GETTING IT DONE

WRITING THE PLAN

So, what does a youth plan actually look like? You've probably seen examples from other communities (see the resource section on the A Way Home website). This section will walk you through the key elements of a youth plan and provides you technical guidance on how to develop one based on best practices and information you gathered locally. It will point you to further reading, where available.

In some ways, knowing what a youth plan could look like – or working with the end in mind – can help you think through your consultation and research processes and inform your workplan.

A plan to end youth homelessness is not drastically different from a strategic plan or business plan; however, its scope is much wider than that of a single agency or government department/ministry. The plan takes a systems view and provides guidance to a particular community (city, region, province, country) on tackling a complex social issue. Thus, while elements of the plan content may seem familiar at first glance, the scope is much broader because of the diverse systems and stakeholders it aims to coalesce into a coherent strategy.

SAMPLE PLAN OVERVIEW

Plans tend to be between 50-100 pages. They usually include significant information and analysis; thus, communities often develop executive summaries and other complementary communication materials based on the plan. These complementary materials ensure that the information effectively reaches a broad audience.

While every plan is distinct, the sections remain more or less consistent. Below, we provide you with a sample outline of a fictional plan.

Table 24: Sample Plan Overview

SECTION	INTENT
Executive Summary	» Succinctly summarizes plan key points: facts, solutions, costs, implementation actions » Short (2-5 pages) document, grabs reader attention; used in wider communications
Section 1: **Setting the Stage** Outlining the Vision Guiding Principles Business Case for Action Key Facts on Homelessness & Youth Homelessness Plan Development Process Overview of Plan Strategies & Costs/Cost Savings Celebrating Success Key Risks & Challenges Ahead, Costs of Inaction	This section aims to present the basic premise of the plan: it paints a picture of the current state of youth homelessness in the community and presents the vision resulting from the proposed direction. The section introduces key elements of the plan: proposed strategies, costs, implementation options and risk assessment highlights. The section also celebrates current efforts, highlighting that while the plan proposes significant changes, it is built on a foundation of efforts already underway. You can also make the case for continuing the status quo – the cost and human implications of inaction. You can include an overview of the plan development process here as well, though this should be kept at a highlights level – you can add more details in an appendix.

Section 2:
Making the Case

Local Youth Housing and Homelessness Trends

Housing Market & Affordability Analysis

Extreme Core Housing Need

Shelter Use Patterns

System Interactions

Homeless Count Results

Youth Homelessness Prevalence

Key Subpopulations: Indigenous, LGBTQ2S, rural, newcomer, etc.

Revisioning the Response to Youth Homelessness

Summary of Best Practice Analysis Results

Implications for Local Community

Consultations Results:

» Youth

» Government

» Public Systems

» Service Providers

Analyzing Needs

Projecting Future Needs

Current System Capacity and Performance for Youth

Emerging Housing and Program Gaps

Policy and Practice Issues

The section summarises your research findings, depending on the type of information you were able to secure for analysis.

You can include a summary of the best practices around ending youth homelessness, highlighting how these impact the local response.

A section summarizing consultation feedback helps you build the evidence for proposed actions later in the plan; note that you should have this distilled to main points; use the appendices as means of including more information.

The analysis of needs and current system capacity is technical as it requires you to develop a projection of needs into the future, analyze how the system can respond under the status quo and how impact can be improved under alternative scenarios.

You can begin to identify program and policy barriers here based on the synthesis of information already presented from research and consultations.

Section 3:
Presenting Solutions

Priority Directions in Detail

Priority 1

Objective 1 – Rationale

Objective 2 – Rationale

Priority 2

Objective 1 – Rationale

Objective 2 – Rationale, etc.

Projected Results, Costs and Cost Savings

Targets and Progress Indicators

Implementation Considerations

Policy Recommendations

Risk Management

A Living Plan: Process for Renewal

Based on the previous sections, you can now begin to lay out the proposed directions of the plan. You may want to summarize the overall direction, then go into each strategy and its accompanying goals in further detail. For each strategy and goal, you should summarize the rationale for making the recommendation recalling evidence from previous sections.

The milestones and progress indicators will be developed once the strategies are fully worked out, along with the needs and performance analysis. You can include them after you outline your strategies and goals to show how you will track progress. You can pull these key indicators earlier in the document (executive summary, setting the stage section) to give readers a sense of your vision from a performance management perspective as well.

The sections should also provide guidance on how the plan is to be implemented. You may not have this set in stone, but you should provide some recommendations on selecting a group or organization to provide backbone supports to lead implementation, considerations on governance and tracking progress and plan renewal.

The section can include policy recommendations specific to government as well – and this could be presented as a policy agenda in further detail as an appendix.

A risk assessment is recommended to ensure readers are aware of your key assumptions building the plan and potential risk mitigation measures to consider in implementation.

Appendices

Acknowledgements

Methodology Points

Consultation Notes

Plan Development Process

Implementation Plan

Policy Agenda

The appendices can include detailed information on a number of topics to ensure your plan can be as succinct as possible.

Remember, drafting the plan is not a linear process. You may find yourself having to return to the research or consultation phases to fill in gaps or re-examine your assumptions.

Often, the lead writer(s) of the plan hold(s) the reins on pulling the various sources of information, collected throughout the process, into a coherent direction. However, the plan writer does not wholly determine the suggested course of action. It is their role to work with the broader planning group to affirm the direction taken and even go back to community stakeholders for further input.

