



# Rural Housing Information System

Stakeholder Feedback of the Design Plan



# PURPOSE

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- Provide an update to stakeholders
- Request feedback regarding the preliminary design plan
- Ensure we understand your data needs & priorities
- Ask about data you may be willing to share and your capacity to provide it
- Recruit participants for user testing





# IN BRIEF

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- The Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus (EOWC), the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI), and Itergy are partnering to develop a data solution to support affordable housing in rural communities.
- This digital tool aims to provide local, reliable, salient, and current rural data to assist proponents & municipalities in the planning and construction of new, affordable housing.





# BACKGROUND

- There is a **growing, acute shortage of housing** in Eastern Ontario, particularly in rural regions.
- While home prices have generally reliably risen for nearly 20 years, there has been a sudden spike in rural home prices following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Eastern Ontario regions averaged **32.4%** in median home price increases from 2020-2021 (CREA).
  - While Toronto averaged ~18%, Northumberland County was 44%, City of Kawartha Lakes was 60%, while Prince Edward County averaged **79%**.

CANADA ONTARIO

Ontario's Most Popular Real Estate Market Is Now Rural, While People Flee Toronto



## Rural Ontario the new hot spot for home buyers

New report indicates Simcoe County had the highest percentage increase in house sales in the GTA

Feb 6, 2021 7:00 PM By: Mark Pavilons, Local Journalism Initiative



CANADA

Canada's Property Bubble Pushed Ontario Prices To Grow Over 30% In All But 3 Markets



## Red-hot and rural: Canadian towns grapple with big-city-like real estate boom



By Julie Gordon

## Posthaste: Rural rush – the real housing bubble is in Ontario's cottage country

*Rest-and-recreation destinations may give sleepless nights to those who were late to the market*

Yadullah Hussain  
May 03, 2021 • May 3, 2021 • 6 minute read • □



Canadian recreational house prices soar 11.5% as remote work drives demand in cottage country



# PROJECT PARTNERS

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- Supports and advocates on behalf of the property taxpayers across rural Eastern Ontario
- Covers an area of 45,000 square kilometres from Cobourg to the Quebec border, and includes 13 upper-tier and single-tier municipalities as well as 90 local municipalities



- EOWC has partnered with ROI to leverage their data expertise and support the scalability of the prototype
- ROI has extensive experience with data collection and integration for rural areas, developing evidence-based policy, and communicating data to local decision-makers



- Consulting firm founded to help mid-sized businesses and large corporations improve the reliability, security and performance of their Microsoft infrastructure
- Specializes in Active Directory and IAM (Identity Access Management), is a Microsoft Gold and Silver certified partner, and manages Windows servers, security solutions, Active Directory, and full infrastructures on 6 continents and in over 65 countries

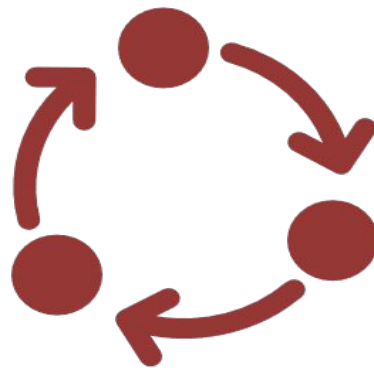
# PROJECT UPDATE

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## Round 1 – Scoping & Start Up - Complete

- Consultation with stakeholders
- Preliminary design plan



## Round 2 – Development & Testing - In progress

- Refinement of design plan through stakeholder input
- Selection of data sources
- Web development
- User testing (May – December 2022)



## Rollout & Scalability - In progress

- Tentative launch at EOWC conference and other events
- Scalability plan to include additional regions

# ROUND 1 – WHO WE CONSULTED

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- We consulted with:
  - Quinte Homebuilders Association
  - Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association
  - Other Eastern Ontario homebuilders' associations
  - Cooperative Housing Federation of Canada
  - Municipal Planning, Economic Development & Housing/Social Services Staff from all 13 EOWC upper and single-tier counties
  - Ray Bollman - Rural Development Institute, Brandon University
- Surveys were also sent to a selection of Eastern Ontario commercial and residential realtors and developers, to gauge which data would be the most useful for residential construction & sales



# ROUND 1 – WHAT WE HEARD

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## Rural Challenges

Poorly maintained, underpopulated and non-uniform data between jurisdictions creates an information gap for stakeholders:

### Municipal Staff & Council

- need authoritative data to address ratepayers' resistance to flexible residential zoning changes that increase options for affordable housing units
- need credible data to justify municipal investments in affordable housing

