

## Fast Facts #02

© 2008 The City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Research Unit

---

### Definitions Related to Homelessness

This document provides key definitions related to the *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons*, which has been conducted by The City of Calgary every two years in May since 1992. These include published definitions of 'emergency' and 'transitional' shelter, and of 'absolute' and 'relative' homelessness. It also includes a summary of the operational definitions of 'transitional beds' used by the 43 facilities that participated in 2004 count, the only year in which this information was requested. The definition of 'homelessness' used by The City of Calgary for the *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons* is provided, as is an explanation of a different way of counting that is used by the homeless-serving community to measure 'full-year shelter utilization.'

The ETHOS Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion, which was pilot tested in Calgary as part of the *2008 Count of Homeless Persons*, is also introduced. This reporting tool is the standard used by the European Union for reporting on both absolute and relative homelessness. Finally, explanations are provided about The City of Calgary's interest in homelessness and how the *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons* intersects with The City's *Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy* and the community-based initiative, *Calgary's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*.

### 1.0 Emergency and Transitional Shelter

In *The Calgary Community Plan 2004-2008: Building Paths Out of Homelessness*, the Calgary Homeless Foundation (2003: 9-10) defines a number of housing terms relevant to moving homeless people into more stable living arrangements:

- **Emergency Shelters** – Provide temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families who would otherwise sleep in the streets, generally including supports such as food, clothing and counselling.
- **Transitional Housing** – Provides short or long-term accommodation while assistance is obtained to address problems such as unemployment, addictions, mental health issues, educational deficits, physical and cognitive disabilities, and domestic violence. Transitional housing units typically provide access to a mix of support services that enable an individual to move towards self-sufficiency. Privately owned, for-profit, affordable rental units are *not* included in this category.

- ***Non-Market Housing*** – Provides long-term, stable and affordable housing options for households unable to afford market housing in Calgary. The extent and focus of associated support services are matched to the needs of individual tenants.
- ***Near-Market Housing*** – Housing that is at least 10 percent or more below the average market rent or home ownership costs [in Calgary].

These are useful definitions for explaining the general differences between types of shelter that lie on a continuum of affordable housing. Of particular relevance to the City of Calgary's *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons*, however, are the definitions cited for *emergency* and *transitional* beds. During consultation with managers at several large and small facilities that shelter the homeless in Calgary in advance of the *2004 Count of Homeless Persons*, there was general agreement on how *emergency beds* are defined. It became evident, however, that each organization defines *transitional beds* somewhat differently, either according to its own mandate or as required by various funding agencies that support the provision of those beds.

For the 2004 count, The City of Calgary asked each participating facility to provide a description of how *transitional* beds are defined by that agency. Using that agency's own definition, facilities were then asked to record the number of *emergency beds* and the number of *transitional beds* that were available and occupied on the night of 2004 May 12, and to indicate *how occupied beds were assigned* (according to the observed sex, age group, and population group of those seeking shelter). The definitions provided were analyzed qualitatively and the findings are summarized in Appendix A.

While there were 39 facilities in Calgary that were providing transitional shelter for homeless persons in 2004, the unspecified or indeterminate end dates for permissible lengths of stay may indicate there is an insufficient amount of *transitional housing* to meet the need in several sectors. Contributing factors may be the lack of available *non-market housing* (with or without supportive services) and the shortage of *affordable market housing*, both of which might enable individuals and families to move further along the affordable housing continuum. The City of Calgary (2002a), through its *Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy*, is encouraging community partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors to provide more affordable housing in Calgary.

Given the array of transitional shelter provided in the city and the variety of ways in which it is defined, the Calgary Homeless Foundation and its community partners were advised to consider subdividing their classification of *transitional housing* to clearly identify facilities that provide, for example, shelter for less than one month, for one month to two years, and for more than two years. This would have helped to bring some clarity to facilities' descriptions of short- and long-term shelter, which, as they are used at present, render these terms essentially meaningless. For the homeless-serving community, however, distinguishing between *emergency* and *transitional* bed usage remains helpful and will continue to be collected and reported in the *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons*.

## 2.0 Absolute and Relative Homelessness

In 2002, the Calgary Homeless Foundation commissioned a comprehensive study on homelessness in Calgary. The 2002 study updated information contained in a 1997 report by mapping the homelessness system in Calgary; identifying how individuals and families move through the system; identifying gaps in the system; and developing a profile of the population at risk of becoming homeless by identifying the factors that may precipitate homelessness for individuals and families.

The report authors note that “the definition of homelessness continues to be debated.” Following extensive community consultation, however, a majority of those consulted preferred the United Nations’ definition of homelessness, “which clearly differentiates between the absolutely and the relatively homeless.” This definition was used in the *2002 Calgary Homelessness Study* (Gardiner and Cairns, 2002: 33) and in *The Calgary Community Plan 2004-2008: Building Paths Out of Homelessness* (Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2003: 9).

As reported by Gardiner and Cairns (2002: 33), the United Nations has defined two forms of homelessness. One is known as *absolute homelessness*, which refers to “individuals living in the street with no physical shelter of their own, including those who spend their nights in emergency shelters.” The second, *relative homelessness*, refers to “people living in spaces that do not meet the basic health and safety standards” including protection from the elements; access to safe water and sanitation; security of tenure and personal safety; affordability; access to employment, education and health care; and the provision of minimum space to avoid overcrowding.

