

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy

**Saskatoon Community Plan
2019 – 2024**

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1. Community Engagement

Consultation Process

Over the course of 12 months (Sept 2018 – September 2019), community service agencies specifically connected to the housing sector, were consulted regarding the process of moving unsheltered residents in Saskatoon to secure sheltering options. The purpose of this project was to build a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of housing and homelessness sector in Saskatoon. Through a collaborative approach, a modified “value stream mapping” process was designed to capture the sector process points for people who are navigating a system that supports the transition for unsheltered to securely sheltered. This sector map is referred to as the “current state map” or “current sector landscape map” and represents the sector at the point in time at which the data was collected.

Specific points of connection where community agencies, case managers, support services and/or government we described in order to determine the following:

1. **The gaps**, which include: specific places where delays in service, inability to access service, service denial, service banning and other significant system delays or missed opportunities to connect to services (particularly in real time or with limited time delays);
2. **Duplications and barriers**, which include: specific places where agencies provide similar services to similar groups of people, at similar times of day. Barriers may include bottlenecks and/or policies that limit access to real-time service delivery, systemic racism, archaic or legacy policy implementation and/or delivery systems that are designed to exclude or increase the complexity of navigation;
3. **Potential opportunities**, which include: identified areas where sector agencies can work collaboratively to create changes and improve system delivery. Including opportunities to determine how policy and practice interconnect to create better outcomes.

All participants were asked the following questions:

1. In your work what process and pathways exist to support a client who is currently unsheltered?
2. What is your perspective of the system(s) to move someone from unsheltered to securely sheltered?
3. What non-housing supports are critical to this process?
4. Where does the system bottleneck?
5. If there were unlimited funds to create an “ideal system” what would you invest in?
6. What is the role of human service systems in this process? What systems does your agency/program interact with?
7. What are the demographics of your clients? Are there certain demographics you cannot serve? Do you know who can?
8. What other aspects of the system do you think is relevant to the map?

Table 1: Community Mapping Process Results

| Description | Participants | Outcomes | Timeline |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1-on-1 mapping conversations | 150 | Individual maps that were compiled to create the large sector map | Winter 2018-19 |
| Group consultations – building the map | 8 meetings (35 participants) | Refining the map to ensure that the context and content from the individual maps is accurately recorded and represents the work of the teams | Spring 2019 |
| Sector meetings | 13 meetings (3-6 participants) | More specific information regarding the complexity of the system was embedded in the map - the housing sector is complex – these meetings were specific to the categories within the map (emergency shelter, case managers, short term housing, market housing, housing first, etc.) | Winter 2018 – Spring 2019 |
| Lived experience | 9 participants | A diverse background of people with lived experience including: youth, Indigenous, people with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+, renters, | On going |
| Youth meetings | 15 youth 3 mentors Weekly meetings (Tuesday 3hrs); 2 consultations; 2 learning events; 1 final reporting (Fall 2019) | Youth specific project is funded by Community Initiatives Fund and implemented by the Student's Commission/Saskatoon Opportunity for Youth This project will focus on youth interpretation of the map, specific youth stories and a survey of homelessness and youth (that was used to inform report recommendations) | On going (Spring 2019 – Winter 2020) |
| Other Collaborative groups | 4 groups | Maps were shown to members of the Safe Community Action Alliance (SCAA) housing team, Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership (SPRP) and Saskatoon Human Rights Commission (SHRC) housing team, Community University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) | Spring / Summer 2019 |
| Group consultations – refining the map | 8meetings (150 participants) | Completed map was presented to determine the core priority investment areas, gaps, celebrations, community goals, and next steps | Spring / Summer 2019 |
| Non-housing sector meetings | 5 meetings (12 participants) | Connection to non-housing sector (predominantly groups that work with crisis interventions (food security, health, transit, education, justice) | Spring 2019 |
| Policy and practice reviews | 1 student support | Review of the policy and practices that are associated with the release from systems (system taps) | Summer / Fall 2019 |

NOTE: Please see Appendix 1 for a complete list of agencies/programs included in the consultation process

To honor the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Community Entity and CAB has made it a priority to consult with Indigenous people on the development of the community priorities and plans, as well as the ongoing development of projects. The Community Entity, in partnership with the Saskatoon Aboriginal Community Action Partnership, consulted a group of 30 Indigenous elders, residential school survivors and survivors' children. This consultation focused on understanding what can be done address homelessness from an Indigenous perspective to develop and determine priorities and strategies for the community plan.