### Developers & Builders Associations

- need reliable information on rules and incentives to entice them to consider rural areas where construction rules and incentives vary
- need data to assist with grant applications to improve their chances of success and to determine ROI in rural areas

### Social Service & Housing Managers

- need reliable data to plan and implement housing plans effectively and understand regional trends

### Non-Profit Housing Providers

- need easy access to rural data to complete funding applications

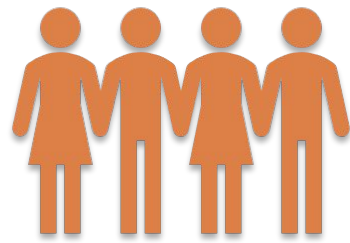
### Economic Development & Real Estate Professionals

- need detailed rural data that is not skewed by urban areas to develop investment cases for rural communities

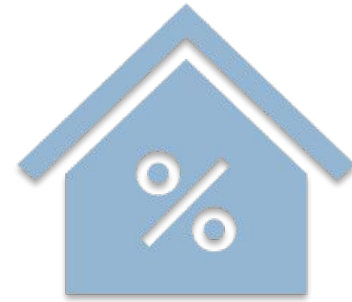


# IMPORTANT DATA POINTS

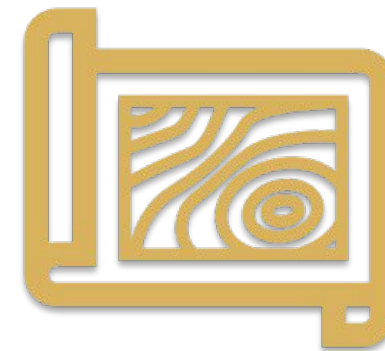
These data points (non-exhaustive) were the most frequently mentioned in consultation as being useful for new construction & sales.



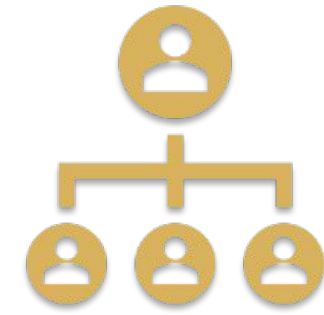
**Demographic trends**  
(population growth, age, income)



**Average market rents & home prices, correlated to income**



**Available zoned & developable land**



**Local organizations available for collaboration**



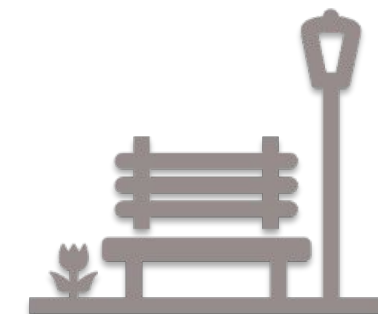
**Soft costs (development charges, parkland levy, school fees)**



