

Calgary's  
**10 Year Plan**  
to End Homelessness

2008 – 2018

**Calgary Homeless Foundation** January 2011 Update



Calgary  
Homeless  
Foundation

## Contents

2	<b>Strategic shifts</b>	17	Strategies at a glance
3	<b>Milestones</b>	17	Addressing the unique needs of vulnerable subpopulations
	<b>The journey to end homelessness in Calgary</b>	18	Summary of changes in strategies
4	A quick catch up - Housing First and the business case	20	Strategy one – prevention and rehousing
5	12 guiding principles	23	Strategy two – housing
6	Breaking 10 years into a three phases	27	Strategy three – data and research
	<b>Phase 1 (2008, 2009 and 2010)</b>	30	Strategy four – non-profit sector
	Creating rapid, visible and meaningful change		<b>Phase 3 (2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018)</b>
9	Making solid progress		Fine-tuning the system for sustainability
10	Leading the way	33	A living plan
10	Better understanding homelessness in Calgary	33	Transition to community leadership
12	Consulting with the community	34	<b>Goals at a glance</b>
	<b>Phase 2 (2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014)</b>	36	<b>A thank you to those who contributed to this update</b>
	Building a homeless-serving system to end homelessness	IC	<b>For more information</b>
14	The process to build a coordinated system		

On the cover:

Before this five-month old girl was born, her mother and older sister were staying at a local emergency shelter for families. The family has now been housed with support for nearly a year. Thanks to the efforts of those working on Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, this family has hope for a better future.

This document is intended for a broad audience, but will be of particular interest to those working to help those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary, including non-profit agencies, those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, all levels of government, the faith community, businesses, volunteers, academics and researchers, and philanthropists. The "community" is frequently referenced in this document and refers to stakeholders working to end homelessness in Calgary. The information in this update includes expectations for the future. When strategy, plans and future performance, or other things that have not yet taken place are discussed, the Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) is making statements considered to be forward-looking information. Forward-looking information is solely designed to help readers understand current views and is not appropriate for other purposes.

# We can end homelessness in Calgary.

By January 29, 2018, an individual or family will stay in an emergency shelter or sleep outside for no longer than one week before moving into a safe, decent, affordable home with the support needed to sustain it.

## Our goal is within reach.

# Strategic shifts

Calgary's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness (Plan) was first published in January 2008. The original Plan included a number of assumptions and reflected a different landscape in Calgary. Three years into the Plan (January 2011), the Calgary Homeless Foundation in partnership with the community prepared this update. This update describes what has been learned and achieved to date, and what needs to be done over the next seven years.

## What is new?

- A plan to build a homeless-serving system focused on ending homelessness
- Added attention to the unique needs of vulnerable subpopulations, including youth, women, families and Aboriginal Peoples
- Combining the prevention and rehousing strategies in the original Plan
- An increased emphasis on homelessness prevention and reform of public systems that contribute to homelessness
- A refocused housing strategy that concentrates limited resources on housing for those in greatest need
- Beginning a process to transition to community leadership and planning for long-term sustainability of success

## What has not changed?

- Resources prioritized to the most vulnerable, particularly chronically and episodically homeless individuals and families<sup>1</sup>
- Twelve guiding principles, basic 10 Year Plan model and Housing First approach
- Commitment to end homelessness by 2018

1. See definition on page 11.

# Milestones

## Original 10 Year Plan

1. Retire 50 percent of Calgary's emergency shelter capacity within five years
2. Decrease the chronic population by 85 percent from current levels within five years, with a complete elimination of chronic homelessness in seven years
3. Eliminate family homelessness in two years
4. Stop the growth of homelessness and stabilize the overall homeless count at 2006 levels by May 1, 2010
5. Deliver a 12.5 percent annual decrease in the total homeless population starting in 2010
6. Reduce the economic cost of homelessness
7. Reduce the maximum average stay in an emergency shelter to less than seven days by January 29, 2018. By that point, anyone in an emergency shelter will be rapidly moved into permanent housing

The milestones were updated to reflect what has been learned about homelessness in Calgary and to ensure the milestones are measurable. The intention and direction of the original milestones has not changed. With the implementation of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS),<sup>2</sup> it will be easier to track progress to achieve these milestones.

## Updated 10 Year Plan

1. By 2014, 1,800 people who are chronically and episodically homeless will obtain and maintain housing
2. By 2014, ensure that no more than 10 percent of those served by Housing First<sup>3</sup> programs return to homelessness
3. By December 2014, all individuals who engage in rough sleeping will have access to housing and support options appropriate to their needs
4. By 2018, eliminate 85 percent of 2010 emergency shelter beds (a 1,700 bed reduction). At minimum, a 600 bed reduction should be achieved by 2014
5. By December 2014, reduce the average length of stay in family emergency shelters to 14 days and to seven days by January 29, 2018
6. By January 29, 2018, reduce the maximum average stay in an emergency shelter to less than seven days. By that point, anyone in an emergency shelter will be rapidly moved into permanent housing

2. HMIS is a web-based software application that will lead to a more coordinated system of care for homeless Calgarians. More information can be found on page 15.

3. See definition on page 4.

# The journey to end homelessness in Calgary

## A quick catch up

From 1994 to 2006, Calgary had Canada's fastest growing population of people experiencing homelessness, with nearly 3,500 people sleeping in shelters and outside in May 2006. In 2007, the Calgary Committee to End Homelessness was formed to create a 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness (Plan). The Plan was based on a 10 Year Plan model first introduced by the National Alliance to End Homelessness in the United States (U.S.) that was successfully reducing homelessness all over the U.S. Completed in January 2008, Calgary became the first city in Canada to have a Plan that committed the community to end homelessness.

## Two fundamentals

### Housing First

Traditionally, people experiencing homelessness were expected to address the issues that led to their homelessness, such as mental illness or addictions, before they were housed. With Housing First, the priority is to quickly move people experiencing homelessness into appropriate housing first, and then begin to work on the issues that contributed to their homelessness from the stability and safety of a home. Housing First programs respect client choice, follow a harm reduction approach and see permanent housing as a basic human right.

Over the past three years, the community has learned a lot from building and implementing Housing First programs in Calgary. Most important, 85 to 90 percent of people who were rehoused remained housed.

### The business case

Research demonstrates that it costs less to provide appropriate housing and support to a person at risk of or experiencing homelessness (ending homelessness) compared with providing that same person with short-term and ongoing emergency and institutional responses (managing homelessness). Most studies indicate those people with the highest needs incur system costs of \$100,000 or more per year.<sup>4</sup> This is two to three times higher than the cost of providing housing and support.

In the first three years of implementing the Plan in Calgary, the cost to rehouse people with support varied. Those requiring a low level of support over a short period of time, such as rent supplements, were rehoused for as little as \$4,000 per year. Providing housing and support to those with very complex needs can cost as much as \$36,000 per year. Those programs providing 24/7 care, similar to a nursing home, can cost as much as \$56,000 per year. With three years of experience, a detailed cost of housing review will be completed to confirm the cost savings of housing and support.

4. 2010 Study by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "Costs Associated with First Time Homelessness by Families and Individuals." Commissioned by Calgary Committee to End Homelessness. "2007 RSM Richter Inc. Study on Cost of Homelessness in Calgary." National Secretariat on Homelessness (2005) Study. "The Cost of Homelessness: Alternate Responses in Four Canadian Cities (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax)."

## 12 guiding principles

From the original 10 Year Plan and continuing on to 2018

1. Ending homelessness is a collective responsibility. This includes those experiencing homelessness taking personal ownership and accountability in ending their homelessness.
2. Our Plan will aim to help people move to self-reliance and independence.
3. All people experiencing homelessness are ready for permanent housing, with supports as necessary.
4. The first objective of homeless-serving systems, agencies, programs and funding is to help people experiencing homelessness gain and maintain permanent housing (Housing First).
5. The most vulnerable homeless populations need to be prioritized.
6. The selection of affordable housing and the provision of services should be guided by consumer choice.
7. Resources will be concentrated on programs that offer measurable results.
8. Affordable housing is safe, decent and readily attainable. Diverse, integrated, scattered site affordable housing, close to services, is preferred.
9. Ten Year Plan funding should be diverse and sustainable.
10. The use of markets will be maximized by involving the private sector in the implementation of the 10 Year Plan.
11. The economic cost of homelessness will be reduced.
12. A well-educated, well-trained and adequately funded non-profit sector is central to the success of the 10 Year Plan.

# Breaking 10 years into three phases



2008

2010

## Phase 1

### Creating rapid, visible and meaningful change

The Plan began at a time when not only were there many people experiencing homelessness in Calgary, but most said it was frustrating to get help among a tangled web of agencies. At the same time, resources to serve the growing population of homeless were severely limited and collaboration among agencies, while strong, was not focused.

This is much like a traffic system. The roads, which represent the way those experiencing homelessness get help from agencies, had no focus on creating traffic flow (a 10 Year Plan). This meant drivers (those at risk of or experiencing homelessness) faced traffic jams (long lines for service), dead ends (staying in emergency shelters or sleeping outside for many years) and traffic circles with no exits (repeatedly cycling in and out of homelessness). There was also little agreement over the rules of the road, such as applying a philosophy of Housing First. Investment into fixing the traffic infrastructure did not follow a plan.

Given this starting point, during the first three years the community came together to create rapid, visible and meaningful change. It started with an agreement to shift from managing homelessness to ending homelessness. This led to a large infusion of resources from both the public and private sector, which held, despite a weaker economy. These resources were used to fund much more affordable housing and introduce innovative programs to relieve the immediate pressure on the system, with housing and support provided to more than 2,000 Calgarians. Agencies began to work together more and the Housing First approach proved successful. There was also an opportunity to better understand homelessness in Calgary, as a way to guide the next phase of the Plan.

