



LOOKING AHEAD

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



A FEW WORDS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

“What are you working on these days?” It’s a simple question that often comes up in casual conversation. When we have a new building project actively under construction, it’s easy to answer. However, since completing the addition at Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors in St. Jacobs in November 2024, responding has been a bit trickier.

With over 9,000 households currently on the waiting list for affordable housing in Waterloo Region, people are naturally curious about what’s next. It’s encouraging that they fully expect us to be working on something — and we always are!

The challenge is that we can’t always share details about our next project. Saying “We have a number of irons in the fire right now” signals that we are indeed busy, even if specifics can’t yet be disclosed.

The development process can take years before project details are ready to be shared publicly. Securing land is typically the first step, followed by design concepts, feasibility studies, and more detailed design activities. Then come the budgets — which can

sometimes send us back to square one. It’s rarely a linear process.

Even with land, the perfect design, and a solid budget, moving a project forward depends on a blend of government funding and generous donations from supporters like you. Thank you for your consistent and strong support. It allows us to keep planning for what’s next.

Sometimes looking ahead means imagining how to do things differently. While our approach has been to successfully leverage government investments and raise additional capital through donations, something may need to change. The number of opportunities available to us, and the needs we want to respond to, far exceed the funding

the government provides. Are there other funding models we can explore to generate capital for further investments in affordable housing?

Twenty-five years ago, when the idea of creating an organization to address affordable housing was first conceived, it might have seemed inconceivable that today we would have over \$54 million

in assets and provide housing to 258 households. As we look ahead, what’s the next step in our evolution? What bold ideas will shape our future? How can we continue building affordable housing without being entirely reliant on government funding?

While clear answers aren’t yet in sight, we have the creativity, ingenuity, persistence, and broad community support needed to make good things happen. Thank you to our volunteers, donors, staff, and board of directors for your continued involvement and support of our work. Together, we are responding to the need for affordable housing.

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Dan Driedger
Executive Director



Chip Bender
Board Chair

Cover Photo - A highlight outing this past year for tenants at Rockway Gardens Village was a river boat dinner cruise. Looking ahead was important, even on the tranquil waters of the Grand River.

LOOKING AHEAD

The theme for this year's annual report is "Looking Ahead." While this may seem like an unusual focus for a document summarizing the past year, much of 2024 was indeed spent looking forward. With the completion of the addition at Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors in St. Jacobs, we were able to refocus our energy on creating more affordable housing in our community.

The development process often spans many years, transitioning from an initial idea to full occupancy. For example, an upcoming project in Kitchener made possible by the gift of land, is a potential we first became aware of in 2019. At that time, construction had not yet begun at 544 Bridgeport in Kitchener. Since then, tenants have moved into 544 Bridgeport, we've acquired and renovated 24 Mill St. in Kitchener, and we've completed the addition at Sprucelawn.

In 2024, we also engaged in numerous conversations with potential new partners. We received 20 requests for exploratory discussions about possible affordable housing projects. With over 9,000 households on the waiting list for affordable housing, the need in our community is clear, and many are eager to find creative solutions. While we may not be the right fit for every partnership or may lack the financial resources to proceed at this time, we are inspired and encouraged by the growing interest in working with us.

Currently, alongside a new townhouse project in Kitchener, we are prepared to move forward with Phase 2 at Bridgeport and Lancaster,



pending the necessary funding. Additionally, in partnership with the Township of Woolwich, we continue to explore opportunities to redevelop the Kiwanis House site. We are also working actively with two churches in

Waterloo Region to develop memorandums of understanding for affordable housing projects on their properties. Even as we prepare for a project set to begin construction in 2025, we are already planning for what comes next.

Other areas of our work in 2024 also required us to look ahead. For instance, we migrated to a new donor software system. While this change may not be immediately visible on our website's donation page, the new system offers enhanced security and functionality, ensuring we are well-positioned for the future.

We also began preparing for upcoming transitions on our board of directors. Beyond Housing is fortunate to have a dedicated community of individuals interested in serving on our board. While timing and roles may not always align, we deeply value the willingness of community members to get involved. If joining our board is something you are open to exploring, we encourage you to reach out.

As we reflect on 2024, it's clear that looking ahead has been central to our work. We are grateful for the opportunities to build partnerships, address community needs, and plan for a future where everyone has access to safe, affordable housing.

NEW BEGINNINGS: A PARTNERSHIP WITH WOMEN'S CRISIS SERVICES

In December 2024, we were thrilled to share news of an exciting new project in Kitchener in partnership with Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region (WCSWR). New Beginnings will be a 20-unit, 54-bed stacked townhouse development featuring a mix of unit sizes, including accessible one-bedroom units and four-bedroom family townhouses.