**Available building incentives, CIPs, grants, etc.**



**Relevant municipal planning by-laws**

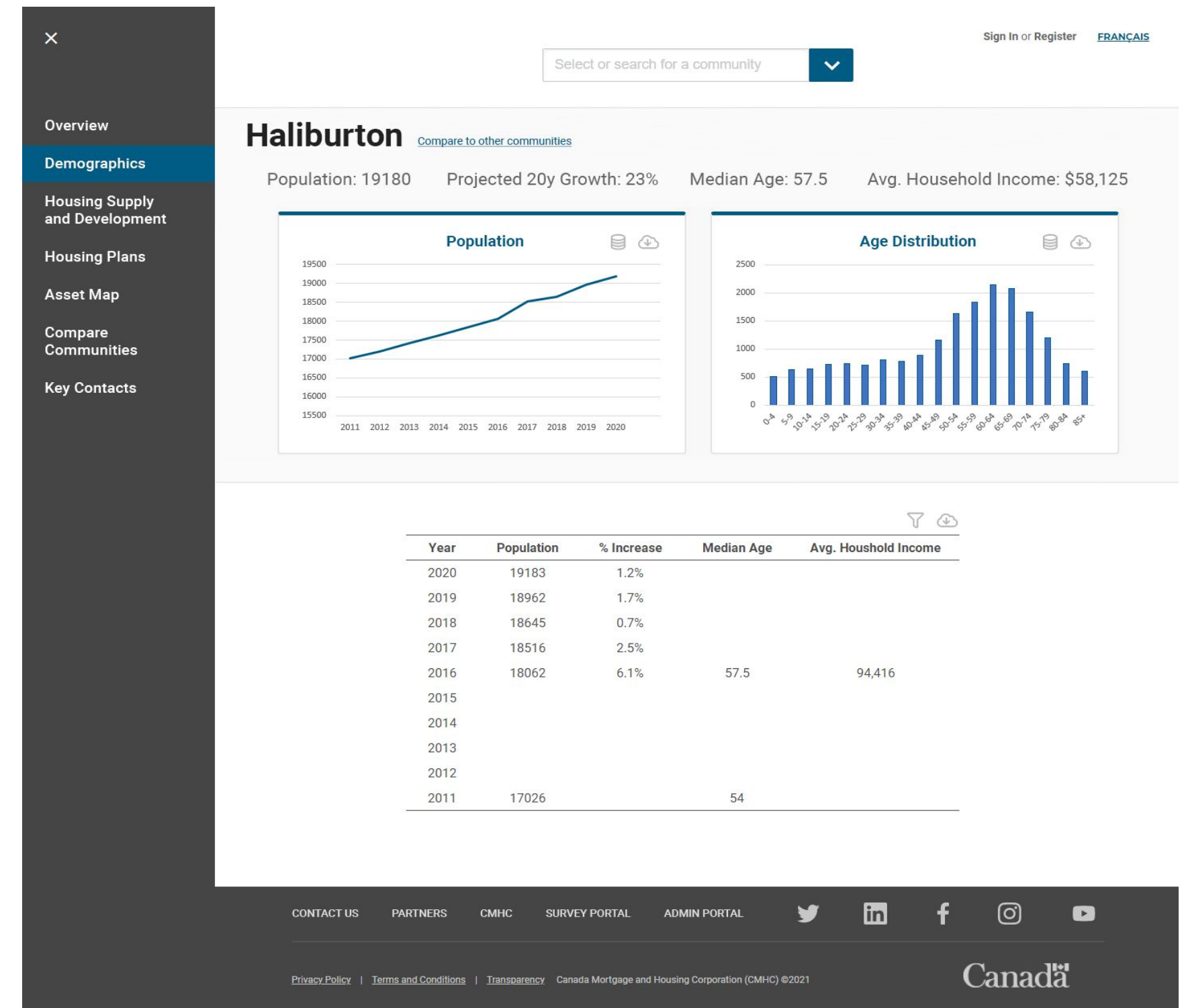


**Assets & amenities that support residents**

# RURAL HOUSING INFORMATION SYSTEM

## - PRELIMINARY DESIGN PLAN

- **Public-facing**
  - Some information may be restricted to specific user groups
- **Logical organization**
  - Community profiles
  - Thematic data groups
- **Interactive & custom**
  - Data visualizations
  - Downloadable data
  - Custom reports
  - Community comparison tool
  - Interactive mapping feature





# RURAL HOUSING INFORMATION SYSTEM

## - PRELIMINARY DESIGN PLAN

- **Uploading data**

- Data can be uploaded automatically, or manually with controlled user access
- Manually-uploaded data will be reviewed before publication
- Approved data will be automatically integrated with existing datasets

The screenshot displays the 'Admin Portal' interface for the Rural Housing Information System. On the left is a dark sidebar with a 'Datasets' menu containing options like 'Population Data', 'Age Distribution', 'Housing and Dwelling Characteristics', 'Ave. Housing Costs', 'Social Housing Expenditures', 'Policy, Studies, Funding Programs, and Grants', 'Affordable Housing Data', 'Key Contacts', 'Assets', 'Locations', and '+ add dataset'. Below this are 'Reports' and 'Surveys' sections. The main content area is titled 'Population Data' and features a file upload box with the filename '2017-2018\_POP\_DATA\_Haliburton.xlsx'. Below the upload box is a table for mapping 'Field Name' to 'Spreadsheet Column'. The table includes fields for Year, Population, Projected Growth, Growth Period (years), Median Age, Average Household Income, and various household size categories (1-person, 2-person, 3-person, 4-person, 5 or more), each with a corresponding dropdown menu for the spreadsheet column. At the bottom of the form, there are checkboxes for applying the same location to all rows, a 'Filter by location type' dropdown set to 'County', and a 'Select the locatoin:' dropdown set to 'County of Haliburton'. The footer contains navigation links (CONTACT US, PARTNERS, CMHC, SURVEY PORTAL, ADMIN PORTAL), social media icons, and the Canada logo.

