Canadian Definition of Homelessness

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

DEFINITION

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household’s financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing.

Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other. That is, homelessness encompasses a range of physical living situations, organized here in a typology that includes 1) Unsheltered, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation; 2) Emergency Sheltered, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence; 3) Provisionally Accommodated, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, and finally, 4) At Risk of Homelessness, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one’s shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.

The problem of homelessness and housing exclusion is the outcome of our broken social contract; the failure of society to ensure that adequate systems, funding and supports are in place so that all people, even in crisis situations, have access to housing and the supports they need. The goal of ending homelessness is to ensure housing stability, which means people have a fixed address and housing that is appropriate (affordable, safe, adequately maintained, accessible and suitable in size), and includes required income, services and supports to enhance their well-being and reduce the risk that they will ever become homeless. This means focusing both on prevention and on sustainable exits from homelessness.

In the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action, the definition of homelessness recognizes the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples (including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) amongst Canadian homeless populations resulting from colonization and cultural genocide. The Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada highlights the necessity of considering the historical, experiential, and cultural perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the ongoing experience of colonization and racism as central to understanding and addressing Indigenous homelessness. In addition, numerous populations, such as youth, women, families, people with mental health and/or addictions issues, people impacted by violence, seniors, veterans, immigrants, refugees, ethno-racial and racialized people, and members of LGBTQ2S communities experience homelessness due to a unique constellation of circumstances and as such the appropriateness of community responses has to take into account such diversity.

1. In 2012, the COH (formerly the Canadian Homelessness Research Network) established a working group with leaders from the areas of research, policy and practice, to develop, refine and test a new definition. The COH Working Group included: Dr. Stephen Gaetz, Director, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, York University; Carolann Barr, Executive Director, Raising the Roof; Anita Friesen, Senior Policy Advisor, Program Policy and Planning, Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports, Alberta Human Services; Bradley Harris, Social Services Consultant, The Salvation Army; Charlie Hill, Executive Director, National Aboriginal Housing Association; Dr. Kathy Kovacs-Burns, Associate Director, Health Sciences Council, University of Alberta; Dr. Bernie Pauly, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, University of Victoria; Bruce Pearce, President, Canadian Housing Renewal Association; Alina Turner, VP Strategy, Calgary Homeless Foundation; Allyson Marsolais, Project Manager, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Based on national consultation, the definition was revised in 2017.
TYPOLOGY

The typology describes the range of accommodations that people without appropriate, stable, and permanent housing may experience. Those without acceptable housing experience a range of different types of homelessness, from being unsheltered to having housing that is insecure or inappropriate. As homelessness is not one single event or state of being, it is important to recognize that at different points in time people may find themselves experiencing different types of homelessness.

1) Unsheltered

This includes people who lack housing and are not accessing emergency shelters or accommodation, except during extreme weather conditions. In most cases, people are staying in places that are not designed for or fit for human habitation.

1.1 PEOPLE LIVING IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SPACES WITHOUT CONSENT OR CONTRACT

- Public space, such as sidewalks, squares, parks, forests, etc.
- Private space and vacant buildings (squatting)

1.2 PEOPLE LIVING IN PLACES NOT INTENDED FOR PERMANENT HUMAN HABITATION

- Living in cars or other vehicles
- Living in garages, attics, closets or buildings not designed for habitation
- People in makeshift shelters, shacks or tents

2) Emergency Sheltered

This refers to people who, because they cannot secure permanent housing, are accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user. Such accommodation represents a stop-gap institutional response to homelessness provided by government, non-profit, faith based organizations and/or volunteers.

2.1 EMERGENCY OVERNIGHT SHELTERS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS

These facilities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people who are homeless. Such short-term emergency shelters may target specific sub-populations, including women, families, youth or Aboriginal persons, for instance. These shelters typically have minimal eligibility criteria, offer shared sleeping facilities and amenities, and often expect clients to leave in the morning. They may or may not offer food, clothing or other services. Some emergency shelters allow people to stay on an ongoing basis while others are short term and are set up to respond to special circumstances, such as extreme weather.

2.2 SHELTERS FOR INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES IMPACTED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE

These shelters provide basic emergency and crisis services including safe accommodation, meals, information, and referral. They provide a high security environment for women (and sometimes men) and children fleeing family violence or other crisis situations. Residents are not required to leave during the day. These facilities offer private rooms for families and a range of supports to help residents rebuild their lives.

