

# HOUSING YORK INC. 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Housing York Inc.  
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[york.ca/hyi](http://york.ca/hyi)



## ABOUT HOUSING YORK INC.

Housing York Inc. (HYI) is a community housing provider regulated by the *Housing Services Act, 2011*, incorporated under the *Ontario Business Corporations Act, 1990* and owned by the Regional Municipality of York. As a leader in York Region's housing sector, HYI manages and maintains 36 housing properties with more than 4,500 residents in 2,762 units located in all nine local cities, townships and towns.

HYI is the largest community housing provider in York Region. Established in 2003, HYI operates subsidized rental housing and market housing across the Region. Approximately 80% of HYI's units are subsidized and 20% are market units. HYI manages building operations, ensures properties are well-maintained and financially sustainable, supports successful tenancies, and promotes resident engagement. The purpose of this report is to outline key 2020 activities and achievements of interest to HYI residents.



## VISION AND MISSION

In 2017, the Board of Directors approved HYI's vision and mission. The vision and mission statements guide strategic plans and continue to inform day-to-day operational decisions. These statements also align with the Region's vision of strong, caring, safe communities and its mission of working together to serve our thriving communities – today and tomorrow.



*Our*  
**Vision**

A leader in affordable housing, building inclusive communities that everyone would be proud to call home.

*and*

**Mission**

As a responsible and caring landlord, we work with our residents and partners to deliver housing programs and services that are important to our communities.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018 to 2022

HYI is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Region. The Board provides strategic direction and oversight of the company, approves budgets and business plans and makes important policy decisions. Resourcing for HYI is provided through a management services agreement with York Region.

Owens the company

### REGIONAL COUNCIL

Defines the governance framework through the Shareholder Direction

12 Board Members, appointed by Council from Council Membership

### HOUSING YORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Establishes strategic directions and oversees management of the company.



York Region Chairman and CEO  
Wayne Emmerson



Mayor  
Town of Newmarket  
John Taylor  
(Chair)



Mayor Town of  
Whitchurch-Stouffville  
Iain Lovatt  
(Vice-Chair)



Mayor  
Town of East Gwillimbury  
Virginia Hackson



Mayor  
Town of Aurora  
Tom Mrakas



Mayor  
Town of Georgina  
Margaret Quirk



Regional Councillor  
City of Markham  
Don Hamilton



Regional Councillor  
City of Markham  
Jack Heath



Regional Councillor  
City of Vaughan  
Gino Rosati



Regional Councillor  
Town of Newmarket  
Tom Vegh



Acting Mayor  
City of Richmond Hill  
Joe DiPaola



Mayor  
Township of King  
Steve Pellegrini

Leadership Team

### HOUSING YORK OFFICERS



Katherine Chislett  
President



Kathy Milsom  
General Manager



Michelle Willson  
Chief Financial Officer



Chris Raynor  
Secretary



Dan Kuzmyk  
Solicitor

## HYI'S 2021 TO 2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

In November 2020, the HYI Board approved *Building Better Together: Housing York Inc.'s 2021 to 2024 Strategic Plan*. The plan advances the organization toward achieving its vision and delivering on its mission through three strategic priorities that reflect input from residents, partners and the Board of Directors. Each strategic priority has specific goals for the next four years, high-level actions to achieve them and key performance indicators and targets to measure success.

The Board also approved *Building Better Together, 2021 Business Plan*, which operationalizes the first year of the strategic plan. It includes more detailed actions and one-year targets to ensure the organization is on track to meet the four-year commitments of the strategic plan.

For more information on the 2021 to 2024 strategic plan or 2021 business plan, please visit [york.ca/HYI](http://york.ca/HYI)



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: Expanded Housing Portfolio

#### Why this priority is important

Safe, secure, affordable housing is an important social determinant of health, supporting positive economic, social and health outcomes. This strategic priority recognizes that a healthy supply of affordable and rental housing is needed in York Region so individuals and families have housing options for all ages and stages of their lives. HYI has the opportunity to contribute to Regional housing initiatives that increase the supply of affordable and rental housing in local communities.

#### What we are already doing

- Maintain HYI's building conditions to support good performance and resident comfort, ensuring that existing supply does not deteriorate
- Implement universal design principles and build accessible units in new HYI developments to ensure high-quality housing for all HYI residents
- Work with partners to advocate for consistent and predictable funding sources for capital repairs and new development



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: Inclusive Communities and Successful Tenancies

#### Why this priority is important

Helping residents maintain stable housing is a priority for HYI and the Region. This strategic priority recognizes that residents sometimes need support in order to have successful tenancies and enhance their well-being. This means considering residents as individuals, providing the right services at the right time and building inclusive communities so all residents feel safe, welcome and at home.

