

Reaching Home:

Edmonton Homelessness Plan

2019 – 2024

Note:

All communities receiving funding from Designated Communities stream are required to use this template in order to complete the community plan under Reaching Home. In completing this template, communities are encouraged to develop comprehensive community plans that reflect the contributions of all funding partners, including other orders of governments, not-for-profit organizations, and the for-profit sector.

Please note that in communities that receive funding from both the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness streams, cross-stream collaboration is expected to promote the adoption of a community-wide planning process and support the achievement of community-level outcomes reflecting the needs of the whole community. To support communities in completing their community plans, a Reference Guide has been developed. It is recommended that this be reviewed prior to completing your community's homelessness plan to ensure understanding of the requirements and completeness.

The Community Plan for Reaching Home must be approved by the Community Advisory Board (CAB) of the Designated Community before it is submitted to Service Canada. If your community is developing a joint plan with the Indigenous Community Entity, both Community Advisory Boards must approve the community plan.

In addition to the core requirements provided in this template, communities may also wish to include other components that provide insight into the community's housing and homelessness context or contribute to community-level homelessness challenges, such as a map of the community's current homelessness services and/or gaps in homelessness services or infrastructure (e.g. housing stock). Communities have full flexibility in drafting these sections.

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1. Community Engagement

Please identify the steps taken to engage your community stakeholders in developing this plan.¹

Overview

Homeward Trust Edmonton (HTE) is responsible for strategic leadership to end homelessness in Edmonton, managing resources to support the implementation of plans to end homelessness, and reporting back to community on results and outcomes. HTE receives funding from the City of Edmonton, the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada to coordinate activities through sub-contractors to end homelessness. Reporting responsibilities include:

- Government of Canada: Reaching Home Community Plan and Annual Reporting; Quarterly financial and activity reports for Reaching Home funds;
- Government of Alberta: Annual Service Delivery Plan, monthly financial reporting;
- City of Edmonton: Annual Report to City Council and Edmonton's Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Ensuring that the community is meaningfully engaged on all these reporting activities, HTE coordinates the Community Advisory Board (CAB), plans opportunities for engagement activities throughout the year, and has implemented a strategy to engage key sector voices on the implications of Reaching Home alongside all our other reporting relationships.

Community Advisory Board (CAB)

HTE's Community Advisory Board (CAB) comprises 3 committees, the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC), the Project Review Committee (PRC) and the Community Plan Committee (CPC). The process for the plan development was reviewed by HTE's Board of Directors and the CAB committees have advised on the contents of the application before submission to the Government of Canada.

On-going Engagement

Planning and engagement is a core component of the work at HTE and is done through facilitation and participation at multiple tables in the community, at events, and through external engagement activities. Examples of where input has been, and continues to be solicited include:

- Community Advisory Board
 - This is made up of the Community Plan Committee, Project Review Committee, and Indigenous Advisory Council.
- Annual Update Events

¹ Engagement with local Indigenous organizations, and the Indigenous Community Entity and Community Advisory Board is expected in the development of this community plan.

- Community Update – An opportunity to share progress, celebrate successes, and provide insight on necessary direction to end homelessness. This event occurred on September 26, 2019.
- Indigenous Gathering – A key event to provide specific updates to the Indigenous community on progress, celebrate successes, and for community to inform planning through presentations, conversations, and engagement activities. This event occurred on April 10, 2019.
- Coordinating Local Committees – This involves a broad range of stakeholders that meet regularly to inform practice and strategic direction
 - Housing First Advisory Council; Housing First Team Lead Meeting; Permanent Supportive Housing Community of Practice; Communications Community of Practice; Youth Systems Committee; Winter Emergency Response Committee; Shelter Systems Committee; Research Committee; Lived Experience Committees – the Participant Advisory Committee and Youth Advisory Group.
- External Engagement
 - Homeless on Public Lands (HoPL); Action Alliance for Youth Inclusion (AAYI); Rainbow Alliance for Youth of Edmonton (RAYE); Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH); Funder’s Liaison Network; 7 Cities; The Homeless Hub & the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness; 20,000 Homes, Built for Zero (BFZ).