You will likely have a number of authors that contribute to the plan content, but it is wise to have a lead writer accountable for pulling it all together in a timely fashion, ensuring there is a common thread tying various content pieces

If you consider the key elements of the plan at the same time as building your research and consultation processes, you will be able to develop the content of your plan as you go through the development process, rather than waiting until the end. For instance, it is best to gain input on the vision for the initiative from a broad stakeholder group rather than having the plan writer come up with it on their own, then try to shop it out in the final editing stages.

Carefully consider who will write the plan. Is it the project manager? The steering committee members? The consultant? Or a combination thereof? You will likely have a number of authors that contribute to the plan content, but it is wise to have a lead writer accountable for pulling it all together in a timely fashion, ensuring there is a common thread tying various content pieces. The ideal plan writer is an effective communicator and able to distil complex concepts into concise communications.

The plan is largely a technical report. Therefore, it is important that your writer has the skills to develop the content based on the quantitative and qualitative data available. It is always a 'bonus' to have someone who can actually take on the financial and performance modelling. If this is not feasible, you can consider bringing in outside technical assistance. Nonetheless, the lead plan writer must be sufficiently proficient in these areas in order to develop a cohesive, sensible narrative.

To develop broader communication materials, look to individuals with communications and marketing backgrounds to assist you. They can turn the content of the plan into brochures, websites, at-a-glance documents and infographics. Develop these marketing materials as part of the launch of the final report, once the plan is complete.

DEVELOPING PLAN GOALS

As you work through the data you gathered from your research and consultation process, consider emerging themes that are common throughout the material and examine these against the aforementioned priority areas. There may be variations on the priority areas outlined in this toolkit, but in some way you will need to address these issues in your plan's proposed approach.

Various communities use different terms to highlight the broad priority areas and associated actions. There is no standard but what is key is that you have a way of differentiating between the two and ensuring that your shorter term activities feed into larger priorities.

The detailed actions associated with your goals break down the priorities into smaller pieces that can be operationalized. These should be action oriented and reflect both best practices and community-identified needs. In other words, just because a national report identifies a particular program as a promising practice, doesn't mean it necessarily fits within your local context. It is the job of the planning team to articulate relevant goals for your community. Be strategic and succinct in how these are presented, but provide sufficient rationale as to why the goals within the plan are priorities. Further, build on existing efforts and link with ongoing government or community initiatives where possible.

The table below, adapted from the *Calgary Plan to End Youth Homelessness Refresh Strategy Overview* (2016), provides examples of the types of goals often found in youth plans. If your plan has a specific focus on Indigenous homelessness, LGBTQ2S youth, newcomers, etc., you may want to delve in deeper into these issues throughout the plan. In the case of recommended actions, you can also consider having a separate strategy on Indigenous youth, for instance, or integrate the focus throughout the goals.

Table 25: Common Plan Objectives

PRIORITY AREA	COMMON OBJECTIVES
Leadership, Engagement & Resources	Mobilize diverse stakeholder groups to enhance collective impact on youth homelessness and develop a theory of change to guide the planning and implementation process.
	Develop the infrastructure and governance necessary to implement the youth plan.
	Develop and advance a policy and funding agenda to end youth homelessness.
	Coordinate diverse funding sources to maximize impact on youth homelessness.
	Champion an end to youth homelessness.
	Introduce strategic education and awareness campaigns to support plan implementation.
	Use research and knowledge mobilization to support ending youth homelessness.
	Support youth's meaningful engagement in plan development and implementation.
	Build private sector partnerships to support plan goals.
Prevention	Introduce targeted prevention measures to support youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This includes shelter diversion and prevention supports to keep youth housed or rapidly rehouse them when they do become homeless.
	Promote family reunification and mediation supports.
	Ensure single youth and youth in families have access to available social housing and rent subsidy supports as well as income assistance to maintain housing stability.
	Ensure youth are not discharged into homelessness from housing programs, child protection services, health and correctional systems.
	Develop effective supports for youth aging out of government care.
	Work with schools to educate youth about homelessness and available supports.
	Enhance youth's access to education, training and job skill development.

System Planning & Integration	Ensure the diverse services for at-risk and homeless youth have well-articulated roles in the broader system of care; ensure program type, target population, eligibility criteria and outcomes are well articulated for each program, whether delivered by the non-profit or public sector.
	Introduce measures to enhance service integration within and between youth-serving, homeless-serving and key public systems, including child protection, domestic violence, education, correction and health to implement the plan. Measures to improve coordination and integration among key stakeholders serving homeless and at risk youth can include:
	» Collective vision and guiding principles,
	» Collaborative planning processes,
	» Coordinated access and assessment processes,
	» Data and information sharing, including use of common information system performance management and quality assurance,
	» Coordinated service delivery,
	» Capacity building and training and
	» Captured information about youth is used effectively in research and initiatives, including homeless counts and HMIS/HIFIS.