## 3.0 The City of Calgary’s Definition of Homelessness

The formal definition that has been used for every count of homeless persons conducted by The City of Calgary since 1996<sup>1</sup> is:

*Homeless persons are considered to be those who do not have a permanent residence to which they can return whenever they so choose.*

This definition includes people who are living on the streets, as well as those who are staying in emergency shelters or facilities offering longer term shelter and support for people who would otherwise be living on the streets. Since only those individuals and families *who do not have a permanent residence to which they can return whenever they so choose* are included in the count, The City of Calgary only enumerates people who are absolutely homeless.

---

<sup>1</sup> This definition was formalized for the count undertaken for the first published report of the research findings (see City of Calgary, 1996: 2; 1998: 1; 2000: 2; 2002b: 2; 2004:3; 2006: 4; 2008: 2).

Not every homeless person can be enumerated in a census because not everyone who is homeless is “visible.” Since the “hidden homeless” tend not to be counted, ***the actual number of homeless persons reported to be living in any community is always underestimated.***

The *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary* does not have a means to identify and include persons who, on the night of the count, do not have a permanent residence to which they can return if they so choose but, instead, may be “couch surfing” (i.e., staying with friends or family), sleeping in vehicles or abandoned buildings where they would not have been enumerated, camping in heavily wooded areas that are difficult to search, or living outside of the observation catchment area (i.e., the zones that would be formally surveyed as part of a street count).

#### **4.0 Full-Year Shelter Utilization Studies**

A research group comprised of Interagency Committee members (the sector affiliated with the Community Action Committee on homelessness that serves Calgary’s absolutely homeless population) is in discussion about undertaking full-year shelter utilization studies for the years 2005, 2006, and 2007.<sup>2</sup> This would build on earlier work, in which client data were collected by five operators of nine shelters in Calgary and used to track the number of people who sought emergency shelter *at least once* during the years 2000 and 2002.<sup>3</sup>

These shelters accommodated 11,000 different people for at least one night in 2000, which increased to 14,181 individuals in 2002, a *growth rate for homelessness* of 29% when Calgary’s population growth rate was only 5%. The shelter population in the years 2000 and 2002 represented, respectively, 1.3% and 1.6% of the resident population of Calgary. This was a *prevalence rate for homelessness* that, at the time, was comparable to New York, Philadelphia and Toronto (Mars, *et al.*, 2001: 15).

Although a large proportion of this population was in residence at a shelter for only a short time, 6,000 individuals identified in 2002 had also been accommodated in 2000. This “indicates the population’s vulnerability to setbacks,” especially among those people “whose chronic and complex conditions will require long-term support” (Perras and Huyder, 2003: 3). The proposed study is expected to be completed in late 2008.

---

<sup>2</sup> The agencies involved in planning the 2008 research project are the Calgary Alpha House Society, the Calgary Dream Centre, the Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre Society, the Inn from the Cold Society, the Mustard Seed (Calgary) Street Ministry, and the Salvation Army, all of which provide emergency shelter for Calgary’s homeless population.

<sup>3</sup> The organizations involved in the full-year shelter utilization studies completed in 2000 and 2002 were the Calgary Alpha House Society, the Calgary Drop-In and Rehab Centre Society, the Inn from the Cold Society, the Mustard Seed (Calgary) Street Ministry, and the Salvation Army.

## 5.0 The ETHOS Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

In seeking a more accurate way to describe the type of shelter used by homeless people in Calgary, one that would also be more useful to the facilities that participate in the count, The City of Calgary decided to pilot test the use of the ETHOS classification system as part of the *2008 Count of Homeless Persons*. ETHOS is the standard used by member states in the European Union for reporting on homelessness and housing exclusion (FEANTSA, 2007). In the ETHOS classification system, the housing situation of people who are *absolutely homeless* is broadly categorized as **roofless** or **houseless**. Similarly, accommodation used by people who are *relatively homeless* is broadly classified as either **insecure** or **inadequate**.

These four ‘conceptual categories’ are each divided into ‘operational categories’ (e.g., people living rough; people living in emergency accommodation; people due to be released from institutions; and so on). The operational categories are further divided to show the *range of living conditions* possible (e.g., in the operational category ‘people due to be released from institutions,’ the living conditions described include penal institutions, medical institutions, and children’s institutions or homes). Finally, generic definitions are provided to further describe the type of shelter that a homeless person might be accessing. Definitions for all ETHOS categories are provided in Appendix B.<sup>4</sup>