#### What we are already doing

- Ensure residents are connected to Regional social work supports and provide financial literacy supports to help residents budget and maintain financial stability
- Work with community partners to bring a range of programs and services into HYI buildings
- Focus on food security and food access programs for residents
- Support residents with better access to technology
- Provide operations and maintenance services to support safe, high-quality emergency housing



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: Financial Sustainability

#### Why this priority is important

HYI's long-term financial sustainability is critical so individuals, seniors and families have access to high-quality affordable housing now and in the future. This strategic priority recognizes that sustainability comes from strong life-cycle value for buildings, efficient operations and finding new ways of funding developments, as financial resources may become increasingly limited. This means protecting HYI's existing assets and managing resources in a way that can also support new initiatives.

#### What we are already doing

- Follow the principles and policies identified in the long-term fiscal strategy, including the prudent management of reserves
- Upgrade and improve HYI's property management system, including new software modules to support business needs
- Invest in capital repairs and upgrades to increase the safety, accessibility and lifespan of buildings



# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS



## A year like no other...

HYI adapted quickly to ensure essential resident and building services continued with appropriate COVID-19 precautions. To support resident safety, HYI closed resident common areas and site offices, and encouraged residents to follow Public Health guidance.

## Resident services go virtual

With offices closed, the HYI team shifted to virtual services, working with residents to complete contactless rent subsidy renewals, and encouraging residents to pay their rent through online banking or pre-authorized payments. At the end of 2020, 90% of residents paid their rent electronically.

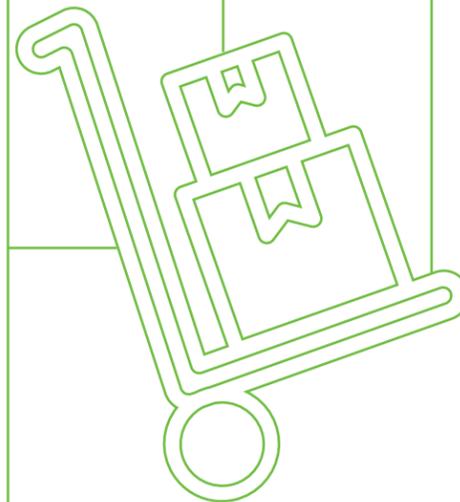


To make access easier, HYI worked with community partners to provide flu clinics to seniors at HYI buildings.



## We've moved!

HYI's head office is now located at 17150 Yonge Street, Newmarket, L3Y 8V3 ON



## HYI welcomed 278 new households in 2020

HYI adapted leasing processes to include virtual showings and contactless key exchange. HYI continued leasing routine vacancies and rented up the new Woodbridge Lane building.



## Essential maintenance and emergency repair services continued

HYI continued with all health and safety related preventative and responsive maintenance. Essential in-suite capital projects and repairs continued with appropriate precautions. To ensure the safety of both residents and HYI team members, screening processes, personal protective equipment and physical distancing protocols became part of HYI's maintenance practices.



## Raising fire safety awareness

Fire departments in York Region teamed up with HYI to promote fire safety to residents. While in-person events were not possible in 2020, firefighters delivered educational material on fire safety to residents.

## Resident wellness checks

Wellness checks were conducted in six HYI communities to ensure that vulnerable residents were staying healthy and getting the support they needed during COVID-19. Many of the seniors and families that HYI connected with were worried about contracting the virus, paying their bills, and taking care of dependent family members. 100% of the residents phoned were happy to have someone check in on them. Residents who needed additional support were referred to services such as food banks, family doctors, virtual counselling and social support groups.



With health and safety in mind, HYI piloted touchless automatic door openers at select high-traffic entrances.

As a responsible and caring landlord, HYI worked with residents impacted financially by COVID-19, connecting them to income programs and support services.

While residents were still required to pay rent on time, residents who fell behind on payments were provided with manageable payment plans to preserve their tenancies.