Housing & Supports	Use a Housing First Framework for youth and a range of effective program models to support the prevention, reduction and ending of youth homelessness. This incorporates various housing solutions that will respond appropriately to the broad range of the homeless youth's needs (including family-style homes, transitional housing, independent apartments, supportive housing, etc.).
	Revise and enhance the role of youth-specific and adult shelters and transitional housing in ending youth homelessness.
	Introduce and/or reform transitional housing for youth, such as Foyer, to ensure best outcomes.
	Provide outreach services to connect youth with housing and support.
	Ensure accessible and affordable transportation options are available to youth to access supports and housing, particularly in rural communities.
	Introduce independent housing options for youth, including adaptations of the Housing First approach.
	Increase affordable housing options appropriate for and accessible to youth.
	Develop a targeted landlord recruitment strategy to enhance youth's access to private rental units.
	Tailor interventions to meet the needs of diverse youth groups, including Indigenous, LGBTQ2S, immigrant, parenting, sexually exploited youth and youth with developmental disabilities, mental health and/or addiction issues.
	Promote relationship-based approaches to supporting youth.
	Explore innovative models of peer-based support and mentorship.
	Ensure youth have access to necessary treatment and recovery supports to address addiction, mental and physical health issues.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A FOCUS ON INDIGENOUS YOUTH

An example of a youth plan that focuses on Indigenous youth is Calgary's 2011 Youth Plan. During consultations for the plan's development, the Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness provided the backbone supports leading the work (Calgary Homeless Foundation). It includes several elements that should be considered in any plan involving Indigenous people, as outlined in the Calgary Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness (note that the original input from the ASCHH was specific to Aboriginal people, not Indigenous – hence we kept the original term):

» To end Aboriginal homelessness and other housing issues while understanding cultural competencies and ensuring cultural sensitivities through collaborative community efforts and awareness of cultural identity; maintain safe and culturally appropriate housing... allows for not just purchasing, but renting and maintenance as well

» Expand and support existing organizations and agencies that provide housing to homeless Aboriginal youth and children

» Centralize the intake system to ensure Aboriginal identification is captured and utilized;

» Establish Aboriginal transition/halfway houses/group homes for Aboriginal youth leaving institutions, like ILS home or Wellington House, when leaving foster care, CYOC, hospitals, etc.

» Establish safe, culturally relevant and sensitive discharge plans, so no Aboriginal person is discharged into homelessness or unsafe housing; do not want to discharge anyone into an unsafe (physically, or otherwise) situation

» Initiate greater consultation with Aboriginal organizations and agencies in the creation of HMIS (and incorporation of culturally sensitive questions at intake)

» Talk to and learn from the Aboriginal people who have been previously or are currently homeless or have faced housing issues

» It is far too subjective to measure success, instead we should find out from our people what they feel is and is not working, best practices and where improvements can be made

» Increase competent Aboriginal workforce and treatment facilities, with cultural, spiritual and emotional perspectives (harm reduction)

» Ensure all four levels of government are involved in ensuring Aboriginal inclusion

» Create an urban Aboriginal cultural support system/ centre, with culturally specific wrap around programs

» Cannot just be managed on a case-by-case situation – should be available for prevention – proactive rather than reactive approach

» Provide more opportunities for urban Aboriginal people to earn income and receive education

» More engagement and involvement with stakeholders, leaders, committee members and First Nation communities. Discussions around off-reserve funding availability

» Educate the community about poverty, homelessness and Aboriginal issues through Alberta-specific workers at community resource centres

» Will need to hire more Aboriginal people to work with existing centres

» Build a physical epicentre, like Thunderbird Lodge in Winnipeg or the Anishnabe Health and Wellness Centre in downtown Toronto

» Ensure Calgary Homeless Foundation includes two Aboriginal positions on its board – one on-reserve and one off-reserve to ensure a voice

In response to these recommendations, Calgary's Youth Plan places specific emphasis on Aboriginal youth homelessness in Calgary. The plan calls for engaging key stakeholders in a collaborative community-response model, with critical attention given to meet the needs of diverse communities including Aboriginal people, youth with disabilities, newcomers and LGBTQ2S youth.

There is a focus on increasing supports, awareness and services dedicated to Aboriginal young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary, including:

» Conducting further research about the pathways into Aboriginal youth homelessness to help ensure services dedicated to Aboriginal young people (at risk of or experiencing homelessness) will be carried out in consideration of structural factors.

» Recognizing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people that are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, the youth plan adopts the following major milestone:

  » By 2018, Aboriginal homeless young people will not be overrepresented in the homeless population. According to The City of Calgary 2008 Biennial Homeless Count, Aboriginal young people and children represent 28% of the homeless population under 24 years old. Census Canada 2006 data revealed that two percent of the Calgary population self-identify as Aboriginal.

» In conjunction with the broader Calgary 10 Year Plan, the youth plan ensuring continued implementation of case management standards for ensuring that:

  » Young Aboriginal people have control over the planning of their lives,

  » Young Aboriginal people are receiving services with contextual considerations, including pathways into homelessness for Aboriginal people. Specifically, the role of intergenerational trauma specific to the effects of colonization must be addressed to ensure adequate cultural connectedness and therefore healing for Aboriginal people.

PLAN COSTS & PERFORMANCE

As you develop your plan goals, you may want to go a step further and develop a funding ask as well. Considering developing an evidenced-based cost argument. If the vision set out in the plan were to be realised, what would the impact be? This will help you build a solid business case to funders and government, but will also help you distil your goals.

Your research and consultation may have told you new housing and supports were needed, but how much of what program/housing? How much would this cost and to what effect? These are basic questions decision makers will ask, but so too will the public. Releasing a youth plan without an indication of the resources required to execute it will pose a legitimacy risk. You may be able to mitigate this by noting you will work on such questions in implementation, but there is no reason why you can't consider including this piece of analysis during plan development.