With immediate change accomplished and pressure on the system reduced, it is time to build a more effective and efficient homeless-serving system.



2011

2014

2015

2018

## Phase 2

### Building a homeless-serving system to end homelessness

Homelessness in Calgary appears to have turned a corner, with the growth of homelessness stopped and with the use of emergency shelters stabilizing. Building on the momentum of the first three years, now is the time to make the deeper, long-term changes to the homeless-serving system. This is the most critical and challenging part of the overall Plan.

Let's go back to the traffic system. The community can now anticipate where drivers will enter the road ways (become homeless) as a way to reduce the traffic to begin with, build programs to prevent homelessness and close gaps in the homeless-serving system. If drivers (people at risk of or experiencing homelessness) still enter onto the roadways, there is now agreement (among the homeless-serving agencies) that the traffic needs to be coordinated, prioritized and moved more effectively.

This means that over the next three years, the community's goal will be to make deeper system changes, filling in critical gaps, working with larger institutional systems and adjusting based on a better understanding of the system. There will be more emphasis on preventing homelessness, advocating for long-term policy changes and ensuring limited resources go to the most vulnerable.

## Phase 3

### Fine-tuning the system for sustainability

The final years of the Plan will be fine-tuning, making the adjustments necessary to complete and sustain success. In all likelihood, this will include an "evergreen" plan, which transfers more of the leadership into the community. If this were a traffic system, in the final years there will be an ongoing maintenance plan to ensure the infrastructure is sufficient to the needs of drivers (those becoming homeless).



Richard was on his way to work in northern Alberta's oil sands, when he was robbed and suffered head injuries. Richard admits his homelessness has to do with alcohol. "I loved drinking and I need to learn from when I was foolish."

# Phase 1

(2008, 2009 and 2010)

Creating rapid, visible and meaningful change



## Making solid progress

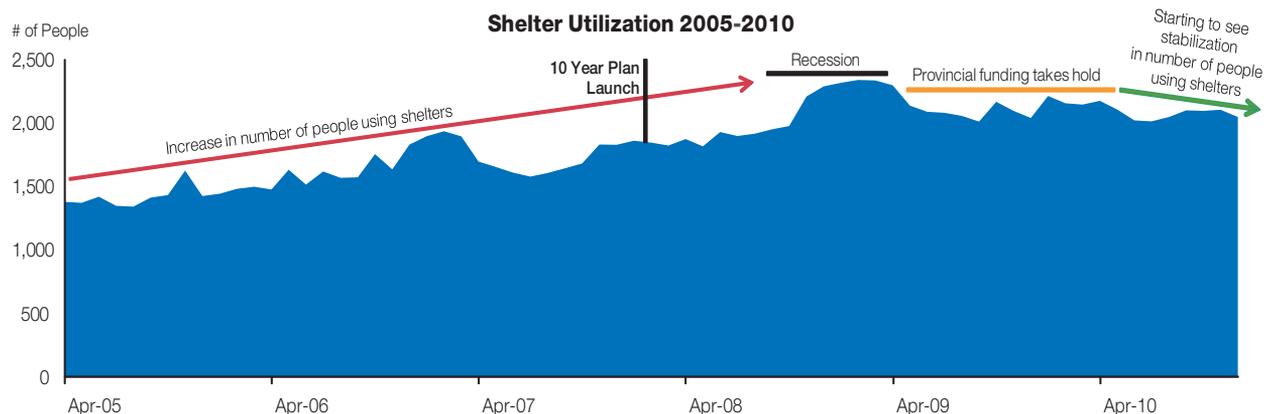
During the first three years of the Plan, there were many successes, as shown by the number of people served, greater agency collaboration and continued public funding.

From a client perspective, by the end of January 2011, it is expected that more than 2,000 Calgarians will have received housing with support through programs funded by the Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF). The stock of affordable housing increased more in two years compared with the prior decade, with funding for nearly 2,000 units of affordable housing and a plan for another 1,000 units of attainable home ownership.<sup>5</sup>

The homeless-serving sector also began to work better together. Seven out of the nine sectors in the Community Action Committee, a committee representing the sectors that provide services and supports to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, now have Housing First programs. Similarly, most Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs (HUA) funded emergency shelters in Calgary now have housing programs either in place or under development. Agencies are also beginning to work together on coordinated intake and rehousing. Most important, more than 20 agencies will begin using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in 2011, with another 25 to join later in the year.

The public sector took notice of this shift. Despite a recession that started in the fall of 2008, the Government of Alberta drafted its own Plan to End Homelessness, the first provincial government to do so in Canada. In fiscal 2010/11, this meant committing \$188 million for affordable housing and \$42 million for housing and support programs.

Shelter utilization in Calgary over the past five years is illustrated in the graph below. Since 2005, the number of people using the shelter system gradually increased, peaking during the 2008 winter season as the recession hit Calgary. Provincial funding began to flow in the spring of 2009 and along with other community efforts and improving economic conditions, worked to stabilize shelter utilization. These numbers are an encouraging sign of progress.



Notes: Based on HUA Daily Shelter Summary Statistics (averages/month). All shelters include singles and families; emergency and transitional. These figures represent total HUA shelter numbers. Monthly averages are calculated by the CHF. Figures do not take into consideration the closing/transfers/opening of shelters. Reported numbers may change based on verifying final numbers with HUA.

5. This number represents data from March 31, 2008 to March 31, 2010.

## Leading the way

With agency collaboration and funding, Calgary achieved a number of “firsts” and “best practices,” above and beyond the fact that Calgary was the first city in Canada to implement a Plan. These included:

- building the first Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in Canada;
- initiating the first Project Homeless Connect (PHC)<sup>6</sup> in Alberta, with close to 8,000 served so far;
- applying Housing First to youth (up to 24 years of age) and those experiencing domestic violence;
- drafting the first Plan to End Youth Homelessness;
- implementing case management standards for agencies working with those at risk of or experiencing homelessness;
- building the Homelessness Asset and Risk Tool to predict and prevent homelessness;
- assembling a research network and agenda to end homelessness;
- engaging the private sector in the Plan, through funding and leveraging skills;
- developing a tool to assess the risk of mortality and thus prioritize those most vulnerable; and
- serving as a national model, with 11 Canadian cities subsequently launching Plans.

## Better understanding homelessness in Calgary

During the first three years of the Plan, the community began to better understand homelessness in Calgary. Using this information, new housing and support programs were tested to learn what works, what needs to be adjusted and where there are gaps.

Assumptions that were made in the original Plan were confirmed. These include:

- proving the effectiveness of Housing First, with an 85 to 90 percent housing retention rate among singles;
- directing limited resources to the most vulnerable, who also are the highest users of the system;
- basing the strategy on sound data and research, as well as “best practices” from other jurisdictions;
- making sure those at risk of or experiencing homelessness helped guide strategies, plans and changes;
- phasing in change, starting with rapid, visible change and then moving to deeper system transformation; and
- demonstrating that ending homelessness is more cost effective than managing homelessness.

6. A one-day event where people at risk of or experiencing homelessness can access information and services in one location.



## Predictable risk factors and pathways into homelessness

People who become homeless typically have common risk factors and interact with similar public systems. For example, those at high risk of long-term homelessness often interact with key public institutions, such as health care, addiction treatment, correctional facilities, child intervention and domestic violence services. Risk factors that contribute to homelessness include:

- extremely low income/high housing costs;
- health issues, such as the presence of mental health, substance abuse and chronic physical health problems;
- systems interactions, such as a history of incarceration and out-of-home placement as a child; and
- experiences of trauma and abuse, such as adverse childhood experiences including physical and sexual abuse, and domestic violence.

Certain protective factors, such as healthy social supports and education, lessen these risks.

## 14,000 households anticipated to be at high risk of homelessness

Better understanding who is at risk of homelessness allows the community to prevent homelessness in the first place. Based on data from the 2006 Census, 23,165 Calgary households were identified as living in poverty (annual income of less than \$20,000) and spending more than 50 percent of their income on shelter. Of those, 13,765 were renter households, who are at a higher risk because they cannot sell their assets to prevent homelessness.

## 16,000 people estimated to experience homelessness annually

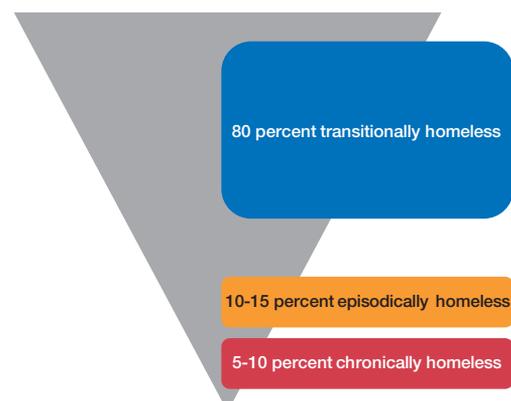
Accurately determining the number of people experiencing homelessness in Calgary is difficult. Historically, point-in-time counts conducted every two years were based on the number of people sleeping in shelters and outside. The count done in 2008 determined that 4,060 people were homeless in Calgary on any given night. Unfortunately, this is only a snapshot.

The City of Calgary reports there is an estimated 1.5 percent prevalence rate of homelessness in Calgary. Based on a population of one million people, this leads to a population of about 16,000 individuals using the shelter system in 2009. Only ongoing, real-time data through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) will determine the real count, including hidden populations such as women, families and youth.

## For most, homelessness is a short-term phenomenon

Studies show that the general experience of homelessness tends to fall into three categories:

1. *Transitionally homeless*: About 80 percent of individuals will experience short-term homelessness, usually less than one month, as a result of economic issues and housing costs. These people tend to require minimal and one-time assistance. This population is estimated to be about 13,000 people in Calgary.



