

Saskatoon Homelessness Action Plan (SHAP) Foundational Elements

The vision, mission, priorities and objectives of the SHAP were identified and developed through a series of consultations in 2024. As the action items are currently being finalized, a selection of sample actions have been included below for context.

Vision:

Prevent and reduce homelessness in Saskatoon.

Mission

Make homelessness uncommon, brief and non-recurring by promoting shared responsibility among stakeholders, and effectively coordinate the resources needed for the success of the SHAP.

Priorities

PRIORITY 1: INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

Objective 1.1: Increase the availability and stock of affordable housing with a focus on supportive and transitional housing.

Sample Actions:

- Work with the City of Saskatoon (City) to reduce barriers for affordable, transitional and supportive housing through alignment with the City's Affordable Housing Strategy;
- Dedicate land for affordable housing in all new neighbourhood concept plans; and
- Explore/Establish a community land trust.

Objective 1.2: Maximize the use of vacant buildings throughout Saskatoon for housing and support services.

Sample Actions:

- Explore options to incentivize the use of vacant and boarded up properties;
- Partner with developers to repurpose underutilized commercial space into affordable housing; and
- Develop a rental repair and renovation incentive program.

Objective 1.3: Adapt and utilize unused government-owned housing inventory and land to serve community needs.

Sample Actions:

- Develop a framework for City-owned land acquisition and disposition for affordable, supportive and transitional housing; and

- Work with the Provincial and Federal governments to develop affordable housing on government owned land.

PRIORITY 2: ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Objective 2.1: Collaborate with the Province of Saskatchewan (Province) to mitigate systemic barriers that contribute to homelessness.

Sample Actions:

- Advocate, through the Province, for the reintroduction of direct payments to landlords to facilitate housing access and reduce evictions; and
- Create a Community Safety and Well-Being Framework.

Objective 2.2: Determine the availability of appropriate facilities to meet community needs.

Sample Actions:

- Initiate the development of a year-round basic low-barrier shelter;
- Undertake a feasibility study for a community navigation centre and approach to essential services; and
- Enhance mobile outreach programs to provide immediate aid/support to unhoused individuals.

Objective 2.3: Ensure accountability among landlords to uphold fair and ethical practices, promoting housing quality, safety and security for tenants.

Sample Action: Advocate for renters concerning landlord accountability, rental policies, and protections for tenants against unfair evictions and excessive rent increases through the Province and Rental Housing Saskatchewan.

Objective 2.4: Implement proactive measures and support systems to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless.

Sample Actions:

- Provide educational materials through a revamped Housing Handbook (providing information including housing options, tenant rights, etc.);
- Determine the resources needed to transition individuals along the housing continuum and address existing service gaps; and
- Engage with current shelter users to identify systemic gaps and barriers contributing to homelessness.

PRIORITY 3: INCREASE AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Objective 3.1: Foster partnerships and communication among community organizations, stakeholders and government to enhance collaboration and upstream approaches to service delivery, resource and information sharing.

Sample Actions:

- Improve data collection, monitoring and analysis across the sector;
- City of Saskatoon to regularly update their Housing Needs Assessment; and
- Create bi-annual forums and educational courses with housing and homelessness sector organizations.

Objective 3.2: Explore and advocate for funding opportunities and create mechanisms to align resources across all funders and sectors.

Sample Actions:

- Provide support to organizations in navigating and applying for funding programs and development processes; and
- Engage with the private sector to identify community champions and to explore additional funding opportunities.

Objective 3.3: Expand Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and coordinated access, ensuring effective use and community buy in.

Sample Action: Create educational materials on HIFIS and Coordinated Access to help organizations (including private landlords) understand misconceptions.