Though other plans make it look easy, with infographics and simple dollar figures, the analysis that goes behind such business cases is no easy feat.

Here is what you need to know to get started:
First, know your limits. You and/or your team may not have the technical background to develop the necessary analysis. You may need to bring in an external expert, while making sure they walk you through the methods so you can learn for future needs. You may also not have the necessary data to complete the modelling – in such a case, you may want to suggest such analysis is done during plan implementation.

Know however, that without a solid articulation of the impact that the proposed measures will have and the cost of these, it is going to be more difficult to credibly approach decision makers to support and invest in the plan. Budgeting and impact assessment, along with scenario building, are to a large degree interconnected and are in many ways different ways of interpreting the same information, building on one another as you go.

1. PREVALENCE OF HOMELESSNESS &YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

First, figure out local homelessness prevalence rates and calculate the youth prevalence from this general figure. The prevalence rate refers to the total number of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness person in your community during the course of one year. Cities usually represent this rate as a percentage of their general population – in Calgary, it is 1.4% and in Red Deer it is 0.8%.

Note that you are estimating the number of rough sleepers who would otherwise not be captured at any point during the year in the shelter data used. Ensure you account for possible duplication among diverse facilities as well.

You will also have to estimate how many of these individuals are youth (up to 24 years old). It is best to use actual shelter and rough sleeper demographics from your HMIS or HIFIS for this and if these are unavailable at least general population demographics to generate an estimate.

Below is an example of what the results of this exercise can look like.

Table 26: Estimating Youth Homelessness

SHELTER	ALL UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS	UNIQUE YOUTH	
Singles Emergency Shelter	468	20%	94
Women's Emergency Shelter	403	3%	133
Youth Emergency Shelter	40	100%	40
Sub-total Shelter	911	29%	267
Estimated Duplication	13%	13%	35
Re-calculated Shelter	791	29%	231
Rough Sleepers	40	10%	4
Total Individuals Experiencing Homelessness	**831**	**28%**	**235**
Estimated Prevalence Rate (2015 General Pop. 100,000 total)	**0.8%**	**25%**	**0.2%**

2. ESTIMATE OF THE AT-RISK POPULATION

Calculate an estimate of the total number of youth at risk of homelessness in your community. You can do this through an analysis of extreme core housing need using Census data to determine the number of individuals renting and paying more than 50% of income on shelter with low incomes (under $20,000). Break this figure out by age groups to gain a sense of the youth component.

You may also be able to complement this data with available information from public systems on youth discharges into homelessness from corrections, child protection, health, treatment, etc.

Note that because Census data is dated (2011), you will need to project current totals based on historic population growth. You can also estimate the total number of individuals from the household data by looking at census information on average household size. In this example, it was 2.3 individuals per household.

Table 27: Estimating Youth At Risk Population

AT-RISK POPULATION	COMMUNITY TOTAL	YOUTH UNDER 18		YOUTH OVER 18		ALL YOUTH	
Extreme Core Housing Need Household	1,735	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total
Estimated Individuals in Extreme Core Housing Need (2.3 individuals/ household)	4,236	13%	226	12%	508	25%	1,059

3. HOMELESSNESS TYPE AND ACUITY AMONG AT-RISK GROUPS ESTIMATES

Using the available data, you can develop an analysis of the at-risk and homeless youth population to estimate the breakout of level of acuity.

You can use HMIS or HIFIS information to generate this estimated acuity breakout based on the most recent annual data or provide a placeholder until you have actual data from community input and service provider reports. Ensure you project population growth for the entire implementation time period to ensure adequate resources are allocated.

Looking at both calculations, we can see that we have a total of about 1,242 youth at risk of experiencing homelessness and/or who experience transitional homelessness and 53 youth who use shelters or sleep rough for a total of 1,295 total youth who may need an intervention by 2018.

Table 28: Projecting Need

HOMELESS POPULATION				
	2015	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Rough Sleepers	20	20	21	21
Youth Rough Sleepers (10%)	2	2	3	3
Shelter Users	235	240	246	252
Youth Shelter Users (20%)	47	48	49	50

AT-RISK HOMELESS POPULATION								
	2011	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**
Total Individuals	4,236	4,333	4,433	4,535	4,639	4,746	4,855	4,967
Total Youth Individuals (25%)	1,059	1,083	1,108	1,134	1,160	1,187	1,214	1,242
Growth Rate: 2.3%								

After we split out the acuity levels by homeless/at-risk groups, we have a good sense of what capacity would be needed to serve projected demand by 2018. The estimated need gives you a sense of what kind of interventions will be needed to match demand to program types.

Table 29: Estimating Need Levels

ACUITY LEVELS	HOMELESS YOUTH		AT-RISK YOUTH		POSSIBLE PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS
High	26	50%	248	20%	Housing First ICM, Supportive Housing, Prevention
Moderate	16	30%	373	30%	Transitional Housing/Foyer, Independent Living, Prevention
Low	11	20%	621	50%	Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, Rent Supports, Family Reunification
Total	53	100%	1,242	100%	

4. SYSTEM CAPACITY AND PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Provide a breakdown of current homeless services and housing youth access per program type or specifically target youth and their most current performance indicators where possible. This includes such indicators as turnover rates annually, caseload capacities, bed/unit inventory, negative exits, length of stay and cost per program/housing space. Note any eligibility requirements that have an impact on youth.