2. *Episodically homeless*: About 10 to 15 percent of people have recurring episodes of homelessness, lasting several months throughout their lifetime. Typically this is due to complex issues, such as addictions, domestic violence and mental health. In Calgary, it is believed there are between 1,600 to 2,400 people who are episodically homeless per year.
3. *Chronically homeless*: Between 5 to 10 percent of people experience long term and ongoing homelessness related to complex and persistent health barriers, mental health and addictions. In Calgary, this population is estimated to be about 800 to 1,600 people per year.

Research on homelessness confirms that people who are episodically and chronically homeless are the highest users of the system and are the most vulnerable. A recent study on Ottawa, Guelph and Toronto emergency shelters indicated that while only a small portion of the population, 60 percent of shelter space is taken up by those who experience recurring or long-term homelessness. Research confirms that those who have been homeless over a long term have poor health, with a high risk of premature death.

## Consulting with the community

The update of the 10 Year Plan is based not only on research, but also gleaned what others learned over the past three years of implementation. Specifically, input was received from a number of key groups.

**10 Year Plan Advisory Committee** – The group met five times to provide strategic advice to the CHF in the development of this rewrite. The group was comprised of 24 members, representing public systems, agencies, researchers and the private sector.

**Housing Strategy Review Committee** – This Committee guided development of Strategy 2 – Housing, within the broader process. A comprehensive housing inventory assessment was completed in 2010, with more than 80 agencies informing the review.

**The CHF Board of Directors** – The Directors met three times to review the direction of the updated 10 Year Plan, including a motion to approve the update in November 2010. A number of Directors participated in the Advisory Committee.

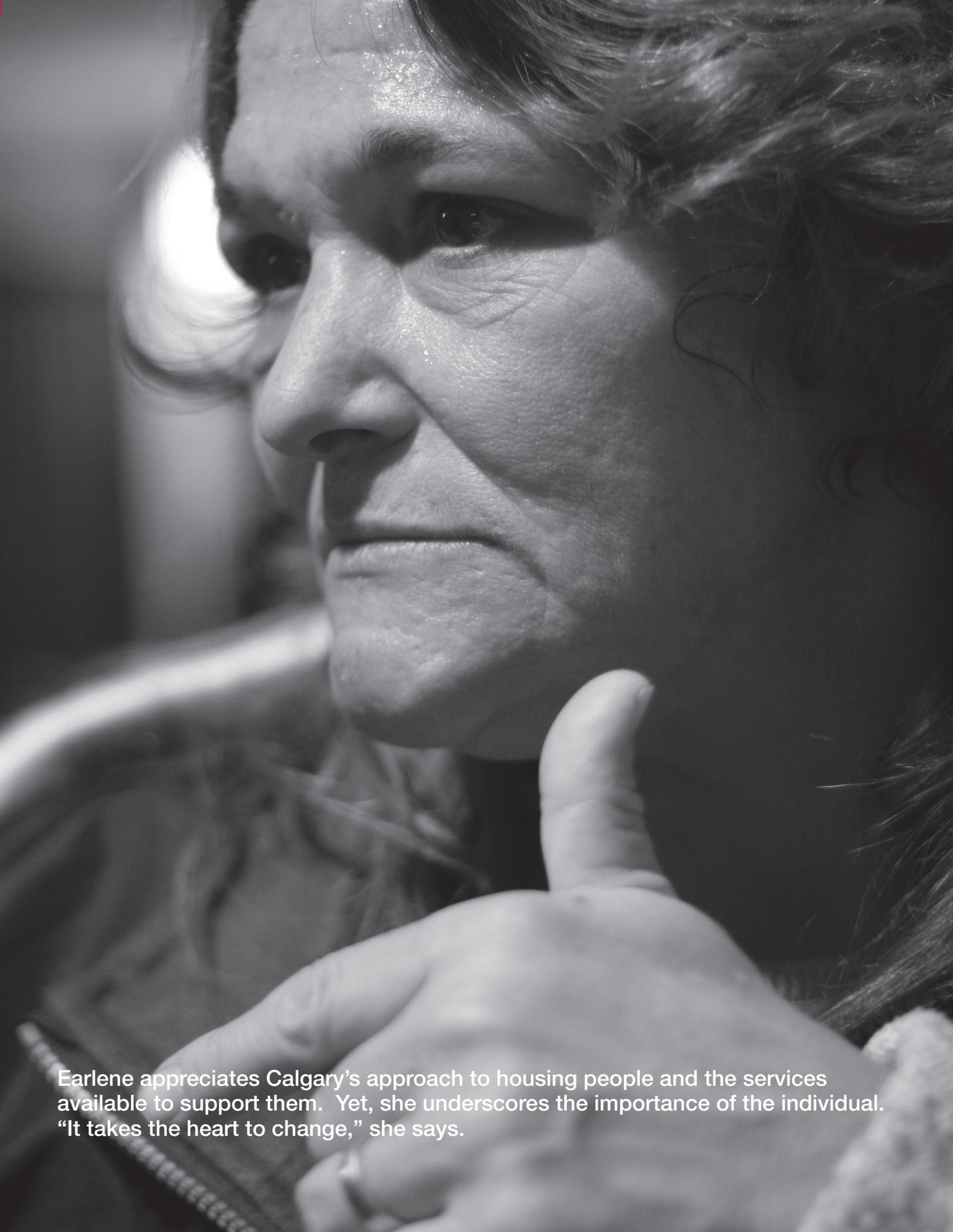
**Research Symposium** – A 2010 symposium reviewed research progress on homelessness and provided input into revising the existing research agenda as part of the updated Plan. This revised agenda will be released in early 2011.

**Agency Input** – Feedback from agencies was gathered through the Community Action Committee (CAC), which represents more than 130 agencies and groups. Agencies also provided feedback at the 2010 Community Summit, where more than 300 participants discussed progress to implement the Plan and suggested improvements.

A list of the above participants can be found on page 36 of this document.

Along with this particular feedback, the updated Plan also reflects feedback gathered from those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, surveys conducted with those attending Project Homeless Connect, data gathered from people participating in the Rehousing, Triage and Assessment Survey, the Research Agenda, ongoing consultation with the CAC, the 2009 Youth Summit, case management standards consultation, implementation of the HMIS, as well as strategic review and business planning processes over two years.

Frank and specific feedback was critical to updating the Plan.



Earlene appreciates Calgary's approach to housing people and the services available to support them. Yet, she underscores the importance of the individual. "It takes the heart to change," she says.

# Phase 2

(2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014)

## Building a homeless-serving system to end homelessness

### The process to build a coordinated system

About 130 different organizations provide services to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary. The system is complicated and hard to navigate, especially for those in crisis. Ending homelessness requires an easier, more coordinated way for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness to get help. To be successful, this coordinated system requires:

- an understanding of how different components fit into the overall system and what is expected from each;
- agreed upon goals, outcomes and performance measures to tell if components and the overall system are working;
- the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to bring together the system, share relevant information and measure performance;
- common intake, triage and assessment processes; and
- standards to ensure quality of care among the different services.

### Defining system components

With better definition of services and coordination among agencies, those at risk of or experiencing homelessness will be matched with the right intervention at the right time. The system will be sensitive to changes in client needs and will be more nimble in transitioning those at risk of or experiencing homelessness to a more independent, community environment. The components of the system and their expected roles are below.

**Emergency shelters** provide temporary accommodations and essential services for individuals experiencing homelessness. The length of stay should not exceed 30 days, with an aim to reduce the length of stay to seven days by 2018.

**Transitional housing and support** provides housing and support services to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Housing and services are time-limited and designed to move individuals to independent living or permanent housing with support. The length of stay should not exceed 24 months. Those at risk of or experiencing homelessness can participate in case management and support services as part of their stay in the program.

**Permanent housing and support** provides long-term housing and support to individuals who are homeless and experiencing major disabling conditions. There is no limit to the length of stay. While support services are offered and made readily available, the programs do not require participation in these services to remain in the housing.

**Rapid rehousing** provides targeted, time-limited financial assistance and support services for those experiencing homelessness in order to help them quickly exit emergency shelters and then retain housing. These programs are for those who can live independently after receiving subsidies and support services for less than one year.

**Prevention services** provide short-term assistance to individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless. These services are for those who can live independently after receiving services for less than one year.

**Outreach** provides basic services and referrals to people who are chronically homeless and living outside.

**Affordable housing** is for low income households who cannot afford rents based on market prices. In Calgary, tenants in affordable housing programs should spend no more than 30 percent of their gross income on shelter.

**Supportive services** provide a variety of essential health and basic needs to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness to complement the housing interventions outlined above.



## Developing system and program outcomes, and performance measurement

Groups working directly on the issue of homelessness will develop and implement common ways to measure the success of the homeless-serving system in ending homelessness. The measures will be focused on the outcomes for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The following proposed measures can be monitored using the HMIS and can track progress to achieve Plan goals.

### System measures

- “Occupancy” measures the rate of bed utilization.
- “Destinations at exit” tracks the number people who exit to permanent housing solutions.
- “Return to shelter/rough sleeping” refers to the percentage of people who receive a positive exit from a program and then re-enter shelter/street within a relatively short time period.
- “Discharge from public institutions” measures the decrease in number of people discharged into homelessness from public institutions, such as hospitals, jails and child intervention services.

### Program measures

- “Income gains at exit” measures the number of people who increase their income while in a program.
- “Length of stay/stability” is the number of days a person or household is enrolled in a program.
- “Client rate of engagement” is the total amount of people engaged by a shelter or outreach program that end up obtaining a better housing intervention.
- “Self-sufficiency measures” look at programs providing intense support services in areas such as employment, substance abuse and mental health.