2.3 EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR PEOPLE FLEEING A NATURAL DISASTER OR DESTRUCTION OF ACCOMMODATION DUE TO FIRES, FLOODS, ETC.
3) Provisionally Accommodated
This describes situations in which people, who are technically homeless and without permanent shelter, access accommodation that offers no prospect of permanence. Those who are provisionally accommodated may be accessing temporary housing provided by government or the non-profit sector, or may have independently made arrangements for short-term accommodation.

3.1 INTERIM HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS
Interim housing is a systems-supported form of housing that is meant to bridge the gap between unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing. In some cases referred to as ‘transitional housing’, this form of accommodation typically provides services beyond basic needs, offers residents more privacy, and places greater emphasis on participation and social engagement. Interim housing targets those who would benefit from structure, support and skill-building prior to moving to long term housing stability, with the ultimate goal of preventing a return to homelessness. In the case of second-stage housing for those impacted by family violence, the key characteristics of this housing are the safety and security it provides, trauma recovery supports, along with the ultimate goal of preventing re-victimization. Interim housing has time limitations on residency, but generally allows for a longer stay (in some cases up to three years) compared to emergency shelters.

3.2 PEOPLE LIVING TEMPORARILY WITH OTHERS, BUT WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF CONTINUED RESIDENCY OR IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS FOR ACCESSING PERMANENT HOUSING
Often referred to as ‘couch surfers’ or the ‘hidden homeless’, this describes people who stay with friends, family, or even strangers. They are typically not paying rent, their duration of stay is unsustainable in the long term, and they do not have the means to secure their own permanent housing in the future. They differ from those who are staying with friends or family out of choice in anticipation of prearranged accommodation, whether in their current hometown or an altogether new community. This living situation is understood by both parties to be temporary, and the assumption is that it will not become permanent.

3.3 PEOPLE ACCESSING SHORT TERM, TEMPORARY RENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS WITHOUT SECURITY OF TENURE
In some cases people who are homeless make temporary rental arrangements, such as staying in motels, hostels, rooming houses, etc. Although occupants pay rent, the accommodation does not offer the possibility of permanency. People living in these situations are often considered to be part of the ‘hidden homeless’ population.

3.4 PEOPLE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE WHO LACK PERMANENT HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS
Individuals are considered to be provisionally accommodated and ‘at risk’ of homelessness if there are no arrangements in place to ensure they move into safe, permanent housing upon release from institutional care. This includes individuals who:
   a) were homeless prior to admittance (where their stay may be short-term or long-term) and who have no plan for permanent accommodation after release; or
   b) had housing prior to admittance, but lost their housing while in institutional care; or
   c) had housing prior to admittance, but cannot go back due to changes in their needs.

In either case, without adequate discharge planning and support, which includes arrangements for safe and reliable housing (and necessary aftercare or community-based services), there is a likelihood that these individuals may transition into homelessness following their release. Institutional care includes:
   • Penal institutions
   • Medical/mental health institutions
   • Residential treatment programs or withdrawal management centers
   • Children’s institutions/group homes

3.5 ACCOMMODATION/RECEPTION CENTERS FOR RECENTLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
Prior to securing their own housing, recently arrived immigrants and refugees may be temporarily housed while receiving settlement support and orientation to life in Canada. They are considered to be homeless if they have no means or prospects of securing permanent housing.
4) At Risk of Homelessness

Although not technically homeless, this includes individuals or families whose current housing situations are dangerously lacking security or stability, and so are considered to be at risk of homelessness. They are living in housing that is intended for permanent human habitation, and could potentially be permanent (as opposed to those who are provisionally accommodated). However, as a result of external hardship, poverty, personal crisis, discrimination, a lack of other available and affordable housing, insecurity of tenure and / or the inappropriateness of their current housing (which may be overcrowded or does not meet public health and safety standards) residents may be “at risk” of homelessness.

An important distinction to make is between those who are at “imminent risk” of becoming homeless and those who are “precariously housed”.

No matter the level of probability, all who can be categorized as being “at risk” of homelessness possess a shared vulnerability; for them, a single event, unexpected expense, crisis, or trigger is all it may take for them to lose their housing. As the risk factors mount and compound, so too does the possibility of becoming homeless.