Indigenous Engagement

Ensuring Indigenous perspectives and identified needs guide the work of ending homelessness in Edmonton continues to be a priority for HTE. This is accomplished through the work of our Senior Indigenous Liaison through one-on-one interviews to discuss community priorities that have informed the Reaching Home application, alongside our work more broadly. Conversations took place between **September 6th, 2019 to September 19th, 2019** and were with representatives from:

- Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
- Creating Hope Society
- Edmonton Indigenous Seniors Centre
- O’Chiese First Nation Holdings
- The Canadian Native Friendship Centre
- Ambrose Place, Niginan Housing Ventures
- Inuit Edmontonmiut Society
- Edmonton Institution for Women – Indigenous Offenders Supports

HTE reached out to but was unable to connect with the following agencies in time for the submission. They will continue to be engaged in our work:

- Cunningham Place
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta
- Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women
- Métis Capital Housing
- Poundmaker Lodge

- Spirit of our Youth Homes

Membership

After reviewing membership of existing CAB tables (which includes the Indigenous Advisory Council, Project Review Committee, and Community Plan Committee), we have identified existing and missing representation from Edmonton's CAB. Moving forward, we are committed to recruit the missing perspectives to ensure that adequate representation from these groups is present. As outlined by the membership guidelines provided by the Government of Canada, these include:

Existing Membership:

- Indigenous Representatives
- Government of Canada (ex-officio)
- Government of Alberta (ex-officio)
 - Housing & Homeless Supports
- Alberta Health Services
- City of Edmonton
 - Family & Community Services
 - Housing & Homelessness
- Various Shelter & Housing Programs/Organizations
 - George Spady Society
 - The Mustard Seed
 - Right at Home Society
 - House Next Door Society
 - Ambrose Place, Niginan Housing Ventures
- Others (Business, Non-profit, etc.)

Identified Gaps in Membership:

- Veterans Affairs Canada (or) veteran serving organizations;
- Organizations serving women/families fleeing violence;
- Organizations serving seniors; and
- Newcomer serving organizations.

2. Investment Plan

In the table below, please outline your planned allocation of Reaching Home funding (including funding from the Designated Community stream and Community Capacity and Innovation stream) from 2019-24 by investment area. Please note that it is acceptable that your community's funding priorities change over time. This investment plan is to demonstrate that your community has a vision moving forward for the allocation of Reaching Home funding. An example has been included in the Community Plan Reference Guide.

Reaching Home Annual Allocation

2019-2020: \$9,728,577*

2020-2021: \$7,894,795

2021-2022: \$9,031,407

2022-2023: \$9,022,582

2023-2024: \$9,022,582

(*includes \$7,911,795 Designated Community and \$1,816,782 Indigenous Stream funding for 2019-20)

	2019-20*	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Housing Services	59% (66%)	46%	34%	34%	34%
Prevention and shelter diversion	3% (10%)	3%	3%	3%	3%
Support Services	20% (6%)	20%	20%	20%	20%
Capital Investments	0% (0%)	13%	25%	25%	25%
Coordination of Resources and Data Collection	3% (3%)	3%	3%	3%	3%
Administration	15% (15%)	15%	15%	15%	15%
TOTAL	100% (100%)	100%	100%	100%	100%

* Percentage in brackets is Indigenous Stream funding allocation as a percentage of itself

3. Cost-Matching Requirement

In the table below, please outline all funding for homelessness initiatives your community plans to receive from external partners from 2019 to 2024. This includes both financial and in-kind contributions. If your anticipated community contributions do not project to cost-match funding from both the Designated Community stream and Community Capacity and Innovation stream for each year, explain the circumstances below the table and include a description of the steps you will take to meet the requirement. An example has been included in the Community Plan Reference Guide.

Projected Funding towards Homelessness Initiatives						
Funder	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2019 - 24
Government of Alberta - Outreach and Support Services Initiative (OSSI)	\$32,458,440	\$29,360,000	\$31,360,000	\$33,360,000	\$35,360,000	\$161,898,440
City of Edmonton – Annual Agreement	\$1,238,000	\$1,238,000	\$1,238,000	\$1,238,000	\$1,238,000	\$6,190,000
City of Edmonton – Provision of Land	\$1,665,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000		\$6,765,000
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation		\$9,333,000	\$9,333,000	\$9,334,000	\$33,000,000*	\$61,000,000
Other Funding	\$221,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,021,000
Total	\$35,582,440	\$41,831,000	\$43,831,000	\$45,832,000	\$69,798,000	\$236,874,440

* awaiting confirmation of funding

4. Coordinated Access

Please discuss the steps you will take to implement a coordinated access system in your community. If your community has a coordinated access system in place, please describe how it presently functions.