The areas of discussion included:

- root causes of Indigenous homelessness
- the role of systems (foster care, health, justice) in creating and perpetuating Indigenous homelessness
- the support people need to exit from homelessness (for example, is it help to find a home, financial assistance to set up the home, providing support to connect to healing (i.e. mental health or addictions), providing support to connect to culturally relevant or traditional responses and supports)
- support that people need in order to prevent homelessness
- the gaps in housing or services that people require to prevent and end homelessness

Consultation Recommendations

The outcome of the consultations revealed areas where additional supports, research and/or investment could occur. Often some of these pieces were rooted in old policy/practices that would require a fundamental culture shift from current practice, discretionary practices and/or government mandate/legislative changes. For the purpose of the recommendations outlined below, the focus will be on changes that community can directly influence, manage and/or create investment strategies for – in relation to the eligible costs of the Reaching Home program funding and understanding that leveraging other funding streams is an integral part of successfully implementing these recommendations.

In Saskatoon, it is important to reflect on the over-representation of Indigenous people in the housing and homelessness sector. Moving forward, the Community Entity will review all changes to and coordination of systems and highlight the linkages, impacts, and actions to the Truth & Reconciliations' 94 Calls to Action.

Recommendations specify that activities include:

- Opportunities for investment and support of Indigenous community, agencies and Elders in the development, implementation and evaluation of solutions to homelessness;
- Inclusion of voices of lived experience in all aspects of the development, implementation and evaluation of system changes (including policy level conversations, funding decisions and collaborative inter-sectoral connections);
- Identification of internal system structures that are rooted in historic practices that represent barriers to vulnerable, marginalized or under-represented demographics; and
- Opportunities to invest in structures, policies and processes that respect family units and support keeping children with their families.

Specific recommended activities identified by the community include :

1. Shut Off the System Taps: System Accountability at the Point Of Release
 - 1.1. Investigate the current policy and practices that are developed for release from systems
 - 1.2. Create a working team to look at changes to policy and practice that could alleviate/eliminate cycles of homelessness
 - 1.3. Develop a pilot project to directly impact systems and clients with positive housing outcomes (including a measurement of social return on investment) in areas such as:
 - 1.3.1. Initiatives that support youth transitioning from foster care to independent living
 - 1.3.2. Services for individuals who are transitioning from correctional institutions
 - 1.4. Connect to any local/regional/national research about release practices/policies

2. Improve Navigation: Coordinated Access
 - 2.1. Investigate other community's Centralized Intake and Coordinated Access process/policies
 - 2.2. Develop a community of practice for Saskatoon's approach to Coordinated Access
 - 2.3. Create a mechanism to collect, aggregate and disseminate data to ensure that Coordinated Access and Centralized Intake is efficient and effective (and maintain privacy/confidentiality)
 - 2.4. Build capacity in Coordinated Access, recognizing the individualized needs of some clients. This process would include the options for a centralized housing hub and mobile outreach and/or agency based spokes. It is essential that a coordinated communication strategy be embedded in the implementation
 - 2.5. Support Indigenous people moving from rural or remote communities to urban living, for example, renter education and targeted financial literacy programs
 - 2.6. Develop, implement and evaluate a mechanism for street/community outreach to be connected to the centralized intake/coordinated access team(s)
 - 2.7. Encourage systems to look for efficiencies in delivery of system programs

3. Emergency Sheltering for All Clients
 - 3.1. Create an Emergency Shelter Team (from current community agencies offering emergency shelter)
 - 3.2. Develop a long-term shelter development strategy for Saskatoon including the following groups:
 - 3.2.1. Youth
 - 3.2.2. Indigenous
 - 3.2.3. Family
 - 3.3. Create a communication strategy with Coordinated Access to ensure that all shelter teams understand the process, policy and practices
 - 3.4. Move clients from emergency shelter beds into supported housing in order to ensure that there is adequate supply of short term (<2weeks) emergency shelter options.