4.1 PEOPLE AT IMMINENT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Many factors can contribute to individuals and families being at imminent risk of homelessness. Though in some cases individual factors (such as those listed below) may be most significant, in most cases it is the interaction of structural and individual risk that, in the context of a crisis, influence pathways into homelessness. In other words, what separates those who are at risk of homelessness due to precarious housing from those who are at imminent risk, is the onset of a crisis, a turn in events, or the increase in acuity of one or more underlying risk factors. Factors that may contribute (as singular or co-occurring factors) include:

- **Precarious employment.** Many people have unstable employment and live pay cheque to pay cheque. Precarious employment describes non-standard employment that does not meet basic needs, is poorly paid, part time (when full time work is desired), temporary, and/or insecure and unprotected. An unanticipated expense, increases in cost of living or a change in employment status may undermine their ability to maintain housing.

- **Sudden unemployment** with few prospects and little to no financial savings or assets, or social supports to turn to for assistance.

- **Supported housing with supports that are about to be discontinued.** Some Housing First models provide supports, but on a time-limited basis. If such resources (aftercare, services) are withdrawn but are still needed, individuals and families may be at imminent risk of re-entering homelessness.

- **Households facing eviction,** lacking the resources needed to afford other housing including social supports, or living in areas with low availability of affordable housing.

- **Severe and persistent mental illness, active addictions, substance use and/or behavioural issues.**

- **Division of Household** – caused by situations (such as separation, divorce, conflicts between caregivers and children, or roommates moving out) where the affected do not have the resources to keep the existing housing or secure other stable housing.

- **Violence / abuse (or direct fear of) in current housing situations,** including:
  - People facing family/gender violence and abuse
  - Children and youth experiencing neglect, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
  - Seniors facing abuse
  - People facing abuse or discrimination caused by racism or homophobia or misogyny

- **Institutional care that is inadequate or unsuited** to the needs of the individual or family.
INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE PRECARIOUSLY HOUSED

Many individuals and families experience severe housing affordability problems, due to their income, the local economy and/or the lack of availability of affordable housing that meets their needs in the local market. The income of these households is not sufficient to cover the household’s basic shelter and non-shelter costs. This includes people who are on government benefits but who do not have sufficient funds to pay for basic needs.

The greater the shortfall of income in covering basic costs, the more at risk of homelessness the household is. Those classified as “precariously housed” face challenges that may or may not leave them homeless in the immediate or near future (in the absence of an intervention). Those who manage to retain their housing in such circumstances often do so at the expense of meeting their nutritional needs, heating their homes, providing proper child care and other expenses that contribute to health and well-being.

Precarious and inadequate housing not only relate to household income and the physical structure of the dwelling, but also to lack of access to necessary supports and opportunities, including employment, health care services, clean water and sanitation, schools, child care centres and other social supports and facilities. Housing that is not culturally appropriate in the way it is constructed, the building materials used, and the policies that support it is also considered inadequate.

CMHC defines a household as being in core housing need if its housing: “falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards).” (CMHC, 2012)

- **Adequate** housing is reported by residents as not requiring any major repairs. Housing that is inadequate may have excessive mold, inadequate heating or water supply, significant damage, etc.

- **Affordable** dwelling costs less than 30% of total before-tax household income. Those in extreme core housing need pay 50% or more of their income on housing. It should be noted that the lower the household income, the more onerous this expense becomes.

- **Suitable** housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the resident household, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

HOW TO CITE THE CANADIAN DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS:


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The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness is a non-profit, non-partisan research institute that is committed to conducting and mobilizing research so as to contribute to solutions to homelessness. We work together as a group of researchers, service providers, policy and decision makers, people with lived experience of homelessness as well as graduate and undergraduate students from across Canada with a passion for social justice issues and a desire to solve homelessness in our communities. Learn more about the COH.
Appendix B

Initiation Workshop with Core Collaborators
One-on-one Interviews with Key Stakeholders and First Voices
Lived Experience BBQ
Youth Pizza Party
Homelessness Serving Systems Workshop with All Stakeholders
Public Online Survey
Strategy Development Workshop with Core Collaborators
Workshop to Refine the Strategy
Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness
Core Collaborators: Workshop #1
July 19th, 2018

What We Heard & Meeting Summary

Introduction and Background
The day started with a beautiful welcome prayer from Elder Ella Arcand. Introductions from Core Collaborators, FCSS staff, and Urban Matters CCC staff took place. The background behind the project, the project overview and current FCSS initiatives were discussed.