Once the proposed measures are agreed upon, benchmarks will be developed to evaluate how programs are working and establish goals.

## Implementing HMIS to coordinate the system

An HMIS is a locally administered, electronic data collection system that knits together homeless assistance providers in a community. The HMIS creates a more coordinated and effective housing and service delivery system. It is a web-based software application that homeless assistance providers use to coordinate care, manage their operations and better serve those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Calgary’s HMIS will be the first of its kind in Canada, however many HMIS systems are in place in the United States.

Calgary began the process of implementing an HMIS in 2010 through an extensive engagement process with agencies, funders, public systems and those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The HMIS is being built in consultation with the Alberta Privacy Commissioner’s Office to ensure the system operates under the highest privacy and security standards.

## Establishing and coordinating common intake, triage and assessment processes

People at risk of or experiencing homelessness deserve a consistent intake, triage and assessment process no matter where they enter the homeless-serving system. The HMIS can help streamline access for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in a consistent manner across diverse programs. The HMIS can also prioritize resources for those most in need.

- **Intake** – no matter where a client enters the system, there is a common process and access to resources.
- **Triage** – the system prioritizes resources for the most vulnerable.
- **Assessment** – the system links people with the housing and support that best matches their needs.

## Introducing standards of care to achieve excellence

Case management standards for ending homelessness were developed over a two-year period. These case management standards are the first of their kind in North America. Extensive consultation occurred, including feedback from homeless-serving agencies, the academic community and more than 300 people who were at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

The case management standards articulate the quality of care and service expected from homeless-serving agencies providing support to individuals and families. These include basic practice standards, like access to 24/7 crisis support, cultural competency of staff and programs (particularly for Aboriginal Peoples), minimum training requirements for case managers, staff to client ratios, client consent to services, grievance processes and clients' rights.

In 2011, the Canadian Accreditation Council will help implement a process to review, monitor and develop accreditation based on these case management standards. In upcoming years, standards will be developed for all components of the homeless-serving system.

# Strategies at a glance



## Strategy 1 – Prevention and Rehousing

Develop a homeless-serving system that ensures Calgarians at risk of or experiencing homelessness have the supports they need to achieve and maintain housing stability<sup>7</sup>

## Strategy 2 – Housing

Ensure adequate affordable and supportive housing

## Strategy 3 – Data and Research

Improve data and systems knowledge

## Strategy 4 – Non-profit Sector

Reinforce non-profit organizations serving Calgarians at risk of or experiencing homelessness

# Addressing the unique needs of vulnerable subpopulations

Among those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, there are subpopulations which are especially vulnerable and have unique needs to take into account when providing housing with support. The following groups are particularly vulnerable and require tailored interventions.

- Chronic and episodically homeless are at higher risk of death due to very poor health and long-term homelessness. They also use more than 50 percent of emergency shelter capacity.
- Aboriginal Peoples are over represented, making up about two percent of the general population but 30 percent of the homeless population. They also have culturally-specific needs calling for tailored strategies to overcome barriers to housing stability.
- Youth (up to 24 years of age) are extremely vulnerable because they are at an early stage in life.
- Families require immediate action because of the presence of children.
- Women merit specific attention due to vulnerability to violence and typically lower incomes, particularly when they are lone heads of household.

The needs of the chronic and episodically homeless are prioritized throughout this updated Plan. The unique requirements of the other subpopulations are indicated as applicable in each strategy.

7. Strategy 1 now combines the prevention and rehousing strategies from the original Plan into a single strategy.

# Summary of changes in strategies

## Original 10 Year Plan

### Strategy 1 – Prevention

- Provide opportunities for the most vulnerable to increase their incomes
- Reinforce emergency prevention
- Streamline access to housing and services
- Stop discharging people into homelessness from key points of contact, like hospitals, corrections and child intervention services
- Improve housing opportunities and services for homeless youth

### Strategy 2 – Rehousing

- Make permanent housing the first objective of all homeless-serving programs and services
- Provide 1,200 chronically homeless with housing with support
- Develop a city-wide, common, but physically distributed, intake and assessment process
- Provide a case manager for every person who becomes homeless in Calgary

### Strategy 3 – Housing

- Acquire 114 acres of land for affordable housing
- Develop 11,250 new units of affordable housing, including 1,200 supportive housing units and treatment beds
- Optimize affordable housing use through an affordable housing registry
- Develop housing trust model for affordable housing development

### Strategy 4 – Data and Research

- Introduce Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Develop and maintain a detailed services directory
- Expand, coordinate and deepen research capabilities

### Strategy 5 – Non-profit Sector

- Address critical human resources issues facing homeless-serving non-profit agencies, including wages, benefits and workload
- Improve efficiency by coordinating and optimizing resources
- Reduce the administrative burden on non-profit organizations
- Build public support and encourage community action on homelessness

# Updated 10 Year Plan

## Strategy 1 – Prevention and Rehousing

- *Continue*: provide opportunities for the most vulnerable to increase their incomes
- *Continue*: reinforce emergency prevention
- *New*: link prevention and rehousing strategies using HMIS
- *Continue*: stop discharging people into homelessness from key points of contact, like hospitals, corrections and child intervention services
- *New*: draft Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Calgary
- *New*: introduce strategy to end rough sleeping (sleeping outside)
- *New*: draft Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness in Calgary
- *Continue*: focus on providing people with chronic homelessness with housing with support, but recognize episodically homeless too. By 2014, 1,500 people who are chronically or episodically homeless will obtain and maintain housing
- *New*: introduce place-based prevention interventions and focus on community integration
- *New*: clarify the integration of housing and case management support
- *Modify*: provide case management only as needed, rather than to all
- *New*: focus on priority populations (chronic and episodically homeless, Aboriginal Peoples, youth, families and women)

## Strategy 2 – Housing

- *Discontinue*: acquire 114 acres of land for affordable housing
- *Modify*: add 8,500 affordable housing units, instead of 11,250 units, focusing on providing units to those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness rather than focusing on the type of housing
- *Continue*: develop policy agenda to increase rental stock and affordable housing
- *Continue*: develop housing registry using HMIS (moved to Strategy 3)
- *New*: optimize existing housing (emergency, transitional and non-market) and better target rent supports to people at risk of homelessness
- *New*: develop housing standards
- *Modify*: include collaborative capital campaign and market-based investment vehicles as a way to create stable, long-term revenue for the development of affordable housing
- *Discontinue*: add addictions treatment beds and family/youth emergency shelter beds

## Strategy 3 – Data and Research

- *Continue*: introduce HMIS
- *Continue*: build service directory and housing registry using HMIS
- *Continue*: build agency capacity to do research and strategic analysis of data
- *Continue*: develop policy advocacy
- *New*: implement research agenda, focusing on priority populations

## Strategy 4 – Non-profit Sector

- *Continue*: align funders to achieve consistent outcomes across the system
- *Continue*: improve efficiency by coordinating and optimizing resources, using HMIS and evaluation framework
- *New*: introduce standards of care across program types
- *Continue*: reduce administrative burden on non-profit organizations, using HMIS, evaluation framework and standards of care
- *New*: build capacity related to working with priority populations and system planning
- *New*: advocate for funding appropriate to program type and client acuity

# Strategy 1

## Prevention and Rehousing

**Develop a homeless-serving system that ensures Calgarians at risk of or experiencing homelessness have the support they need to achieve and maintain housing stability**

### Background

The update of the Plan has an added emphasis on homelessness prevention. These prevention efforts are guided by five principles:

- **identify** those at greatest risk of homelessness and intervene at predictable pathways into homelessness;
- **prioritize resources to the most vulnerable**, especially those at risk of long-term homelessness;
- **provide just enough assistance** to prevent and/or end homelessness, stretching resources;
- **integrate key public systems** that interact with those at high risk of homelessness, such as corrections, health care, child intervention and addictions treatment; and
- **reform public systems** so there is shared responsibility for stable housing across public systems, including income supports, corrections, health care, child intervention, Aboriginal and domestic violence.

### Goals

1. Prioritize the most vulnerable for rehousing and systems prevention, particularly those interacting with corrections, health care, child intervention (including domestic violence) and addictions treatment. Provide and maintain housing with supports for 500 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and 1,000 individuals experiencing episodic homelessness by 2014.

Central to ending homelessness in Calgary is to prioritize housing and support to those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness. Research from Ontario emergency shelters indicates that 60 percent of shelter beds were used by those who had been homeless over a long period of time and had complex needs. Not only are these people the most vulnerable population, but they are also the highest users of public systems.

One way to prevent this population from becoming homeless over the long term is to intervene on the pathways that lead to their homelessness. In a CHF study of 315 people experiencing homelessness over a long period, more than one-third had a background of child intervention and more than 85 percent had a criminal record. About 30 percent of these people accessed the emergency health services over 270 times in a three-month period. Proactively identifying and housing those being discharged into homelessness from hospitals, corrections, child intervention services and addiction treatment is key.

By intervening along known pathways into homelessness, the homeless-serving system will prioritize those at greatest risk. The community will work with the Government of Alberta to end people being discharged from health services, corrections and child intervention services into homelessness in Calgary.

2. Develop a coordinated system for those experiencing housing crises that includes building common intake, triage and assessment, leveraging the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by December 31, 2011.

People at risk of or experiencing homelessness should be able to access help easily. There should be points of entry (intake) at homeless-serving agencies and at locations where people come into contact with mainstream systems, such as emergency shelters, hospitals, the Calgary Police Service, government service locations and non-profit service providers.



Along with easy access to help, people at risk of or experiencing homelessness deserve a consistent intake, triage and assessment process. This will streamline access for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in a consistent manner across diverse programs.

3. Enumerate all rough sleepers (those sleeping outside) by December 2011 and create a collaborative system of outreach to end rough sleeping by 2014.