To classify programs, you can use local definitions, or look to the Performance Management Toolkit for consistent definitions and benchmark indicators of performance. The turnover rate reflects how many new clients in any given year went through the program as a percentage of the total caseload capacity of the program. Negative exits represent total clients who exited to homelessness (rough sleeping, shelter, jail, etc.) as a percent of total exits in a particular year. The program space cost is calculated by dividing the annual funding by the total caseload.

In the example below, you can see, by comparing the youth caseload to the total caseload, not all programs serve youth exclusively. In fact, average caseload for youth of all programs is 29%. You will need to consider if this level of access is proportional to the estimated need, but try to dig even deeper to determine how outcomes for youth compare to those of adults. Are there subgroups of youth (Indigenous, immigrants, etc.) that differ in access and outcomes? How does this play out from a cost analysis perspective?

Table 30: System Capacity Analysis

PROGRAM NAME	PROGRAM TYPE	HOMELESSNESS HISTORY AT INTAKE	ELIGIBILITY RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL CASELOAD	YOUTH CASELOAD	TURNOVER RATE	PERCENT NEGATIVE EXITS	TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING	$/PROGRAM SPACE
Program 1	Supportive Housing	Chronic	Sobriety required	39	20	25%	20%	$800,000	$20,512.82
Program 2	Supportive Housing	Chronic	Adults only	8	2	50%	25%	$200,000	$25,000.00
Program 3	Intensive Case Management	Chronic/Episodic	Families with children	6	1	10%	10%	$100,000	$16,666.67
Program 4	Transitional Housing	Chronic/Episodic	Sobriety required	80	15	30%	31%	$1,500,000	$18,750.00
Program 5	Intensive Case Management	Chronic/Episodic	Downtown focus	50	5	100%	N/A	$500,000	$10,000.00
Program 6	Prevention	At-risk	Families with children	20	5	58%	35%	$150,000	$7,500.00
Program 7	Prevention	At-risk	Must have job	10	9	200%	10%	$100,000	$10,000.00
Program 8	Rapid Rehousing	Chronic/Episodic	Adults only	50	5	100%	50%	$1,300,000	$26,000.00
Program 9	Rapid Rehousing	Episodic	Youth up to 24 years old	25	25	59%	33%	$200,000	$8,000.00
Program 10	Rapid Rehousing	Episodic	Adults exiting corrections	20	1	33%	25%	$180,000	$9,000.00

5. MODELLING SOLUTIONS

Based on the previous steps, you will need to evaluate what type of interventions are best suited to ending homelessness in your community in your particular timeframe (ex. Two, five, 10 years), as well as the associated costs and capacity needs.

Surprisingly, you may find that you have adequate capacity to meet the needs of certain groups, but have performance issues that need addressing in other areas. Without this analysis, you are likely to make overly generalized recommendations, without a solid sense of cost and impact.

From the example below, you can see there will be a total of 113 youth served by 2018 if the system continues as is. We know higher acuity youth with longer homelessness histories will likely benefit from supportive housing and intensive case management (ICM). Conversely, youth who experience transitional homelessness or are at-risk of homelessness are more likely to benefit from rapid rehousing and prevention services. As a result, we can estimate that lower acuity youth at-risk/experiencing transitional homelessness will remain underserved with the current performance and capacity in the system.

By playing with the numbers, we can estimate what it would take to eliminate youth homelessness in terms of new program capacity, but also what impact enhanced performance might have on turnover and negative exits. The turnover in the model, for instance, assumes that current negative exits and turnover rates remain consistent, but what if these improved? We can model what impact enhanced performance would have. Improvements to service quality or access for youth would likely not require the same level of funding.

Once you work out some scenarios, you can also model costs for maximum impact. Capital solutions will likely be the costliest, though may be critical for particular groups of youth. You can also play with program costs to potentially create efficiencies in some cases. In the scenario below, new ICM spaces are modelled to estimate the costs of the enhancement over the set time period. This can be done with all program types, depending on need.

Table 31: Estimating Impact

	2016				2017			
	Existing Spaces	Turnover in Existing Spaces	New Spaces Created	Total New Clients Served	Existing Spaces	Turnover in Existing Spaces	New Spaces Created	Total New Clients Served
Supportive Housing - Place Based	47	12	0	12	47	12	0	12
Supported Housing - Place Based	35	11	0	11	35	11	0	11
ICM - Scattered Site	85	28	15	43	100	33	0	33
Prevention - Scattered Site	40	33	0	33	40	33	0	33
RRH - Scattered Site	90	37	0	37	90	37	0	37
Total	**296**	**121**	**15**	**136**	**311**	**126**	**0**	**126**

	2018				TOTAL INDIVIDUALS			TOTAL YOUTH
	Existing Spaces	Turnover in Existing Spaces	New Spaces Created	Total New Clients Served	Existing Spaces	New Spaces Created	Total New Clients Served	Average Based on Status Quo - 29%
Supportive Housing - Place Based	47	12	0	12	47	0	36	10
Supported Housing - Place Based	35	11	0	11	35	0	33	10
ICM - Scattered Site	100	33	0	33	100	15	109	32
Prevention - Scattered Site	40	33	0	33	40	0	99	29
RRH - Scattered Site	90	37	0	37	90	0	110	32
Total	**311**	**126**	**0**	**126**	**311**	**15**	**387**	**113**