Welcome Kevin [FRANÇAIS](#)

### Admin Portal

#### Population Data

2017-2018\_POP\_DATA\_Haliburton.xlsx [X](#)

Drag a file into the box or click browse

Field Name	Spreadsheet Column
Year	REP_YEAR
Population	TOT_POP
Projected Growth	Select a column...
Growth Period (years)	Select a column...
Median Age	MEDIAN_AGE_OF_POP
Average Household Income	AVE_INCOME
Households by size - 1 person	1-PERSON_COUNT
Households by size - 2 person	2-PERSON_COUNT
Households by size - 3 person	Number
Households by size - 4 person	Number
Households by size - 5 or more...	Number
Location	Select a column...

Would you like to apply the same location to all rows ☒

Filter by location type: County

Select the locatoin: County of Haliburton

CONTACT US PARTNERS CMHC SURVEY PORTAL ADMIN PORTAL

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Canada

# RURAL HOUSING INFORMATION SYSTEM

## - PRELIMINARY DESIGN PLAN

- **Collecting stakeholder data**

- Administrative portal enables the creation of surveys to collect stakeholder data that is shareable, but not readily available
- Surveys can be automatically pushed to stakeholders on a regular schedule
- Examples of survey data types:
  - Housing costs  
Municipal fees, funding, incentives...
  - Housing supply  
Number of units built...
  - Housing market  
Sale/rental history...

The screenshot displays the 'Admin Portal' interface for adding a new survey. On the left is a dark sidebar with a navigation menu containing 'Datasets', 'Reports', and 'Surveys'. Under 'Surveys', there are links for 'Home Builder Survey' and 'Annual Municipality Survey', along with a '+ add survey' button. The main content area is titled 'Add Survey' and includes tabs for 'Survey Designer' (active), 'Test Survey', 'Survey Logic', and 'JSON Editor'. Below the tabs are buttons for 'Undo', 'Redo', and 'Survey Settings'. The central workspace shows a survey page titled 'page1' with a dropdown menu and an 'Add New Page' button. The workspace contains a text input field for 'Input page title here' and a description field. A large blue circular graphic with a white plus sign and a checklist icon is positioned in the lower right of the workspace. To the right of the workspace is a 'TOOLBOX' panel listing various question types: Single Input, Checkbox, Radiogroup, Dropdown, Comment, Rating, Ranking, Image picker, Boolean, Image, Html, Signature pad, Expression (read-only), File, Matrix (single choice), and Matrix (multiple choice). The top right corner of the interface shows a user greeting 'Welcome Kevin' and a language selector for 'FRANÇAIS'.



# DESIGN PLAN FEEDBACK – FUNCTION & UTILITY

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Sign In or Register

FRANÇAIS

Select or search for a community

▼

Overview

Demographics

Housing Supply and Development

Housing Plans


Asset Map

Compare Communities

Key Contacts

Haliburton

Compare to other communities



Demographics

Population Increase

1.16%

change from 2020 to 2021

Labour & Materials

Labour Force

7,875

10.0% unemployment rate

Housing Supply & Dev

Affordable housing wait list

8 month

12 affordable homes in the area

Housing Plans

Vacant properties for sale

11

ASSETS



CONTACT US

PARTNERS

CMHC

SURVEY PORTAL

ADMIN PORTAL











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Overview

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Key Contacts

Haliburton

Compare to other communities

Population: 19180

Projected 20y Growth: 23%

Median Age: 57.5

Avg. Household Income: \$58,125

Population



Age Distribution



Year	Population	% Increase	Median Age	Avg. Household Income
2020	19183	1.2%		
2019	18962	1.7%		
2018	18645	0.7%		
2017	18516	2.5%		
2016	18062	6.1%	57.5	94,416
2015				
2014				
2013				
2012				
2011	17026		54	

CONTACT US

PARTNERS

CMHC

SURVEY PORTAL

ADMIN PORTAL











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# DESIGN PLAN FEEDBACK – SIMILAR TOOLS



Statistics  
Canada

## Census Profile and Data Viewer

- Presents StatsCan data only



## CMHC Housing Market Information Portal

- Presents Census and CMHC data
- Lacks data for rural areas



## Townfolio

- Provides community profiles using various data sources
- Requires an annual subscription fee



## Housing & Homelessness Tool

- Coming soon
- Available only to Service Managers
- Presents customized StatsCan data, CHMC data, 3<sup>rd</sup> party data, and municipal data