WCSWR provides crucial support to women and children who have experienced domestic violence. Operating two emergency shelters in the region, WCSWR helps families transition beyond violence through education, safe shelter, and

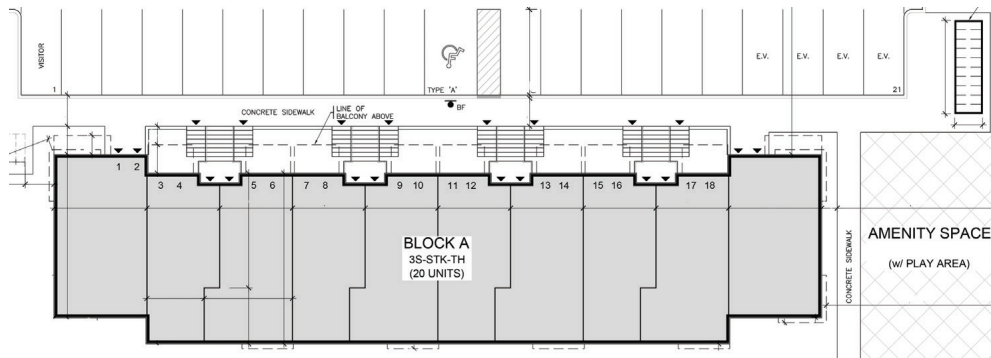
support services. A significant challenge for WCSWR is finding permanent housing for women and children to move out of its shelters, which then frees up space for new individuals in need. New Beginnings will address this challenge by introducing new affordable housing, with dedicated space for families supported by WCSWR. This development offers these families a new beginning—a safe and stable place to call home.

In keeping with this year's theme of looking ahead, we have been working on early-stage development activities for this

project for several years. In 2024, we made significant progress, with planning and architectural design actively underway. The site is properly zoned, environmentally clean, and supported by City of Kitchener staff. We have secured funding from the City of Kitchener (\$200,000) and the Region of Waterloo (\$1,074,960). With these milestones achieved, we look forward to breaking ground in late spring or early summer 2025.

“Due to the affordable housing crisis, our residents are having to stay in shelter for longer periods of time. This creates a bottleneck that restricts access to shelter beds on an emergency basis. We need more dedicated affordable housing.”

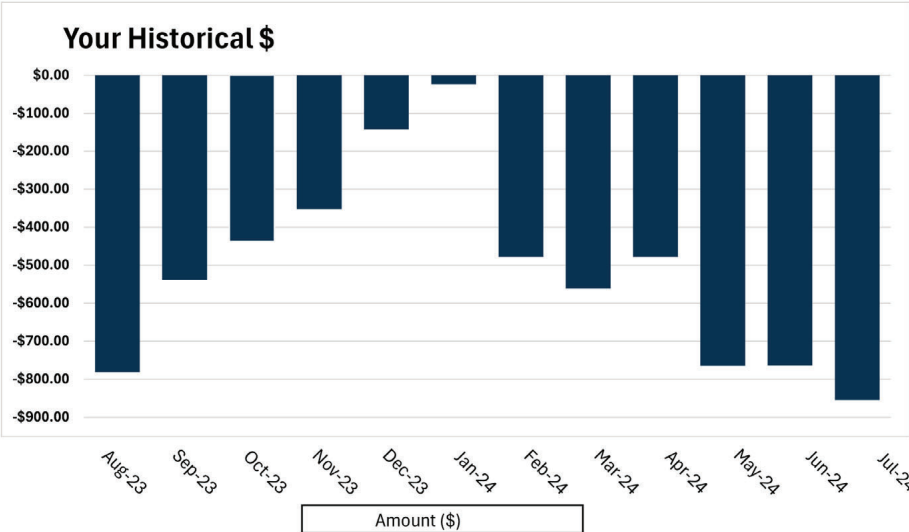
Women's Crisis Services
OF WATERLOO REGION



GOING BEYOND WITH THE SUN

When Beyond Housing amalgamated with Waterloo Mennonite Homes at 27 George Street in Waterloo, we inherited a solar panel array installed by a forward-thinking community. The building's 10kW PowerOne inverter, maintained by the VCT Group in Kitchener, supports 36 solar panels on its rooftop.

In the last fiscal year, these solar panels generated over 11,300 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity, contributing to renewable energy production and helping to reduce our carbon footprint. Additionally, the panels generated \$6,175.75 in income for Beyond Housing in 2024. This revenue plays an important role in supporting our operational sustainability and underscores our commitment to environmental stewardship.



Have you ever seen a Hydro bill in the negative?

GRATITUDE

In every apartment building, there is a diverse mix of people with different interests, personalities, histories, and life experiences. At Beyond Housing, we are especially fortunate to have Sue Martin as our Community Support Worker. Sue plays a vital role in supporting tenants as they work toward their goals and fostering a sense of community through activities centered around fun and food.

This Thanksgiving, Sue introduced a thoughtful initiative across three of our buildings. She put up posters with the prompt, “I am thankful for...,” leaving markers for tenants to share their words of gratitude. The responses poured in, filling the posters with heartfelt messages. Many expressed appreciation for fundamental blessings like “life,” “freedoms,” and “a loving God whose mercies are new every morning.”