Table 32: Calculating Costs

New Spaces	COSTS Per Program Space	2016 New Spaces Created	New Costs	2017 New Spaces Created	Previous Added Spaces	New Costs
Permanent Supportive Housing - Place Based - Operations	$36,470	0	–	0	0	–
Supported Housing - Place-Based - Operations	$7,540	0	–	0	0	–
ICM- Scattered Site - Operations	$14,470	15	$217,050	0	15	$217,050
Prevention - Scattered Site - Operations	$3,600	0	–	0	0	–
RRH- Scattered Site -	$12,600	0	–	0	0	–
Total		**15**	**$217,050**	**0**	**15**	**$217,050**

New Spaces	COSTS Per Program Space	2018 New Spaces Created	Previous Added Spaces	New Costs	TOTAL New Spaces Created	New Costs
Permanent Supportive Housing - Place Based - Operations	$36,470	0	0	–	0	–
Supported Housing - Place-Based - Operations	$7,540	0	0	–	0	–
ICM- Scattered Site - Operations	$14,470	15	15	$217,050	15	$651,150
Prevention - Scattered Site - Operations	$3,600	0	0	–	0	–
RRH- Scattered Site -	$12,600	0	0	–	0	–
Total		**0**	**15**	**$217,050**	**15**	**$651,150**

Once you've completed the analysis, develop a summary with a proposed course of action but also outline at least three scenarios for the consideration of the broader planning group. Ensure you provide a full assessment of risks and record all your assumptions so future work can build on your calculations in implementation. On the next page is a sample risk register from Calgary's Plan to End Homelessness.

6. DEVELOPING YOUR FUNDING ASK

Ensure you are explicit about the costs of new operations and capital over the course of the plan's implementation – see example below.

Table 33: Developing Funding Asks

SUMMARY NEW COSTS					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	Toal
Operations	$0	$731,861	$1,902,392	$2,568,493	$5,202,746
Capital	$690,000	$2,070,000	$2,070,000	$0	$4,830,000
Total New Cost	**$656,487**	**$2,801,861**	**$3,972,393**	**$2,568,493**	**$10,032,746**

Ideally, you will be able to outline who is expected to cover these costs – in other words, what is the ask to various government and community funders?

A solid case to funders can be made by showing the cost savings realized through implementing the plan. Unfortunately, we do not have good data at this time to develop this analysis with a youth focus. For examples for how this can be undertaken for broader populations, the Chez Soi project and several community plans are available for review such as Calgary's plan, though these are not specifically targeted at youth.

DEVELOPING TARGETS & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The above section provides you a means of developing the plan progress. You can create targets around funding using this work and proposed actual number of youth you can serve pending resources. You do have the option not to include this information and instead stick to a high-level visioning document that would call for this level of analysis in implementation. However, It will be a harder sell, as you will not be able to paint a picture of how to resolve the issue in a measureable way.

Targets and progress indicators draw on these analyses to propose targets for the number of youth housed, days spent in shelter, percent discharges into homelessness from systems, etc. If you don't have a current sense of performance in these areas, you can instead use general indicator descriptions that you can populate with real data over time. Without setting some measurable indicators however, your plan will not trigger any evidence-based means of implementation tracking either. It is best to set some performance expectations from the start.

This is also another way of showing what you mean by ending youth homelessness – how do you know you're making progress? Ensuring stakeholders have input on this issue will also be essential to buy-in for the plan. In fact, this is one of the essentials of collective impact (shared measurement).

Indicators should be evidenced-based and aligned with your vision, but also realistic from a data collection perspective.

Nevertheless, such targets and indicators should be included in your plan. Here are some examples of plan targets: note they are very specific and build on each other. It goes without saying that these are developed using the research and analysis you have undertaken, versus 'being pulled out of thin air.' In fact, you should be able to provide a description of the methods used and rationale for coming up with the targets in the first place.

Indicators should be evidenced-based and aligned with your vision, but also realistic from a data collection perspective. Give thought as to how these are collected and reported to the community moving forward. Stakeholders that provide data into this effort should have a say in what is being collected and how it's interpreted for wider audiences, particularly when it impacts funding allocation.

Target examples:

1 House 123 youth in shelters to bring their average length of stay in shelters from 20 to 12 days by 2019

Meeting Targets 1 and 2 would eliminate shelter use and rough sleeping among youth in the community by 2019.

2 House 15 youth sleeping rough who are not connected to shelters, eliminating youth street homelessness by 2018

3 Develop targeted prevention, diversion and rapid rehousing measures to stem the flow into homelessness for 500 vulnerable youth by 2020.

Here are some more examples of performance measures that indicate progress on youth homelessness is being made by an optimized homeless youth-serving system. Note that the COH is working to develop a national definition of 'functional zero' that will help you think through the key elements needed and measures you may want to include in developing plan targets.

Performance measures:

» Total number of youth experiencing homelessness
(rough sleeping/shelter) decreases.

» Average length of stay in shelter/street for youth is less than seven days on
average. This performance is maintained for a minimum of 12 months.

» The incidence of youth exiting public systems (corrections, child protection,
health, etc.) who become homeless is reduced and eventually eliminated.

» Turnover rate and occupancy levels in current homeless system capacity
allow access to appropriate housing and supports to youth experiencing
homelessness and at imminent risk within 10 days of referral. This
performance is maintained for a minimum of 12 months.

» No more than five percent of youth who exit through intervention programs
return to homelessness within 12 months.

