups.
- Establish relations with Greater Sudbury's emergency shelters and other service providers who provide housing support services (i.e. the Homelessness Network, including the Corner Clinic and seven other service providers). It is within their capacity to monitor the number of people who use their services that are from the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. Data from Greater Sudbury's shelters and housing support services indicate that a high number of people come from areas outside of Sudbury that are still within the province.
- Obtain quarterly data from Haven House – the only existing shelter within the district. This data should include information about the 'turn-aways' or people who do not fit the criteria to stay at the shelter for whatever reason. Start to establish a base for what the needs are around homelessness and an emergency shelter system.

#### **#4 – Address Additional Gaps in Services that Contribute to Imminent Risk of Homelessness**

- In spearheading the implementation of service delivery committees (Priority #10), increase the connectedness between hospitals, prisons, and community service providers in and around the district. There currently appears to be no discharge planning taking

place between service providers in the district and hospitals and prisons in and around the district. While hospital and prison policies are not the mandate of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, all three entities are involved in one cycle of service, which is evidently disconnected.

### **#5 - Imperative Action on Improving Transportation Accessibility Required**

- The vast geography and limited amenities and services within the district strongly and disproportionately impact persons in low-income. Immediate innovation around transportation is required. Build upon the *'Blueprint for Moving Forward in Improving the Seniors' Non-Emergent Transportation System in Sudbury-Manitoulin.'* The blueprint, released in 2010, contains innovative collaborative opportunities both among potential partners within the district as well with transportation providers in Greater Sudbury.
- Explore opportunities to partner with and build upon existing services in the district such as the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) and Aides aux Seniors. Increasing service availability and subsidies were the main concerns raised around existing transportation services throughout the consultations.

### **#6 - Employment and Training Opportunities**

- This priority demands innovation as well as maximizing the potential of the programs already in place by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB through increased outreach (see #9). While the current programs demonstrate reasonable success, eagerness to work and acquire training was a common theme in the client participant groups, as was frustration around limited opportunities. It is evident from different data sources within this plan that initiatives to expand employment and education/training opportunities which respond to the district's large senior demographic (e.g. Personal Support Worker, Nursing, and Gerontology) would be both worthwhile and attainable.
- Partnering with employers, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and Employment Ontario service providers who are already involved in the current employment and training programs of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should be built upon as part of a larger process to develop an integrated labour market strategy for the Manitoulin - Sudbury District.

### **#7 - Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Housing**

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been doing good work and planning around energy efficiency and sustainable housing. In addition to initiatives discussed in the 'Affordable Housing Repairs segment' other upgrades have been made and the development of an

Energy Plan for the district is set to begin in 2013. To assist with this plan and to identify opportunities for reducing energy usage, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been tracking energy consumption in all of their stock. Software being used from the National Research Council will be helpful in evaluating the return on investment for energy initiatives and opportunities.

## **#8 - Innovation and Efficiency with Affordable Housing**

- As it stands, Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW) recipients must receive an additional source of funding or reside in social housing to be able to meet 'affordable' rent standards for their level of income, with OW earners falling far below the mark. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should continue with the practice of the Direct Shelter Subsidy (DSS) over the next several years and maximize its usage. It is an efficient use of housing/homelessness money that sets the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB apart from other service managers, probably contributing to their lower levels of visible homelessness. Currently, this program is unique to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, so it is important that beneficiaries are made aware that they will no longer receive funds if they move outside of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area. However, the province should be made aware of the success of this program and be encouraged to invest money into it.
- The Building Condition Assessments (BCAs) that took place on Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB-owned properties in 2010 are intended to provide the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB with information about the buildings' needs over the next 20 years. As done in 2011, the BCAs should continue to be used for Capital Asset Management Plans and annual budgets.
- An MMAH initiative is underway by a task force including the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's Supervisor of Infrastructure and Asset Management, to assess the effectiveness of the Affordable Housing program. It is important that repairs made through the Northern Housing component of the Affordable Housing program be followed up with. Evaluate and make recommendations based on how the funding was dispersed and what it was targeted for. Determine if the program was successful in targeting major repairs. Compare 2006 and 2011 census statistics (when the 2011 statistics become available) to determine if the percent of dwellings requiring major repairs has decreased. Determine if residents were made aware of the program, particularly individuals with low incomes. In the event that funds become available again, this information would position the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB to be able to make effective use of it.
- Conduct cost-benefit analysis on energy efficiency initiatives that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB put into place for housing over the last few years. Continue to monitor and compare costs from pre-repair years, as well as to other buildings with older appliances and fixtures, to determine if and where similar initiatives could be applied if money becomes available.

- It has been difficult to attract private developers and property managers to social housing initiatives, within the district and elsewhere. An alternative to future negotiations for social housing buildings would be the inclusion of subsidized *units* within multiple existing buildings. Members of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB could consider advocating to the their respective municipalities for the reducing or waiving of municipal fees (i.e. development, cost charges, planning fees, parkland levies, and reductions or waivers of property taxes) for potential private developers who agree to incorporate affordable housing or subsidized units within their buildings. Many social housing residents and individuals requiring affordable housing are not comfortable in buildings entirely devoted to social housing and would prefer to be in ‘mixed’ housing. Next steps should include increased outreach to property managers/owners and maintaining updated records about rental dwellings (i.e. locations, prevalence, and costs) throughout the district.
- Many Canadian municipalities have adopted policies that mandate a certain percentage of new construction to be affordable. The units are sold to households with low incomes and remain affordable (not spending more than 30% of before tax income on shelter costs). (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2009).
- With the cost of monthly payments on housing being more affordable than rent in many parts of the district it is worthwhile to explore programs that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB could implement to assist low income earners to become home owners.
- Explore alternative developments and companies for affordable housing; e.g. Options for Homes – a non-profit housing corporation whose mandate is affordable home ownership (usually condominiums).
- Refer to the *Affordable, Adaptable Housing* report by CMHC. It is meant to be a guide to adopting affordable housing and presents various types of housing and adaptability options, as well as a detailed analysis of ten Canadian projects which demonstrate a range of these options.

## **#9 - Increase Opportunities by Increasing Knowledge Dissemination**

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB administers various helpful and critical programs that directly assist with housing (i.e. cost, bills, etc.) and also with related matters that participants expressed were important to them for improving their living situations (i.e. Enhanced Job Placement Program and Employment Ontario Program). However, a common theme among participants was lack of knowledge about what is available to them through social assistance, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, and in their communities. Quarterly communications (i.e. newsletter) should be sent out to social housing tenants and OW and ODSP recipients, detailing existing programs and services – even if they have not recently changed.

## **#10 - Spearhead Integrated Service Delivery**

- It would be advantageous to create a district-wide integrated service delivery committee with sub-committees mandated across different regions. Many populations who are currently in or requiring affordable housing have additional support service needs. Best practices and recent literature indicate that integrated service delivery is preferable for understanding and addressing homelessness. In some ways, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB already applies a Housing First model when people go to them. However, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and other service providers should have the capacity to continue with case management for some clients after they are housed.
- With the district being so spread out and services being limited, a coordinated system of service delivery is essential. It is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offices and partnering support services implement HIFIS 4.0 when the program is released within the next few years. It is a web-based/shared version of the current program which will allow for service providers to share information to ensure quality of care as well as improve program evaluation and planning.
- Implementing a current version of the program at individual sites (including social housing) in the meantime would also improve data organization, planning, case management records, and performance measures including social housing. In addition to these benefits, the program has an automatic reporting feature which can generate data summaries for most of the information it stores.

## **#11 - Increased Advocacy Roles for Civic Leaders**

- Since funding limitations underlie many challenges around housing and homelessness, collective lobbying for common causes at higher levels is important. The need for the Board to be connected with other municipalities and to take on an advocacy role was raised in consultations with civic officials. In addition to advocacy regarding affordable housing and social assistance rates, civic leaders should be advocating for the

enhancement and return of helpful affiliated programs, such as the bursary program for social housing tenants and their children.

- Most recently, these types of initiatives within the poverty sector around Ontario directly impacted the last minute decision by the province to add more funding to CHPI, to temporarily help alleviate the loss of the Community Start Up And Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB). This role could potentially be increased following the development of housing and homelessness plans across the province.

## **#12 - Increase Program Evaluations**

- A number of initiatives have already been mentioned in previous priorities. Building on and in addition to those recommendations are the following:
  - Take a closer look at trends in social assistance for social housing in the context of population changes and economic factors within the district. Closely monitor the impact of the elimination of the CSUMB. Caseworkers should continue to assist their clients in applying for the same circumstances in which they may have qualified for prior to 2013. It is important that a strong record of unmet need be kept and reported on. Changes will continue following 2013 and the ‘post-CSUMB’ impact should continue to be looked at and compared for some time. At this time especially, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should take measures to ensure a closer monitoring of homelessness within the district and within the next year, develop a strategy around aiming to better understand the scope of the issue within the district in general, and among specific populations like youth and aboriginals. With the district being so spread out and services being limited, a coordinated system of service delivery is essential.
  - It is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offices and partnering support services implement HIFIS 4.0 when the program is released within the next few years. It is a web-based shared version of the current program which will allow for service providers to share information to ensure quality of care as well as improve program evaluation and planning. Implementing a current version of the program at individual sites (including social housing) in the meantime would also improve data organization, planning, case management records, and performance measures including social housing. In addition to these benefits, the program has an automatic reporting feature which can generate data summaries for most of the information it stores.

## **#13 - Closely Monitor the Release of RFPs and Opportunities for Funding**

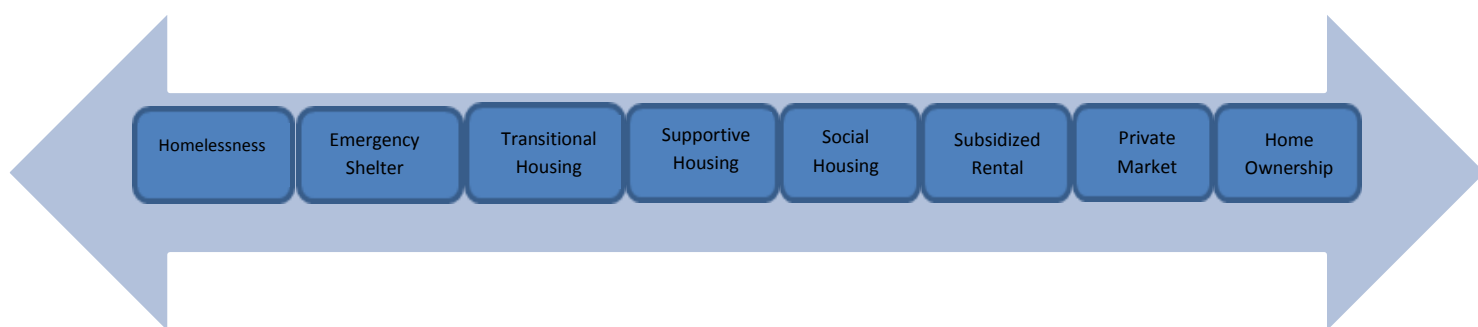
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and its member municipalities have been fairly proactive in developing comprehensive plans for expanding and enhancing their housing portfolio.

If data and information presented in this plan (and updated as recommended), is incorporated into new proposals and supplemented with existing proposals around housing development, repairs, and supports, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will be better equipped to acquire future funding opportunities when they become available. Actively seek out calls or requests for proposals (CFPs or RFPs) that provide funding for housing and homelessness initiatives. Connect with and follow updates from the North East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Secretariat (HPS). Inquire about annual HPS funding as well, which has been recently renewed, and previously used by many communities across Canada for capital projects and homelessness prevention initiatives. In addition to annual funding which has so far been released in five-year iteration periods, HPS also puts out other CFPs for more specific initiatives; most recently this involved projects pertaining to mental health and homelessness.

## Introduction

The Province of Ontario's Housing Services Act and Housing Policy Statement, under the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, exist because there is recognition that meaningful improvements to housing conditions are needed across the province. It is acknowledged that responding to local needs requires local flexibility in terms of planning. Under these guidelines, each service manager was required to develop a 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan to respond to local circumstances.

It is within the interest of the Ontario Long-Term Housing Strategy to address all levels and types of housing in moving forward. Figure 1 refers to the housing and homelessness continuum that is widely accepted in Ontario and in Canada; appropriately titled for its sequential progression, distinct extremes, and not necessarily having clear divisions in between. From the continuum it is understood that a workable system of housing and homelessness has different key players with different roles.



*Figure 1. Housing and Homelessness Continuum*

This plan is centered on housing issues facing a low-income demographic and solutions that respond to these issues. It is recognized that affordable housing is an integral component of building strong families and strong communities, and a basic fundamental that can help break the cycle of poverty (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2010). Affordable housing is not a reality for roughly 13% of Canadians (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2009, p.15). In Canada, affordable housing denotes that shelter costs are less than 30% of the household income before taxes (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2009, p.15). In other words, if shelter is being paid for but other necessities such as food and clothing are compromised, it is not affordable.

This 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan reflects the principles outlined in Ontario's Affordable Housing Strategy: is locally driven and considers the whole local environment as a factor in affordable housing; is supportive – keeping in mind permanency and appropriate supports; is inclusive in taking into account the needs of different special populations; and, is fiscally responsible in proposing ambitious goals and recommendations while recognizing evolving fiscal circumstances (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, p.3, 2010).



## Geography of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District is the catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board. The district is geographically widespread, consisting of four regions – Sudbury North, Sudbury East, Lacloche, and Manitoulin Island and area – each broken down into various municipalities, towns, and townships. The closest neighbouring cities, depending on where one is situated within the district, are Timmins and Greater Sudbury.

Figure 2 displays a map of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District, indicated by the area outside of the City of Greater Sudbury that is enclosed within the brown outline. Also contained within the boundaries of the District is a collective of surrounding small communities or settlements known as Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part, covering the area outlined in Figure 3. Sudbury, Unorganized North Part is typically considered a part of Sudbury North, but geographically speaking, communities fall within Sudbury North and Sudbury East. These communities are included within the same subdivision because of their census designation (unorganized).



*Figure 2.* Map of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District

*Note.* From Statistics Canada Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB (2011)



Figure 3. Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part

Note. From Statistics Canada (2012)

The catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is a provincial geopolitical boundary that is designated to deliver social services to the communities within its area. It does not include First Nations' Reserves, whose housing and public social programs fall under the mandate of the federal government. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the 18 municipalities, townships, and towns, and two unorganized territories within the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area; including several communities and designated places<sup>1</sup> that exist within them.

Statistics Canada designates the area that makes up Sudbury East, Sudbury North, and Lacloche as the Sudbury District and the Manitoulin District as the area that is inclusive of all of the municipalities, towns, and townships on Manitoulin Island. In both districts Stats Canada includes First Nations reserves from a statistical perspective.

Where possible in this report we have highlighted the differences between the whole population and the population that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB serves.

<sup>1</sup> Designated Places are typically small communities that do “not meet the criteria used to define municipalities or population centres (areas with a population of at least 1,000 and no fewer than 400 persons per square kilometre)” (Statistics Canada, 2012).