## 6.0 The City of Calgary’s Interest in Homelessness

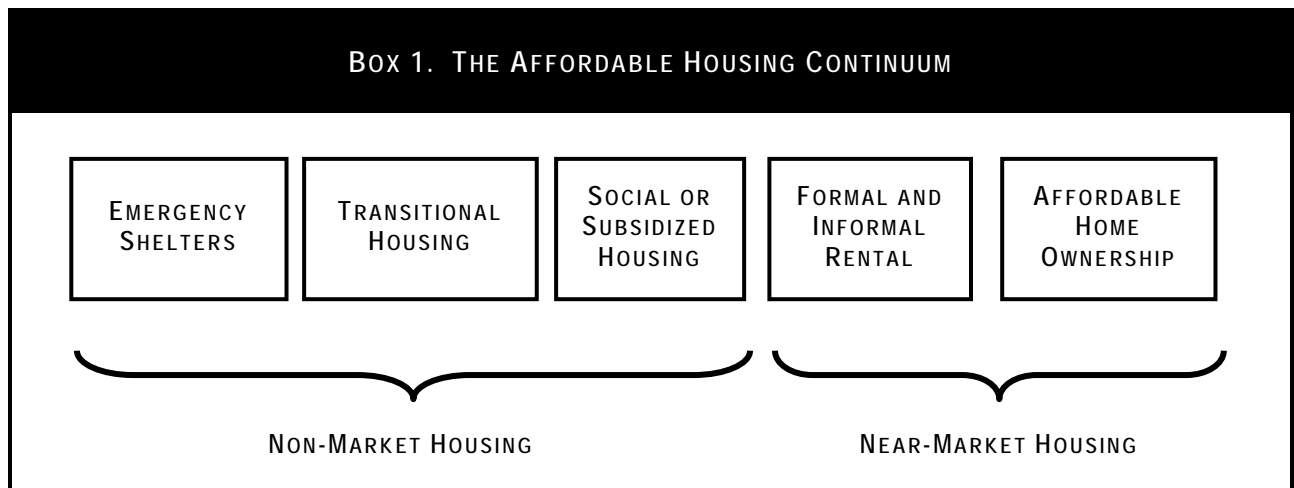
Municipalities are not mandated to provide for the basic needs of residents (such as food, shelter, health care, or education), which are provincial responsibilities. Although The City of Calgary does not have a mandate to shelter the homeless, it is deeply committed to creating and sustaining a vibrant, healthy, safe and caring community. The City focuses its efforts on *homelessness prevention* through the Family and Community Support Services program and on *affordable housing* as a key element in both preventing and ending homelessness. It also has an important role in publishing research on affordable housing and homelessness. With an understanding that the cost of shelter is one factor that can place people at risk of becoming homeless,<sup>5</sup> Calgary City Council identified affordable housing as a Council priority and unanimously endorsed a Corporate Affordable Housing Implementation Plan in 2002.

---

<sup>4</sup> The results proved quite interesting and are summarized in *Fast Facts #11 – Exploring the Use of the ETHOS Typology for Calgary* (City of Calgary, 2008b). See also *Research Summary #08 – Absolute and Relative Homelessness: A Case Study of the Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter Using ETHOS Criteria* (City of Calgary, 2008c).

<sup>5</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s shelter cost guidelines state that any renter household spending more than 30% of gross household income on shelter is overspending on housing. Rental costs include “rent and payments for utilities (water, fuel, and electricity) where they are paid separately from rent” (CMHC, 1991: 4). In addition, no more than 32 percent of gross household income should be spent on home ownership (CMHC, 2002: 13), which includes “payments for mortgage principle and interest; and property taxes; and payments for utilities (water, fuel, and electricity); as well as condominium fees, where the dwelling is a condominium” (CMHC, 1991: 4).

For The City of Calgary (2002a: 18), “affordable housing adequately suits the needs of low- and moderate-income households at costs *below* those generally found in the Calgary market. It may take a number of forms that exist along a continuum – from emergency shelters, to transitional housing, to non-market rental (also known as social or subsidized housing), to formal and informal rental, and ending with affordable home ownership. ... Affordable housing projects are targeted to households with 65 percent or less of the area median income.” The City of Calgary’s definition of affordable housing is presented graphically in Box 1 as an “affordable housing continuum.”



Information about emergency shelters and transitional housing, the first two categories on The City’s affordable housing continuum, is reported in the *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary*. Information about low-income households that are living in social or subsidized housing, rental market housing, or their own homes is provided in a series of detailed *Research Briefs* on housing need, as well as in several *Research Summaries*, *Fast Facts* documents, and *Major Research Reports*. All of these can be downloaded from The City of Calgary website at [www.calgary.ca/affordablehousing](http://www.calgary.ca/affordablehousing) (select the link to ‘Research on Affordable Housing and Homelessness’).

The City of Calgary does *not* enumerate the relatively homeless population because there is no sound methodology available to do so as part of a point-in-time count. Instead, by using Canada Census data provided by Statistics Canada (2003b), The City of Calgary reports on the size and characteristics of households that are *at risk of becoming absolutely homeless* because they have low income<sup>6</sup> and, based on national guidelines, are overspending on shelter, live in homes that are in need of major repairs, or live in overcrowded conditions.

<sup>6</sup> The “low-income target groups” identified by Calgary City Council are defined as households with less than 65 percent of median gross annual household income in the city of Calgary, as reported in the Canada Census (City of Calgary, 2002a).