The size of the rough sleeping population in Calgary is unknown, so a first step is to understand the scope. It is known, however, that this group is highly vulnerable, difficult to engage and requires a high level of support because of the complex issues they face due to poor physical and mental health, as well as addictions. Coordinated outreach by groups such as City Bylaw, Calgary Police Service, Alberta Health Services, Emergency Medical Services and agencies will identify all rough sleepers and prioritize them for housing and support.

4. Create opportunities for the most vulnerable to obtain adequate incomes.

Income for the poor has not kept up with the cost of living in Calgary, particularly for housing. The most vulnerable Calgarians receive Income Supports or Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH). These supports are often difficult to access and are not sufficient to cover the cost of rental accommodation.

The homeless-serving community will work with the Government of Alberta to increase the amount of these supports, advocate for regulations that makes these benefits more accessible and prioritized to those at greatest risk of homelessness. It is important to link people with existing employment opportunities and training, and develop additional training, education and work programs.

5. Reinforce rehousing efforts with appropriate case management and community reintegration supports.

In connection with the common intake and assessment process, homeless-serving agencies will put in place case management standards for homelessness and Housing First programs that provide case management to a range of client needs.

Housing stability over the long term requires integration into and support from the broader community. The homeless-serving system needs to engage the public to help people who are rehoused become self-sufficient and then contribute as active members of society.

6. Develop targeted emergency prevention and community interventions to stabilize those at imminent risk of homelessness in Calgary.

Prevention resources will be prioritized to those who are most vulnerable (likely to experience chronic and episodic homelessness). The homeless-serving community also has data now that shows the paths into homelessness, the factors that make people more vulnerable to homelessness and the factors that protect people against homelessness. This information will guide targeted prevention efforts.

Research can also help identify the communities in Calgary where large numbers of people at risk of homelessness live. In these specific neighbourhoods, there is an opportunity to work with the community to prevent homelessness.

7. Implement the Plan to End Youth Homelessness.

Agencies that work with youth (up to 24 years of age) are developing a Plan to End Youth Homelessness, which will be launched in early 2011. The focus is to better coordinate mainstream services, to enhance rehousing and support for youth and to develop a strategy to address the health (mental and physical) and addiction issues of youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary. The youth-serving agencies will work with the Government of Alberta to add new youth housing, such as transitional housing beds. These agencies will also ensure that young people are not discharged into homelessness from child intervention services.

8. Work with Aboriginal community stakeholders to develop and implement a Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness.

Aboriginal Peoples make up about two percent of Calgary's population, yet a CHF study indicated that Aboriginal Peoples represented 30 percent of those experiencing long-term homelessness in 2008 and 2009. This disproportionate representation and the fact that Aboriginal Peoples have greater barriers in accessing help from the homeless-serving system merits development of a Plan unique to the needs of this population. The Plan will build cultural reconnection into Housing First programs for those who self-identify as Aboriginal Peoples. Homeless-serving agencies will also work with public systems so those who might be discharged from institutions into homelessness are provided with safe and culturally appropriate housing with supports.

Subpopulation	Specific actions
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Develop and implement a Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness Continue to implement Housing First programs with cultural reconnection components Pilot Aboriginal Housing First program staffed by qualified Aboriginal Peoples Establish safe, culturally appropriate outreach and engagement, as well as safe, culturally appropriate discharge plans from public systems
<b>Families</b>	Continue efforts to coordinate intake and pathways out of homelessness with families and women fleeing violence Enhance rehousing and shelter diversion efforts with transitional and permanent housing with support for higher acuity families Address the needs of Aboriginal families through culturally appropriate Housing First programs
<b>Women</b>	Develop rehousing and stabilization programs, targeting homeless women with complex needs, including hidden homeless women and those fleeing domestic violence Ensure women have safe places to seek assistance to end homelessness
<b>Youth</b>	Develop and implement the Plan to End Youth Homelessness Continue to develop transitional housing with support programs for youth using a Housing First approach Introduce system prevention programs for youth exiting care

# Strategy 2

## Housing



Ensure adequate affordable and supportive housing

### Background

During the first two years of the Plan, about 3,000 units of housing were funded in Calgary, including about 1,000 units for The City of Calgary's Attainable Home Ownership program. While the provincial government provided most of the funding (between 60 and 70 percent per project), the federal and municipal governments also participated in adding housing. Non-profit agencies are beginning to contribute about 700 units of housing on an annual basis and were responsible for seeking private sector funding and financing for between 30 and 40 percent of project costs.

Despite significant funding for affordable housing development in Calgary, there remains a lack of rental units in the \$500 per month and under rent category. These are the rental units needed to house with support those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness. This is the priority population for this updated Plan. On an annual basis, the Calgary rental market loses about 1,000 units per year of this low-cost rental housing. As well, with the current funding structure, if the mix of tenants leans toward the more deeply subsidized and the agency is paying financing costs on 30 to 40 percent of the project cost, it is difficult to get the rents below the \$500 per month level. As a result, the government is not only investing in capital, but it is also frequently providing rental supplements to those needing deep subsidies.

Based on an assumption that about 16,000 Calgarians experience homelessness annually, research suggests there are about 800 to 1,600 people experiencing chronic homelessness and 1,600 to 2,400 people experiencing episodic homelessness (see page 11). These people typically are frequent users of public institutions and are very vulnerable, experiencing poor mental and physical health, as well as addictions. This sector is most in need of deeply subsidized housing with higher levels of ongoing support.

Given what the homeless-serving community has learned in the first three years of the Plan, the principles guiding the update are to:

- prioritize capital investment to the most vulnerable (those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness);
- provide “just enough” housing to end homelessness;
- prioritize economically efficient investments;
- match those at risk of or experiencing homelessness with appropriate housing and supports;
- take portfolio approach, including balancing the addition of new units and the provision of rent supplements;
- build non-profit agency capacity to own and operate housing; and
- make the most efficient use of existing non-market housing stock.

The CHF will focus its housing efforts on creating housing for those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness, working with partners to ensure a comprehensive range of housing options for the most vulnerable.

## Goals

1. Based on limited dollars and only an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness in Calgary, it is believed that 6,000 affordable housing rental units need to be developed by 2018 to end homelessness.
  - 2,000 rental units will be very low rent (well under \$500 per month) for the most vulnerable populations requiring high levels of support, primarily those experiencing chronic homelessness. One hundred and fifty of these units would be permanent supportive housing units (special care facilities where residents receive 24/7 support).
  - 4,000 rental units will be low rent (about \$500 per month and slightly above) for tenants who require less support.

A mix of tenants in affordable housing buildings creates a healthy social mix within the building and the neighbourhood. The range of tenants also makes projects financially sustainable, as those paying higher rents offset the cost of those in need of lower rent.

The updated Plan recognizes that other types of affordable housing need to be developed, so people requiring assistance can move up through the housing market as they become more independent, making units available as new people require help.

From a financial perspective, it makes more sense to direct most of the public sector capital dollars toward projects housing the most vulnerable (6,000 described above), as these tenants will likely require long term and more intense support. Rent supplements are better directed towards those requiring short term and limited support.

2. Assess transitional housing capacity, working to maximize this kind of housing in the Plan.

There are about 1,800 units of transitional housing in Calgary. Because of complex funding and eligibility rules, it is hard to assess if these units are permanent, emergency or transitional housing. This makes it difficult for tenants to access the right unit and for the homeless-serving agencies to assess whether these units are being used efficiently.

Over the years, the number of emergency shelter beds in Calgary has increased to more than 2,000. Many emergency shelter operators have introduced Housing First programs. As prevention and rehousing efforts begin to take hold and there are more housing options, there will be less flow into shelters. It is estimated that only 300 emergency beds will be required after 2018, as those at risk of or experiencing homelessness will receive permanent housing within seven days.

The Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) will work with the homeless-serving community to review the current stock of emergency beds and transitional units and develop a better understanding of their role in the homeless-serving system.



3. Streamline access to non-market housing stock, prioritizing access to the most vulnerable and finding attractive housing alternatives for existing tenants to free up space for new tenants.

Calgary has about 15,000 units of non-market housing. The Calgary Housing Company, the major operator of these units, reported that more than 4,000 people are on its waitlist, indicating more demand than supply. While more affordable housing needs to be added, there also needs to be a review of the practices to allocate social housing. The most vulnerable populations should be prioritized for access to housing, regardless of whether the units are provided by the public, non-profit or private sectors. Further, compelling alternatives (including home ownership) should move affordable housing tenants who are willing and able to move out of these limited units to make room for the most vulnerable. The CHF will work with affordable housing providers to develop common triage and assessment processes to streamline access to units for priority populations.

4. Continue advocating for public funding of rent supports, targeting priority populations.

The Government of Alberta's rent supports and homelessness emergency prevention initiatives dedicated \$44.4 million to about 15,500 Alberta households in 2009/10. Rent supplements directed to landlords provided another \$30.8 million to more than 4,700 households in 2009/10. For less than \$4,000 per household, these initiatives prevented the homelessness of more than 20,000 Albertans in one year. The provincial government also builds rent supports into Housing First programs and funds Outreach Support Services grants.

The CHF and the community will advocate that all of these different funds continue. As sufficient affordable housing stock is built (directing capital to those requiring high levels of support over the long term), rental supplements should go to those requiring a lower level of support and only for a short term. Homeless-serving agencies will also work with the government to better connect those receiving rental supplements with more comprehensive support through homelessness prevention and rehousing programs.

5. Develop and advocate for policy changes that encourage an increase in overall affordable housing stock, including secondary suites, land donations, tax changes to incent rental stock development and density bonusing.

The community needs to work with government to find new ways to get the private sector to invest in developing affordable housing in Calgary. A comprehensive annual policy agenda will continue to be pursued. This includes increasing the supply of legal and safe secondary suites and introducing a Low Income Housing Tax Credit to attract private sector investment.