<b>Region</b>	<b>Municipalities, Townships, and Designated Places</b>	<b>Communities</b>
Sudbury East	French River (Municipality)	Alban Part A Bigwood Noëlville Ouellette Monetville Rutter
	Killarney (Municipality)	Alban Part B
	Markstay-Warren (Municipality)	Hagar
	St. Charles (Municipality)	
		Casladen
		Eden
		RR #3
Manitoulin Island/District	Assiqinack (Township)	Manitowaning
	Billings (Township)	Kagawong
	Burpee and Mills (Township)	Evansville
	Central Manitoulin (Township)	Mindemoya Sandfield
	Cockburn Island (Township)	
	Gordon/Barrie Island (Municipality)	
	Gore Bay (Town)	
	Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part (Unorganized)	
	Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands (Town)	Little Current
	Tehkummah (Township)	
Lacloche	Baldwin (Township)	McKerrow
	Espanola (Town)	
	Nairn and Hyman (Township)	
	Sables-Spanish River (Township)	Massey Walford

		Walford Station Webbwood
Sudbury North/Chapleau	Chapleau (Township)	
Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part (Unorganized)		Biscotasing Burwash Cartier Estaire Foleyet Gogama Shining Tree Sultan West Tree Willisville & Whitefish Falls

## Housing Instability and Homelessness in Northern Rural Communities: An Overview

The housing needs of northern rural communities reflect their unique geographical context and must be responded to accordingly. These areas differ from their metropolitan counterparts in the structure and prevalence of governance and services, as much as they do in landscape. Generally, provincially funded social services in rural communities are administered through one board for an entire district, with a geographical span far larger than that of an urban centre.

Other services and amenities are also dispersed, or non-existent within rural districts themselves. Population sizes and densities are fairly low and the demographic reflects other aspects of the rural context; such as economic activity, leisure activities, and prevalence of neighbouring First Nations reserves.

The breadth of Canadian literature on homelessness in rural areas does not compare to that on urban homelessness. No one definition exists of what makes up a rural area or community. In recognition of this, Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care recognizes rural communities as typically having a population of less than 30,000 and being more than 30 minutes away from communities with populations greater than 30,000 (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 2010, p.8).

### Definition of Homelessness

In their 2008 report *A Strategy to End Homelessness*, the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) defined the term homeless to apply to people in the following three types of situations:

- *Absolutely homeless*: People who sleep in indoor or outdoor public places not intended for habitation (e.g. streets, parks, abandoned buildings, stairwells, doorways, cars, or under bridges);
- *Lacking permanent housing*: People who live in temporary accommodation not meant for long-term housing. Examples include: emergency shelters, hospitals, time-limited transitional housing programs, residential treatment programs or withdrawal management centres and more informal arrangements such as staying with family, friends, or acquaintances; and
- *At risk of homelessness*: Households whose current housing is unaffordable, unsafe, overcrowded, insecure, inappropriate or inadequately maintained; it also refers to situations where the person lacks supports to maintain housing stability (e.g. activities of daily living, life skills training, conflict resolution).

A complicating factor that tends to blur a more complete understanding of rural homelessness is its relative invisibility as compared to urban homelessness. Generally speaking, individuals and families at-risk of homelessness in rural areas tend to more readily experience living in substandard or overcrowded housing or living with friends or family rather than experiencing absolute homelessness (Reid & Katerburg, 2007).

## Causes of Homelessness

Homelessness is not *only* a housing problem but it is *always* a housing problem (Hulchanski, 1999). The shortage of adequate, affordable housing means that someone will be homeless; other circumstances determine which person will be homeless (Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2008). Therefore, any strategy to end homelessness must include both measures to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing and measures to address the circumstances which cause particular individuals and families to become homeless. All of these factors must be addressed to prevent people from becoming homeless as well as in housing them.

Among the circumstances that can contribute to homelessness, poverty is the most pervasive, as people living in poverty often have limited ability to call on other resources to avoid homelessness (OMSSA, 2008). In the Waterloo Region, researchers identified four risk factors, all stemming from poverty, associated with homelessness;

- Households dedicating more than 30% of their income to shelter costs
- Families in the low-income category as outlined by Statistics Canada
- Use of food banks
- Households accessing energy assistance

(Reid & Katerburg, 2007, p.24)

In rural areas, common risk factors for homelessness are compounded by additional barriers that can interfere with seeking help and receiving a continuity of care; “weak public transit infrastructure, social isolation and low-quality social services...” (Whitzman, 2006, p.395). Furthermore, persons who are homeless or at-risk in rural areas may resort to walk-in clinics, which do not typically assist people beyond emergency and immediate needs (Whitzman, 2006). Housing stability in rural areas can also be compromised by lower wages, fewer employment opportunities, fewer social and informational resources, as well as under-dissemination of information (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008). As well, rural areas that are adjacent to urban settings are susceptible to the continual pressure of gentrification (Reid & Katerburg, 2007).

In addition to systemic factors, there are a number of other circumstances that can contribute to a particular person or household becoming homeless. This can include addictions, mental illness,

physical illness or disability, family violence, discrimination, unemployment, family breakdown, eviction, natural disaster, house fires, and deinstitutionalization (OMSSA, 2008).

In Northern Ontario these circumstances are often compounded again by factors specific to the North. For example: high unemployment and seasonal unemployment; extremely low vacancy rates; distinct First Nations issues like inter-generational patterns of substance use, violence and generalized instability within the community linked to historical experiences with residential schools; high and rising energy costs relative to other parts of the province, and increasing property taxes, all of which especially impact people on fixed incomes, particularly senior-led households (Stewart & Ramage, 2011).

In a study conducted on migratory homelessness in Sudbury in 2009, researchers determined that one of the largest proportions of homeless migrants in Sudbury had come from other Northeastern Ontario communities including, among others, Chapleau and Manitoulin Island. (Kauppi, & Gasparini et al, 2009, p. 20). This is particularly true for youth, unattached individuals and First Nations populations who cited unemployment and seeking work or better wages as the primary reason for leaving their home community (Kauppi, & Gasparini et al, 2009, p. 23).

### **Housing and Support: The Housing First Model**

Different housing models exist that are intentioned to help persons experiencing mental illness, addictions, and others who are ‘hard to house’, become and remained housed. The Continuum of Care, or rehabilitation model typically involves different levels of accommodation that would allow someone to work their way up to permanent supportive housing when they are deemed ready by service providers (Schiff, Schiff, and Schneider, 2010). A more modern model in terms of its relatively recent, fairly widespread adaptation is the Housing First model. With Housing First, stable and permanent housing is considered to be the first step in a person’s journey toward stability in multiple aspects of life, should the individual agree and wish to be housed at that time (Collins et al., 2012; Schiff, Schiff, and Schneider, 2010). It is a person-focused model that has demonstrated effectiveness in harm reduction and increased prospects of obtaining and maintaining housing for persons who are chronically homeless or with addictions (Collins et al., 2012)

When it comes to youth homelessness, outreach models involving prevention and early intervention for at-risk youth are often emphasized; typically through mass distribution of referral information (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008). This is especially important for rural areas where the prevalence of services is lower and social isolation is an increased risk.

Coordination models involve linking people to a variety of different services to assist on their path from homelessness to stability (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008). The goal is to implement a comprehensive system of care that will prevent future homelessness by linking

someone with unrelated resources including financial, education and training, mental health, and of course, housing. This model has been demonstrated in previous studies to be the most effective in assisting rural homeless youth.

## **Challenges to Assessment and Evaluation in the Homelessness Sector**

Reliable, high quality data about homeless populations is generally difficult to come by in Canada (Peressini & Engeland, 2004). Difficulty with measurement is not unique to Canada; it is reflective of the precarious nature of the homeless population itself. Furthermore, a compounding barrier has been a lack of collaboration among the Canadian service provider community around addressing homelessness on local, regional, and national scales; a trend largely associated with funding scarcity and unreliability (Peressini & Engeland, 2004, p.348). Comparable and collective data about consumers of these services has been greatly lacking as a result of these factors.

A definition of homelessness that does not look at stability of one's housing situation can also cause issues with understanding and measuring its occurrence in an area (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou; Toomey & First, 1993). Emergency shelter usage is an apparent representation of homelessness that can be readily captured with appropriate measurement tools and used to represent need and direct programming.

However, this indicator of homelessness does not apply to many nonurban settings where 'hidden homelessness' is a more likely reality, often represented by persons in unstable housing situations; staying in motels or rooming houses, couch-surfing with family or friends, or living in overcrowded environments (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008; Whitzman, 2006; Toomey & First, 1993).

In spite of the number of rural youth alone who migrate to urban centres upon experiencing homelessness, the majority of the literature around youth homelessness and homelessness in general is urban-focused (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008). Furthermore, the common focus on demand for service as a measure of social issues disadvantages nonurban and rural populations where service centres such as emergency shelters, support services, and hospitals do not readily exist (Toomey & First, 1993).

Research is imperative for quantifying rural homelessness, understanding its characteristics and ultimately for solving it (Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou, 2008; Toomey & First, 1993). Underreporting housing and homelessness indicators can lead to assumptions that rural and nonurban issues mimic those of urban centres. Furthermore, underreporting from nonurban communities can impact the security of public and private funds received for services that assist persons experiencing poverty and homelessness in these areas (Toomey & First, 1993).



## Data Collection Tools and Methods in the Homelessness Sector

The nature of social issues themselves may vary between urban and nonurban areas and research that is carried out in the respective areas should also reflect these differences. Research methods in rural areas should have the capacity to produce findings that can allow for the comparison of rural and urban issues within their respective contexts (Toomey & First, 1993). In their Ontario study on youth homelessness, Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou (2008) found that social programs in rural areas, even when modified or created in the rural context, are underexplored and underreported on. From this, they inferred that rural homeless programs were not sufficiently informed by research literature and therefore may not be as responsive to the need in these areas.

Methods of study in rural areas must provide findings that can be compared with urban findings. A tool such as the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) is a plausible means for increasing standardized data, while also allowing for the collection and use of information that is custom to different areas and different service providers.

HIFIS is a federal government program and database that has been increasing the quality and capacity of measurement in the homelessness sector. It is one of the initiatives that is responding to the need for improving information records and sharing about homelessness and risk factors in Canadian communities. It was originally developed through consulting with a variety of stakeholders including service providers, representatives from different levels of government, as well as persons who had lived experience of homelessness.

The program continues to evolve through a ‘bottom-up’ process, through direct response to local shelter and service provider needs (Peressini & Engeland, 2004). Similarly, the data generated by this expansive program/database can effectively be used to create responsive programs at a local service provider level and for larger scale capacity building and policy development (Peressini & Engeland, 2004). HIFIS can be used to manage client records at shelters as well as any setting where housing support services are provided to homeless or at-risk populations.

Data collection techniques in rural areas require some innovation and expansion. Skott-Myhre, Raby, & Nikolaou (2008) found that homeless and at-risk youth would be easiest to reach through schools and community programs; although researchers may experience problems around restricted access to the schools (p.97). Toomey & First (1993) point out that in areas where homelessness is more hidden, the people who tend to encounter persons experiencing homelessness are not necessarily social service providers, but people who work in the community, such as mail carriers, hotel and motel desk clerks, librarians, public health inspectors, etc.

Rural areas would benefit from having a data collection coordinator who would maintain good relationships with service providers and advocates, facilitate data collection training, and overall create a standard for data collection, quality assurance, and dissemination (Toomey & First,

1993). Such a role would serve as an important connecting link in a geographically dispersed area. It is also recommended that data collection on the homeless population in rural areas be carried out for longer than in urban areas where the higher population density is more likely to be conducive for a more accurate representation within a short period of time.

Research and evaluation of housing and homelessness issues that are specific to rural areas is necessary and should be ongoing in order to meet the needs of persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The literature on rural housing and homelessness consistently points out that a lack of research and reference to research when planning services can lead to underestimating the prevalence and scope of the issues as well as equating them with that of urban problems and responses. Understanding and incorporating the rural context is crucial for services to address problems in a comprehensive manner (Toomey and First, 1993).

## **Data Compilation: Informing the Key Priorities through Community Profile Data and Community Consultations**

In order to inform The Plan, we engaged in three phases of data collection and analysis. Phase 1 began with establishing a clear understanding of the district's borders, both geographically (i.e. on a regional level) and according to the Statistics Canada Census Divisions and Subdivisions. Following this, relevant data about the district from the 2006 and 2011 Community Profiles in the Statistics Canada database was collected and analyzed. For several indicators, 2011 data is not yet available and therefore should be integrated into the plan when it becomes available.

Phase 2 consisted of 12 focus groups with various housing and social service clients, service providers, civic officials and board members, and other community stakeholders from relevant fields. Participants for the client focus group became involved after being informed through one of three ways:

- Receiving a flyer with their Ontario Works cheque
- Receiving a flyer under their door if they resided in non-profit housing
- Seeing the flyer at a local food bank or service provider

Names and contact information containing Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB board members, civic officials, service providers, and housing providers, were provided by representatives from the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and then built on through additional research and networking. These individuals were provided with invitations via email or mail, as well as personal phone calls.

Participants in both the client and service provider/community officials stakeholders groups were asked to RSVP, in order to keep the groups relatively small (no more than 20 people). Signed consent forms were collected from all participants. Participants in the client focus groups were provided with a meal and a \$20 honorarium for their time.

The information was tallied from a basic information sheet that participants were asked to fill out. Focus group participants were informed that the questions were being asked through a low-income lens. They were provided with five open-ended questions about housing and homelessness, and were asked to keep in mind the housing continuum as a guide while answering. A large visual display was provided, and participants were also provided a handout of the continuum which included existing services/housing or 'assets' within their areas.

In Phase 3, additional civic officials, board members, and a few property managers and service providers were sent questionnaires via email, for which they responded to either by phone or in writing. At this time, a few civic officials who participated in the Phase 2 focus groups were also consulted with again, to acquire more specialized information around past, current, and prospective building initiatives.

Participants in the interview/questionnaire phase were asked similar questions, which were slightly tweaked since the focus group phase. Overall, questions addressed the following:

- Assets and gaps that exist in housing and housing related services
- Elaboration on effective services, programs, and supports
- Special needs populations and the needs of special populations with regard to housing and homelessness
- Recommendations for improvement; specific strategies
- Necessary resources

Participants were frequently prompted to elaborate on areas they had knowledge of as well as on areas that had not been brought up within the housing continuum. An attempt was made at all groups to address homelessness and the needs of special populations such as Aboriginals, youth, seniors, persons with mental illness, and persons with accessibility needs.

Appendix A provides some key descriptors (demographic, service usage, sector, etc.) of the participants from the focus groups and interview/questionnaires.

The following sections detail the focal points, priorities and actions to be taken, around the challenges of affordable housing and homelessness based on the demographic and economic picture of the district combined with feedback from the communities.

## Responding to Demographic Trends

### Population Highlights and Projections

The total population of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District (including reserves) from the 2011 census was roughly 34,240. This was a slight decrease (0.7%) since the 2006 census. Within each region, municipality, town, and township, there was considerable variance in terms of population growth and decline. Table 2 displays the total populations of each region and the growth or decline that took place within the five year span between 2006 and 2011. For the most part, regional populations experienced moderate to large decreases since 2006, with the exception of Manitoulin Island's total population, which increased by 3.2%. Looking at the off-reserve population only, each region experienced a moderate to high decrease; the largest of which was Sudbury North/Chapleau Township, by 10.11%.