A series of *Research Briefs* on housing need assess these households that are at risk of homelessness in terms of:

- **Household Type** – individual, family, or multi-family households
- **Tenure** – renters, owners, and both groups combined
- **Extent of Low Income** – gross annual household income of less than \$20,000; from \$20,000 to \$29,999; from \$30,000 to 65 percent of median household income in Calgary; as well as for all three groups combined (income of less than 65% of area median income)<sup>7</sup>
- **Proportion of Gross Annual Household Income Spent on Shelter** – over 50%, from 30% to 49%, and both groups combined (spending over 30%)
- **Average Age** – of the “primary household maintainer” (head of household), and
- **Sex** – of the primary household maintainer (head of household).

These characteristics were also examined for two sub-populations of “low-income target group” households in Calgary – those with an Aboriginal primary household maintainer (head of household)<sup>8</sup> and those with the presence of disability in the household (among one or more members of the household).<sup>9</sup> The City of Calgary’s *Research Briefs* on housing needs feature 2001 Canada Census data, which will be updated with 2006 Census data in the fall of 2008. Using 2006 customized Canada Census data prepared for The City of Calgary, target income Calgary households will also be examined for an additional sub-population in 2008 to assess housing need among recent immigrants.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> The 2001 Canada Census reported that the median annual household income in Calgary for the year 2000 was \$57,879 (Statistics Canada, 2003a). Therefore, 65% of area median income was \$37,621. This was rounded to \$38,000 by Statistics Canada (2003b) for custom data analysis. The 2006 Canada Census reported that the median annual household income in Calgary for the year 2005 was \$67,238 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Therefore, 65% of area median income in Calgary is now set at \$43,705. This will be rounded to \$44,000 by Statistics Canada (2008) for custom data analysis being done for The City of Calgary during the summer of 2008.

<sup>8</sup> For Statistics Canada (2003c: 2), “Aboriginal Origin includes those who reported at least one Aboriginal origin (North American Indian, Métis or Inuit) to the ethnic origin question and/or reported they were registered under the Indian Act of Canada.”

<sup>9</sup> For Statistics Canada (2003c: 2), the presence of disability in the household means “at least 1 [one] person in [the] household with long-term disabilities or activity limitations.”

<sup>10</sup> For Statistics Canada (2008: 4), a “recent immigrant PHM is a primary household maintainer who immigrated between January 1, 2001 and May 16, 2006.”

## **7.0 The Community-Based 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness**

In January 2007, the Calgary Committee to End Homelessness (2007) was established by 24 corporate, government and community leaders to develop a 10-year plan to end homelessness in the city. At the press conference announcing this initiative, Calgary Mayor Dave Bronconnier stated that “bringing together all sectors of our community, along with all three orders of government, offers an excellent opportunity to develop a long-term strategy for tackling homelessness in Calgary. The City of Calgary fully supports this initiative” (Calgary Committee to End Homelessness, 2007).

The Committee released *Calgary’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness* on January 29, 2008. It includes “12 guiding principles, five strategies and one objective: ending homelessness in Calgary” and sets short- and long-term milestones for measuring its success (Calgary Committee to End Homelessness, 2008: 9-12). Strategy 4 in the Plan is designed to improve data and systems knowledge. Its first goal is to introduce a mandatory Homeless Management Information System to provide “real-time data on how long people are homeless, what their needs are, what the causes of homelessness are, how people are interacting with our systems of care, how effective our interventions are, the number of homeless people, and detailed demographic and biographical information” (Calgary Committee to End Homelessness, 2008: 37).

Once the Homeless Management Information System is in place, there will no longer be a need to conduct a point-in-time census of homeless persons. Until that time, The City of Calgary will continue to conduct a count of homeless people every two years.

## **8.0 Summary of Definitions Related to Homelessness**

This report has provided a range of definitions related to homelessness and explained how they relate to The City of Calgary’s *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons*. The glossary provided on the following two pages summarizes the key definitions that were discussed (City of Calgary, 2008a: v-vi).



# Glossary

## CITY OF CALGARY

<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>	Affordable housing adequately suits the needs of low- and moderate-income households at costs below those generally found in the Calgary market.
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTINUUM</b>	Affordable housing may take a number of forms, from emergency shelters, to transitional housing, to non-market rental (also known as social or subsidized housing), to formal and informal rental, and ending with affordable home ownership.
<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS</b>	Affordable housing projects are targeted to households with 65 percent or less of the area median income.
<b>HOMELESS PERSONS</b>	Homeless persons are considered to be those who do not have a permanent residence to which they can return whenever they so choose.

Source: City of Calgary (2002a: 18); and City of Calgary (1996: 2).

## UNITED NATIONS

<b>ABSOLUTE HOMELESSNESS</b>	Individuals living in the street with no physical shelter of their own, including those who spend their nights in emergency shelters.
<b>RELATIVE HOMELESSNESS</b>	People living in spaces that do not meet basic health and safety standards, including protection from the elements; access to safe water and sanitation; security of tenure and personal safety; affordability; access to employment, education and health care; and the provision of minimum space to avoid overcrowding.

Source: Gardiner and Cairns (2002: 33); and Calgary Homeless Foundation (2003: 9).