4. Connections to Mental Health and Addictions
 - 4.1. Create a housing and mental health/addictions team (and/or connect with existing teams)

- 4.2. Develop a long-term residential/non-residential treatment plan that includes housing plans and supports for release, institutionalized periods and all associated supports
 - 4.3. Investigate the role of income assistance and other government supports for clients/agencies supporting the housing/shelter needs of complex MH/A clients
 - 4.4. Investigate the efficacy of Managed Alcohol Programs (MAP) and determine additional opportunities for MAP beds in other areas of the city.
 - 4.5. Investigate drug treatments that are similar to MAP but for specific drugs (opioids, crystal meth, etc.)
 - 4.6. Develop and implement a harm reduction housing model in Saskatoon.
 - 4.7. Create opportunities/investment for Indigenous agencies to develop, implement and evaluate programs/services for Indigenous people, by Indigenous people, rooted in land-based healing, cultural ways of knowing and non-colonial practice.
5. Securely Housed
- 5.1. Build awareness about the complexity of intensive case management for clients who will live in long-term supported housing indefinitely
 - 5.2. Invest in capital infrastructure that supports long-term supported living
 - 5.3. Work with landlords to build capacity and support for clients to enter market housing
 - 5.4. Create increased awareness about the barriers facing those who require rapid rehousing supports, or general assistance in system navigation to prevent evictions, increase successful rentals and decrease barriers to accessing affordable, appropriate and safe housing
 - 5.5. Facilitate increased discussion and solutions with Indigenous partners that support affordable housing initiatives in all areas of the city of Saskatoon.
 - 5.6. Invest in affordable housing in Saskatoon
6. Improved Communication and Collaboration
- 6.1. Establish regular interagency dialogue among organizations whose work affect homelessness in Saskatoon to create awareness, increase communication, reduce duplication of services, and leverage possible partnership opportunities.
 - 6.2. Establish on going formal and informal engagement opportunities with the Elder/survivor group to build sustainable relationship practices and inclusive voices
 - 6.3. Utilize Indigenous voice and people when advocating for increased control on rental properties, zoning laws, low income housing and city planning to create multi-income neighborhoods.
 - 6.4. Establish a communication plan for the de-stigmatization on homelessness and highlighting the factors that contribute to homelessness.

2. Investment Plan

Considering the breadth of recommendations, the investment plan will focus on a broad approach to addressing homelessness in the community. A majority of the planned investment will focus on assisting those in need with system navigation and housing placement services. To complement this focus, funding will also be directed to support services such as basic needs, clinical services and social integration.

| Fiscal Year | Designated Communities | Indigenous Homelessness |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2019-20 | \$768,068 | \$1,470,000 |
| 2020-21 | \$755,568 | \$1,470,000 |
| 2021-22 | \$868,976 | \$1,470,000 |
| 2022-23 | \$862,826 | \$1,470,000 |
| 2023-24 | \$862,826 | \$1,470,000 |
| Total | \$4,118,264 | \$7,350,000 |

A common theme throughout the consultations was the fact that some public systems discharge individuals into homelessness. To address this situation, funding will be directed to homelessness prevention and shelter diversion, along with an eviction prevention fund.

While the capacity for capital investment is limited through the Reaching Home program, experience shows that federal homelessness funding can help leverage other funding in the community to create excellent projects. A portion of funding has been allocated to capital investment to assist with the community's stated need for appropriate housing and facilities to address homelessness.