Region	2011 Population	2006 Population	Population Growth/Decline since 2006	% Growth/Decline since 2006
Sudbury East	6,526	6,752	-226	-3.3
Manitoulin Island District	13,048 (8380*)	12,631 (8,434*)	417 (-54*)	3.3 (-0.6*)
Lacloche/Espanola	9,467	9,598	-131	-1.4
Sudbury North	2,499 (2,116*)	2,741 (2,354*)	-242 (-238*)	-8.8 (-10.1*)
Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part	2,306	2,415	-109	-4.5
Total	34,240 (28,795*)	34,486 (29,553*)	-246 (-758*)	-0.7 (-2.6*)

*Note.* \*Indicates population total excluding First Nations' reserves in the region

*Note.* Based on Original Data from Statistics Canada: 2006 and 2011 Community Profiles

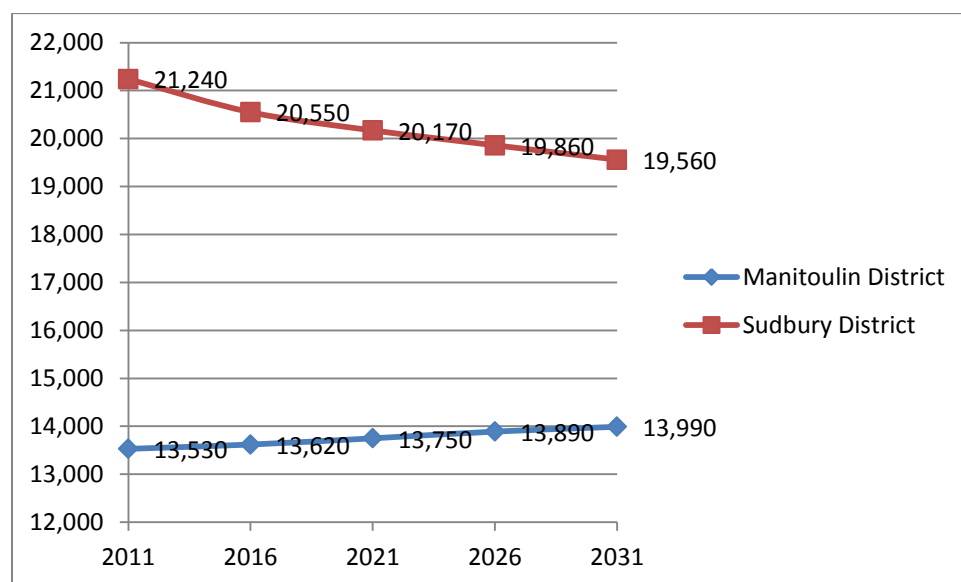
*Note.* The 'Total' population row also includes population counts of Whitefish Lake 6 First Nations, which was not assigned to a designated region within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District.

Table 3 displays the largest population changes that took place among the municipalities, towns, and townships across the district. Population numbers and changes for each municipality, town, and township can be found in Appendix B. There were notably more moderate to significant population decreases than increases throughout the district.

Top Population Growth Sites	% Growth	Top Population Decline Sites	% Decline
Gordon/Barrie Island	14.6	Chapleau	-10.1
St Charles	10.6	French River	-8.2
Killarney	10.0	Gore Bay	-8.0
Tehkummah	6.3	Markstay-Warren	-7.2
Assiginack	5.0	Burpee and Mills	-6.4
Espanola	0.9	Billings	-6.1
Central Manitoulin	0.7	Sables-Spanish River	-5.0
		Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	-27.9

*Note.* Based on Original Data from Statistics Canada: 2006 and 2011 Community Profiles

Figure 4 displays the projected population changes for the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts (including reserves) between 2011 and 2031. The population projections come from the Ministry of Finance and are not available solely for the off-reserve part of the district.



*Figure 4.* Population Projections for the Manitoulin District and Sudbury District, 2011-2031

*Note.* Based on original data on the Manitoulin District and Sudbury District (includes First Nations reserves) from the Ontario Ministry of Finance

According to the Ministry of Finance population projections, the Sudbury District as a whole (including reserves) will decrease by roughly 7.9% between 2011 and 2031, with an average of a 2% decrease for every five years. Between 2006 and 2011, the actual population decrease of the Sudbury District as a whole was roughly 3.0% and was about 3.3% for the off-reserve portion only.

The population for the Manitoulin District as a whole (including reserves) is expected to increase by 3.3% between 2011 and 2031 according to the Ministry of Finance, which is the same as the actual increase that took place between 2006 and 2011. Off-reserve however, the population of the Manitoulin District decreased by 0.6% between 2006 and 2011, while the population of reserves in this district actually increased significantly by 11.2%.

Therefore, it will be important that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB continue to monitor population changes from census data separately for on and off of reserve areas, to get a better sense of the service needs of their catchment area. Having said that, increasing populations of reserves still have some impact on service needs of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area due to potential migration and this should be highlighted when applying for housing or service funding. Populations presented for the Manitoulin District and for the Sudbury District in the Statistics Canada database include First Nations reserves. To monitor the population of the Manitoulin Sudbury DSB catchment area, gather and total data from each individual municipality when it becomes available from the Statistics Canada Census every five years.

Feedback from the community consultations supports data and projections about population decline. Moving out of the district was discussed as a common occurrence by different community members, workers, and civic officials. Reasons cited primarily revolved around employment opportunities and unmet needs of people with special housing needs, such as seniors and persons with developmental disabilities. It was revealed from group discussions that people are leaving their communities, not because they want to, but because of the lack of suitable affordable housing. According to a participant from the client focus group in Noelville (and reflecting a shared sentiment from others);

*“[There are] many seniors who must leave the community to get into a nursing home or subsidized housing when they are no longer capable of waiting for vacancies in Noelville. They go to Sturgeon or Sudbury...”*

## **#1 - Understand and Respond to the District's Demographic**

- Overall, more communities within the district have experienced population decreases than increases between 2006 and 2011, and this trend is projected to continue over the next few decades.
- Some factors that contribute to the population decrease and to housing and homelessness problems are not independent of one another. The cause of this and addressing this in a

comprehensive manner will require a critical look at other factors in the community that are impacting the current demand. For example, participants in the focus groups emphasized that there are very few employment opportunities available to them. They also emphasized their struggles with the cost and availability of food, within their limited shopping options and food bank access. Multi-sector efforts will be required in order to retain the population across the district, and to improve opportunities and services for the whole population.

### **Age Highlights and Characteristics**

From 2006 to 2011, the median age increased in all municipalities across the district, with an average median age of 51.7 in 2011. This is 11.3 years higher than the median age in Ontario as a whole, which also experienced a slight increase since 2006. Table 4 displays the median ages of the municipalities across the district as well as the percent of the population that was age 15 and older in 2006 and 2011.

The percent of the population aged 15 and over ranged between 80.5 and 91.1 across the district's catchment area in 2006 and was between 83.5 and 96.9 in 2011 (average of 88.1). The average value for this indicator in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District catchment area is also higher than it was for all of Ontario at the time (83.0%).



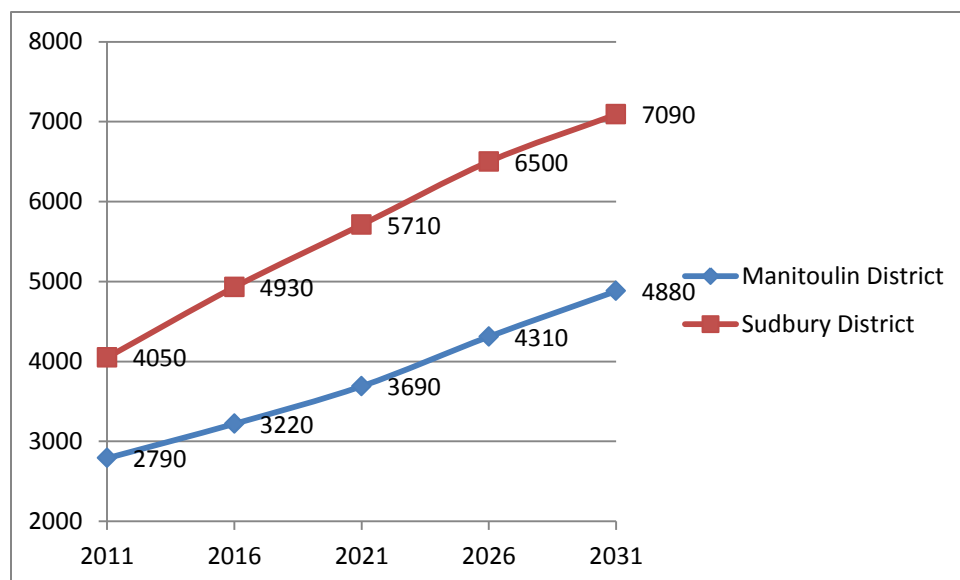
Location	Median Age (2006)	Median Age (2011)	% of Population Aged 15 and Over (2006)	% of Population Aged 15 and Over (2011)
<i>Sudbury East &amp; Area</i>				
Killarney	48.2	54.4	87.9	92.3
St. Charles	49.6	48.7	84.9	86.0
Markstay-Warren	44.1	47.0	83.8	85.5
French River	50.1	53.7	86.8	89.1
<i>Area Average</i>	48.0	51.0	85.9	88.2
<i>Espanola and LaCloche Area</i>				
Espanola	44.3	46.5	84.1	85.4
Sables-Spanish River	43.5	46.2	81.3	83.3
Nairn and Hyman	44.8	47.5	86.7	85.4
Baldwin	44.3	47.6	82	88.9
<i>Area Average</i>	44.2	47.0	83.5	85.8
<i>Manitoulin Island &amp; Area</i>				
Burpee and Mills	49.9	55.2	87.9	91.9
Gore Bay	50.9	51.6	88.6	87.1
Billings	53.6	56.4	88.9	93.2
Assiqinack	48.5	49.1	84.2	83.5
Central Manitoulin	51.4	53.7	87.9	88.5
Gordon/Barrie Island	n/a	55	n/a	88.3
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	56.2	63.4	91.1	96.9
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	47.4	51	84.9	86.3
Cockburn Island	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Tehkummah	54	56.9	89.5	88.6
<i>Area Average</i>	52.3	54.7	88.9	89.4
<i>Sudbury North</i>				
Chapleau and area	40.0	44.5	80.5	83.6
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>				
<i>Area Average</i>	49.3	53.4	89.0	90.1
<i>District Average</i>	49.1	51.7	86.8	88.1
<i>Ontario</i>	39.0	40.4	81.8	83.0

Note. Original data from Statistics Canada 2006 and 2011 Community Profiles

The age groups which are near retirement and could be retiring over the next 20 years make up the highest population cohort in the district. This group, ages 45-64, made up roughly 37.4% of the Sudbury District population in 2011 and 31.8% of the total population in the Manitoulin District that year.

## Seniors

In spite of stagnant and declining trends among the general population, the population of seniors within the district is high and on a rapid incline. Figure 5 displays the projected trends in the senior population (65+) for the two districts as a whole. This age group will incur the most significant change and increase in both the Sudbury and Manitoulin districts based on the Ontario Ministry of Finance's projections. Over the 20 year span of 2011 to 2031, the senior population of the Sudbury District is projected to increase by 42.9%, with an average of a 13% increase every five years. The Manitoulin District's senior population is projected to increase by 53.5% during this time, with an average of 13% increase every five years.



*Figure 5. Population Projections for Seniors Ages 65 and up, 2011-2031*

*Note.* Based on original data on the Manitoulin District and Sudbury District (includes First Nations reserves) from the Ontario Ministry of Finance

Key Age Statistics from the 2006 and 2011 census support the trajectory that is projected to take place across the district over the next 20 years. Currently, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District is 'older' than other areas across the province and the current pattern of a growing population of seniors will continue over the next 20 years. The 45-64 age cohorts are currently the highest in the district and therefore there is the potential for many people to retire over the next 20 years.

The aging population across the district should be taken into consideration by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, along with income, social assistance, and old age pension scans of the area, for prospective future housing site developments and also by municipalities and service partners for strengthening support services.

These trends and projections were evident in the community consultations, as concerns regarding housing and supports for seniors were paramount. Keeping seniors in their own homes should be a main priority. This was overwhelmingly relayed by participant input. Housing that is “a halfway point” or “in between” a nursing home and regular apartment unit is in high demand. People don’t want to give up their homes and don’t feel that they need nursing homes, yet require extra assistance on a regular basis. Home care services, supported housing, and if possible, live-in supports, are a necessity that *will* increase over time. A few communities referred to private organizations that provide these types of services but cost and availability pose barriers. A lack of respite care services was also a concern for family caregivers, sometimes preventing them to carry out errands (including commutes to Greater Sudbury).

Population data, as well as the concerns of citizens (young and old), service providers, and civic officials, across the district, strongly support the development of seniors-only housing.

A strong case is present for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and services within the district to be awarded funding opportunities and to advocate for more housing and increased services as the aging population grows throughout the district. Funded by the province of Ontario (renewed in 2010), the *Aging at Home Strategy* allows for the expansions of community living options for seniors, and for a wider range of home care and community support services available to enable people to continue leading healthy and independent lives in their own homes.

## **#2 - Strong Emphasis on Seniors Required – Housing and Supports**

- The 45-64 age cohort is currently the highest in the district and therefore there is the potential for many people to retire over the next 20 years. The senior population has increased in recent years as well and is projected to continue to increase over the next 20 years. The proportion of seniors is higher in the district than it is in the province of Ontario. Based on these trends, as well as the concerns of citizens across the district, it is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB transition back to a ‘seniors-only’ social housing portfolio from their existing building stock. The population and consultation data strongly demonstrate demand for this change.
- Age statistics hone in on the municipalities with the highest and lowest population of seniors (i.e. highest in NEMI and lowest in Chapleau), although the concentration is high as a whole across the district. This should be taken into consideration by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB for prospective future housing developments and by municipalities and service partners, for strengthening support services.
- Keeping seniors in their own homes should be a main priority. This was overwhelmingly relayed through focus group input. Housing that is “a halfway point” or “in between” a nursing home and regular one-bedroom apartment is in high demand. People do not want to give up their homes and do not feel that they need nursing homes, but need extra assistance on a regular basis. Home care services, supported housing, and if possible,

live-in supports at (future) seniors-only housing facilities, are a necessity that will only increase with time. A few communities referred to private organizations that provide these types of services but noted that they were expensive. Ensure that the district is taking full advantage of services and funding opportunities offered through the LHIN and their Aging at Home Strategy and advocate for increased services as the aging population grows. Furthermore, get connected with agencies such as Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), which provides services to assist seniors with staying in their homes longer, or helps them get set up with long-term care if needed. Without question, CCAC and the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB share, or should be sharing many of the same clientele. It is worthwhile to explore potential partnerships around homecare and respite care subsidies.

- Health Care workers from the Manitoulin-Sudbury District should be sitting on the Health Professionals Advisory Committee (HPAC), through the North East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), if they are not doing so already. If so, those individuals should immediately become connected to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB so that it can stay informed about funding and collaborative opportunities.

## Youth

Youth ages 10-19 also make up a significant age cohort across the district. In 2011, this group made up 11.8% of the population in the Sudbury District and 12.7% of the population in the Manitoulin District.