## CALGARY HOMELESS FOUNDATION

<b>EMERGENCY SHELTER</b>	Temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families who would otherwise sleep in the streets, generally including supports such as food, clothing and counselling.
<b>TRANSITIONAL HOUSING</b>	Short or long-term accommodation with access to a mix of support services that enable an individual to move towards self-sufficiency (e.g., assistance to address problems such as unemployment, addictions, mental health issues, educational deficits, physical and cognitive disabilities, and domestic violence).
<b>NON-MARKET HOUSING</b>	Non-market housing provides long-term, stable and affordable housing options for households unable to afford market housing in Calgary, where the extent and focus of associated support services are matched to the needs of individual tenants.
<b>NEAR-MARKET HOUSING</b>	Near-market housing costs at least 10% or more below the average market rent or home ownership costs in Calgary.

Source: Calgary Homeless Foundation (2003: 9-10).

## ETHOS 2007 – EUROPEAN TYPOLOGY OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION

<b>ROOFLESS</b>	People living rough or in emergency accommodation.
<b>HOUSELESS</b>	People in accommodation for the homeless, in accommodation for immigrants, receiving longer-term support due to homelessness, or due to be released from institutions (with no discharge address).
<b>INSECURE</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, under threat of eviction, or under threat of violence.
<b>INADEQUATE</b>	People living in temporary or non-conventional structures, in unfit housing, or in extreme overcrowding.

Source: FEANTSA (2007).

## References

- Calgary Committee to End Homelessness. 2008. *Calgary's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness*. Calgary: CCEH. [www.endinghomelessness.ca](http://www.endinghomelessness.ca).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "City Leaders Launch Effort to End Homelessness." News Release 09 January 2007. Calgary, Alberta.
- Calgary Homeless Foundation. 2003. *The Calgary Community Plan 2004-2008: Building Paths Out of Homelessness*. Calgary: Calgary Homeless Foundation. Available in PDF at [www.calgaryhomeless.com](http://www.calgaryhomeless.com).
- City of Calgary. 2008a. *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary: 2008 May 14*. Calgary: City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008b. *Fast Facts #11 – Exploring the Use of the ETHOS Typology for Calgary*. Calgary: City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008c. *Research Summary #08 – Absolute and Relative Homelessness: A Case Study of the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter Using ETHOS Criteria*. Calgary: City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. *Results of the 2006 Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary: Enumerated in Emergency and Transitional Facilities, by Service Agencies, and On the Streets – 2006 May 10*. Calgary: City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Policy and Planning Division.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2004. *Biennial Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary: Enumerated in Emergency and Transitional Facilities, by Service Agencies, and On the Streets – 2004 May 12*. The City of Calgary, Community Strategies, Policy and Planning Division, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002a. *City of Calgary: Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy*. Approved 2002 July 17 (CPS2002-57). Calgary: The City of Calgary, Corporate Properties and Community Strategies. 31 pp.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002b. *The 2002 Count of Homeless Persons – 2002 May 15*. Calgary: The City of Calgary, Community Vitality and Protection, Community Strategies, Policy and Planning Division.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. *The 2000 Count of Homeless Persons – 2000 May 17*. Calgary: The City of Calgary, Community Strategies, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1998. *Count of Homeless Persons in Downtown Calgary – May 21, 1998*. Calgary: The City of Calgary, Community and Social Development Department, Social Research Unit.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1996. *Homeless Count in Downtown Calgary – 1996*. Calgary: The City of Calgary, Community and Social Development Department.
- CMHC [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation]. 2002. *Homebuying Step by Step: A Consumer Guide and Workbook*. Ottawa: CMHC.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1991. *Core Housing Need in Canada*. Ottawa: CMHC.
- FEANTSA [Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-Abris AISBL / European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless AISBL]. 2007. *ETHOS 2007: European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion*. Brussels: FEANTSA. [www.feantsa.org](http://www.feantsa.org)
- Gardiner, Helen, and Kathleen V. Cairns. 2002. *2002 Calgary Homelessness Study: Final Report (October 2002)*. Research Report to the Calgary Homeless Foundation. Calgary: Calgary Homeless Foundation.
- Perras, Floyd, and Jeremy Huyder. 2003. *Interagency Shelter User Count for 2002*. A Collaboration with the Interagency Committee. Calgary: The Mustard Seed Street Ministry. [www.theseed.ca/about/researchreports/InteragencyShelterCount2002.pdf](http://www.theseed.ca/about/researchreports/InteragencyShelterCount2002.pdf)
- Mars, Jim, Margaret Eberle, Tom Zizys, and Jim Johnson. 2001. *Methods for Estimating the Costs of Homelessness: A Review of Options*. Ottawa: National Secretariat on Homelessness, HRDC.
- Statistics Canada. 2008. *Specifications for Custom Census Tables*. Prepared for The City of Calgary, Community and Neighbourhood Services, Social Research Unit. June 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. "2006 Community Profiles: Calgary, Alberta." *2006 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. [www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/index.cfm?Lang=E](http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/index.cfm?Lang=E)
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003a. "2001 Community Profiles." *2001 Census*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003b. *Household Data 2001-96-91*. Custom tabulation using 2001, 1996 and 1991 Census data (20 percent sample) for non-farm non-reserve private households with positive household income by Aboriginal status of primary household maintainer, household income, tenure/shelter cost, household type, presence of activity limitations, and selected characteristics for the city of Calgary. Prepared for The City of Calgary, Community Strategies. December 2003. CD-ROM.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003c. *Specifications for Custom Census Tables*. Prepared for The City of Calgary, Community Strategies. November 2003.
- Warthe, D. Gaye, Irene Hoffart, and Merrill Cooper. 2004. *Calgary Family and Sexual Violence Sector Review: Building a New Vision. Final Report*. Completed for The City of Calgary, Community Strategies (FCSS); the United Way of Calgary and Area; and Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority. Calgary: The City of Calgary, Community Strategies, FCSS.

