

# ***Community Focus Bulletin:*** ***Creating Community Conversations***

Prepared by Merriam & Associates

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## **Reports Released:**

### **“2017 Housing is Fundamental Report” and “Limited Incomes – a Recipe for Food Insecurity”**

Two recently released reports describe the quality of life in Peterborough through the lens of housing and food insecurity.

1. The annual report **Housing is Fundamental** has been prepared by the Affordable Housing Action Committee (AHAC). The report documents the changing social trends in housing and some of the social impact that housing plays in the quality of life for our community.

For the complete report go to [peterborough.ca/ahac](http://peterborough.ca/ahac).

Here are some facts that the report provides:

#### **Did you know that in Peterborough:**

- Vacancy rate decreased to 1%
- Peterborough tied with Guelph for lowest vacancy rate in Ontario
- the average rent is \$936; up by 1.3%
- Rent increases below guideline of 2.0%
- At the end of 2015, every third person in our region was older than 55 and every fourth person was older than 60
- In 2016, 65 individuals were sheltered per night in Peterborough
- Peterborough has the consistently highest “core housing need” rate in Canada in each of the three years - even higher than Toronto – those years being 2012, 2013, 2014
- There were 1463 people waiting for social housing in Peterborough (December, 2016)

2. Peterborough Public Health released its annual report on food **insecurity “Limited Incomes – a Recipe for Food Insecurity”**

For the complete report go to the Peterborough Public Health website:

<http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/2017-Limited->

Incomes.pdf

Here are some of the facts that the report documents:

**Did you know that in Peterborough:**

- In 2014, 11.9% of 594,900 Ontario households experienced food insecurity. In the City and County of Peterborough, food insecurity impacts 16.55 or 1 in 6 households.
- The cost of feeding a family of four in Peterborough was \$899 in May 2017. That represents 11% of an average family's income. However, the Nutritious Food Basket cost (\$899) represents 28% of the income of a family supported by a minimum wage earner or 35% of the income for a family on Ontario Works.

**Questions to consider:**

1. How can the information in these reports be used to educate decision makers on policies needed to improve quality of life?
2. What is needed to support food systems planning that makes healthy, local food a priority?
3. What role can the City's and County's official plan review play in making affordable and accessible housing a priority?
4. How can the "core housing need" rate be reduced in the Peterborough CMA so it more closely resembles other Census Metropolitan Areas in Canada?

For more information about our upcoming Community Focus Bulletins or to view past editions go to:

<http://www.merriam-associates.com/contact-us>

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