When focus group discussions with both stakeholder groups turned to at-risk youth in their communities, one of two things happened; either, participants had little to say and were unaware about youth services and youth homelessness, or there was demonstrated concern about a known lack of supports for youth and in people's experience they end up couch-surfing with friends. Beyond this it is generally not known what happens. This is influenced by a case management and funding gap for persons around the ages of 16-17 who were former CAS clients, but are too young to receive social assistance.

There was a strong indication from the focus groups that little to no support services for struggling youth exist in any of the communities visited. If any services were offered to youth experiencing personal and family struggles through the school system, this was not discussed.

## Aboriginal Population

In 2006, the Manitoulin-Sudbury District as a whole (including reserves) had a total aboriginal population of 7885 (SHS, 2009). Off-reserve, the population of aboriginals across the district totaled 3160 or 10.7% of the total general population off of reserves. This is more than five times the ratio of the aboriginal population province-wide and therefore it is critical that the close proximity of First Nations reserves be considered as impacting the demographic as well as the service needs of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area. Table 5 provides a breakdown of the off-reserve aboriginal population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District for 2006. It is important that these records be updated when 2011 data is released, and that they continue to be updated every five years for planning purposes.

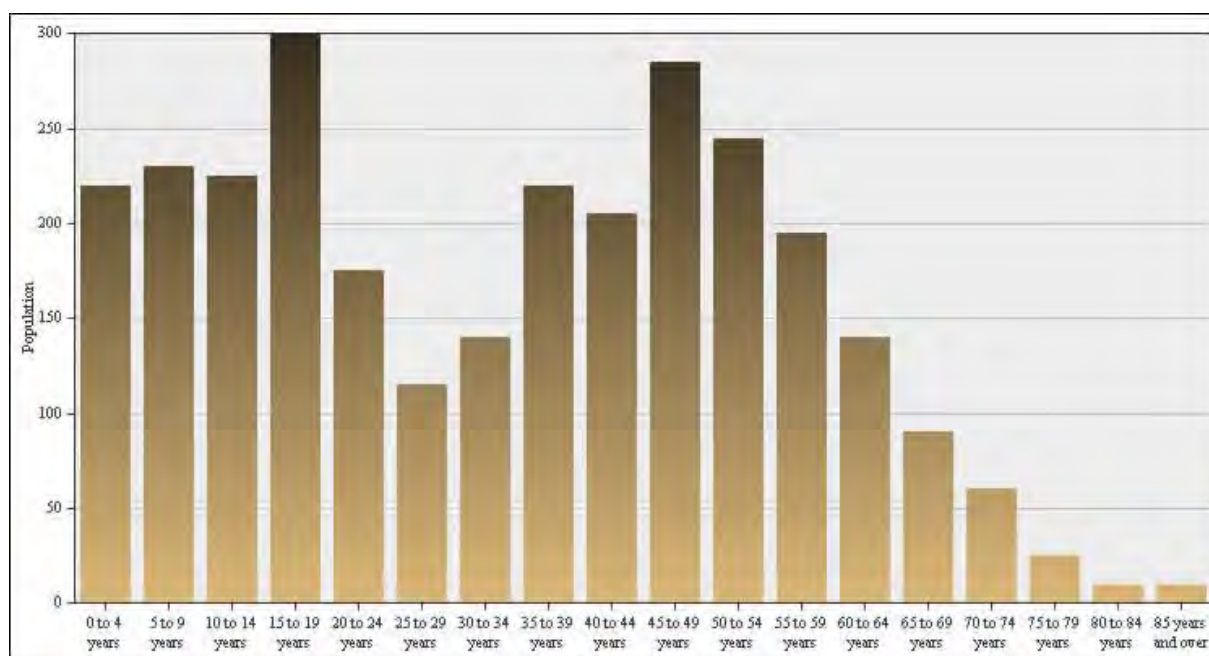
Table 5 <i>Off-Reserve Population of Aboriginal Persons in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District in 2006</i>		
Location	Aboriginal Identity Population 2006	% of Total Population who Identified as Aboriginal
<i>Sudbury East &amp; Area</i>		
Killarney	190	41.4
St. Charles	100	8.6
Markstay-Warren	380	15.4
French River	315	11.8
<i>Total</i>	985	14.6
<i>Espanola and LaCloche Area</i>		
Espanola	475	8.9
Sables-Spanish River	430	13.3
Nairn and Hyman	45	9.1
Baldwin	20	3.6
<i>Total</i>	970	10.1
<i>Manitoulin Island &amp; Area</i>		
Burpee and Mills	n/a	n/a
Gore Bay	50	5.4
Billings	35	6.5
Assiginack	125	13.7
Central Manitoulin	75	3.9
Gordon/Barrie Island	30	6.5
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	n/a	n/a
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	420	15.5
Cockburn Island	n/a	n/a
Tehkummah	25	6.5
<i>Total</i>	760	9.0
<i>Sudbury North</i>		
Total (Chapleau and Area)	255	10.8
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>		
Total	190	7.9
<i>Total Across District</i>	3160	10.7
<i>Ontario</i>	242,490	2.0

Note. Original data from Statistics Canada 2006 Community Profiles

It is important to recognize that statistics regarding aboriginal people, including aboriginal youth, should be gathered and understood beyond the catchment area of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, because of the occurrence of migration between the catchment area and neighbouring reserves.

The aboriginal population in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District, including First Nations' reserves, had a notably younger age demographic than the district's general population in 2006. The median age of the population that identified as being aboriginal in the Sudbury District in 2006 was 36.0, compared to 45.0 for the whole Sudbury District (includes aboriginal and non-aboriginal). Furthermore, 76.6% of the aboriginal population in the Sudbury District was over the age of 15 in 2006, while 83.8% was over 15 for the Sudbury District as a whole (includes aboriginal and non-aboriginal). For the Manitoulin District, the median age of the aboriginal population in 2006 was 32.8, compared to 44.1 for the whole district, and 72.1% of the population was over the age of 15, compared to 81.9% for Manitoulin as a whole.

Figure 6 and Figure 7 display the age distributions of the aboriginal population in the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts (including reserves), respectively. In the Sudbury District, the largest population cohort for aboriginals is youth ages 15-19, and it is 45-49 among the general population. In the Manitoulin District, the largest aboriginal population cohort is youth ages 10-14, and is 55-59 for the whole population. An emergent theme from the consultations was that specific support services were needed for at-risk youth in general in the district. This disadvantage likely disproportionately affects the aboriginal population which has a high cohort of youth.



*Figure 6.* Age Characteristics of the Aboriginal Identity Population in the Sudbury District in 2006

Note. From Aboriginal Population Profile (Statistics Canada , 2007)

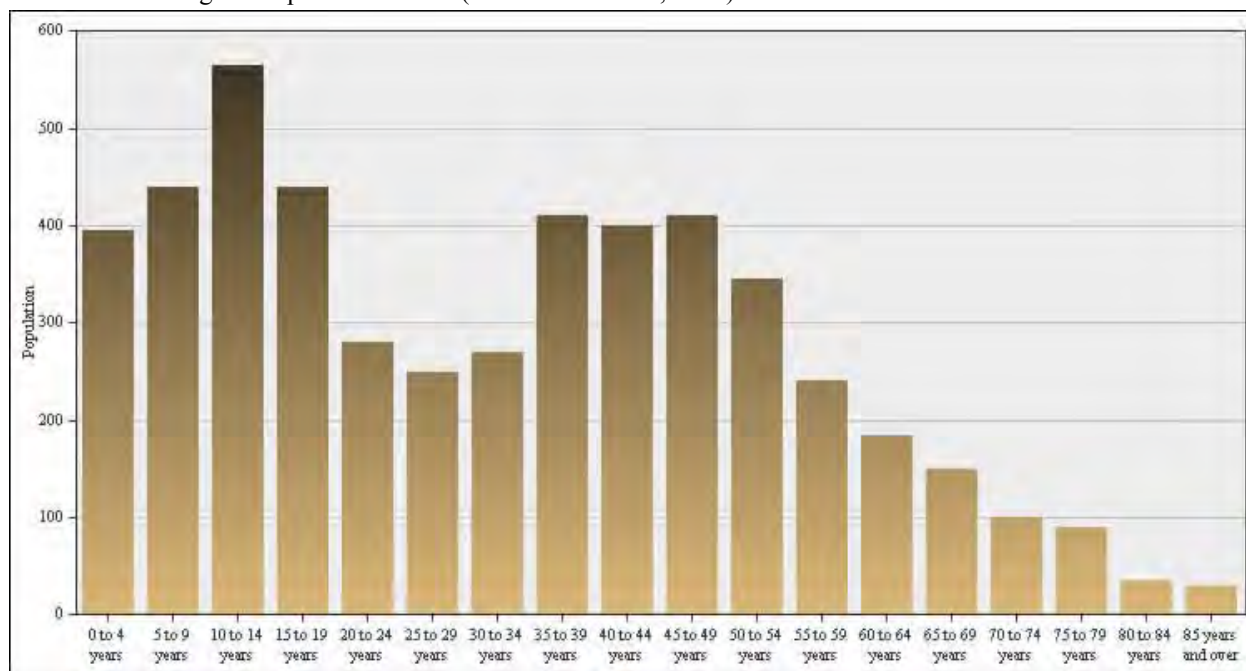


Figure 7. Age Characteristics of the Aboriginal Identity Population in the Manitoulin District in 2006

Note. From Aboriginal Population Profile (Statistics Canada, 2007)

Overall, participants had little to say with regards to issues, needs, and services as they related to aboriginals, youth, and people in general who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. When prompted about whether or not service providers and community officials felt that they knew enough about these populations to provide information, the general response was no, or limited. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area would benefit from establishing a plan to improve and increase relations with the aboriginal community both on and off of reserves, and should recognize the importance of offering culturally appropriate services. To explore opportunities and ideas in this regard, efforts should be made to establish contact with aboriginal organizations that may serve the district (even if they are outside of the district).

Chapleau was the only community where there was substantial discussion of aboriginal housing issues and migration. Within this group, there was an on-reserve service provider, who had some level of connection with a couple of other group members. According to participants, Chapleau has a large off-reserve population, which does not only stem from neighbouring reserves, but also from further areas such as... *“Mattagami, and fly in reserves like Moose Factory [and] Moosonee...”* It was explained that a pattern of transience exists, in which people will move off the reserve for roughly a year, and then go back.



The service provider who works on the reserve raised concerns regarding a significant lack of housing, overcrowding, and lacking access to services on the reserve for her clients...

*“I don’t have access to some mainstream services ... (for example) Food Basics. We have a Crisis Services Team but they rely on the band ... if the band doesn’t help, (the person) does without.”*

Off-reserve across the district, there are few culturally appropriate services. For housing within the vicinity of Chapleau, there is Cochrane/Temiskaming Native Housing (RGI units) but “single people don’t usually get in.” Service providers from different communities expressed that services were not seamless between on and off-reserve organizations. Migration is common among persons facing homelessness. Service providers and community officials were generally not very aware of the prevalence and factors involved. It was inferred from the consultations that this is under-monitored and that relationships with on-reserve services are generally under-developed.

Recommendations in regards to youth and aboriginal populations as a demographic will be included in the #3 - Implement Strategies to Support Overlooked Populations – Aboriginals, Youth, and Individuals who are Homeless.

## The Scope of Low-Income

Table 6 displays key income and expenditure statistics from 2005 and 2006. Overall, median income levels in the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area in 2005-2006 were lower than the provincial average, with very few municipalities displaying exceptions (among certain household compositions). Chapleau had among the highest median incomes for each of the three household compositions with available data – couples with children, couples without children, and one-person households. Tehkkumah, Baldwin, Burpee and Mills, and Sables-Spanish River had among the lowest median incomes overall. In most communities, couples, even with low income, overall fared better than one-person households. The Sudbury East area had the lowest average median income across the district for couple households with children (\$67, 550); Manitoulin Island had the lowest average median income for couples without children (\$48,425), as well as for one-person households (\$17,524).

The median monthly payments for shelter (includes all shelter expenses) were also lower than the provincial average. The highest median monthly payment for a rented dwelling in the district in 2006 was in Killarney (\$1008) and the lowest was in Billings (\$301). The \$500-600 range was most common for median monthly payments on rented dwellings across the district in 2006. The highest median monthly payment for an owned dwelling in the district in 2006 was in Chapleau (\$775) and the lowest was in Sudbury, Unorganized North Part (\$379). It is interesting to note that the median monthly payments on owned dwellings was less than that of rented dwellings in 10 of the 15 municipalities, towns, and townships (with data) for 2006.

The disparity in median income levels between the district and the province appear to be greater than the disparity that exists in shelter costs, indicated by the overall net difference in median income versus median shelter spending over the course of a year (Table 6). Therefore, even though shelter costs may be lower on average in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District, people do not appear to be better off financially, in general.

As a whole, both the Sudbury and Manitoulin districts (including reserves) experienced a considerable increase in household incomes between 2000 and 2006 (SHS Consulting, 2009). The low income rates displayed in Table 6 are based on LICOs (low income cut-offs), which “in short, [are] an income threshold below which a family will likely devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family” (Statistics Canada, 2009). The LICOs are relative measures and are not standardized across Canada. For example, nonurban and rural communities within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District have lower LICOs than urban centres do because the cost of living in nonurban and rural communities is perceived to be less. In 2005, the LICO (before tax) for a single person in areas with populations of less than 30,000 was considered to be \$16,283, and was \$14,313 at the time for rural areas (Statistics Canada, 2011). Refer to Appendix C for additional 2005 LICOs for different family unit sizes. The percentage of people living below the LICO for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District was 10.0 in 2006, compared to 14.7 for the province. The township of Central Manitoulin had

the lowest percentage of people living below the LICO, at 2.6%, and Sudbury East was the lowest on a regional level, at 8.0%. The township of Tehkummah had the highest proportion of people living below LICO at 24.7%, and the highest average among the regions was in Lacloche, at 14%.