## Appendix A. Agency Definitions of ‘Transitional’ Shelter, 2004

This information is taken from the *2004 Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary* (City of Calgary, 2004: 21-25).

The way in which *transitional shelter* is defined in the community serving the homeless population in Calgary varies distinctly by organization, with few commonalities seen even within the eight sectors working with the Calgary Homeless Foundation (2003: 38-42) in 2004 on the implementation of *The Calgary Community Plan*.<sup>11</sup> A summary overview of the definition of *transitional beds* used by each organization in 2004 is provided below, listed alphabetically by facility for each of the eight sectors that reported this information. After each sectoral overview, the range of permissible lengths of stay for the sector is summarized.

1. **Aboriginal Sector:** Both facilities in this sector provide transitional housing for Aboriginal clients. Elizabeth Fry Society's Berkana House provides accommodation for an average of four months to women moving from prison into the community, while the Native Addictions Services Society offers residential addiction treatment services for four to six weeks.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector ranges from four weeks to four months.*

2. **Absolutely Homeless Sector:** Nine of ten facilities in this sector provide transitional housing. Alberta Seniors, Housing Services Division's Sunalta Shelter offers only emergency shelter. The Calgary Dream Centre is a residential training centre that, in partnership with Alberta Seniors, provides short-term housing for up to one year for the working poor, in the form of shared accommodation (two males per room). The Calgary Drop-In Centre Society, through its three facilities, provides transitional beds for clients who are pre-screened prior to being allowed to access a facility or sleeping program. Transitional beds are provided at Centre 110, Centre 2507 (Hillhurst), and on the fourth floor of Riverfront Centre. The duration of stay was not specified.

The Mustard Seed (Calgary) Street Ministry offers a short-term Step-Up program for individuals who want to actively work through the concerns in their lives that keep them from maintaining an independent lifestyle. It also provides long-term housing through a Transitional Housing program for people who need longer periods of support than is available in Step-Up. The duration of stay was not specified.

---

<sup>11</sup> Eight sectors serving the homeless were first identified by the Calgary Homeless Foundation (2003: 29; 38-42) in *The Calgary Community Plan 2004-2008*. These sectors are known as Aboriginal, Absolutely Homeless (previously called Singles), Addictions, Families, Mental Health, Seniors and People with Disabilities (previously called Seniors), Women Fleeing Violence (previously called Family Violence), and Youth. A ninth sector, Immigrant Housing, was formed in 2007.

The Salvation Army's Booth Centre provides transitional beds for up to four months for persons who are receiving social assistance, working in low-income jobs, or who are hard to house due to mental health issues. The current time limit is under review. The Salvation Army's Centre of Hope similarly provides transitional beds for up to four months for the same clientele. However, extensions beyond four months are possible, which are evaluated on an individual basis. Victory Outreach Foundation provides transitional housing for a minimum of six months in two residences, one for adult men and another for adult women, all of whom are encouraged to seek employment if they are not already employed. YWCA of Calgary's Mary Dover House provides transitional housing for up to six months for women and children who are in crisis or transition.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector **ranges from four months to two years**, although four of nine facilities providing transitional shelter did not specify the exact length of stay that is permitted.*

3. **Addictions Sector:** All eight facilities in this sector provide either detoxification or addiction treatment services. AADAC's Renfrew Recovery Centre moves clients from emergency assessment beds into transitional treatment beds for a length of stay that was not specified. Aventa provides 'crisis' beds for up to two weeks, 'treatment program' beds for four weeks, and 'long-term' beds for three months, all of which are considered to be transitional beds. Calgary Alpha House Society has 20 beds in their detoxification program that are classified as transitional, where clients can stay from three days (minimum) to as long as one month. Fresh Start Addictions Centre has 23 transitional beds for men in treatment, where clients can stay from 90 days (minimum) to as long as one year.

Oxford House Foundation of Canada provides 121 short- or long-term transitional beds for clients. No end date is imposed on residents who abide by the rules of the residence. Recovery Acres (Calgary) Society provides short- and long-term treatment accommodation (duration not specified) for men receiving treatment for substance abuse. Simon House provides transitional beds for an unspecified period, which they define as safe, affordable housing for clients who have completed a [substance abuse] Relapse Prevention program and are slowly reintegrating into society. Youville Women's Residence provides 23 transitional beds for women with addictions, abuse histories, and mental health distress who are in a recovery treatment program (duration not specified).