6. Increase non-profit sector capacity to develop, manage and operate affordable housing.

Non-profit agencies that are beginning to develop and manage affordable housing could benefit from training in this area. This includes training on real estate purchases and development, tenant relations, financial management, risk mitigation and support services for complex populations. The CHF will work with these agencies to develop this capacity, which will be needed through the Plan and beyond 2018.

7. Develop and implement standards to ensure excellence across affordable housing options.

Groups that provide affordable, transitional and permanent supportive housing need to develop high and consistent standards for operating these units. This includes not only basic health and safety standards, but also tenant relations and support.

8. Develop collaborative, innovative and sustainable funding mechanisms for affordable housing, independent of public funding.

Non-profit agencies need to finance between 30 to 40 percent of affordable housing costs not funded by the public sector. Based on the updated Plan, it's estimated that about \$300 million will need to be raised for affordable housing from the private sector to the end of 2018. Options to raise this money include non-profit agencies collaborating on a joint capital campaign to raise more money more effectively. As well, the CHF will investigate innovative market-based financial vehicles. The goal is to create stable and long-term revenue to ensure continued development of affordable housing.

<b>Subpopulation</b>	<b>Specific actions</b>
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Continue to develop affordable housing with support appropriate for vulnerable Aboriginal Peoples
<b>Families</b>	Continue to develop affordable housing with support for vulnerable families
<b>Women</b>	Continue to develop women's specific housing
<b>Youth</b>	Develop housing appropriate for higher acuity youth

# Strategy 3

## Data and Research



Improve data and systems knowledge

### Background

This strategy gathers data and evidence-based knowledge as a way to inform the evolution of the Plan, reform mainstream systems, improve the homeless-serving system, and guide and measure progress of homeless-serving agencies working on the Plan.

### Goals

1. Implement the HMIS throughout the homeless-serving system, prioritizing key intervention points for the most vulnerable with mainstream systems (corrections, justice, health care, child intervention, domestic violence and addictions treatment).

The HMIS is the information technology backbone of the homeless-serving system. It will provide real-time data on the length of time people are homeless, their needs, the causes of homelessness, interactions with the homeless-serving system and the effectiveness of interventions.

Work with those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, non-profit agencies, the public and academic sectors, and funders to support HMIS implementation will continue. In January 2011, 20 agencies are starting to phase-in the system, with another 25 agencies expected to implement the system later in the year. By improving the quality and availability of information, the HMIS will make access to and coordination of services to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness easier and more effective.

2. Analyze and respond to HMIS-generated information throughout the homeless-serving sector.

Using the real-time data from HMIS for better access and coordination among the homeless-serving system is the tip of the iceberg. The data from HMIS can also be interpreted and used strategically. Homeless-serving agencies will be trained and be given ongoing assistance to analyze, report and respond strategically to the data from HMIS, whilst maintaining client privacy. Successfully leveraging the information will result in improved services and outcomes for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

3. Continue to implement Calgary's Research Agenda to End Homelessness and enhance its development in light of HMIS data.

The role of research is to accelerate the homeless-serving system's efforts by applying "best practices," better understanding homelessness, identifying system gaps and developing public policy options to end homelessness. Partnering with Calgary's academic and policy researchers, the community<sup>8</sup> developed a Research Agenda to End Homelessness (Agenda) and a Research Network to share the knowledge. The Agenda is being updated and relaunched in 2011. Work is underway to develop an Alberta-wide network and agenda through the Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium.

8. In this Strategy, "community" adds researchers and academics along with non-profit agencies and government stakeholders working on homelessness.

The research priorities for the next three years are to:

- identify the most effective ways to rehouse and support the most vulnerable;
- support the implementation of an Aboriginal Homelessness Research Agenda;
- work with agencies serving women fleeing violence and families to articulate priority research questions, particularly regarding the magnitude of hidden homelessness among women; and
- support the Plan to End Youth Homelessness, with research identifying youth at high risk of experiencing long-term homelessness.

The social and economic costs of homelessness have been the topic of major international studies, which consistently conclude that it is more efficient to provide housing and support rather than keep people in shelters and public institutions. With three years of implementation experience and better data to come from HMIS, Calgary-based research can now be conducted. In 2011, a systematic analysis of the outcomes and cost savings resulting from the Plan interventions will commence.

The community will continue to expand, coordinate and deepen its research capabilities. Research will help the community gain a detailed understanding of homelessness in Calgary, homeless systems and “best practices.”

In addition, by partnering with the Canadian Homelessness Research Network and with international colleagues in the United States, Australia and Europe, Calgary academics, researchers and service providers will benefit from, and contribute to, the international body of knowledge.

#### 4. Develop and advocate priority policy changes, supporting the Plan through an annual Policy Agenda.

The community will continue to develop policy solutions that address the root causes of homelessness. By working with partners, including the University of Calgary’s School of Public Policy and the Faculty of Social Work, the community will develop research-based recommendations for government in the areas of income supports, funding of homeless-serving systems, affordable housing, access to services and processes for discharging from public systems.

Calgary will also be a leader in Canada, collecting, demonstrating and sharing “best practices” in ending homelessness. The homeless-serving sector in Calgary will also encourage the development of plans in other cities across Canada and help create a Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness.



Subpopulation	Specific actions
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Work with stakeholders to address priorities of the Research Agenda on Aboriginal homelessness  Articulate policy areas to end Aboriginal homelessness, addressing jurisdictional gaps  Provide real-time data and analysis of trends and needs of Aboriginal Peoples using HMIS
<b>Families</b>	Implement HMIS throughout the family system and provide real-time data on families experiencing homelessness  Work with the family system to identify and address priority research questions  Advocate for enhanced supports for homeless families fleeing family violence, particularly for those with high acuity  Identify policy changes to support full participation of vulnerable families in society
<b>Women</b>	Work with agencies to identify and address research specific to women, particularly around hidden homelessness  Articulate and advocate for public system changes to end women's homelessness  Provide real-time information on and track women's homelessness using HMIS
<b>Youth</b>	Work with youth sector to address research needs specific to youth homelessness, particularly to identify youth at high risk of long-term homelessness  Articulate and advocate for policy areas to end youth homelessness  Provide real-time information on the needs of youth and emerging trends using HMIS

# Strategy 4

## Non-profit Sector

Reinforce non-profit organizations serving Calgarians at risk of or experiencing homelessness

### Background

Homeless-serving agencies are key to ending homelessness in Calgary. To succeed they need to be engaged and supported with adequate tools, resources and training.

### Goals

1. Streamline the reporting required of homeless-serving agencies to funders by applying a common evaluation framework, using HMIS and creating common standards of care.

There is a need to balance funders' reporting requirements with the administrative burden on non-profit agencies who work with a number of different funders. Coordination and streamlined reporting is expected as a result of implementing HMIS. The community will continue to work toward common evaluation metrics, standards of care and reporting requirements.

2. Engage the community in developing a more coordinated homeless-serving system.

The community will work together to develop and implement a more coordinated system by implementing the HMIS, creating standards of practice, applying a common evaluation framework and streamlining reporting. By working together, there will be better coordination and outcomes among homeless-serving agencies. As this work is done, it is also expected that the community will be better able to direct existing resources to the areas in most need and reduce duplication.

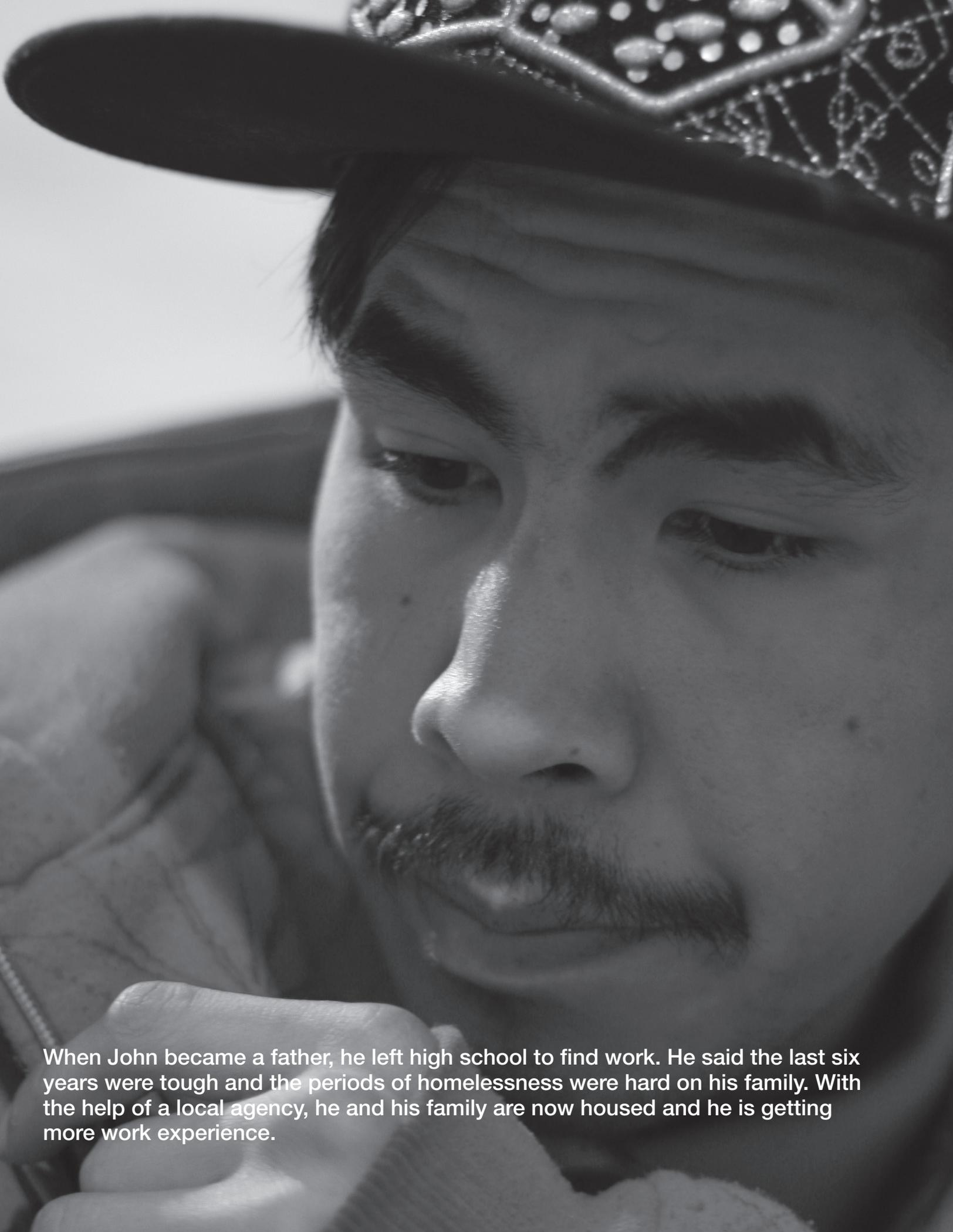
3. Increase capacity of sector to respond to client needs through training and professional development, particularly in the areas of case management, housing, HMIS and outreach.