Table 6 Key Income and Expenditure Statistics from 2005-2006						
Location	Median Income in 2005 - Couple Households with Children (\$)	Median Income in 2005 - Couple Households without Children (\$)	Median Income in 2005 - One-Person Households (\$)	Median Monthly Payments for Rented Dwellings (\$)	Median Monthly Payments for Owner-Occupied Dwellings	% Living in Low Income*
<i>Sudbury East &amp; Area</i>						
Killarney	80,551	56,699	26,791	1,008	491	9.4
St. Charles	58,352	57,065	19,530	600	564	5.6
Markstay-Warren	74,991	44,900	20,211	500	667	9.1
French River	69,308	51,912	23,162	541	536	6.7
<i>Average</i>	67,550	52,644	22,424	662	565	8
<i>Espanola and LaCloche Area</i>						
Espanola	90,246	63,364	20,547	583	604	11.1
Sables-Spanish River Township	61,503	44,984	17,579	650	483	11.5
Nairn and Hyman	66,497	55,908	32,160	n/a	618	13.1
Baldwin Township	78,494	45,535	15,506	675	472	20.0
<i>Average</i>	74,185	52,448	21,448	636	544	14
<i>Manitoulin Island &amp; Area</i>						
Burpee and Mills	45,285	38,475	13,939	n/a	511	12.1
Gore Bay	75,672	62,979	19,685	551	464	6.2
Billings	84,704	48,315	18,355	301	434	9.4
Assiqinack	72,140	56,311	18,324	401	640	5.5
Central Manitoulin	84,965	48,060	23,669	449	446	2.6
Cockburn Island	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gordon	65,487	48,585	n/a	601	460	4.9
Barrie Island	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	77,802	57,128	20,931	567	492	10.8
Tehkummah	56,255	36,248	13,908	n/a	408	24.7
<i>Average</i>	71,376	48,425	17,524	478	482	10
<i>Sudbury North</i>						

Chapleau and Area	88,035	58,877	33,104	550	775	9.1
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>						
Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part	83,874	51,627	23,279	525	379	8.4
<i>District Average of Medians</i>	73304	51139	21,063	567	525	10.0
<i>Ontario</i>	87,960	68,764	30,025	801	1,046	14.7
<i>Annual Spending Difference between Province and District</i>	-14,656	-17,625	-8,962	2,810	6,256	4.7

Note. \*Refers to an economic family or person over 15 who is not a part of an economic family

Note. Original data from 2006 Community Profiles (Statistics Canada, 2006)

With the cost of monthly payments on housing being more affordable than rent in many parts of the district, it is worthwhile to continue to explore the potential of assisting low income earners to become home owners. This practice is an allowable component of funding provided through the Investment in Affordable Housing Program (IAH), which was granted to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB at the end of 2011, for use until 2015. However, the funds received in 2011 were one quarter of what they had been prior to this time, and were allocated to home and apartment repairs through the Ontario Renovates program (\$240,000), the Direct Shelter Subsidy program (\$10,000), and to Haven House, the only emergency shelter in the district (\$50,000).

Table 7 displays average rent amounts for the districts from 2006. Table 8 displays 2006 estimates of affordable rent amounts, according to household incomes in the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts. The calculation of ‘affordable rents’ assume that household spending on rent is no higher than 30% of one’s income. Information from these tables must be updated when 2011 numbers are released and should continue to be monitored.

Table 7				
<i>Average Market Rents for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District in 2006</i>				
Bachelor	One Bedroom	Two Bedroom	Three Bedroom	More than Three Bedrooms
\$410	\$544	\$668	\$754	\$758

Note. Original data from “CMHC Market Rent Survey,” by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2005. Copyright 2006 by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

District	Income 20 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Affordable Rent	Income 30 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Affordable Rent	Income 40 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Affordable Rent	Income 50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Affordable Rent
Sudbury District	\$13,800	\$350	\$15,500	\$390	\$19,700	\$490	\$25,700	\$640
Manitoulin District	\$11,900	\$300	\$14,800	\$370	\$19,200	\$480	\$26,700	\$670

*Note.* Income percentile refers to the percent of people who earned less than the displayed amount i.e. 20% of people in the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile earn less than \$13,800 or \$11,900

*Note.* Original data from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2006)

### **Living on Social Assistance - Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program**

For people living on social assistance (OW and ODSP), income levels and affordability are significantly more compromised. Table 9 displays the current (2013) OW and ODSP rates, since the 1% increase took effect in November/December of 2012. Today's shelter rates for an OW client would not even cover the average rent for a bachelor apartment in the district back in 2006. OW and ODSP earners today are below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of income earners. Both recipients would have to receive an additional source of funding or reside in social housing in order to potentially be able to meet 'affordable' rent standards for their level of income, with OW earners falling far below the mark.

Case Type	Before Nov / Dec 2012				After Nov / Dec 2012			
OW	Basic Needs	Max Shelter	Max OCB	Total	Basic Needs	Max Shelter	Max OCB	Total
Single	\$227	\$372	\$0	\$599	\$230	\$376	\$0	\$606
Couple	\$448	\$584	\$0	\$1032	\$453	\$590	\$0	\$1043
Single Parent + 1 child <sup>1</sup>	\$347	\$584	\$92	\$1023	\$350	\$590	\$92	\$1032
Single Parent + 2 children <sup>1</sup>	\$347	\$634	\$184	\$1165	\$350	\$641	\$184	\$1175
Couple +1 child <sup>1</sup>	\$448	\$634	\$92	\$1174	\$453	\$641	\$92	\$1186
<b>ODSP</b>								
Single	\$590	\$474	\$0	\$1064	\$596	\$479	\$0	\$1075
Couple <sup>2</sup>	\$873	\$745	\$0	\$1618	\$882	\$753	\$0	\$1635
Single Parent + 1 child <sup>3</sup>	\$733	\$745	\$92	\$1570	\$739	\$753	\$92	\$1584
Single Parent + 2 children <sup>4</sup>	\$751	\$807	\$184	\$1742	\$757	\$816	\$184	\$1757
Couple <sup>2</sup> + 1 child <sup>3</sup>	\$873	\$807	\$92	\$1772	\$882	\$816	\$92	\$1790

Note. From Income Security Advocacy Centre (2012)

Youth who find themselves on their own and financially struggling generally do not qualify for social assistance...

*“Kids that are between 16-17 years are falling through the cracks ... they’re not under CAS care anymore and can’t be on OW.” (Chapleau)*

Community service providers and social assistance case workers in the district have come across ineligible youth who have been couch-surfing or who end up couch-surfing after being denied

social assistance. Generally speaking, persons under the age of 18 do not qualify for social assistance but under extenuating circumstances such as family violence they may be able to qualify. Still, participants from a few communities expressed that for 16 and 17 year olds who are no longer under the care of Children's Aid Society (CAS), the transition to housing and receiving OW is not quick or easy.

Core housing need in the district further puts the median income levels and median shelter spending levels into perspective. Core housing need, as defined by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, refers to households that spend more than 30% of their before-tax income on shelter. Table 10 displays the number and percent of various households that were in core need throughout the district (including reserves) in 2001 and 2006. The numbers are high overall, especially among renters (31.3% in 2006) and aboriginal people (15.2% in 2006). The percent of households in core housing need decreased overall and among owners and aboriginal households since 2001, but remained relatively the same among renters. Ensure to update records with 2011 data when it becomes available.

Household Type	Core Housing Need							
	2001				2006			
	In Core Need	% of Total Households	Not in Core Need	Total	In Core Need	% of Total Households	Not in Core Need	Total
All Households	1,690	14.3	10,095	11,785	1,315	11.0	10,690	12,005
Owners	925	9.9	8,435	9,360	595	6.1	9,110	9,705
Renters	770	31.8	1,655	2,425	720	31.3	1,580	2,300
Aboriginal	275	21.7	995	1,270	245	15.2	1,370	1,615

*Note.* \*Households spending more than 30% of before-tax household income on shelter.

*Note.* From CMHC, based on Statistics Canada Census data (2006)

## Homeless - Hidden and Hard-to-Serve

Haven House is the only emergency shelter that exists within the whole Manitoulin-Sudbury District. It generally serves women and children; however women who are victims of domestic violence typically get sent to Geneva House in Greater Sudbury. Haven House will also refer men to Greater Sudbury's Salvation Army Men's Shelter. Referrals to shelters in Greater Sudbury are not only inconvenient due to distance from loved ones and transportation, but as one service provider from the shelter stated, this also forces some individuals to have to choose between leaving a job and obtaining shelter.

A lack of knowledge about the existence of homelessness and what happens to homeless people was common throughout the communities, among clients, civic officials, and service providers alike. At times, persons facing homelessness will be set up in motels or provided with bus money



to go to Greater Sudbury. This was primarily discussed by Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB officials situated in Espanola and did not appear to be a standard practice in general, even though the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB does provide this service elsewhere in the catchment area. Advertisement of this service as an official Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB practice is strongly encouraged among municipalities and services providers in the catchment area.

### **Additional Gaps in Services that Contribute to Imminent Risk of Homelessness**

It has already been discussed that a general lack of supports, outreach, and shelters throughout the district may disproportionately impact youth and aboriginal people who are at imminent risk or experiencing homelessness. In addition to this, the absence of transitional housing, services, and processes within the district were major concerns raised around the following populations and scenarios:

- Persons with mental illness being discharged from the hospital
- Seniors taking up limited hospital beds because of a lack of post-hospitalization supports
- People recovering from addictions
- People leaving prison

*“There is no discharge planning from the hospital. When folks are discharged on Fridays, there are no services open on the weekend and no place for them to go. Meanwhile, they or their family are in crisis ... this is a really big issue.” (Chapleau)*

A lack of mental health and addictions services in general was raised as a concern, especially among service providers. Overall, it does not seem feasible for persons with high mental health need to be able to stay in their communities if they wish to receive proper supports, including transitional housing and crisis services.

*“...if they need housing, there’s nothing available. If they’re lucky, they’ve gotten on the [Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB] wait list. When they get housing, it might be in Webbwood (there’s no services, store, no transportation). How do they get their groceries, medications, etc. ... another challenge.” (Espanola)*

### **#3 - Implement Strategies to Support Overlooked Populations – Aboriginals, Youth, and Individuals who are Homeless**

- A strategy to better understand and address homelessness throughout the district must be put into place. Subcomponents of this strategy should involve hard-to-reach individuals (persons with mental health and addictions), aboriginal homelessness, aboriginal relations, and youth services and outreach.

➤ **Aboriginal Population and Aboriginal Youth**

- A lack of knowledge about the importance of culturally sensitive and specific services can be strongly inferred from the consultations. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB would benefit from establishing a plan to improve and increase relations with the aboriginal community both on and off of reserves, and should recognize the importance of offering culturally appropriate services. Efforts to establish contact with Aboriginal organizations that may serve the district (even if they are outside of the district) to explore opportunities in this regard should be made.
- Maintain aboriginal population records with every census release (starting with 2011).
- For planning purposes, migration of low-income populations on and off reserves should be better monitored. Migration is common among persons facing homelessness. Service providers and community officials were generally not very aware of the prevalence and factors involved. It was inferred from the consultations that this is under-monitored and that relationships with on-reserve services are generally under-developed. Social housing, social assistance, and other service intake forms should specifically determine aboriginal identity as well as previous place of residence for applicants, including an option of having lived on reserve within the last six months.
- A partnership among case managers on and off of reserves should be established with the consent of clients in order to provide more effective supports and services.

➤ **Youth in General**

- As a whole, the population of youth ages 10-19 is fairly high in the district (2006 data). There does not seem to be any specific services for youth in the district, which may disproportionately affect the aboriginal population. Some participants claimed that there were homeless youth within the district who were couch-surfing with their friends. Family breakdown is generally the leading cause of youth homelessness and couch-surfing is a common avenue for many youth who fall into hardship, before ending up on the streets or in a shelter.
- There was no clear understanding among focus group participants if any services were offered to youth experiencing personal and family struggles through the school system. It is critical to get connected with schools to get a better understanding of what they offer and how connected to services they are. There was evidence that children and youth services were not well connected to other services. Sharing information would be the first step in getting a better sense of needs to inform strategies around at-risk youth.

## Homelessness in General

- Municipalities should have a policy in place to provide temporary shelter and assistance finding housing for people who are homeless. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should investigate establishing partnerships with motels/hotels in the various communities for this purpose and engaging service providers in the process. The lack of knowledge about the existence of homelessness and the lack of awareness about how people facing homelessness cope emerged as a clear issue throughout the focus groups.
- Establish relations with Greater Sudbury's emergency shelters and other service providers who provide housing support services (i.e. the Homelessness Network, including the Corner Clinic and seven other service providers). It is within their capacity to monitor the number of people who use their services that are from the Manitoulin-Sudbury District. Data from Greater Sudbury's shelters and housing support services indicate that a high number of people come from areas outside of Sudbury that are still within the province.
- Obtain quarterly data from Haven House – the only existing shelter within the district. This data should include information about the 'turn-aways' or people who do not fit the criteria to stay at the shelter for whatever reason. Start to establish a base for what the needs are around homelessness and an emergency shelter system.

## #4 -Address Gaps in Services that Contribute to Homelessness

- In spearheading the implementation of service delivery committees (Priority #10), increase the connectedness between hospitals, prisons, and community service providers in and around the district. There currently appears to be no discharge planning taking place between service providers in the district and hospitals and prisons in and around the district. While hospital and prison policies are not the mandate of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, all three entities are involved in one cycle of service, which is evidently disconnected.

## Transportation

Living in low-income and in core housing need with social assistance rates that fall exceptionally below shelter and living costs makes it almost impossible for an individual to own a vehicle. The disadvantage of this, as was overwhelmingly relayed through community consultations, was particularly worsened by living in rural communities where access to public transportation, services, and amenities, are limited.

*“For people who don’t drive, there is no access to a transportation service to bring you downtown to get groceries. If you need a ride to the hospital, you are on your own.”*  
(Gore Bay)

The issue of transportation was paramount across the district and was discussed as having an impact on so many aspects of people’s lives; putting limitations on their health and on potential opportunities for upward economic mobility. The closest thing to public transportation described was the Care Van in Espanola, which provides transportation for residents aged 55 and over and for residents with disabilities. The service is available Monday to Friday at a rate of \$2.50 per trip. However, participants in Espanola raised concerns about scheduling (especially between communities) and a lack of bicycle accessibility with the service. Private transportation services that are available in parts of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District, such as the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) which provides transportation to medical appointments, were said to be too expensive.

The issue of transportation repeatedly arose as a barrier to accessing food banks and to food security overall...

*“Food is expensive; we have to pay more for groceries. The closest grocery store [where food is more affordable] is in Timmins ... 2 hours away.”* (Chapleau)

In Chapleau, there is Via Rail, and a bus which runs sparsely. Healthcare workers from the Family Health Team Clinic there who participated in the focus group often serve persons in low income, so they are aware that the \$7 bus fare to attend a five minute appointment sometimes prevents people from receiving critical and preventative health services. These workers strongly felt that having a bus pass paid for “*would help keep clients out of the emergency department.*”

## **#5 - Imperative Action on Improving Transportation Accessibility Required**

- The vast geography and limited amenities and services within the district strongly and disproportionately impact persons in low-income. Immediate innovation around transportation is required. Build upon the *‘Blueprint for Moving Forward in Improving the Seniors’ Non-Emergent Transportation System in Sudbury-Manitoulin.’* The blueprint, released in 2010, contains innovative collaborative opportunities both among potential partners within the district as well with transportation providers in Greater Sudbury.
- Explore opportunities to partner with and build upon existing services in the district such as the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) and Aides aux Seniors. Increasing service availability and subsidies were the main concerns raised around existing transportation services throughout the consultations.

## Labour Force Characteristics

Labour Force information is obviously related to income and is therefore important and closely related to the population's ability to secure stable housing.

The labour force participation rate (for persons aged 15 and over) for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District (not including reserves) was 54.6% in 2006, slightly down from the 2001 rate of 58.3%. The provincial labour force participation rate was 67.1% in 2006 and 67.3% in 2001. A possible contribution to the difference is the higher proportion of seniors in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District (SHS, 2009). Labour force data is monitored by the Manitoulin Sudbury DSB on a regular basis and can be found at [www.labourmarketstats.com](http://www.labourmarketstats.com).