2019  
**117** households  
owed rent arrears  
**\$83,050**  
rent owed

2020  
**172** households  
owed rent arrears  
**\$224,526**  
rent owed

## 2020 BUSINESS PLAN RESULTS

Goal	Key Performance Indicator (How it's measured)	2020 Target	2020 Results
Strengthen community health and wellbeing			
Analyze the 2019 resident survey results and create a plan to respond and action the results	A plan to respond to the survey results, with specific consideration of resident inclusion implications and identifying high priority opportunities for improvement	High priorities addressed in accordance with the response plan	Improvements made to grounds of properties with lower scores  Traditional communications maintained while encouraging residents to connect with HYI electronically  Accessibility and elevator service contracts to be addressed in the 2021 business plan
Support residents in accessing affordable housing options			
Plan, communicate and implement <i>Housing Services Act</i> regulatory changes regarding Rent Geared Income and refusal changes for HYI and community housing providers	Regulatory changes communicated to relevant stakeholders and implemented	Regulatory changes communicated and implemented	2020 changes implemented and communicated to residents
Support the creation of new affordable rental units			
Develop Housing York Inc.'s 2021 to 2024 strategic plan	A successful strategic planning process	Final draft of the plan presented to the HYI Board	The plan was presented to and approved by the Board
Lease all units at HYI's newest building, Woodbridge Lane	Residential units leased	Leases signed for 100% of the subsidized units by September 30	All standard units leased, 12 accessible units remain as of December 31, 2020
	Tenant rent revenue target	Leases signed for 100% of the market units by December 1  Manage the rental mix to achieve a monthly revenue target of \$158K to be realized effective January 2021	Completed August 2020  Monthly revenue of \$147K achieved, full target pending leasing of accessible units

## CAPITAL REPAIRS AND UPDATES

HYI continuously invests in capital repairs to ensure resident comfort and that properties are in a state of good repair. Enhancements are also made through programs to increase accessibility and resident comfort.

Despite some delays due to the pandemic, in 2020 HYI invested \$5.5 million in capital repairs and completed approximately 60 projects, some of which are listed in the table below.



## 2020 Major Capital Repair and Replacement Projects

PROPERTY	WORK
Armitage Gardens, Town of Newmarket	Generator replacement
Fairy Lake Gardens, Town of Newmarket	Upgrades to the building exterior
Maplewood Place, City of Richmond Hill	Make-up air unit replacement
Rose Town, Town of Richmond Hill	Balcony repairs and railing replacement
Springbrook Gardens, Town of Richmond Hill	Front entrance and rear patio landscape upgrades
Oxford Village, Town of East Gwillimbury	Natural gas generator installation
Kingview Court, Township of King	Parking lot repairs, sidewalk sloping and drainage
Lakeside Residences, Town of Georgina	Window replacement
Maplewood Place, City of Richmond Hill	Roof replacement

This chart includes capital projects with a value of \$250,000 or more.

# WE ARE GROWING!



## Unionville Commons, City of Markham

Construction began on the Unionville Commons seniors affordable housing development site located on the north side of Highway 7, west of Kennedy Road in the City of Markham. Once completed, the energy efficient building will have 265 apartments for seniors, and a seniors' hub offering seniors-focused services to the community.

The building is on schedule to see its first residents move in by the end of 2022.

For more information, visit [york.ca/unionvilleHYI](http://york.ca/unionvilleHYI)



## Stouffville Affordable Housing Development, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

In 2020, the Stouffville affordable housing development was in the planning and application approval stages.

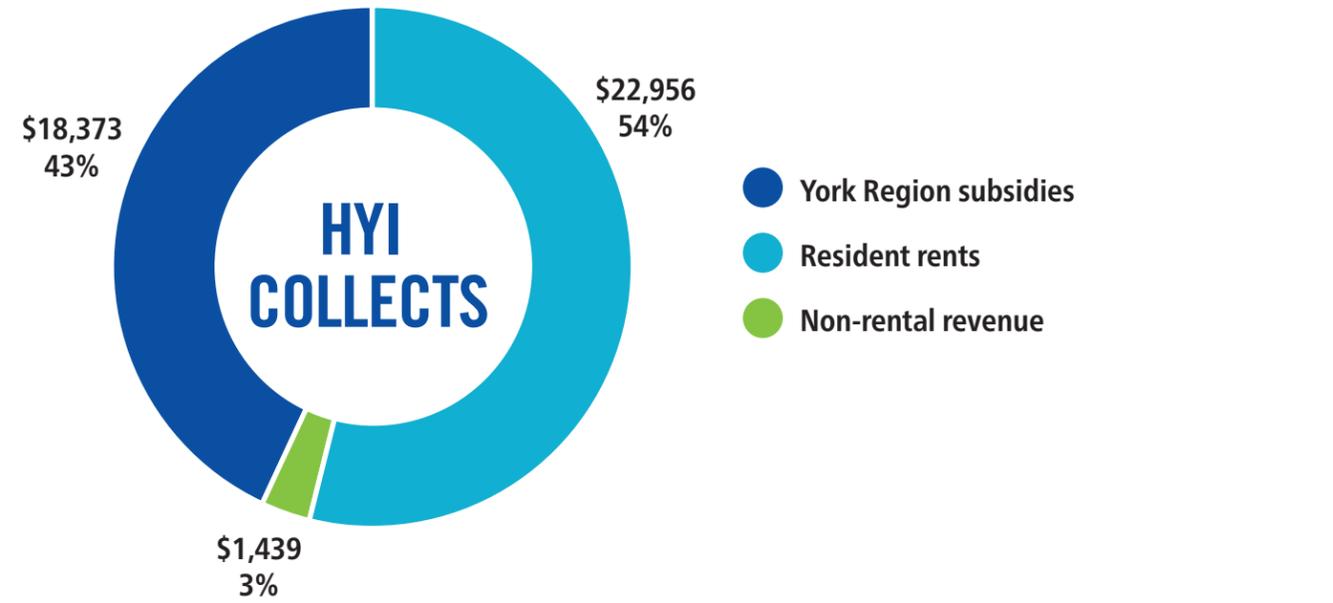
To gather feedback from the public, a virtual Public Information Centre was launched explaining the project, design elements and project schedule. The public also had the opportunity to complete an online survey to provide feedback.