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector **ranges from three days to one year to no fixed end date**. However, half of the facilities in this sector did not indicate a specific duration of stay.*

4. **Families Sector:** There are two facilities in this sector, only one of which provides transitional shelter. Highbanks provides long-term transitional housing (duration not specified) to parenting youth who are addressing problems related to unemployment and educational deficits. Inn from the Cold Society offers emergency shelter only.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by the lone facility in this sector providing that form of accommodation is simply described as ‘long term.’*

5. **Mental Health Sector:** Six of seven organizations in this sector provide transitional housing for persons with mental health issues. The Calgary Health Region’s Private Landlord Personal Care Homes do not provide emergency or transitional shelter but, instead, offer long-term placements for persons referred to Home Care. This contradicts information reported in *The Calgary Community Plan* (Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2003: 40), which lists 14 transitional beds for this organization at the time those data were collected. Six facilities operated by Horizon Housing Society in cooperation with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Art Smith House, Bob Ward Residence, Horizon on 8th, House of Good Cheer, Marguarite House, and Roberts House – provide short- and long-term transitional accommodation (duration not specified), with support to deal with chronic and persistent mental health concerns to help people move towards their optimum level of self-sufficiency.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector was simply described as ‘short and long term.’*

6. **Seniors and People with Disabilities Sector:** The lone homeless-serving facility in this sector is Kerby Centre’s Rotary House, which offers transitional accommodation for men and women over 55 years of age who are fleeing domestic violence. It may also house seniors aged 50 to 60 following a stay at a women’s shelter. The duration of stay was not specified.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by the lone facility in this sector was not specified.*

7. **Family Violence Sector:** All six facilities in this sector provide accommodation for individuals or families who are fleeing family violence. Two also provide shelter for women experiencing other crises, such as homelessness that is unrelated to family violence. Awo Taan Native Women’s Shelter provides transitional beds for up to 24 women and children through five programs that address their clients’ immediate or long-term needs (duration not specified).

Brenda Stafford Centre for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, in partnership with the Calgary Housing Company, provides supportive housing for women and children for a period of six months in 24 transitional *apartments*, in which the number of beds per unit changes based on the number of children in the family. Through its satellite facility, Gateway Place, it also provides transitional shelter for up to six months in the form of private bedrooms in a shared home that can house six women who do not have children living with them. The Calgary Women’s Emergency Shelter Association provides transitional beds for a period of seven to ten days for women and children who are experiencing crises such as homelessness.



Discovery House Family Violence Prevention Society provides transitional shelter for up to six months for women with children who are fleeing family violence. Sonshine Society of Christian Community Services provides transitional housing apartments for a period 12 months for women and children who are fleeing domestic violence and abuse. YWCA of Calgary's Sheriff King Family Home provides transitional beds for up to seven days for women, with or without children, who are without housing.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector ranges from seven days to 12 months.*<sup>12</sup>

8. **Youth Sector:** Six of seven facilities in this sector provide transitional beds for youth who are unable to live independently or with their families. Boys and Girls Club Community Services' Avenue 15 may provide transitional beds for youth who are unable to stay at home due to family conflict and require time away to transition back into the home with support (duration not specified). Calgary John Howard Society's Raido House provides transitional beds for as long as required for youth who are not able to live independently without the aid of an agency or youth worker. McMan Youth Services provides transitional housing for youth, generally for up to two years but with no restrictions on the lengths of stay if warranted by the needs of the youth.

Servants Anonymous Society (which in 2008 is now part of the Addictions Sector) provides long-term transitional housing for a minimum of six months for women aged 16 to 29 and their children. The women must be accessing the life skills, recovery or employment training aspects of the Servants Anonymous Society (SAS) program. Beds are sometimes available for up to 18 months for women who have completed the SAS program and graduated from school or found employment but who wish to return for temporary support.

Street Teams / Safe House Society provides safe housing and a fresh start for youth age 15 to 18 with Child Welfare Status who are exiting street life. There is no maximum length of stay if clients abide by the rules of the residence and are working towards independence. Wood's Homes' Exit Youth Shelter currently provides only emergency beds. YWCA of Calgary's Safe Haven provides transitional housing for up to six months for adolescent girls who are at risk of prostitution, to enable them to address behavioural issues and obtain a more permanent placement.

*The duration of stay in transitional housing that is permitted by facilities in this sector ranges from four weeks to two years to no fixed end date.*

---

<sup>12</sup> The *Calgary Family and Sexual Violence Sector Review* identifies the overall lack of shelter capacity as a particular concern in this sector, noting that "short shelter stays, and the lack of second-stage shelter beds and affordable housing, along with serious income problems" were singled out by agencies as key factors "contributing to their clients' inability to achieve independence from their abusive partners" (Warthe, Hoffart, and Cooper, 2004: vii).

The preceding summary shows there is a considerable range of *housing forms* available to meet the needs of various sub-populations who do not have a permanent residence to which they can return whenever they so choose. Only four of the 43 facilities that were surveyed (9 percent) do not provide transitional beds. Most others provide transitional housing, which includes both accommodation and access to a mix of supportive programs and services to enable people to move towards self-sufficiency. This is consistent with the definition of *transitional housing* provided in *The Calgary Community Plan* (Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2003: 9).