Table 12 displays the 2001 and 2006 labour force participation rates and unemployment rates for the municipalities and towns across the district as well as regional averages. Ensure that these records are updated when 2011 census data is released. There is no clear relationship between the labour force participation rate and unemployment rate values<sup>2</sup>. The highest participation rates in the district in 2006 were in Chapleau (67.6%), Killarney (61.0%), and Nairn and Hyman (59.0%). The lowest participation rates in 2006 were in Gordon (46.5%), Barrie Island (44.4%), and Tehkummah (48.5%). Gordon and Barrie Island have since amalgamated into the township of Gordon/Barrie Island.

Of the 18 municipalities and townships that provided data in both 2001 and 2006, only five experienced a labour force participation increase; which ranged between 0.2 and 2.5%. On a regional level, Manitoulin Island/District experienced the largest decrease in labour force participation since 2001 (7.5%), with an overall rate of 52.1% in 2006. The decreases in the Manitoulin District between 2001 and 2006 were as high as 26.9%, as seen in the township of Tehkummah.

The unemployment rate of the entire Manitoulin-Sudbury District in 2006 was 11.2, compared to the provincial rate of 6.4 at the time. Across the district in 2006, the rates were fairly spread out (standard deviation<sup>3</sup>=5.6), with as low as 4.5% in Gore Bay, and as high as 27.7% in Killarney. Two-thirds of the municipalities with data had an unemployment rate higher than the provincial average. Sudbury East was the region with the highest unemployment rate as a whole in 2006 (15.8%).

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<sup>2</sup> This is based on correlation coefficients for the two rates;  $r = 0.2$  for 2006 and  $-0.6$  in 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Standard Deviation ( $\sigma$ ) indicates the level of variation from the average.

Location	Labour Force Participation Rate (%)		Increase/Decrease Since 2001 (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)		Increase/Decrease Since 2001 (%)
	2006	2001		2006	2001	
<i>Sudbury East &amp; Area</i>						
Killarney	61.0	62.2	-1.2	27.7	21.6	6.1
St. Charles	53.1	50.7	2.4	15.5	6.7	8.8
Markstay-Warren	52.7	50.6	2.1	10.3	13.4	-3.1
French River	52.2	52.9	-0.7	9.7	14.0	-4.3
<i>Average</i>	54.8	54.1	0.7	15.8	13.9	1.9
<i>Espanola and LaCloche Area</i>						
Espanola	58.4	60.2	-1.8	11.3	11.0	0.3
Sables-Spanish River	55.7	53.2	2.5	11.7	14.5	-2.8
Nairn and Hyman	59.0	60.3	-1.3	6.1	4.9	1.2
Baldwin	54.3	58.3	-4.0	10.0	6.7	3.3
<i>Average</i>	56.9	58.0	-1.2	9.8	9.3	0.5
<i>Manitoulin Island &amp; Area</i>						
Burpee and Mills	50.0	66.7	-16.7	17.9	5.3	12.6
Gore Bay	58.7	60.0	-1.3	4.5	4.8	-0.3
Billings	55.7	58.1	-2.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Assiginack	57.4	54.8	2.6	4.7	3.5	1.2
Central Manitoulin	52.9	51.7	1.2	8.3	7.4	0.9
Cockburn Island	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gordon	46.5	69.6	-23.1	n/a	3.6	-3.6
Barrie Island	44.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	n/a	40.5	n/a	n/a	33.3	-33.3
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	54.8	60.0	-5.2	8.4	8.5	-0.1
Tehkummah	48.5	75.4	-26.9	6.1	n/a	6.1
<i>Average</i>	52.1	59.6	-8.0	6.2	6.6	-1.7
<i>Sudbury North</i>						
Chapleau	67.6	67.4	0.2	13.1	9.1	4.0
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>						
Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part	54.6	55.5	-0.9	13.1	18.2	-5.1
<i>District Average</i>	54.6	58.3	-1.4	11.2	11.0	0.2
<i>Ontario</i>	67.1	67.3	-0.2	6.4	6.1	0.3

*Note.* Original data from Statistics Canada Community Profiles, 2006

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB administers programs, such as the Enhanced Job Placement Program (subsidized) that are intended to assist Ontario Works (OW) recipients with finding employment. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's Employment Ontario Services helps connect recipients with employers who are in need of workers. In 2011, 12.5% of OW recipients within the district were employed, compared to 13.7% in 2010 (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, 2012). In 2011, the average percent of clients exiting Ontario Works due to employment was 17.96%; the highest month being July at 42.31% and the lowest being October at 6.67%.

Among participants from the client groups where there was sufficient representation from people of working age, there was a common, strong desire to work. A few main themes emerged as posing barriers or not facilitating this transition, including a lack of employment opportunities, needing assistance, training, and support to get set up with work, and transportation (many people don't own vehicles). The helpful and critical programs administered by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB seem to respond to the desire and types of supports that clients expressed were important to be in place for improving their living situations (i.e. Enhanced Job Placement Program and Employment Ontario Program). However, a strong theme among participants was lacking knowledge about what is available to them through social assistance, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, and in their communities. Quarterly communications should be sent out to OW and ODSP recipients, detailing existing programs and services – even if they have not recently changed.

### **Stagnant Economies and Few Employment Opportunities**

This theme was less common in the communities where the groups were mostly seniors (Gore Bay and Noelville) but otherwise was a concern expressed strongly across the district, particularly by clients and civic officials. In Little Current, concerns were raised about the only opportunities for employment being seasonal, and that those opportunities tend to be awarded to young students.

A lack of employment opportunities locally means that individuals have to try to find good paying jobs outside of their communities. This was an additional issue that client-group participants in multiple communities discussed as a...

*“...Catch-22 – I need a good job in order to subsidize transportation costs of commuting but few good jobs are available. Can't move to Sudbury where you can access more services unless you have a good job.” (Espanola/Lacloche)*

Mayors and other civic officials across the district were very concerned with the emigration of young people from their communities, because of the lack of opportunities available to them. There was a common sentiment of feeling faced with *“real challenges getting private sector*

*investment” (Espanola/Lacloche). There was some recognition that creative incentives were needed to attract investors; “smaller developers [who are] not seeing the same kind of profit margin in investing [compared to Greater Sudbury].” (Espanola/Lacloche)*



## Education and Training

Education and training capacity will impact the labour force data and contribute to overall housing stability as well.

In 2006, 21.2% of persons between the ages of 25 and 64 in the Manitoulin District and 25.6% of this cohort in the Sudbury District had less than a high school diploma. Table 11 provides a general breakdown of educational attainment for the Manitoulin-Sudbury District (including First Nations reserves).

Type of Education	Manitoulin District (%)	Sudbury District (%)	Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part (%)	Ontario (%)
No Certificate, Diploma, or Degree	21.2	25.6	28.4	13.6
High School	25.3	26.6	25.8	25.0
Beyond High School – Certificates, Diplomas, or Degrees from Apprenticeship or Trades, College, or University	53.4	47.7	45.5	61.5

*Note.* Original data from Statistics Canada 2006 Community Profiles (includes First Nations reserves)

The Manitoulin-Sudbury District does not have a college or university main campus located within it; however it does have some satellite campuses that offer select courses. The closest main college and university campuses, depending on where one lives within the widespread district, are in Greater Sudbury, Timmins, and Sault Ste. Marie. There are two satellite campuses for select Cambrian College Programs – one in Little Current and one in Espanola. Residents can also be connected to various northern colleges and universities via distance education through the Contact North program; however focus group participants who discussed education did not seem to have any knowledge of this option.

Attending school on campus did not seem to be a feasible option among participants who discussed wanting to further their education. There are few public transportation options and the schools are far and a costly commute for some. “Moving to Sudbury” frequently came up as an unlikely option for going to school as well. Discussions regarding education and opportunities among younger participants emphasized the “catch 22” of not being able to find a job that would allow them to save enough money to move and get an education, so that they could one day get a better job. In recognition of the high population of elderly people within their communities, interest in training to be a Personal Support Worker (PSW) came up a few times in different communities...

*“It [PSW] is a skill that’s really needed. Not everybody is able to do the PSW work (heavy lifting). Cambrian college ... (I have native status so school for me is covered) ... sometimes they don’t have courses here in Little Current and I don’t have transportation to go to Gore Bay or Espanola.*

There was a general lack of knowledge among participants about training opportunities and supports in place for social assistance recipients and social housing tenants, as well as their children. At times, participants described types of programs that they *wish* they could access (i.e. shuttle bus for education or a job placement program), which already happen to be in place through the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has seven shuttle vans that run in various locations across the district, which are intended to help increase access to education. Currently, the services are primarily intended for persons on social assistance who require upgrading.

Expanding the shuttle services and increasing efforts to make people aware of the services would be worthwhile initiatives for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB. With enough coordination with class times and getting word out, there seems to be enough interest in post-secondary education that people would maximize use of this initiative. While the services may be currently readily used by persons already in school, there was strong indication that not knowing there are transportation options deters others from even applying to school. Furthermore, the district could attract more courses and programs if colleges and universities see that significant demand has been established.

The Kenjgewin Teg Institute, a First Nations training institute, provides a unique selection of secondary and postsecondary courses to community members. The potential for creating more effective partnerships with First Nations may include discussions regarding training and employment.

## **#6 - Employment and Training Opportunities**

- This priority demands innovation as well as maximizing the potential of the programs already in place by the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB through increased outreach (see #9). While the current programs demonstrate reasonable success, eagerness to work and acquire training was a common theme in the client participant groups, as was frustration around limited opportunities. It is evident from different data sources within this plan that initiatives to expand employment and education/training opportunities which respond to the district’s large senior demographic (e.g. Personal Support Worker, Nursing, and Gerontology) would be both worthwhile and attainable.
- Partnering with employers, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and Employment Ontario service providers who are already involved in the current employment and training programs of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should be built upon

as part of a larger process to develop an integrated labour market strategy for the Manitoulin - Sudbury District.

## Household and Dwelling Characteristics

It was reiterated across the district that there is an overall lack of affordable housing within people's respective communities. Within this theme, there were subthemes or components about specific types of housing that were lacking, such as affordable housing for seniors and supportive/supported housing, lack of family housing (Noelville, St. Charles, Gore Bay, and Espanola), and very little physically accessible social or rent-geared-to-income housing (Espanola, Little Current, Gore Bay, Chapleau).

*“There are no places to rent around here. If you aren't already in social housing ... units only become available if someone dies. More move into The Manor or move into a nursing home.”(Little Current)*

Concern was expressed that although there is consideration of special needs when filling up units on the first floors in buildings that are not accessible, seniors did not always get these units. As discussed in the 'Responding to Demographic Trends section, these concerns regarding a lack of housing suitability and affordability caused people to move from their communities.

There have been few new developments and rentals in the district's housing stock in general over the last several years (at least). Between 2007 and 2011 there were no new apartment building developments in the district. During this time, there were 39 new rentals/starts across the district (including on reserves), all within 2007 and 2008 (Statistics Canada, 2011).

In 2009, SHS Consultants recommended that land belonging to the hospital in Espanola be put towards supportive housing for seniors and/or persons with disabilities. It was also noted that at the time there were existing buildings available at reasonable costs, which if purchased could replace currently under-utilized housing stock, allowing that stock to be converted to other needed forms of housing. In addition to the strong demonstration of need for seniors housing from the qualitative and quantitative data in this plan, recent waiting list trends will help direct current housing development need around one bedroom and family units.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has already approved at least four housing project plans and more proposals are forthcoming from member municipalities. These include a Senior Complex and Community Living Proposal presented by the Municipality of French River, Affordable/Supportive Senior Housing in Espanola through the Town of Espanola Non-Profit Housing Corporation, and a Business Plan for an Affordable Senior Housing Transitional Living Centre in Chapleau (Maison Boréal Home Inc.). The Board also recently passed a resolution to transfer property to the Municipality of Gore Bay for the purpose of developing seniors housing.

Municipalities in the district have struggled with bringing in more money for housing developments and initiatives. Money never comes in from the federal government level as the responsibility of housing is downloaded to the province, from which “capital monies have been

shrinking” and to municipalities. According to civic officials, there were good government programs that are not available anymore or have been drastically reduced (e.g. Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program). When this happens, remaining funds tend to only be enough for repairs (which are also needed).

Table 13 displays key information about the prevalence, state of repair, and value of owned and rented dwellings across in the Manitoulin-Sudbury District in 2006. Ensure that this information is updated once 2011 data becomes available. Maintain updated records about rental dwellings (i.e. locations, prevalence, and costs) throughout the district.

Table 13 <i>Household and Dwelling Characteristics from 2006</i>				
Location	Owned Dwellings in 2006 (n)	Rented Dwellings in 2006 (n)	Dwellings Requiring Major Repair in 2006 (% of Total Occupied Dwellings)	Average Value of Owned Dwelling
<i>Sudbury East</i>				
Killarney	175	25	12.5	153,913
St. Charles	425	80	9	149,097
Markstay-Warren	885	125	11.9	118,677
French River	970	220	9.2	165,738
<i>Average</i>			10.7	146,856
<i>LaCloche</i>				
Espanola	1655	570	8.1	107,881
Sables-Spanish River	1020	275	12.0	107,698
Nairn and Hyman	175	20	n/a	117,334
Baldwin	175	35	n/a	101,347
<i>Average</i>			10.05	108,565
<i>Manitoulin Island</i>				
Burpee and Mills	120	20	25	86,125
Gore Bay	270	135	12	129,421
Billings	210	25	10.4	158,255
Assiqinack	310	85	20.5	171,286
Central Manitoulin	715	135	6.4	148,333
Gordon	140	40	5.7	140,195
Barrie Island	15	15	40	n/a
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	920	230	6.9	147,330
Tehkummah	165	15	11.4	184,206
<i>Average</i>			15.4	129,461
<i>Sudbury North</i>				
Average (Chapleau and area)	635	300	8.6	87,650
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>				
Average	950	95	11.5	142,921
<i>District Average</i>			13.0	134,300
<i>Ontario</i>			1.9	297,479

Note. Original data from 2006 Statistics Canada Community Profiles

While funding shortfalls have prevented all necessary repairs in Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB building stock from being addressed in a timely manner, help provided to homeowners in this regard has kept numerous housing units on the market and people in their homes, including seniors and young families. However, as relayed by civic officials and client participants, funding is not sufficient to build new housing or to address the required repair and maintenance of the existing stock. By 2006, there were a considerable amount of dwellings in need of major repair across the district. With the need for major repairs being so high (district average is 11.1% higher than the provincial average), the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should be able to present a strong case for more funding, also considering the amount of proactive initiatives already taking place around repairs.

### **Recent and Ongoing Affordable Housing Repair Initiatives**

The Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program had a northern component that was meant to assist low to moderate income home owners and landlords that administer affordable rental units, with repairs that would allow their dwellings to meet acceptable standards. In addition to this program, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB made major repairs to select social housing units between 2009 and 2011, through the Social Housing Renovation & Retrofit Program (SHRRP). Repairs and renovations were of the following nature:

- Elevator upgrades (Cedar Grover Apartments, Chapleau Health Services)
- Heat recovery ventilator installations (Cochrane Temiskaming Native Housing)
- Water treatment system upgrades (Villa Beausejour Apartments in Warren)
- Energy efficient window installations (Native People of Sudbury Development Corporation family units)
- Replacement of HVAC units (Queensway Place, Espanola Non-Profit Housing)
- Replacement of old refrigerators and stoves with new Energy Star rated appliances (Gore Bay, Mindemoya, Little Current, Massey)
- Replacement of roofing system Evelyn McNenly Apartments, Massey)

It is important that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB ensure that repairs made through the Northern Housing component of the Affordable Housing program are followed up with. Evaluate and make recommendations based on how the funding was dispersed and what it was targeted for. Determine if the program was successful in targeting major repairs. Compare census data from 2006 and 2011 (when 2011 data becomes available), to determine if the number of dwellings requiring major repairs has decreased since 2006. Determine if residents were made aware of the process, particularly individuals with low incomes. In the event that funds become available again, this information would position the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB to be able to make effective use of it.