Themes of relationships were prominent, with tenants writing about their gratitude for “friends,” “family,” “pets,” “today and new friends,” and “people helping others.” One tenant shared a reflection on personal growth: “Learning it’s okay to have and set boundaries.”

Others highlighted the importance of housing and community, echoing Beyond Housing’s mission: “For living in a beautiful apartment I can afford,” “a great place to live,” and “this wonderful home and amazing neighbors.”

We are deeply grateful to all our tenants, staff, and property management teams who help bring our vision to life. Together, we are building more than homes—we are building community.



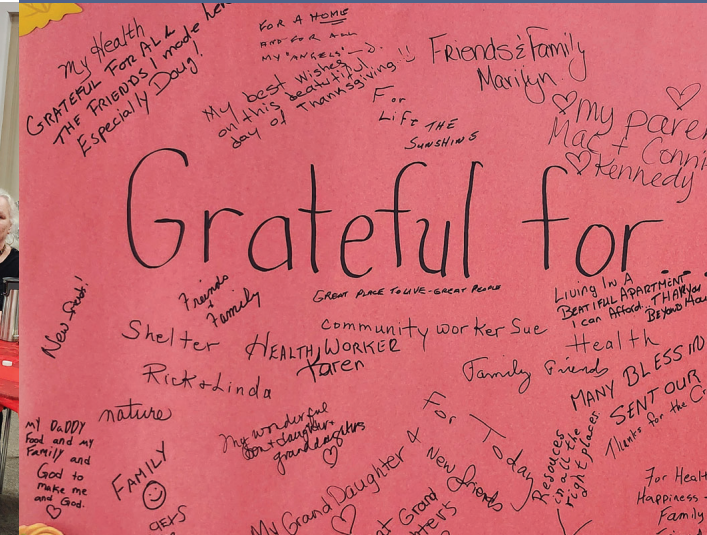
Tenant Quote

“It has been a life saver for me here. Thank you for creating safe spaces, healthy homes, and affordable housing for people like me.” – Cheryl

Tenant Quote

“We are grateful for an affordable place to live!”

– Rockway Coffee Group



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Beyond Housing ended the 2024 fiscal year on a strong financial footing, achieving an operational surplus. Tenant rent covered all annual operating expenses, enabling our fundraising efforts to focus entirely on building new affordable housing. This surplus underscores our commitment to financial sustainability and strategic growth.

Thanks to the remarkable generosity of our donors, we successfully completed the capital campaign for Sprucelawn Apartments

for Seniors, surpassing our goal of \$2.5 million with donations and pledges totaling \$2,611,694. This overwhelming support demonstrates the community's dedication to addressing the need for affordable housing in Waterloo Region.

To learn more about our financial health, our audited financial statements are readily available upon request or can be accessed online: [Beyond Housing - Audited Financial Statements 2024](#).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chip Bender – Chair



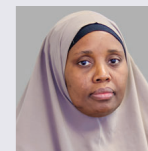
John Oudyk – Vice Chair



Jennifer Horner –
Treasurer



Saleh Saleh – Secretary



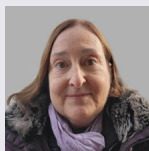
Fadhilah Balogun



Jennifer Justason



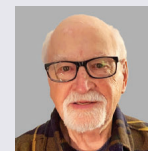
Steven Reesor Rempel



Rae Sands



Brian Unrau



Martin Buhr
– President Emeritus

ADMIN & PROGRAM STAFF

Lori Martin - Administrative Assistant
Robin Near – Bookkeeper
Karen Ehlebracht – Community Nurse
Sue Martin – Community Support Worker
Dan Driedger – Executive Director
Taylor Martin – Operations Manager

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Satellite Community Homes | Dubrick Property Management Ltd.

Alfred Rempel – 544 Bridgeport Road
Rick & Linda Brown – Rockway Gardens Village
Sean & Lisa Harkness – Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors
Helen Bartsch – The Foundry
Linda Rempel – Waterloo Mennonite Homes



VISION

Caring communities where every person can thrive in a safe and affordable place they call home.

MISSION

We create homes for people in need of affordable housing. We develop housing that is economically and environmentally sustainable and includes supportive services.

VALUES

Housing is a Human Right

We believe that adequate, safe and secure housing is a fundamental human right. We are committed to providing quality, affordable housing that is thoughtfully designed and is responsive to the needs of tenants, recognizing that stable and secure housing improves quality of life.

Equity, Integrity and Respect

We respect and value the diversity of people in our community. We adhere to high ethical and professional standards in our work and relationships. We are fair and respectful in our interactions and treat everyone with respect and dignity.

Accountability and Sustainability

We are accountable for our actions. We accept responsibility for our performance and share the results of our work in an open and transparent manner. We balance fiscal prudence with asset preservation, environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

Collaboration and Community

Through collaboration and partnerships, we work with others to achieve common goals, build communities and create places to call “home”. We provide support services to our tenants to develop communities where each person is valued and has a sense of belonging.

Creativity and Innovation

We are open to change and we continuously seek new approaches to enhance the development and operation of affordable housing.

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