

Reaching Home:

Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan

2019 – 2024

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1. Community Engagement

Community members and organizational leads were engaged in Thunder Bay to complete the Reaching Home: Thunder Bay Community Homelessness Plan. The Designated Community Advisory Board (CAB) and the Designated Community Entity (CE) worked collectively with the Indigenous CAB and CE to determine what information is included in the 2019-2024 Thunder Bay Community Homelessness Plan.

- A survey regarding the Community plan priorities was created in June 2019, by both CAB co-chairs and CEs. It was sent out in July 2019 to members of the Indigenous and Designated CABs. The survey was disseminated to CAB members, the People with Lived Experience Committee, via email, as well as being made available at a Family Fun Day held at Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) for Indigenous families. Survey responses were discussed by the CAB/CE committee in July and August, 2019, and a draft of the Investment priorities for the 2019-2024 Community Plan was created in August 2019.
- Feedback was also sought from the co-chairs of the Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) and the District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) at a joint meeting held September 3, 2019.
- The data gathered in both the 2016 and 2018 Point in Time Counts (PIT) provided information about individuals that are homeless in Thunder Bay. In both the 2016 and 2018 PIT Counts, at least 66% of individuals surveyed, self-identified as Indigenous. Recommendations from the 2018 PIT Count Report were also taken into consideration in drafting the Community Plan. These included:
 - Address the service gaps in child welfare systems and individuals aging out of foster care
 - Expand culturally competent supports and housing for Indigenous people
 - Expand the high need homeless and Home for Good systems
 - Conduct research on migratory and transient homelessness
 - Advocate for addiction treatment, prevention, harm reduction
 - Develop a coordinated access system for persons experiencing homelessness
- Outcomes from Service Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2015-2019 sub-projects, funded through both the Designated and Indigenous funding streams have provided information about current community needs for those who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, as well as the barriers that exist, and the gaps in services that contribute to homelessness. These projects include the manager position at Shelter House's Managed Alcohol Program, transitional housing units at Alpha Court, the Social Navigator position at the

John Howard Society, the Housing First Program at ONWA (Nihdawin), as well as the Out of the Cold Pilot project at Grace Place.

Local priorities identified in the Community Plan will act as the guide for decision - making when choosing the funded sub-projects for both Community Advisory Boards. The Community Plan will also help to guide other organizations and groups.

2. Investment Plan

Reaching Home Annual Allocation:

2019-2020: \$997,457
 2020-2021: \$972,457
 2021-2022: \$1,027,067
 2022-2023: \$1,014,767
 2023-2024: \$1,014,767
 Total: \$5,026,515

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Housing Services	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%
Prevention and shelter diversion	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%
Support Services	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%
Capital Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Coordination of Resources and Data Collection	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Administration	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
TOTAL	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
TBDSSAB* (CHPI – Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative)	\$3,200,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$17,200,000
St Joseph Care Group (Home for Good)	\$1,200,000	--	--	--	--	\$1,200,000
Alpha Court (HIP – Homeless Initiative Project II)	\$612,421	\$612,421	\$612,421	\$612,421	\$612,421	\$3,062,105
Matawa First Nation (IAH – Investment in Affordable Housing)	\$900,000	--	--	--	--	\$900,000
OAH – Ontario Aboriginal Housing	--	\$12,000,000	--	--	--	\$12,000,000
TOTAL	\$5,912,421	\$16,112,421	\$4,112,421	\$4,112,421	\$612,112,421	\$34,362,105

* Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board

4. Coordinated Access

Thunder Bay is taking the following steps to implement a Coordinated Access System for the City of Thunder Bay:

1. A Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) committee was formed in the fall of 2018. Terms of Reference, Memoranda of Understanding, and privacy protocols were developed and signed with 11 community agencies committed to developing and implementing a coordinated housing access system in Thunder Bay for individuals experiencing homelessness, and/or those at imminent risk of

homelessness. The committee is co-chaired by Alpha Court Community Mental Health and Addictions Services, and the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB).

2. CHAT members received a two-day Coordinated Access Systems training session delivered by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness in February, 2019.
3. Since 2018, CHAT has been meeting monthly to design a coordinated access system for Thunder Bay. To date, the committee has:
 - a. addressed coverage, and identified five community access points for entry into the system (one access point is Indigenous specific),
 - b. agreed on the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) as the common assessment tool, drafted a common consent form,
 - c. developed a template and completed an inventory of housing services and supports provided by CHAT members,
 - d. agreed on the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) as the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) to be used by CHAT,
 - e. engaged in a process mapping exercise, following a person experiencing homelessness through the proposed system, noting where the process needs to be further clarified and solidified.
4. In June, 2019 the Designated and Indigenous CABs approved a three year funding proposal for both a Community Lead and a Data Lead to support CHAT in the design and implementation of a coordinated housing access system. Alpha Court, as the Community Lead, is receiving Community and Capacity Innovation (CCI) funding, administered and monitored by the Indigenous CE (Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre). The TBDSSAB, as Data Lead, is receiving CCI funding, administered and monitored by the Designated Community Entity (Lakehead Social Planning Council). Community accountability is achieved through reporting mechanisms established in the Governance Structure and through service contracts with the respective agencies for CCI funding.
5. Over the summer of 2019, a Community Coordinator for CHAT was hired by the Community Lead. In August 2019 a draft governance structure for CHAT was presented by the Community Lead, and is currently being considered by the CABs and CEs, to be approved by the CABs in October 2019. The Community Lead is continuing to fill in system design gaps identified in the process mapping exercise, including development of a screening tool to be used for diversion at access points and an intake protocol. CHAT Policies and Procedures (currently