Conduct cost-benefit analysis on energy efficiency initiatives that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB put into place for housing over the last few years. Continue to monitor and compare costs to pre-repair years, as well as to other buildings with older appliances and fixtures, to determine if and where similar initiatives could be applied should funds become available.

In 2010, Building Condition Assessments (BCAs) took place on Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB-owned properties that were intended to provide a picture of the buildings' needs over the next 20 years. As done in 2011, the BCAs should continue to be incorporated into Capital Asset Management Plans and annual budgets.

In addition to a lack of funding, municipalities face other policy limitations, such as not being able to provide incentives to developers. Overall, it has been difficult to attract private developers and property managers to social housing initiatives, within the district and elsewhere. An alternative to future negotiations for social housing buildings would be to consider proposing the inclusion of social housing *units* within existing market rent buildings. Many social housing residents and individuals requiring affordable housing are not comfortable in buildings entirely devoted to social housing and would prefer to be in mixed housing. Furthermore, explore alternative development options and companies for affordable housing; e.g. Options for Homes – non-profit housing corporations whose mandate is affordable home ownership (usually in the form of condominiums).

Actively seek out Requests for Proposals that provide funding for housing and homelessness initiatives. Connect with and follow updates from the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat (HPS, federal government) and the Homelessness Hub, who have put forth general funding opportunities in recent years around program evaluation. Also inquire about the receipt of annual HPS funding, which other service managers across Canada currently receive and often but not always use towards capital projects. There is no HPS funding available for the current iteration of 2011-2014, however when this funding was allocated there was an open call for proposals from communities, including for funding through the Rural and Remote Stream. The United Way of Greater Simcoe County is acting as a Regional Advisory Board for this stream and has representation from across the province. It was recently announced (March 2013) that HPS funding has been renewed through the current federal budget, although specific details have yet to be released. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB is encouraged to continuously monitor the HPS website (<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/funding/regional.shtml>), as calls for proposals were previously published there. In addition to this, establish contact with the United Way of Greater Simcoe County as well as with the regional HPS representative.

The *Affordable, Adaptable Housing* report by CMHC is meant to be a guide to adopting affordable housing and presents various types of housing and adaptability options, as well as a detailed analysis of ten Canadian projects which demonstrate a range of these options.



## #7 - Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Housing

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been doing good work and planning around energy efficiency and sustainable housing. In addition to initiatives discussed in the ‘Affordable Housing Repairs segment’ other upgrades have been made and the development of an Energy Plan for the district is set to begin in 2013. To assist with this plan and to identify opportunities for reducing energy usage, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been tracking energy consumption in all of their stock. Software being used from the National Research Council will be helpful in evaluating the return on investment for energy initiatives and opportunities.

## #8 - Innovation and Efficiency with Affordable Housing

- The Building Condition Assessments (BCAs) that took place on Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB-owned properties in 2010 are intended to provide the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB with information about the buildings’ needs over the next 20 years. As done in 2011, the BCAs should continue to be used for Capital Asset Management Plans and annual budgets.
- An MMAH initiative is underway by a task force including the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB’s Supervisor of Infrastructure and Asset Management, to assess the effectiveness of the Affordable Housing program. It is important that repairs made through the Northern Housing component of the Affordable Housing program be followed up with. Evaluate and make recommendations based on how the funding was dispersed and what it was targeted for. Determine if the program was successful in targeting major repairs. Compare 2006 and 2011 census statistics (when the 2011 statistics become available) to determine if the percent of dwellings requiring major repairs has decreased. Determine if residents were made aware of the program, particularly individuals with low incomes. In the event that funds become available again, this information would position the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB to be able to make effective use of it.
- Conduct cost-benefit analysis on energy efficiency initiatives that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB put into place for housing over the last few years. Continue to monitor and compare costs from pre-repair years, as well as to other buildings with older appliances and fixtures, to determine if and where similar initiatives could be applied if money becomes available.
- It has been difficult to attract private developers and property managers to social housing initiatives, within the district and elsewhere. An alternative to future negotiations for social housing buildings would be the inclusion of subsidized *units* within multiple existing buildings. Members of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB could consider advocating to the their respective municipalities for the reducing or waiving of municipal fees (i.e. development, cost charges, planning fees, parkland levies, and reductions or waivers of

property taxes) for potential private developers who agree to incorporate affordable housing or subsidized units within their buildings. Many social housing residents and individuals requiring affordable housing are not comfortable in buildings entirely devoted to social housing and would prefer to be in ‘mixed’ housing. Next steps should include increased outreach to property managers/owners and maintaining updated records about rental dwellings (i.e. locations, prevalence, and costs) throughout the district.

- Many Canadian municipalities have adopted policies that mandate a certain percentage of new construction to be affordable. The units are sold to households with low incomes and remain affordable (not spending more than 30% of before tax income on shelter costs). (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2009).
- With the cost of monthly payments on housing being more affordable than rent in many parts of the district it is worthwhile to explore programs that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB could implement to assist low income earners to become home owners.
- Explore alternative developments and companies for affordable housing; e.g. Options for Homes – a non-profit housing corporation whose mandate is affordable home ownership (usually condominiums).
- Refer to the *Affordable, Adaptable Housing* report by CMHC. It is meant to be a guide to adopting affordable housing and presents various types of housing and adaptability options, as well as a detailed analysis of ten Canadian projects which demonstrate a range of these options.

## Programs and Services for Housing and Homelessness within the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Service Board Catchment Area

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has managed the Social Housing program in its entirety for the district since 2001. Since 2002, they have also assumed administrative responsibility for all of the Non-Profit Housing Providers across the district (Manitoulin-Sudbury District, 2011). Table 14 contains the breakdown of social, non-profit, and special needs housing across the district. Most non-family housing, whether Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB or non-profit, are one-bedroom units, with the exception of six bachelor units and also 41 two-bedroom units for couples on Manitoulin Island. Family units consist of two to four bedrooms.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Social Housing (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB) One-Bedroom Apartment Buildings/Row Housing</b>	<b>Social Housing (Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB) Family Units</b>	<b>Non-Profit Housing</b>	<b>Other/Special Needs Housing</b>
Lacloche	<i>4 buildings, 84 units total</i> (2 in Espanola, 1 in Massey, and 1 in Webbwood)	<i>23 units total</i> (two to four bedroom, Espanola)	<i>3 buildings – 51 one-bedroom units and 11 family units</i> (Native People of Sudbury, Espanola)	2 Community Living group homes, supporting residents with developmental disabilities (Espanola)
Sudbury East	<i>3 buildings, 63 units total</i> (1 in Warren, 1 in Noelville, and 1 in St. Charles)			
Manitoulin District	<i>5 buildings, 92 units</i> (6 bachelors) (1 in Little Current, 2 in Gore Bay, 1 in Manitowaning, and 1 in Mindemoya)		<i>3 buildings, 47 units total</i> 1 seniors' residence in Little Current, 1 seniors' residence in Gore Bay, and 1 fully accessible building in Mindemoya which often houses victims of violence	4 Community Living residential homes in Mindemoya  1 building, 16 two-bedroom units for couples (4 that are physically accessible) (Little Current)  1 building, 25 two-

				bedroom units for couples (2 physically accessible) (Gore Bay)
Sudbury North/Chapleau	<b>1 building, 13 units</b> (Chapleau)	<b>1 building, 13 units,</b> three to four bedroom (Chapleau)	<b>2 buildings, 36 units total</b> 13 family units with Cochrane Temiskaming Native Housing,  23 Chapleau Health Services units for seniors (semi-supportive)	

Applications for the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB's Social Housing Program have been on a gradual incline since the beginning of 2011. Figure 8 and 9 showcase the trends in one-bedroom and family applications for social housing, respectively, between January 2011 and September 2012. During this time, applications for one bedroom units have increased by 55.2%, and two, three, and four bedroom unit applications increased by 51.7%, 56.8%, and 35.7%, respectively.

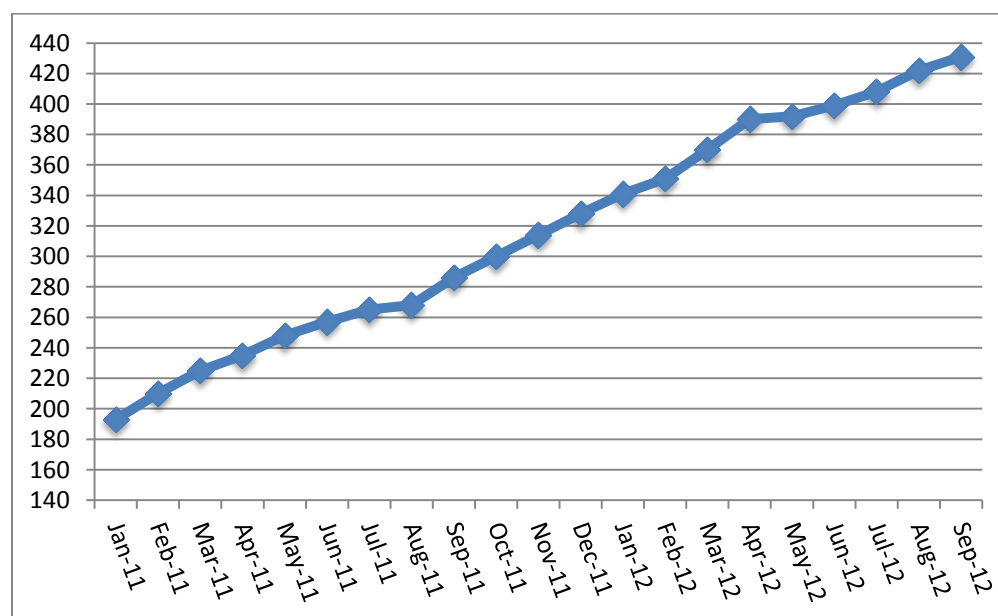


Figure 8. Applicants Waiting for One-Bedroom Social Housing Units: January 2011-September 2012

Note. Original Data Source: Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB (2012)

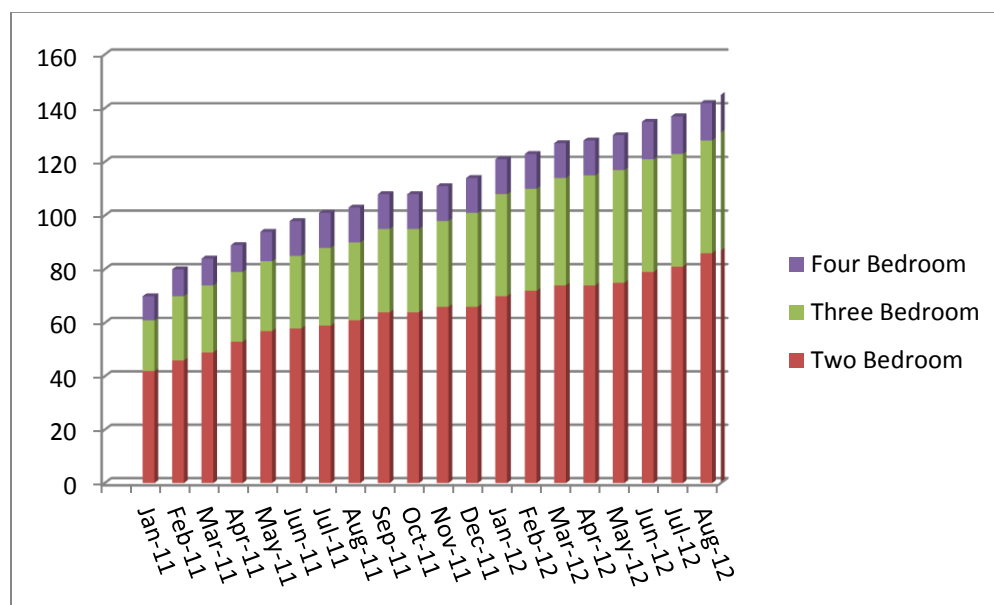


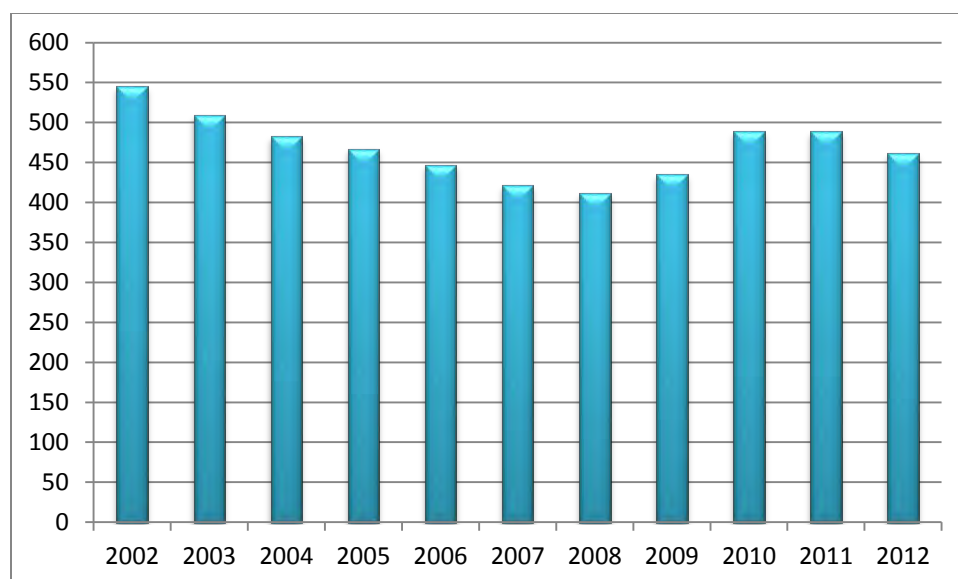
Figure 9: Applicants Waiting for Family Social Housing Units – January 2011 to August 2012

Note. Original Data Source: Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB (2012)

The data was supported by specific concerns raised about the length of waiting list times in Gore Bay, Espanola, and Little Current. Participants in Sudbury East did not seem to perceive this as a concern, with a few clients from St. Charles even pointing out that wait times were rather fair (“a couple of months”), especially with comparison to Greater Sudbury.

### Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

Figure 10 showcases the average OW caseloads in the district between 2002 and 2012. On average, caseloads were on a gradual decline between 2002 and 2008, when they began to increase again. ODSP (Table 15) caseloads are consistently higher than OW caseloads within the district. In 2010, ODSP caseloads ranged between 800 and 900. A further look at annual caseloads by area, in the context of population changes should provide a more in depth understanding of the trends.



*Figure 10. 10-Year Trend in Average OW Caseloads*

*Note.* Original Data Source: Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Program Statistics (2009-2012)

*Note.* Caseload numbers for December 2012, September 2011, and November 2010 were not included in the annual averages for those years.