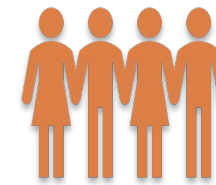
## Community Accounts

- Developed by Memorial University in NFLD
- Adopted by the Northern Policy Institute for rural communities in Northern Ontario
- Could be applied to other parts of Ontario
- Relies mostly on StatsCan data

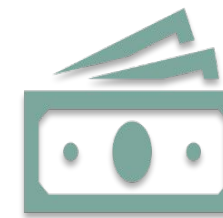


# DESIGN PLAN FEEDBACK – SIMILAR TOOLS

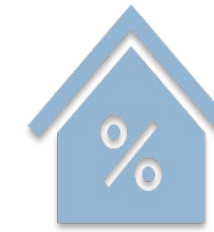
- Which of these data points is most important for you?
- Are there issues with current data sources/information that should be addressed? For example:
  - StatsCan – Outdated data (5-year update cycle)
  - CMHC - Lack of local data to adjust average market rent
  - Municipal websites – Difficult to find by-laws, soft costs, building incentives
- Do you have access to data that you can share with us?
  - How frequently would this data be updated?



**Demographic trends**  
(population growth, age, income)



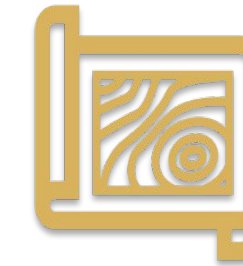
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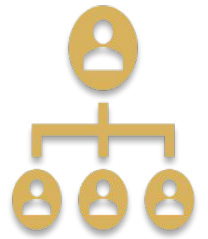
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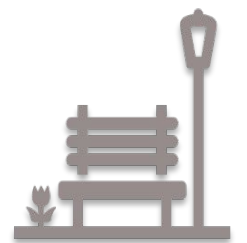
**Available zoned & developable land**



**Relevant municipal planning by-laws**



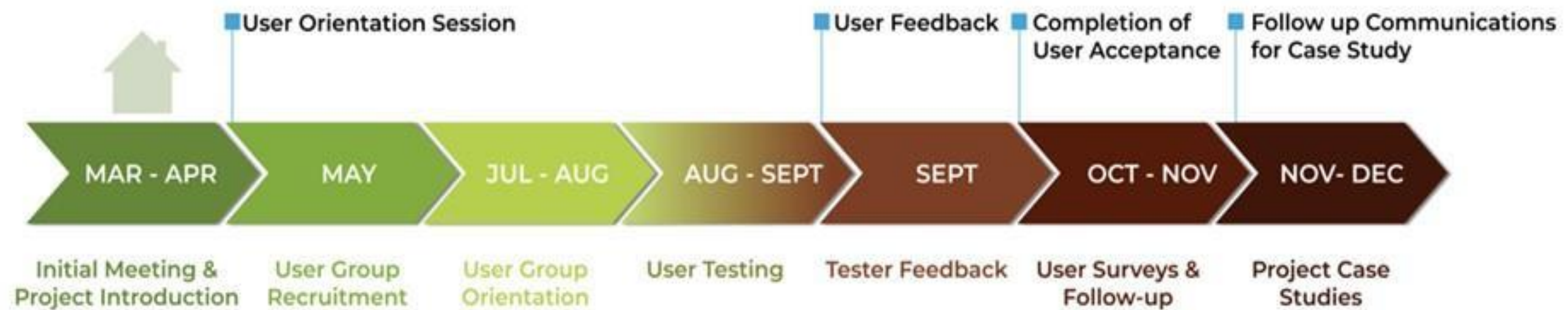
**Local organizations available for collaboration**



**Assets & amenities that support residents**

# NEXT STEPS – USER TESTING

- ROI is recruiting stakeholders to take part in user testing during 2022. We are currently recruiting municipalities, developers, and not-for-profit organizations.
- The aim is to gather information directly from intended users to help build a more robust tool.
- Involvement in the user testing process is free of charge and will include intermittent training, feedback, and follow-up with ROI staff at scheduled dates.



## Contact:

Iain Storosko, Program Development Specialist, [istorosko@ruralontarioinstitute.ca](mailto:istorosko@ruralontarioinstitute.ca), 519-731-7340



Please join our engagement platform, [ROI Connect](#), to receive project updates, share your feedback with us and participate in ongoing discussions.



# THANK YOU!

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## **Rural Housing Information System Project Team:**

Kezia Cowtan, Project Manager

Iain Storosko, Program Development Specialist

Danielle Letang, Data Analyst