The community needs to support non-profit agencies in their work to end homelessness. This includes ongoing development of skills, particularly for those working with the most vulnerable populations who have complex needs. Post-secondary courses for those working with homeless populations will be enhanced, including courses offered by the University of Calgary as part of the certificate program developed in the first three years of the Plan. The community will also support agencies as they implement standards of care across programs. Along with skills development, the CHF will work with key stakeholders to encourage the creation and implementation of a competitive salary and benefit framework for non-profit agencies.



4. As often as possible, ensure multi-year contracts and appropriate funding to implement interventions successfully. To achieve the Plan's goals, agencies need adequate funding to hire qualified staff, implement "best practices" and monitor outcomes. Wherever possible, homeless-serving agencies will have three-year program contracts, unless it is a pilot program. These contracts will be subject to annual performance and financial reviews.

<b>Subpopulation</b>	<b>Specific actions</b>
<b>Aboriginal</b>	Enhance training for non-profit agencies and advocate for better public system capacity to meet culturally specific needs of Aboriginal Peoples  Work to increase the number of Aboriginal service providers working with Aboriginal Peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness
<b>Families</b>	Work with the family system to implement standards of care, streamline reporting and enhance system planning
<b>Women</b>	Improve the coordination of the domestic violence and homeless-serving sectors, so women fleeing violence have better access to housing with support  Address training needs of agencies working with vulnerable homeless women with complex needs
<b>Youth</b>	Address training needs of agencies working with youth with complex needs



When John became a father, he left high school to find work. He said the last six years were tough and the periods of homelessness were hard on his family. With the help of a local agency, he and his family are now housed and he is getting more work experience.

# Phase 3

(2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018)

**Fine-tuning the system for sustainability**



## A living Plan

The community recognizes that the Plan's implementation will adapt and evolve responding to:

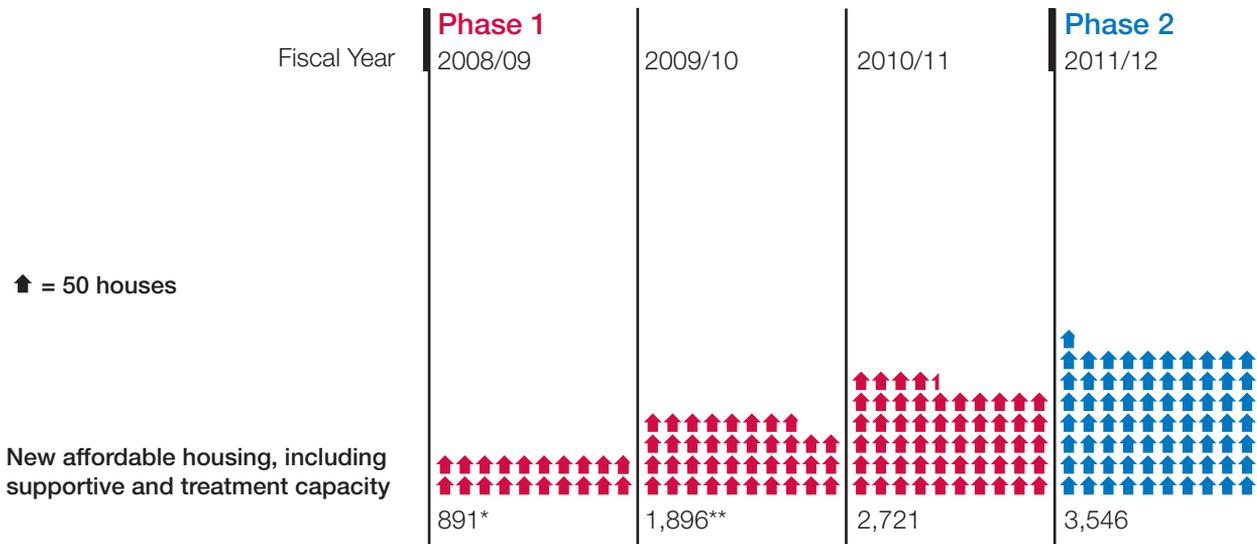
- shifting landscapes (macro-economics, funding, policy changes, political support and public opinion);
- what is learned from HMIS and research;
- evaluation and monitoring of rehousing with support programs;
- consultation with those at risk of or experiencing homelessness and homeless-serving agencies; and
- evolving “best practices” in ending homelessness.

While the Plan sets the high-level, long-term agenda, the CHF has an annual business and service delivery planning cycle to respond to what the CHF is learning and the evolving needs of the community. These annual plans are built in consultation with the community and set out annual implementation for the Plan.

## Transition to community leadership

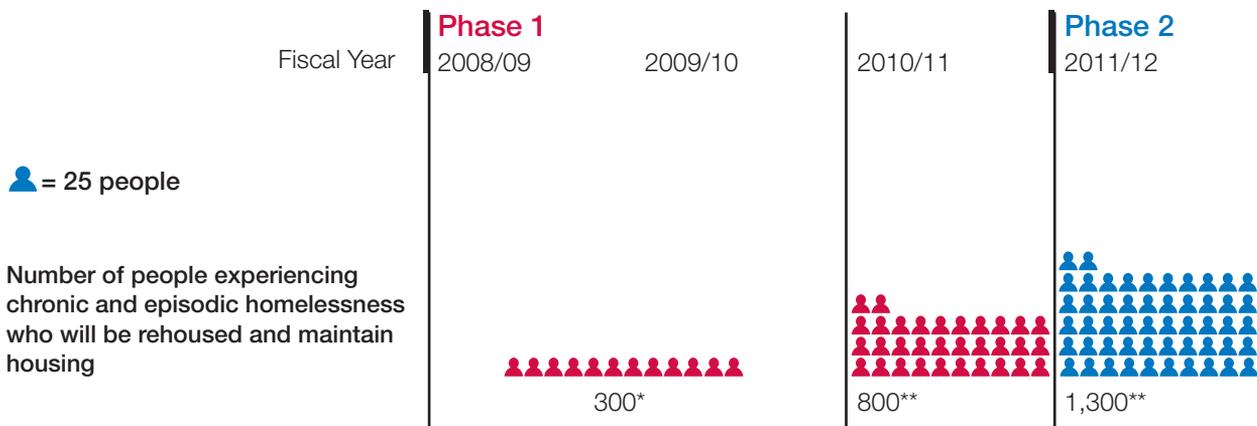
The CHF leads implementation of the Plan. The CHF's vision is by 2018 the community will take over this responsibility and a more decentralized leadership model will emerge. The CHF, in collaboration with community leaders, will map out what this transition to community leadership looks like and how it can occur, while concurrently building capacity in non-profit agencies in a number of key areas. These areas include: HMIS administration, research, public policy development and advocacy, housing development and operation, as well as system design and planning.