Location	2006	2007	2008	2009
LaCloche	293	352	366	359
Manitoulin Island	228	212	206	182
Sudbury East	202	229	237	232
Sudbury North	42	49	52	45
Total	765	842	861	817

*Note.* Original data source: Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Program Statistics

Recipients of OW and ODSP are also eligible under certain circumstances to receive assistance through the Energy Emergency Fund. In 2011, 10 cases were assisted through this fund. That year, 83 cases also received assistance under the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program, which at the time included the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB). Since provincial cuts and changes to this program took effect, more pressure has been put on the Discretionary Benefits fund to assist with many of the same needs that the CSUMB did. During the span of one year, between April 2011 and March 2012, \$284,615 was used to assist people through the CSUMB. The amount available through Discretionary Benefits in 2013 has been reduced to \$145,000. With the new funding that has been put in place through the

Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) as well as the additional one-time funding received through CHPI, there remains a shortfall of \$33,301 for the 2013 calendar year.

OW recipients who are on a waiting list to receive subsidized housing through the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board are also eligible to receive assistance with their market rent through the Direct Shelter Subsidy program (DSS). The DSS program was created with funds that were formerly designated for social housing in Foleyet which is no longer in place.

### **#8 – More Innovation and Efficiency within Affordable Housing**

- As it stands, ODSP and OW recipients must receive an additional source of funding or reside in social housing to be able to meet ‘affordable’ rent standards for their level of income, with OW earners falling far below the mark.
- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should continue with the practice of the Direct Shelter Subsidy (DSS) over the next several years and maximize its usage. It is an efficient use of housing/homelessness money that sets the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB apart from other service managers, probably contributing to their lower levels of visible homelessness. Currently, this program is unique to the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, so it is important that beneficiaries are made aware that they will no longer receive funds if they move outside of the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB catchment area. However, the province should be made aware of the success of this program and be encouraged to invest money into it.

### **Lack of Knowledge of Available Services**

A common theme among client-group participants was that certain benefits and programs available through social assistance and social housing, “...are not advertised widely and not a lot of people know about them” (*Gore Bay*). Some people also expressed that isolation, combined with focusing on survival, was not conducive for keeping up to date with services. During focus group conversations in which the loss of the CSUMB was brought up, there were always at least a few to several individuals who said that they did not know what this benefit was until they had received a letter in the mail notifying them of its cancellation.

Similar concerns around lacking knowledge of services, both within the Manitoulin-Sudbury district and in surrounding cities such as Greater Sudbury, were also raised by the service provider participants. At times, this included specific mention of lacking knowledge of Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB services (such as the DSS). Participants who expressed this recognized the disadvantage that a lack of regular communication among service providers posed to their clients.

*“If you don’t stay current with what’s happening in [Greater] Sudbury, you are at a disadvantage. It’s hard to keep current ... you have to constantly be in connection with*

*these service providers to be on top of things. It would be helpful if there was a 'mechanism' [to stay connected with other service providers] to share this information and to keep up-to-date. (Espanola)*

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and community agencies within the catchment area administer various critical programs that assist with obtaining and maintaining housing for persons in low income and/or requiring special supports. However, housing, services, and resources are evidently limited across the widespread district. Furthermore, existing services could be more efficiently accessed and gradual service improvements and enhancements can be worked toward through increased collaboration between the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, municipalities, different sectors, and service providers. The final key priorities are a summary of systematic themes that reflect the culmination of data gathered throughout the process of compiling the plan.

### **#9 - Increase Opportunities by Increasing Knowledge Dissemination**

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB administers various helpful and critical programs that directly assist with housing (i.e. cost, bills, etc.) and also with related matters that participants expressed were important to them for improving their living situations (i.e. Enhanced Job Placement Program and Employment Ontario Program). However, a common theme among participants was lack of knowledge about what is available to them through social assistance, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB, and in their communities. Quarterly communications (i.e. newsletter) should be sent out to social housing tenants and OW and ODSP recipients, detailing existing programs and services – even if they have not recently changed.

### **#10 - Spearhead Integrated Service Delivery**

- It would be advantageous to create a district-wide integrated service delivery committee with sub-committees mandated across different regions. Many populations who are currently in or requiring affordable housing have additional support service needs. Best practices and recent literature indicate that integrated service delivery is preferable for understanding and addressing homelessness. In some ways, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB already applies a Housing First model when people go to them. However, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and other service providers should have the capacity to continue with case management for some clients after they are housed.
- With the district being so spread out and services being limited, a coordinated system of service delivery is essential. It is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offices and partnering support services implement HIFIS 4.0 when the program is released within the next few years. It is a web-based/shared version of the current program which will allow for service providers to share information to ensure quality of care as well as improve program evaluation and planning.



- Implementing a current version of the program at individual sites (including social housing) in the meantime would also improve data organization, planning, case management records, and performance measures including social housing. In addition to these benefits, the program has an automatic reporting feature which can generate data summaries for most of the information it stores.

### **#11 - Increased Advocacy Role for Civic Leaders**

- Since funding limitations underlie many challenges around housing and homelessness, collective lobbying for common causes at higher levels is important. The need for the Board to be connected with other municipalities and to take on an advocacy role was raised in consultations with civic officials. In addition to advocacy regarding affordable housing and social assistance rates, civic leaders should be advocating for the enhancement and return of helpful affiliated programs, such as the bursary program for social housing tenants and their children.
- Most recently, these types of initiatives within the poverty sector around Ontario directly impacted the last minute decision by the province to add more funding to CHPI, to temporarily help alleviate the loss of the Community Start Up And Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB). This role could potentially be increased following the development of housing and homelessness plans across the province.

### **#12 - Increase Program Evaluation**

- A number of initiatives have already been mentioned in previous priorities. Building on and in addition to those recommendations are the following:
  - Take a closer look at trends in social assistance for social housing in the context of population changes and economic factors within the district. Closely monitor the impact of the elimination of the CSUMB. Caseworkers should continue to assist their clients in applying for the same circumstances in which they may have qualified for prior to 2013. It is important that a strong record of unmet need be kept and reported on. Changes will continue following 2013 and the 'post-CSUMB' impact should continue to be looked at and compared for some time. At this time especially, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB should take measures to ensure a closer monitoring of homelessness within the district and within the next year, develop a strategy around aiming to better understand the scope of the issue within the district in general, and among specific populations like youth and aboriginals. With the district being so spread out and services being limited, a coordinated system of service delivery is essential.
  - It is recommended that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB offices and partnering support services implement HIFIS 4.0 when the program is released within the next few

years. It is a web-based shared version of the current program which will allow for service providers to share information to ensure quality of care as well as improve program evaluation and planning. Implementing a current version of the program at individual sites (including social housing) in the meantime would also improve data organization, planning, case management records, and performance measures including social housing. In addition to these benefits, the program has an automatic reporting feature which can generate data summaries for most of the information it stores.

### **#13 – Closely Monitor the Release of RFPs and Funding Opportunities**

- The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and its member municipalities have been fairly proactive in developing comprehensive plans for expanding and enhancing their housing portfolio. If data and information presented in this plan (and updated as recommended), is incorporated into new proposals and supplemented with existing proposals around housing development, repairs, and supports, the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB will be better equipped to acquire future funding opportunities when they become available. Actively seek out calls or requests for proposals (CFPs or RFPs) that provide funding for housing and homelessness initiatives. Connect with and follow updates from the North East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Secretariat (HPS). Inquire about annual HPS funding as well, which has been recently renewed, and previously used by many communities across Canada for capital projects and homelessness prevention initiatives. In addition to annual funding which has so far been released in five-year iteration periods, HPS also puts out other CFPs for more specific initiatives; most recently this involved projects pertaining to mental health and homelessness.

## Appendix A: Information about Community Consultants

Table 1 <i>Characteristics of Participants in Client Stakeholders Focus Groups</i>				
Location & # of Participants	Age Distribution	Cultural Identification	Service and Housing Representation (multiple can apply)	Living Situation
Chapleau (14)	Under 25: 1 25-34: 4 36-45: 1 46-55: 3 56-65: 5	Most identified as Anglophone; in total, 2 identified as Aboriginal, 1 as Francophone, 1 as other	OW recipients: 7 ODSP recipients: 3 Social housing resident: 1 Non-profit housing residents: 2 Private market rent residents: 2 Home owners: 2 Food bank user: 2	Live... On their own: 6 With a roommate or partner: 4 With a parent or relative: 2
St. Charles (14)	Under 25: 3 25-35: 3 36-45: 3 46-55: 2 56-65: 2 Over 65: 1	Anglophone: 6 Francophone: 2 Aboriginal: 2 Other: 1	OW: 10 ODSP: Social housing resident: 4 Non-profit Housing Resident: Private Market Rent: 1 Home Owner: 1 Mental Health Service User: 1 Home Care Service User: Food Bank Service User: 2	Live... On their own: 5 With roommate or partner: 1 With dependents: 1 With children: 2 Parent/Relative: 3
Noelville (3)	Over 65: 3	Francophone: 3	Social housing resident: 3	
Gore Bay (16)	25-35: 1 36-45: 2 46-55: 1 56-65: 5 Over 65: 7	Anglophone: 12 Aboriginal: 1 Other: 3	OW: 3 ODSP: 3 Social housing resident: 5 Non-profit Housing Resident: 2 Home Owner: 1 Food Bank User: 3 CPP-OAS: 3 Shelter: 1	Live... On their own: 9 With roommate or partner: 1 With Children: 1
Little Current (11)	Under 25: 1 25-35: 1 36-45: 1 56-65: 3 Over 65: 5	Anglophone: 10 Aboriginal: 2	OW recipient: 3 ODSP recipient: 1 Social housing resident: 5 Non-profit Housing Resident: 1 Home Owner: 1	Live... On their own: 9 With roommate or partner: 1 With parent/relative: 1
Espanola (11)	Under 25: 1 25-35: 2 36-45: 1 46-55: 3 56-65: 4	Anglophone: 8 Aboriginal: 2 Other: 1	OW: 5 ODSP: 4 Social housing resident: 5 Private Market Rent: 2 Food Bank Service User: 1	Live... On their own: 7 With roommate or partner: 2 With Parent/relative: 3

*Note.* Non-responses account for areas on the table where numbers from certain categories do not add up to the total participant number. For most questions, the response rate was over 85%.

Location & # of Participants	Sector Representation (multiple can apply)	Cultural Identification	Populations Served or Represented	Front-line Worker (y/n)
Chapleau (areas within Sudbury North) <i>Focus Group: 8</i> <i>Interview/</i> <i>Questionnaire: 1</i>	Municipal Government: 1 Health Care: 1 Mental Health: 2 Public Health (EMS): 1 Social Services: 3 Social Housing: 2 Shelters: 1 Seniors Housing Project: 1 Food Bank: 1 Children's Services: 1	Anglophone: 4 Francophone: 2 Aboriginal: 1 Bilingual: 2	General: 6 Aboriginals: 1 Seniors: 1	Y: 5 N: 4
St. Charles (Sudbury East) <i>Focus Group: 5</i> <i>Interview/</i> <i>Questionnaire: 1</i>	Municipal Government: 3 Social Services: 2 Social Housing: 2	All Anglophone	General: 4	Y: 4 N: 1
Noelville (Sudbury East, including French River and Killarney) <i>Focus Group: 3</i> <i>Interview/</i> <i>Questionnaire: 2</i>	Community Agency/ Non-Profit: 2 Municipal Government: 2 Social Services: 1 Social Housing: 1	Francophone: 3 Anglophone: 2	General: 2 Seniors: 1 Children/youth: 1	Y: 2 N: 2
Gore Bay (Manitoulin) <i>Focus Group: 5</i>	Municipal Government: 2 Community Agency/ Non-Profit: 2 Social Housing: 1	Anglophone: 5	General: 3 Persons with low-income/ in poverty: 2 Persons with developmental disabilities: 2	Y: 2 N: 3
Little Current (Manitoulin) <i>Focus Group: 5</i>	Health Care: 1 Mental Health: 1 Public Health: 1 Social Services: 1	Anglophone: 5	General: 1 Persons with low-income/ in poverty: 1 Persons with developmental disabilities: 1	Y: 2
Manitoulin District <i>Interview/</i> <i>Questionnaire: 4</i>	Economic Development: 1 Municipal Government: 1 Community Agency/ Non-Profit: 1 Social Services: 1 Social Housing: 1 Shelters: 1 Senior housing and support: 1			Y: 1 N: 2
Espanola (Lacloche) <i>Focus Group: 17</i> <i>Interview/</i> <i>Questionnaire: 4</i>	Economic Development: 1 Municipal Government: 7 Health Care: 1 Mental Health: 1 Public Health: 2 Community Agency/ Non-Profit: 2 Social Services: 2 Food bank: 1 Private Market Housing: 1	Anglophone: 17 Francophone: 2 Bilingual: 2	General: 10 Seniors: 2 Men: 2 Women: 2 Persons with low-income/ in poverty: 4 Persons with developmental disabilities: 1	Y: 7 N: 10

## Appendix B: Population Breakdown of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District

Table 1 <i>Population Breakdown of the Manitoulin-Sudbury District</i>			
Location	2006	2011	% Growth/ Decline
<i>Sudbury East</i>			
Killarney	459	505	10.0
St. Charles	1,159	1,282	10.6
Markstay-Warren	2,475	2,297	-7.2
French River	2,659	2,442	-8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,752</b>	<b>6,526</b>	<b>-3.3</b>
<i>LaCloche</i>			
Espanola	5,314	5,364	0.9
Sables-Spanish River	3,237	3,075	-5.0
Nairn and Hyman	493	477	-3.2
Baldwin	554	551	-0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,977</b>	<b>9,954</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
<i>Manitoulin Island</i>			
Burpee and Mills	329	308	-6.4
Gore Bay	924	850	-8.0
Billings	539	506	-6.1
Assiginack	914	960	5.0
Central Manitoulin	1,944	1,958	0.7
Gordon/Barrie Island	459	526	14.6
Manitoulin, Unorganized, West Part	222	160	-27.9
Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands	2,711	2,706	-0.2
Cockburn Island	10	<10*	n/a
Tehkummah	382	406	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,434</b>	<b>8,380</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>(Additional) Population from Reserves</b>	<b>4197</b>	<b>4,668</b>	<b>11.2</b>
<i>Sudbury North</i>			
<b>Chapleau Township/Total</b>	<b>2,354</b>	<b>2,116</b>	<b>-10.1</b>
<b>(Additional) Population from Reserves</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>-1.0</b>
<i>Sudbury, Unorganized, North Part</i>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,415</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>-4.5</b>

Note. Original data from Statistics Canada 2006 and 2011 Community Profiles

Note. \*The exact population count was not provided for the township of Cockburn Island in 2011 due to random rounding procedures that are applied to counts less than 10 .

## Appendix C: 2005 Low Income Cut-Offs

Table 1 <i>Low income cut-offs before tax for 2005</i>		
Size of Family Unit	LICO for Rural Areas	LICO for Areas with Population Less than 30,000
1 persons	14,313	16,283
2 persons	17,818	20,270
3 persons	21,904	24,920
4 persons	26,596	30,257
5 persons	30,164	34,316
6 persons	34,021	38,703
7 or more persons	37,877	43,090

*Note.* Original data from Statistics Canada Low income cut-offs (1992 base) before tax (2011)

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