## Appendix B. ETHOS 2007 – Categories and Definitions

This information is abstracted from the *2008 Count of Homeless Persons in Calgary* (City of Calgary, 2008a: 111-113).

ETHOS is the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion and is the standard used by member states in the European Union for reporting on homelessness and housing exclusion (FEANTSA, 2007). In the ETHOS classification system, the housing situation of people who are *absolutely homeless* is broadly categorized as **roofless** or **houseless**. Similarly, accommodation used by people who are *relatively homeless* is broadly classified as either **insecure** or **inadequate**. The four ETHOS 'conceptual categories' are each divided into 'operational categories,' which are further divided to show the *range of living conditions* possible. Definitions are provided below.

### ETHOS 2007 – Four Conceptual Categories

#### ETHOS 2007 – EUROPEAN TYPOLOGY OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION

<b>ROOFLESS</b>	People living rough or in emergency accommodation.
<b>HOUSELESS</b>	People in accommodation for the homeless, in accommodation for immigrants, receiving longer-term support due to homelessness, or due to be released from institutions.
<b>INSECURE ACCOMMODATION</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, under threat of eviction, or under threat of violence.
<b>INADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION</b>	People living in temporary or non-conventional structures, in unfit housing, or in extreme overcrowding.

### ETHOS 2007 – Operational Categories and Definitions

#### ROOFLESS

<b>PUBLIC SPACE OR EXTERNAL SPACE</b>	Roofless people living rough in the streets or in public spaces without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters.
<b>NIGHT SHELTER</b>	Roofless people in emergency accommodation with no usual place of residence, who make use of <u>overnight</u> , low threshold shelter. [e.g., hotel; motel]

## HOUSELESS

<b>HOMELESS HOSTEL</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for the homeless, where the period of stay is intended to be <u>short term</u> , normally less than one year.
<b>TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for the homeless, where the period of stay is intended to be <u>short term</u> , normally less than one year.
<b>TRANSITIONAL SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for the homeless, where the period of stay is intended to be <u>short term</u> , normally less than one year.
<b>WOMEN'S SHELTER ACCOMMODATION</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for the homeless, where women are accommodated due to the experience of domestic violence and where the period of stay is intended to be <u>short term</u> , normally less than one year.
<b>IMMIGRANTS' TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION OR RECEPTION CENTRES</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for immigrants, where immigrants are in reception or <u>short-term</u> accommodation due to immigrant status, normally less than one year.
<b>MIGRANT WORKERS' ACCOMMODATION</b>	Houseless people in accommodation for immigrants, staying in accommodation for migrant workers.
<b>RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR OLDER FORMERLY HOMELESS PEOPLE</b>	Houseless people receiving longer-term support in <u>long-stay</u> accommodation with care for older, formerly homeless people, normally more than one year.
<b>SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION FOR FORMERLY HOMELESS PEOPLE</b>	Houseless people receiving longer-term support in <u>long-stay</u> accommodation with care for formerly homeless people, normally more than one year.
<b>DUE TO BE RELEASED FROM PENAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	Houseless people due to be released from institutions, where no housing is available prior to release.
<b>DUE TO BE RELEASED FROM MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	Houseless people due to be released from institutions, where they stay longer than needed due to a lack of housing.
<b>DUE TO BE RELEASED FROM CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS OR HOMES</b>	Houseless people due to be released from institutions, where no housing is identified (e.g., by their 18th birthday).

## INSECURE ACCOMMODATION

<b>TEMPORARILY WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, in conventional housing but not their usual place of residence due to a lack of housing (e.g., 'couch surfing').
<b>NO LEGAL TENANCY OR SUB-TENANCY</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, occupying a dwelling with no legal tenancy or sub-tenancy or illegally occupying a dwelling (e.g., living in an 'illegal suite').
<b>ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF LAND</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, occupying land with no legal rights to do so (e.g., 'squatting').
<b>LEGAL ORDERS ARE ENFORCED (RENTED)</b>	Renters living under threat of eviction, where orders for eviction are operative.
<b>RE-POSSESSION ORDERS (OWNED)</b>	Owners living under threat of eviction, where the mortgagor has legal order to re-possess.
<b>POLICE RECORDED INCIDENTS</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, where police action is taken to ensure a place of safety for victims of domestic violence.

## INADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION

<b>MOBILE HOMES</b>	People living in temporary or non-conventional structures, not intended as place of usual residence (e.g., campers; trailers).
<b>NON-CONVENTIONAL BUILDINGS</b>	People living in temporary or non-conventional structures, such as a makeshift shelter, shack or shanty.
<b>TEMPORARY STRUCTURES</b>	People living in insecure accommodation, such as a semi-permanent structure, hut, or cabin.
<b>OCCUPIED DWELLINGS UNFIT FOR HABITATION</b>	People living in unfit housing, defined as unfit for habitation by national legislation or building regulations.
<b>HIGHEST NATIONAL NORM OF OVERCROWDING</b>	People living in extreme overcrowding, defined as exceeding the national density standard for floor-space or useable rooms.

Source: FEANTSA (2007).