Consultations had the repeated themes of system navigation and coordination of resources. Investment in Coordinated Access, a Housing Resource Centre and improving coordination of resources will focus on providing easy access to housing and support for individuals and families in need of assistance.

| | 2019-20 | | 2020-21 | | 2021-22 | | 2022-23 | | 2023-24 | |
|--|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | DC | IH | DC | IH | DC | IH | DC | IH | DC | IH |
| Housing Services | 56% | 76% | 39.4% | 69.4% | 34.2% | 69.4% | 33.5% | 69.4% | 33.5% | 69.4% |
| Prevention and shelter diversion | - | - | 12.6% | 7.1% | 10.9% | 7.1% | 11.3% | 7.1% | 11.3% | 7.1% |
| Support Services | 2.5% | 2.5% | 4.0% | 4.1% | 3.5% | 4.1% | 11.2% | 4.1% | 11.2% | 4.1% |
| Capital Investments | - | - | 1.5% | 4.9% | 12.6% | 4.9% | 19.3% | 4.9% | 19.3% | 4.9% |
| Coordination of Resources and Data Collection | 28% | 8% | 29.0% | 1.0% | 25.3% | 1.0% | 11.2% | 1.0% | 11.2% | 1.0% |
| Administration | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% | 13.5% |
| TOTAL | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

3. Cost-Matching Requirement

| Projected Funding towards Homelessness Initiatives | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Funder | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2019 - 24 |
| Saskatchewan Housing Corporation | \$1.5M | \$1.5M | \$1.5M | TBD | TBD | \$4.5M |
| City of Saskatoon | \$270,000 | \$270,000 | \$270,000 | \$270,000 | \$270,000 | \$1.35M |
| Crocus Co-operative | \$675,000 | \$675,000 | \$675,000 | \$675,000 | \$675,000 | \$3.38M |
| Saskatchewan Health Authority | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$5.5M |
| The Lighthouse Supported Living | \$700,000 | \$700,000 | \$700,000 | \$700,000 | \$700,000 | \$3.5M |
| Salvation Army | \$3M | \$3M | \$3M | \$3M | \$3M | \$15M |
| AIDS Saskatoon | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$1.1M | \$5.5M |
| Sanctum Care Group | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$250,000 | \$1.25M |
| Total | \$8.6M | \$8.6M | \$8.6M | \$7.1M | \$7.1M | \$40M |

4. Coordinated Access

As mentioned previously, the community recommends that changes to and coordination of systems should highlight the linkages, impacts, and actions of the Truth & Reconciliations' 94 Calls to Action. This will be the focus of the development of Coordinated Access.

Considering that the most recent Point-In-Time Count shows that 85% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Saskatoon are Indigenous, design of the Coordinated Access system must reflect and respect the needs of Indigenous people. Therefore, the CAB and Community Entity will focus efforts on inviting Indigenous service providers, Elders, individuals and groups to join the planning committee. For those unable to join the planning committee, additional consultations will be conducted bi-annually for input into design, implementation and evaluation to ensure broad Indigenous consultation.

It is also important that Coordinated Access have a person-centred philosophy, with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with lived experience as part of the planning committee and consultations to gather the knowledge required for thoughtful system design, implementation and evaluation.

The Community Plan and Coordinated Access system cover the area within the Saskatoon city limits. Our Call for Proposals has historically asked for organizations operating within the city of Saskatoon for projects that are conducted within the city limits. The plan is to continue this practice. This information will be published in the advertised Call for Proposals as well as in the Application Guide.

Saskatoon plans to take the following steps to implement a Coordinated Access System for the city:

1. A System Planning Committee (SPC) will be developed and host community engagement sessions to establish community priorities that will guide the implementation of Coordinated Access.
2. The SPC will also form a sub-committee on implementing Coordinated Access and another one to implement Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). To ensure that work in both sub-committees is aligned, many members sit on both committees;
3. The Coordinated Access sub-committee will decide upon a governance structure that will oversee the management of the Coordinated Access System. This will include setting the terms of reference, establishing management and accountability policies and procedures;
4. The Coordinated Access sub-committee will decide upon a model of access, assessment tool, prioritization criteria, and referral process by the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year;
5. The Designated Community Advisory Board will approve the proposed policies and procedures established by the sub-committee by the end of 2019-2020 fiscal year;
6. An implementation plan will be developed for Co-ordinated Access by the 2019-20 fiscal year end;
7. Training and technical assistance will be offered to front-line service providers beginning 2020-2021;
8. The Community Entity employs a project manager responsible to configure, establish help desk and deploy HIFIS. The CE will continue to oversee the implementation and ongoing maintenance of HIFIS. A HIFIS Committee will be formed to oversee planning for legal advice on privacy issues, establishing data governance framework, security procedures;
9. Business requirements are expected to be developed by the end of 2019, with HIFIS configuration and testing completed by the end of 2019-2020 fiscal year;

- 10.HIFIS 4 training material is expected to be finalized one month before the deployment, with users trained 2 weeks before; and
- 11.HIFIS 4 is expected to be fully implemented across all Reaching Home service-providers by March 2022 in support of Coordinated Access.

5. Community-Wide Outcomes

The community will meet or exceed the four federally mandated core outcomes of the Reaching Home program:

1. Chronic homelessness in the community is reduced (by 50% by 2027-28);
2. Homelessness in the community is reduced overall, and specifically for Indigenous populations;
3. New inflows into homelessness are reduced; and,
4. Returns to homelessness from housing are reduced.

Beside the four core outcomes, the community will track the following outcomes:

- Discharges from Public Institutions into homelessness is reduced
 - The indicator used will be the number of individuals accessing homelessness-services who were discharged from public institutions.
 - The baseline will be established with the development of the By-Name-List.
- Number of days in a shelter is reduced
 - Indicator used will be the number of days that an individual resides in the shelter
 - Baseline will be established and tracked with HIFIS data
- Number of shelter stays once in stable housing is reduced
 - Indicator used will be the number of times that an individual stays at a shelter after joining a Housing Placement and Support Program
 - Baseline will be established and tracked with HIFIS and Reaching Home project results
- Improved real-time access
 - Indicator used will be number of points of entry to the Coordinated Access system
 - Baseline will be number of access points for referral to Housing Support System and client feedback

6. Official Language Minority Communities

The community is committed to ensuring it addresses the needs of homeless persons in both official languages. The Community Entity has discussed this issue with the sub-projects and shelters to see if there is an issue with the OLMC not accessing services. No issues have been identified, as service providers have not seen demand for French services, although there is often an issue with people speaking Indigenous languages and struggling with English. In this case, the community's Centralized Intake provider has Indigenous speakers within their agency that can provide translation services.

The Community Entity has a translator available for document translation, and advertises Calls for Proposals in both official languages. Should a client require services in the French, the CE has many connections to organizations in Saskatoon that can provide an interpreter on short notice.

Note: ESDC has removed all personal and identifying information for members of the Community Advisory Board(s) from this document. To validate or change this information, please contact your Service Canada representative.

Appendix 1 – List of Consulted Agencies

Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan
AIDS Saskatoon
Camponi Housing / SaskNative Rentals
City of Saskatoon
Community Support Program
Central Urban Metis Federation Inc. (CUMFI)
EGADZ
Elizabeth Fry Society
FASD Network of Saskatoon
Friendship Inn
Habitat for Humanity Saskatoon
John Howard Society
Lighthouse
Metis Addiction Council of Saskatoon Inc. (MACSI)
OUT Saskatoon
Private landlords
QUINT Development Corp.
Renters of Saskatoon and Area (ROSA)
Salvation Army
Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Services
Saskatoon Housing Authority
Saskatoon Housing Coalition
Saskatoon Human Rights Commission
Saskatchewan Student's Commission
Saskatoon Fire Department
Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre
Saskatchewan Health Authority
Saskatoon Indian & Metis Friendship Centre
Saskatoon Opportunities for Youth
Saskatoon Police Service
Saskatoon Public Library
Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) Urban Justice Program
The Bridge on 20th
White Buffalo Youth Lodge
Whitecap Dakota First Nation housing
YWCA Saskatoon