# Goals at a glance



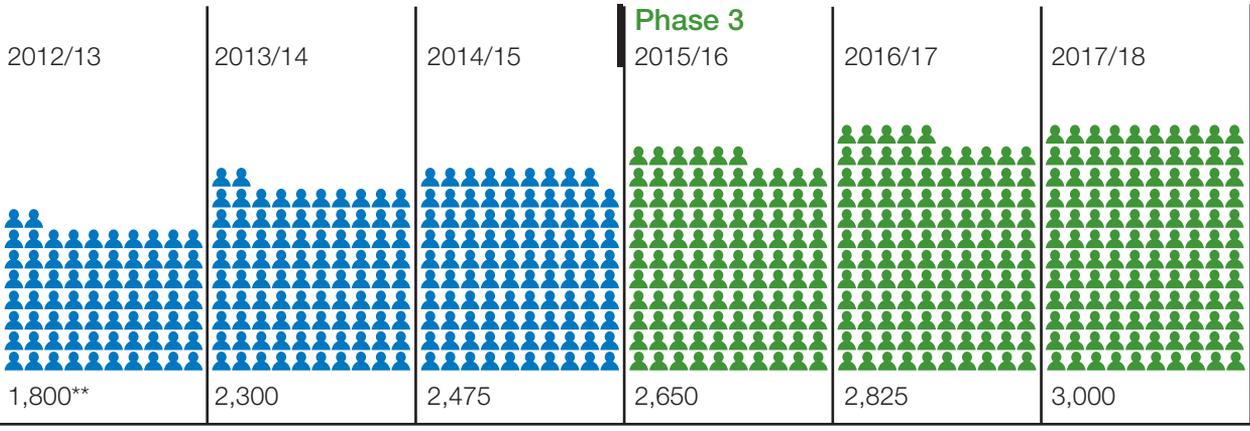
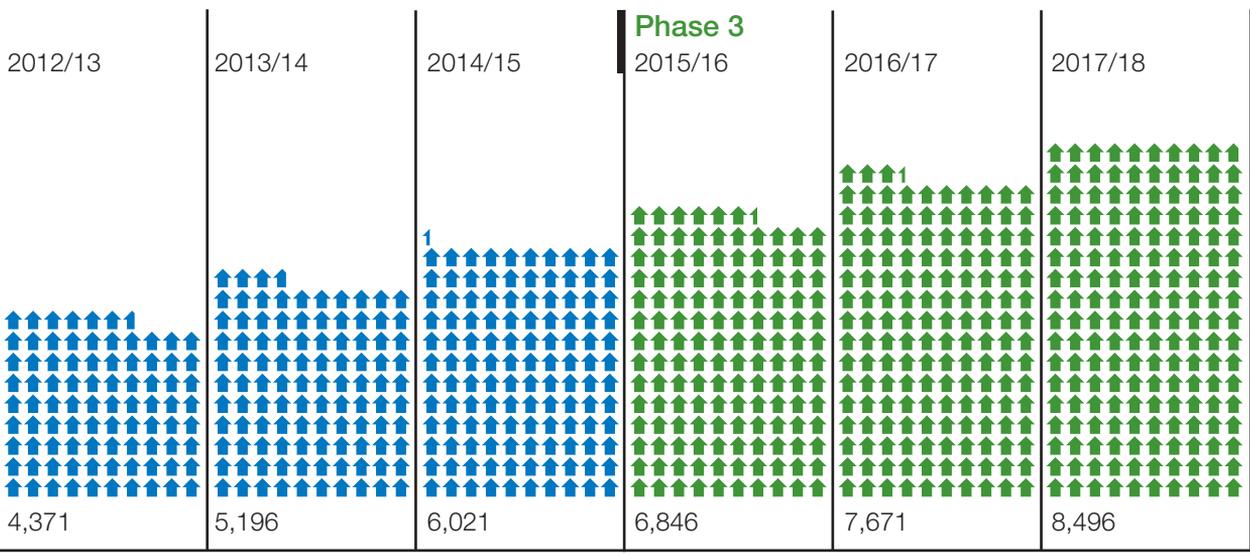
\* Refers to units funded not developed.

\*\* Does not include 1,000 units of affordable home ownership through The City of Calgary Attainable Home Ownership or 160 units for secondary suites. Refers to units funds not developed.



\* The above figure represents an estimate of the total number of people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness, who were rehoused and maintained housing as a result of Housing First interventions specific to these target groups since the beginning of the Plan. Programs designed to help lower acuity clients also serve a number of people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness, however these are not included in this estimate.

\*\* Updated Plan has goal to provide rehousing and support programs to 1,500 people experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness over next three years. This goal is based on an estimate of 2,400 to 4,000 chronic and episodic homeless.



# A thank you to those who contributed to this update

We would like to thank the following individuals for their input into this updated Plan. Without their strategic guidance, experience and commitment, this effort would not have been possible.

## 10 Year Plan Advisory Committee

Adam Legge, Calgary Chamber of Commerce  
Adrian Wolfleg, Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative  
Anne Zacharias, Government of Canada and Community Action Committee (CAC)  
Barry Davidson, Community Life Improvement Council, CAC Chair and CHF Director  
Brian O'Leary, CHF Board, Vice-Chair  
Cameron Bailey, McKinsey & Company and CHF Director  
Chaz Smith, Youth consumer liaison  
David Turner, Aboriginal sector  
Erin Partridge, Calgary Police Service  
George Coppus, Dynawise Inc. and CHF Director  
James Robertson, City of Calgary, Housing  
Jill Wyatt, United Way of Calgary & Area and CAC  
John te Linde, City of Calgary, Social Planning  
Laurie Michalchuk, Government of Alberta, Housing and Urban Affairs  
Lorie Legge, Government of Canada  
Sandra Clarkson, CAC  
Stephen Manley, Government of Alberta, Housing and Urban Affairs  
Valerie Wiebe, Alberta Health Services, Addictions & Mental Health (Calgary Region)  
Alina Tanasescu, Andrea Ranson, Laura Dickson, Marina Giacomini, Martina Jileckova, Tim Richter, CHF

## Housing Strategy Review Committee

Alan Norris, Carma Developers LP and CHF Director  
Bernadette Majdell, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and CHF Director  
David McIlveen, Boardwalk REIT and CHF Director  
Steve Pomeroy, Focus Consulting Inc.  
Ravi Natt, Equipoise Management Consultants Inc.  
Alina Tanasescu, Andrea Ranson, Martina Jileckova, Tim Richter, CHF

## Calgary Homeless Foundation's Board of Directors

Alan Norris, Carma Developers LP  
Amal Remu, Public Health Agency of Canada  
Anne Maxwell, Imagine Energy Inc.  
Barry Davidson, Community Life Improvement Council and CAC Chair  
Bernadette Majdell, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Secretary

Betty Thompson, Lo Porter Hetu  
Brian O'Leary, Vice-Chair  
Cameron Bailey, McKinsey & Company  
Craig Hill, Burnet, Duckworth & Palmer LLP  
Dave Gregory, Brand Insights Group  
David McIlveen, Boardwalk REIT  
Darcy Verhun, Conroy Ross Partners, Treasurer  
Druh Farrell, City of Calgary  
Bishop Fred Henry, Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary  
George Coppus, Dynawise Inc.  
Lee Richardson, Government of Canada  
Len Webber, Government of Alberta  
Ruth Ramsden-Wood, United Way of Calgary & Area  
Sam Koliass, Boardwalk REIT  
Sharon Carry, Bow Valley College  
Stephen Clark, TransCanada Pipelines Limited  
Stephanie Felesky  
Tim Hearn, Chair  
Tom Jackson, Tomali Pictures Ltd., Tomali Studios and The Hurone Carole  
Trevor Daroux, Calgary Police Service

## Organizations Participating in CHF Research Symposium

Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary  
Alberta Employment and Immigration  
Alberta Health Services  
Alberta Homelessness Research Consortium  
Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness  
Alberta Seniors and Community Supports  
Calgary Alternative Support Services  
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society  
Calgary Drop-In & Rehab Centre  
Calgary Homeless Foundation  
Calgary Police Services  
Canadian Homelessness Research Network  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Caresce Inc.  
Centre for Northern Families  
City of Calgary  
City of Red Deer  
Community Action Committee  
CUPS Downtown Outreach Addictions Partnership  
Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society  
Eva's Initiatives  
Fresh Start Recovery Centre  
Government of Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs  
Homeless Awareness Calgary Committee  
Homeward Trust (Edmonton)

HRJ Consulting Ltd.  
Living Homeless: Our Write to Speak  
Mount Royal University  
Mustard Seed  
Pathways to Housing  
Salvation Army  
Servants Anonymous  
Service Canada  
Schizophrenia Society of Alberta  
The Alex Community Health Centre  
Trinity Place Foundation of Alberta  
United Way of Calgary & Area  
University of Alberta  
University of Calgary  
University of Lethbridge  
York University  
Youth Recovery Coalition

## Community Action Committee (CAC)

Andrea Silverstone, Peer Support Services for Abused Women  
Andria Brumwell, Servants Anonymous  
Barry Davidson, Community Life Improvement Council  
Bonnie Malach, Homeless Awareness Calgary Committee  
Brigitte Baradov, Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society  
Colin Penman, Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness  
Diane Altwasser, United Way of Calgary & Area  
Eve MacMillan, Sunrise Native Addictions Society  
Gail Cerekwicki, Salvation Army  
Jim Moore, Calgary Dream Centre  
Joan Wilson, Community Futures Treaty Seven  
John O'Reilly, Recovery Acres  
John Rook, The Alex Community Health Centre  
Kim O'Brien, Horizon Housing Society  
Leslie McMechan, Calgary John Howard Society  
Madelyn McDonald, Woods Homes  
Patricia Morton, Canadian Mental Health Association, Calgary Region  
Ralph Hubele, Health and Housing Initiatives Alberta Senior and Community Supports  
Rob Bray, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society  
Sandra Clarkson, Grants/HRJ Consulting  
Sean French, Community Liasion, CAC  
Stacey Petersen, Fresh Start Recovery Centre  
Timothy Wild, Community and Neighbourhood Services, The City of Calgary  
Walter Twiddy, NeighbourLink

# For more information

The Calgary Homeless Foundation oversees implementation of the Plan along with its partners, which include homeless-serving agencies, those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, the private sector, government partners, researchers and academics, the faith community and Calgarians. Quarterly and annual progress reports are posted on [www.calgaryhomeless.com](http://www.calgaryhomeless.com).

## **Your feedback is welcomed**

Do you have a point of view on this updated Plan? If so, your feedback and input is welcomed.

## **Calgary Homeless Foundation**

Suite 308, 925 7th Avenue S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta CANADA  
T2P 1A5

Telephone: 403 237 6456

Fax: 403 262 2924

General email: [info@calgaryhomeless.com](mailto:info@calgaryhomeless.com)

Media email: [media@calgaryhomeless.com](mailto:media@calgaryhomeless.com)

Design by: Stuart Knox and Debbie Harrison

Printing by: Petro-Tech

Photography by: Terri Heinrichs and Randy Gibson

Printed in Canada on January 2011

Recycled paper

---



Calgary  
Homeless  
Foundation