Overview

A Coordinated Access (CA) system is a critical component to ending homelessness. The work of CA ensures access to services is based on standardized processes and transparent decision making, in turn reducing individual requirement to visit multiple service providers for housing assistance. Individuals can connect with a single site one time to communicate their circumstances and initiate a housing assistance request. Edmonton has been recognized as a leader in the development and implementation of CA. Some examples of this leadership include:

- 2017 – First Canadian city recognized as achieving “Quality By Name List” through Built for Zero (BFZ); HT was presented with an award at the BFZ Learning Session Denver
- 2018 – Participating member of Reaching Home External Reference Group on CA (review of the Directive and Implementation Guide)
- 2019 – Data visualization established with a public By Name List dashboard <https://public.tableau.com/profile/homewardtrust#!/vizhome/EdmontonBNL/BNLDashboard>
- 2019 – Progress recognized by Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) with a Letter and Bright Spot: <https://caeh.ca/bright-spot-edmonton-sees-15-reduction/>

In Edmonton, the CA System includes both the HTE staff team and the network of participating agencies (including Indigenous providers) across the city. These teams are dedicated to connecting people to appropriate housing and related supports. **Access and Screening** for housing assistance takes place across the city, while coordination of the **By Name List** for **Prioritization** and **Matching** is primarily completed by HTE. Community wide participation in CA is supported by a centralized database and training.

The following are some important characteristics of Edmonton’s CA System:

- All projects receiving funding from Reaching Home participate in the CA system
- Reaching Home funded projects receive referrals through the CA system

By Name List

The By Name List (BNL) is one shared list which captures all people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton who have connected with one of 60+ CA points for housing assistance. The list is updated daily with the addition of newly screened individuals (inflow) and the exit of individuals referred to housing options or programs (outflow).

- The Coordinated Access List: A subset of the BNL which includes all people experiencing homelessness who have been screened, prioritized, and are engaged in matching to Housing First programs.
- The Matched List: a subset of the BNL which includes all people who have been matched to a Housing First Program for intake and are in the process of securing housing.

Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)

The HMIS system in Edmonton is Efforts to Outcomes (ETO). This is an electronic data management system that enables community partners and agencies to enter information about people experiencing homelessness. Data collected include demographics, information about their situation, conditions/barriers disclosed at the system’s point of entry, as well as regular assessments and case management information collected during the housing process and for the duration of their housing program. The HMIS system fulfills the following requirements: gives access to all service providers in the

CA system; supports intake, prioritization, triaging and referral of clients to housing and housing related supports; and exports anonymized data fields to ESDC. Data collected align with provincial and federal laws, with each participant asked to provide consent to having their information shared.

Accessing Coordinated Access

Access to information and connection with housing related resources takes place at over 60 locations across the city. Access is provided in person, over the phone, and electronically, by partners and staff that have received training on CA processes. Access to CA is low barrier and no one is denied access which is meant to create equitable access, with the categories of access sites listed below:

- Homeward Trust Coordinated Access Team
- Housing First Providers
- Outreach Teams/Mobile Services
- Shelters
- System Partners (Alberta Health Services, Alberta Supports, Edmonton Police Services)
- Drop Ins and/or community service providers

Regardless of the screening location a person accesses, the connection process to housing is standardized, consistent and simple.

Screening into Coordinated Access

At the first point of contact, a person is asked about the length of time experiencing homelessness, as it informs the subsequent course of action. For example:

Response: Person is experiencing chronic homelessness

Action: the staff member proceeds by completing the Vi-SPDAT (see note below about Vi-SPDAT), obtaining consent, and building an electronic profile which is enrolled onto the BNL via ETO.

Response: Person has experienced homelessness 1-2 times without accessing housing support

Action: Offer Diversion assistance. Enrollment on the BNL will confirm the individual requires housing assistance, but likely not a more intensive intervention such as Housing First programming.