By the end of 2020, the project was in the final stages of planning approvals from the town, with detailed design and demolition of the existing commercial structures on the property underway. Once completed, this building will offer approximately 97 units with a mix of one, two and three-bedrooms for seniors, families and individuals. The development is expected to be completed in 2023.

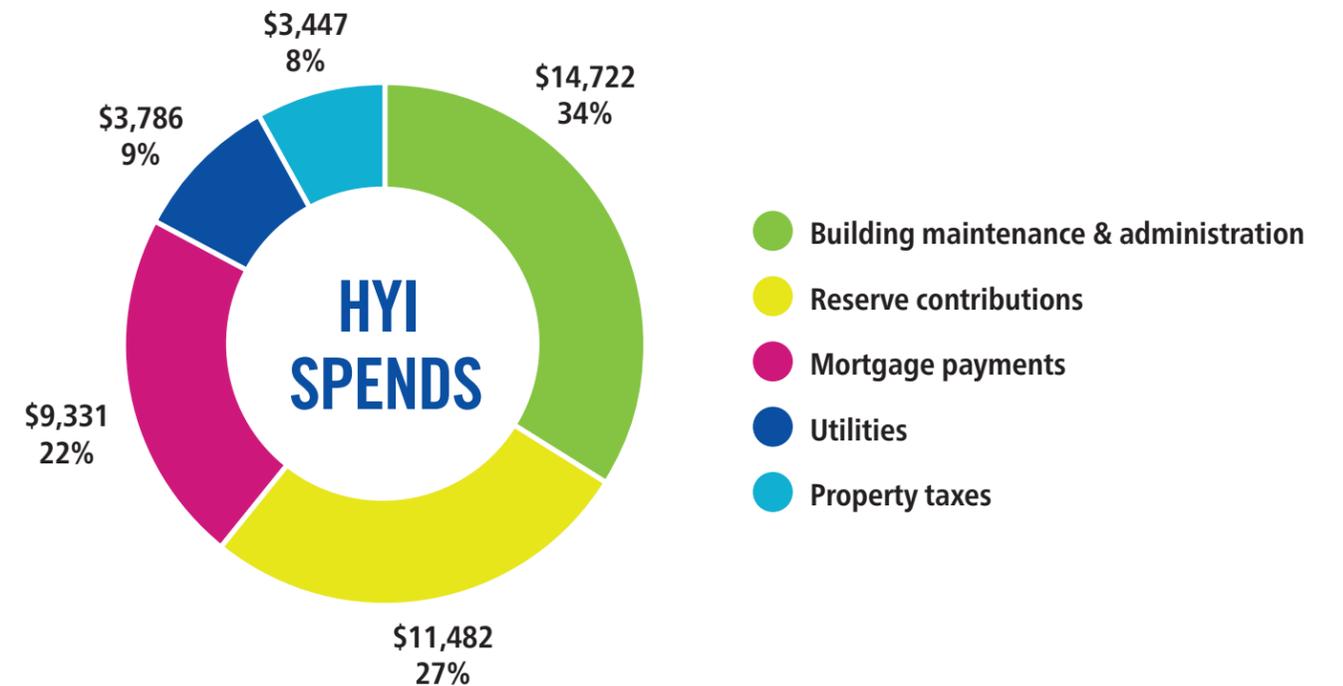
For more information, visit [york.ca/stouffvilleHYI](http://york.ca/stouffvilleHYI)

# 2020 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

HYI continued to be in a strong financial position in 2020. Despite the increase in rent arrears, HYI was able to generate an operating surplus of \$1.8 million by managing costs, and efficiently operating and managing all buildings and sites. The operating surplus was placed into reserves to ensure HYI can continue delivering its services while maintaining its assets as they age.