in draft form) will be further articulated and CHAT Terms of Reference updated once the process has been solidified.

6. The Community Lead and Data Lead met in August 2019 to align work plans and timelines for implementation of CHAT. The Data Lead is attending HIFIS training through Service Canada in Ottawa in October, 2019, and, following the training, will come forward with a concrete plan for onboarding HIFIS 4 to support the coordinated access system and report on the community's progress in reducing homelessness. Data sharing agreements will be signed and the consent form for people entering the system and By Name List will be finalized.
7. In September 2019 the Thunder Bay Homelessness Plan will be approved by the Community Advisory Boards, setting community targets for reducing homelessness and community priorities. Community-Wide Outcomes in the plan will guide the process of prioritizing people on the By Name List and matching people to vacancies in housing and housing supports through CHAT.
8. The Community Lead will be hosting SPDAT training on how to assess acuity of need, with the SPDAT as the assessment tool. Nihdawin is facilitating the training. The training is for staff at access points. Included in the training will be protocols for triaging, diversion and intake into the coordinated access system. Training in cultural competency (for relating to Indigenous peoples) will be part of the training for staff at all access points. Training dates are October 7 & 8, 2019.
9. The coordinated access system will be operational in Thunder Bay by March 31, 2020. The launch of the Coordinated Housing Access Table is currently slated for November, 2019. This time line may have to be extended to the first quarter of 2020, dependent on the development of the data system to support coordinated access. The launch will include a media launch, public and agency education on coordinated access, and promotion of access points. A presentation on the process of developing CHAT is planned for a Harm Reduction Conference in Thunder Bay at the end of October, 2019.
10. Once CHAT is launched, the Community Coordinator will facilitate bi-weekly meetings of CHAT for the purpose of prioritizing and matching people to appropriate vacancies in housing services and supports, and following up with people placed in vacancies. Data will be collected on housing retention and on CHAT in flow and out flow.
11. Based on an evaluation tool developed by the Community Lead, the system will be amended and improved to better serve the goal of reducing chronic homelessness in Thunder Bay. Outreach activities will be undertaken with the goal of expanding coverage of housing services and supports offered through

CHAT. The Community Lead will update the Terms of Reference, Policies and Procedures annually.

12. The Data Lead will report on data collected through the coordinated access system. The data will be used to evaluate the coordinated access system itself, make recommendations for system improvements, identify service gaps, measure community progress in meeting our targets for reducing homelessness and inform future community planning to reduce homelessness in Thunder Bay.

5. Community-Wide Outcomes

1. Chronic homelessness in Thunder Bay is reduced by 50% by 2027/2028.
2. Homelessness in Thunder Bay is reduced overall and especially for people who self-identify as Indigenous.

Thunder Bay Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) will have a target of housing those individuals most widely represented in the PIT Count through proportional allocation of resources. The 2018 Point in Time Count showed that 66% of those individuals that are homeless self-identified as Indigenous.

Therefore, Indigenous people on the CHAT priority list will be placed in housing and housing service vacancies at a ratio of 2:1. For every three people referred to housing services and supports through the Coordinated Housing Access Table, two will be Indigenous. The target is to reduce Indigenous homelessness by 50% by 2027/2028.

3. New inflows into homelessness are reduced by 50% by 2027/2028.
4. Returns to homelessness are reduced by 50% by 2027/2028.

6. Official Language Minority Communities

The City of Thunder Bay is committed to ensuring that we address the needs of homeless persons in both official languages. To this end, we actively encourage organizations representing the OLMCs to apply by issuing Calls for Proposals in both official languages.

211 data information for Thunder Bay shows that less than 1% of individuals have contacted 211 for help/support for issues related to homelessness. According to the 2016 and 2018 Point in Time Counts, 0% of individuals that are homeless identified as a member of the OLMCs. We will include a clause in all sub-projects agreements to ensure that service providers are prepared to offer services in the minority official language, should there be a request. We will also continue to monitor the demand for services in the official minority language on an ongoing basis so that sub-projects support the OLMCs.

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.