

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GREY BRUCE

VitalConversation

ON HOUSING



Insights & Outcomes

Housing is not just a problem for lower income earners – everyone is affected.

Our *Vital Conversation* was hosted on Thursday, December 9, 2021 from 4 - 6 pm. The virtual event was facilitated by Melri Wright and Mike Wright of Ledge Leadership and was sponsored by Leith Wheeler.



Breakout Topics

Affordability & Availability

Living Standards

Wellbeing

Equity

- 2 hours of discussion
- 4 guest speakers
- 4 breakout rooms
- 8 scribes
- 8 facilitators
- 80+ participants



Access to affordable housing is connected to so many other social factors.

“With guest speakers ... and some great facilitation, the evening was a wonderful balance of analysis and story built from the group up by participants. It was a super interactive program that has me wondering about what we can see when we put systems thinking and story together in our community.”

Marilyn Struthers - Facilitator of the Institute of Southern Georgian Bay's Working Group on Social Finance and Housing studying the commodification and financing of housing with the National Financialization of Housing Lab sponsored by Social Innovation Canada and CMHC

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Kee May Ip

Coordinator, Four County Labour
Market Planning Board,
Precarious Living Series

"When we tackle housing, we need to tackle housing together with other social problems, such as precarious living and physical and mental wellbeing."

Erica Phipps

Researcher,
RentSafe Owen Sound

"It is encouraging to see people in Grey-Bruce coming together across sectors to find better ways of supporting the right to healthy housing for all."



Christine MacDonald

Director of Human Services,
Bruce County

"We all have a role in this, in building a healthy, safe community and that will make the difference in helping us solve housing issues."

Diane Giroux

Project Manager,
M'Wikwedong Indigenous
Friendship Centre

"Community, Community, Community... and it must include everyone."

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What We Heard In Conversation

Inequity does not contribute to a healthy community. Affordable housing units are experiencing opposition as a result of NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard), and solutions, such as multifamily homes, infilling, are opposed.

Finding available housing that accommodates the needs of seniors or people living with a disability is difficult.

Wages are not increasing to reflect the market rates of housing, particularly in the tourism and service sectors.

A labour shortage is being created locally because employees cannot find suitable accommodations to align with their income close to their work.

Low vacancy rates prevent tenants from addressing housing issues or inadequate living standards with landlords, as an eviction would leave them with no place to live.

Low housing stock means it is difficult to find housing quickly, which is problematic and dangerous for those that urgently need a safe place to live.

Housing insecurity and poor living standards contribute to declining mental health levels, diminishing self-worth, and increased stress levels.

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People with lived experience need to be engaged in conversations about affordable housing solutions.

Vehicle ownership is required for rural living. Affordable housing is typically not built in close proximity to services or stores and this limits the housing options available to those without reliable transportation.

Individuals or couples are unable to upgrade to larger accommodation when their family situation changes, as there are limited accommodations available to suit growing families.

New builds seem to focus on a desired lifestyle – single, family detached homes – while smaller homes are not being built to fulfill the demand. Individuals cannot live or age in the same communities as their family and friends because there are no affordable options available when they want to scale down.

Tenants typically earn less than homeowners. Increasing rental rates are preventing tenants from saving for a down payment, as the current market rates leave little discretionary funds available at the end of the month.