Total: \$42,768  
(in \$000s)



Total: \$42,768  
(in \$000s)



## Communities by Municipality



Highrise



Lowrise



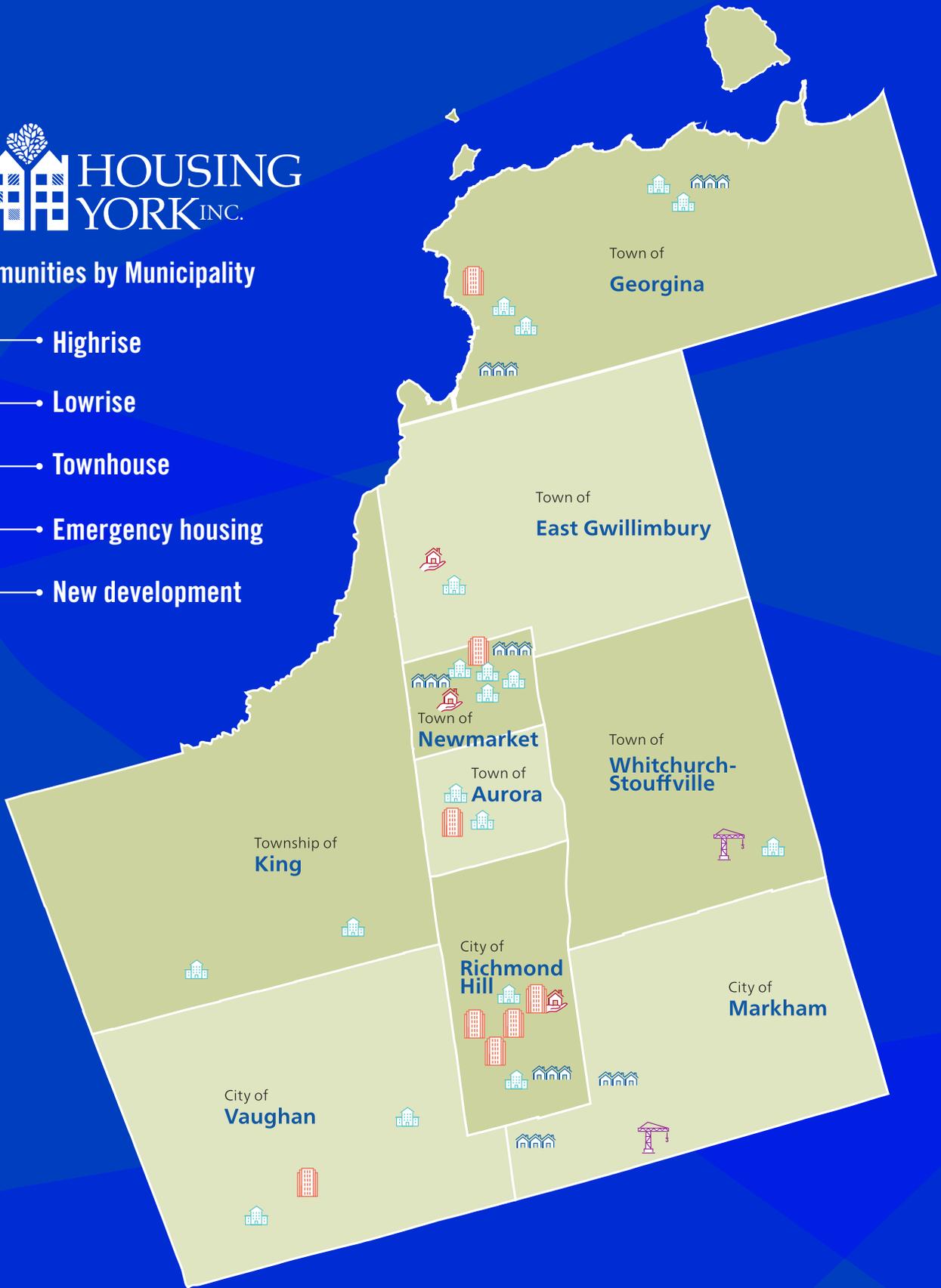
Townhouse



Emergency housing



New development



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