» Youth program and housing participants report high satisfaction using
standard survey tool re:

   » Housing quality, security of tenure affordability and safety;

   » Case management services received;

   » Access to appropriate supports to address diverse needs within homeless
   system & mainstream public systems (addiction, trauma, mental and
   physical health issues, employment, education, etc.);

   » Process of referral and intake into programs & housing;

   » Discharge planning and transition supports;

   » Perception of quality of life, including sense of belonging, participation in
   community activities and connection with friends and family.

» Supporting healthy transitions to adulthood and include increasing level
of education, employment, life skill development and connections to
natural supports.

LAUNCHING THE PLAN

Once you have a draft of the plan, consider how you will release the final document to the community. Many communities organize launch events, celebrating the culmination of the effort with stakeholders from across sectors. Consider the launch as another opportunity to engage with youth – including those who participated in your consultation; youth can take active roles in planning and hosting the launch.

Involve media and politicians, leveraging it as an opportunity to raise awareness about youth homelessness broadly. You can be creative in your launch event design; consider how you can effectively engage youth, for instance, in the design and delivery of the event.

Consider the launch as another opportunity to engage with youth – including those who participated in your consultation; youth can take active roles in planning and hosting the launch.

Prepare communication materials that are easy to read, catchy and to the point. While you may have the full report ready, it may be more effective to launch short summary documents, briefs, infographics and use social media to get the word out. News releases are essential and you may consider hosting a media conference. Leveraging social media will be important as well; prepare blog posts ahead of time, tweets and Facebook posts. Ensure your website is updated with the plan content as well.

Your spokespeople should be well prepared with key messages and have worked through potential 'hairy' questions that might arise. Again, developing a communications plan for the release can ensure you are prepared.

The launch can be a part of your advocacy strategy with government, engaging decision makers in conversations about the plan during the release and in the media. Ensure the plan is shared with key departments ahead of its release, allowing adequate time for administration to prepare ministers with issue briefs. You may want to have meetings ahead of the release to connect with decision makers around plan asks and propose endorsement of the plan. Often, government and other stakeholders will respond to a plan release by noting they will review it and consider their role in various aspects of your proposed direction.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Certain plans include a detailed implementation framework that outlines accountabilities and timelines for achieving the proposed outcomes. This will be an important consideration as you develop your plan. Will you give direction regarding governance matters, for instance? How will progress be reviewed and communicated? The following chart provides a template as you develop an implementation framework for your plan.

Table 34: Developing an Implementation Framework

PRIORITY 1	KEY PLAYERS	PROGRESS	ACTIONS NEEDED	LEAD/ SUPPORT	TIMELINE
	List specific agencies, government, funders, etc.	What's happening in support of this priority?	What's missing that we need to make this happen?	Who is doing the heavy lifting & who is helping?	By when will actions be completed?
Objective 1:					
Objective 2:					

You may also want to consider other items that we have already touched on, though depending on your local capacity that may need to be left to the implementation phase.

Table 35: Planning vs. Implementation

	PLANNING	IMPLEMENTATION	RATIONALE
Target Population Estimates	Essential	Essential	Difficult to make a case without estimate of scope of issue.
Projected Intervention Needs	Recommended	Essential	Needed to help develop priority direction, assess program gaps, develop funding ask.
Current and Future System Performance Analysis	Recommended	Essential	Shows current gaps and system performance with proposed changes introduced against status quo.
Modelling Proposed Solutions	Recommended	Essential	Shows due diligence on assessing best course of action; allows flexibility in implementation to adjust approach in real time.
Targets and Performance Indicators	Essential	Essential	Essential elements of solid plans – emphasis on measurable results, with timelines.
Funding Ask	Essential	Essential	Essential to have this in place for advocacy to implement the plan, even if it adjusts over time.
Governance Model	Recommended	Essential	You may only have ability to give broad direction on governance, though this will be essential to actually execute the plan.
Risk Register	Recommended	Recommended	This is a useful tool to check against your assumptions and adjust your strategy depending on a changing environment. It can help you identify potential pitfalls early on in the planning process to be mindful of as you implement.
Implementation Plan	Recommended	Essential	You can sketch an implementation action plan out broadly or dive into details from the start; ultimately, whoever leads implementation will likely have to shift these details depending on capacity and other factors.
Implementation Resources	Recommended	Essential	Without resources to oversee implementation, it is tough to action your plan. Ideally, your planning group is able to make enough inroads with funders and government to locate at least some start-up funding to support implementation resources needed, particularly around backbone functions.

Build a process for reviewing and updating the plan and reporting on progress. A strategic review and business planning process is useful to apply in the case of the youth plan in order to:

» Document learning over the past year to ensure implementation of the plan as a living document

» Use data from research, program and housing data, environmental scanning and implementation learning

» Seek input and feedback from key stakeholders, including mainstream partners

» Propose focus areas to shape business planning in the coming fiscal year

» Consider implications on priority areas of action and investment moving forward

» Discuss system-level priorities moving forward, such as information management system implementation, shelter closures, adding capacity, etc.

» Identify policy-level changes required to further priorities, address emerging gaps and progress

» Consider any risks associated with meeting priorities (i.e. inability to reach goals/targets due to factors such as increasing rental prices, etc.) and provide risk mitigation strategies.