VI-SPDAT

The Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) is used to complete initial screening for housing services. This is a survey style triage tool, which takes 10-15 minutes to complete with a person and can be done in-person or over the phone. Additional information regarding the VI-SPDAT Tool and its use can be found at <https://www.orgcode.com/products>. The purpose of this tool is to learn about a person's current circumstance and match them to appropriate housing programs. More in depth assessment occurs during the intake phase and is typically gathered through corresponding Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool, or in some cases through clinical or service specific assessment in combination with a case history summary. The assessment tool is used for all population groups; however, the approach to administer it changes based on the audience.

Prioritization

A prioritization matrix guides decision making for the CA team in review of incoming files for individuals who have completed screening. This matrix also provides transparency of the decision-making processes for all CA partners, while highlighting potential program options.

Prioritization is determined by review across four categories:

Primary:

- 1) Length of time spent homeless (chronic vs limited/newly experiencing homelessness)
- 2) VI-SPDAT score (score is an indicator of service intensity)

Supporting:

- 3) Locational risk (ex. sleeping outdoors)
- 4) Severity of health issues requiring more immediate intervention (life-threatening illnesses or pregnancy)

5. Community-Wide Outcomes

If you would like your community to measure progress on additional outcomes beyond the [federally mandated outcomes](#), please identify those outcomes. Please provide your proposed indicators, targets, and methodology for each of the additional identified outcomes.

In addition to the mandated outcomes, HTE will also be reporting on three other important measures.

Exits from Housing Programs

This measure will answer the question of whether people stay housed after finishing a Housing First program. A successful exit is the retention of independent, permanent housing after program completion. The proposed measure will calculate successful exits from housing programs as a percentage of successful and unsuccessful exits. Neutral exits, such as death or moving from service area, will not be factored into the equation. Reasons for exit are captured in program dismissal reasons entered by teams in ETO.

Speed to Housing

Homelessness should be a rare, brief and non-recurring experience. To track our system's performance, we measure the time it takes for an individual to move in to permanent housing after beginning to work with a Housing First team. This indicator is measured as the number of days between the date that an individual enters a team's intake program in ETO and their move-in date.

Indigenous Cultural Efforts

The proportion of individuals identifying as Indigenous within the homeless population on our By Name List is ten times that of the group in Edmonton's general population. In recognition of the historic factors contributing to this overrepresentation, Housing First programs in the city are required to provide Indigenous individuals with the opportunity to connect with their culture through access to ceremony and Elders to participate in traditional rites and rituals. This is tracked through a measure that identifies

the percentage of Indigenous Housing First participants that have engaged in cultural programming through touchpoints as part of their case management. These touchpoints are tracked through an ETO cultural programs touchpoint that is inputted by the case management worker each time they provide the participant with an opportunity to engage with their culture

6. Official Language Minority Communities

The Government of Canada has a responsibility under the Official Languages Act to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of [Official Language Minority Communities \(OLMCs\)](#). Please describe the steps that you will take to ensure that the services funded under the Reaching Home take the needs of the [OLMCs](#) into consideration where applicable.

According to the 2016 Census, there was a small francophone community in Alberta (10.5% of the population) and in Edmonton this was less than 3% of the population. Our HMIS data system reported that less than 1% of our clients identified themselves as being part of the OLMC. Our program will continue to monitor and address the needs of OLMC clients' needs through our HMIS data system and support the CAB and CE in assessing the appropriate types of resources, services, and supports required. If a client or member of the public presents as an OLMC, HTE will work with French speaking staff who can work with the client or provide explanations to the member of public about the aims and objectives of HTE and the services offered through programs. When inquiries about opportunities come up from OLMCs, HTE will have professionally translated documents to make sure information is accessible when needed. For example, our Supported Referrals Report was translated into French earlier this year to meet the Government of Canada's requirement. Additionally, Radio-Canada is often in attendance at HTE events such as Homeless Connect, the Indigenous Gathering, Homeless Count, and conferences and media events, interviewing key staff and providing information to the French-speaking community in Edmonton, ensuring the OLMC is aware of the on-going efforts and progress made to end homelessness in Edmonton.

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.