Figure 8: Plan Review Cycle
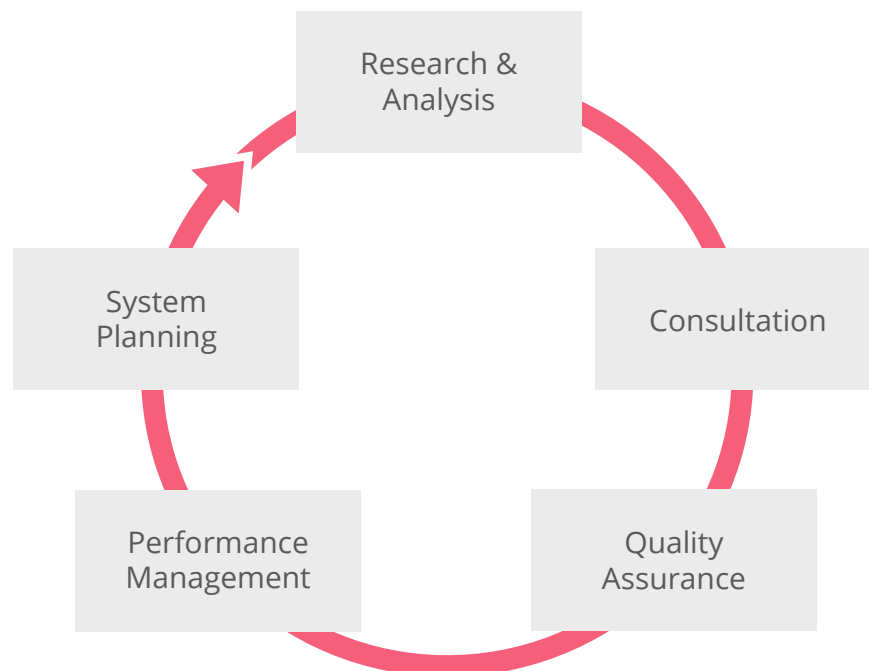
This review cycle can be undertaken on an annual or even three-year basis to ensure that implementation of the plan is consistently reviewed and adjustments to implementation are made. Ultimately, it is the linking of the seemingly mundane activities of plan implementation to broader systems thinking that is one of the hallmarks of a systems approach to ending homelessness.

Evaluating implementation

For communities considering implementation options in further detail, A Way Home has developed a draft evaluation framework to be used in exploring implementation learning from communities with youth plans already underway. The Evaluation Framework (developed by Oriole Research & Design) offers useful questions that communities can use to reflect as they prepare and engage in plan implementation.

What are the critical factors and variables in the environment that need to be tracked so that the implementation plan can adapt to emergent conditions?

» What cultural, social, economic and political factors in each community influence the implementation of the youth homelessness plan?

» Which factors will likely hinder implementation efforts?

» Which factors may enhance or boost implementation efforts?

What process is each community following in their implementation phase?

» To what extent have key stakeholders and partners embraced a common vision for the plan's implementation?

» Has the community established an effective and adequately resourced backbone infrastructure to guide the implementation phase?

» Is a responsive governance structure in place, with an advisory capacity and action groups?

» What processes and mechanisms are in place to ensure continuous and open communication about the implementation efforts and to inspire stakeholders?

» What evidence is there of partners aligning their own activities with elements of the implementation plan and seeking increased inter-agency coordination?

» How do the implementation processes and activities foster a learning culture, including opportunities for experimenting, reflecting and discussion?

What has been learned during the implementation of this initiative that might inform similar efforts elsewhere?

» What has worked well/not so well in the steps toward implementation taken to date?

» What 'quick wins' have you had?

» What else is needed to support implementation?

How are the communities evaluating and tracking their own implementation process?

» What evidence is there of a process and resources for local monitoring and evaluation to support the implementation process?

» In what ways are partners assisting in the development of a shared measurement system?

» What evidence is there of outcomes in the early to middle stages of implementation?

How can A Way Home better support communities during the implementation phase?

» What needs exist in your community that can potentially be addressed by building capacity through A Way Home and provincial partners?

How do we share these findings out more broadly, so others can learn from the experience?

» What opportunities exist to share the experience of communities who are implementing plans to address youth homelessness more broadly?

» What are the best ways to share the learning, products, challenges and successes of these initiatives?

At regular intervals in implementation (6, 12, 18 months, etc.) you may consider your assessment of the following in relation to the plan:

» *Community endorsement of plan and agenda for change*: Does there continue to be widespread or growing endorsement? A continued sense of urgency? Other comments?

» *Communication systems*: What systems are working well to facilitate communication among stakeholders? How are you keeping key stakeholders engaged?

» *Infrastructure to support implementation of the plan*: What human, financial and other resources are in place to support implementation at this stage? How have the support needs in terms of infrastructure changed since you began working on implementation?

» *Evidence of partners coordinating activities to align with the community plan*: What evidence have you seen in terms of reduced duplication of efforts? What evidence is there of more streamlined approaches to meeting the needs of at-risk or homeless youth? What evidence is there of outcomes in the early to middle stages of implementation?

» *Plans for a process to design and manage a shared measurement system*: What progress has been made toward a shared measurement system?

» *Local activity to promote continuous learning*: Is there evidence of a learning focus at the local level? Systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation at the local level? Do stakeholders trust the quality of the data that is already available?

Strategies to effectively Implement a youth plan, including how to identify opportunities and navigate challenges, will be explored further in A Way Home's forthcoming technical assistance materials.