Some of the key background information that was shared is as follows:

- Spruce Grove continues to experience rapid growth and changing social trends (> 30% population increase from 2011-2016)
- Existing and emergent social issues are becoming more complex
- There is an identified homeless population that is increasing
- Clients who are successfully housed in our community remain in core housing need (i.e. > 30% of gross income goes to rent/utilities)
- Effective solutions are beyond the scope of a single program or service and it has been identified that a collective approach is needed
- There is a desire within the community to be part of the solution

Some of the existing FCSS initiatives that were mentioned include:

- Program focusing on prevention at the earliest opportunity at all life stages
- Integrated Supports Coordinators (x3)
- Established relationships with partnering service providers and property managers
- In-kind support for centralized accessible services
- Social Sustainability Plan
- Five Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness

It was presented that the 5-Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness will:

- Identify root causes of poverty and homelessness;
- Define key terms (e.g. homelessness) in the context of Spruce Grove;
- Map assets and opportunities;
- Identify innovating, leading edge practices in addressing the root causes of poverty and homelessness;
- Outline specific actions to address these causes;
- Determine appropriate measures of success; and
- Identify a sustainable road map to implementation
Identification of Key Social and Housing Trends in Spruce Grove

The first workshop exercise that the Core Collaborators took part in required participants to take five minutes to think about any social and housing trends that they are observing in Spruce Grove, and write their responses on sticky notes. The group was then taken through a 'Card Storming' exercise where they took turns posting their sticky notes on a wall in the room, aligning their responses in groups based on others' related answers. The responses were then discussed as a group and given names based on themes. A summary of the responses is listed underneath each theme, with verbatim answers written below with bullet points. Where language was changed to provide context to a response, the change is denoted with square brackets ( [ ]).

1. **Youth (‘too big, too small’)**

   There were many participants that felt that there is a clear trend that youth in Spruce Grove are increasingly struggling with issues around addiction and homelessness, as well as unsafe or unhealthy living conditions.

   - Youth from Edmonton with inconsistent housing seeking out Spruce Grove housing as a safe space
   - Youth: drugs and homelessness
   - 33% of our youth are not graduating high school (regional statistic)
   - No youth hostel
   - Homeless youth are there but invisible
   - Youth [are] living in unhealthy environments because it is all they can find or because it is the cheapest solution
   - 'Too big, too small': Spruce Grove is at a size where it's too big that youth cannot find adequate or appropriate housing, but is still at a size that is too small to develop consistent and effective housing and addictions supports and treatment centres

2. **Education and Awareness (decreasing stigma)**

   Workshop participants identified that there is a general lack of understanding surrounding social and housing issues in Spruce Grove, and that clearer messaging and education is required.

   - Community is polarized on the issue
   - Altruistic vs. fear
   - Clients confused by unclear messages on where to go for help
   - Lack of understanding

3. **Addictions and Mental Health**

   Workshop participants agreed that addiction and mental health are complex, interrelated, multi-layered issues and that increased mental health support is required in Spruce Grove.

   - Addictions
   - Increase in substance misuse
   - Drugs - fentanyl/meth
   - Increase in addictions and mental health [issues]
   - Mental health challenges
   - Drug use/abuse - youth selling drugs to provide themselves with income
   - Family-related issues, kids being kicked out, often due to drug use
   - No mental health outreach - [need] more (MHA with no community supports)
   - Need for mental health and addiction support
   - [Poor] Mental health is crippling the success of individuals
   - Multi-layered psycho-social stressors
   - Mental health, addictions, education - [these] issues are conjoined
4. Resource Challenges

It was noted that there are resource and funding deficiencies in the areas of mental health, housing and addiction support and that these resources are spread thinner by an increase in usage.

• Funding deficiencies for housing - CORE housing only provides $323
• Increase in mental health [issues]/addictions - fewer resources
• Mental health resources and addiction resources are limited
• Increased usage of services (Eg: Food Bank)
• Small communities of homeless are beginning to populate park areas
• Increased interest from the community to respond to the issues of poverty and homelessness
• More clients coming from Edmonton - it's safer and there are more resources
• Clients coming on/off reserve
• Send homeless and those in poverty on to the city where more resources are available
• No 24 hour service for referrals or contact information
• Small town approach ("paradigm"); however, "Big City Issues" ("Trend-shift in social pressures")
• Lack of resources for single men (mostly for women and children)

5. Access

Workshop participants identified that lack of access (based on several reasons and determinants) creates barriers for those who need to access support services.

• Barriers to accessing detox/residential treatments - all centres located in Edmonton. This demographic is afraid of violence in city shelters
• Immigration supports
• Lack of transportation
• Lack of access to services if individual doesn't have their own form of transportation
• More conversations [required] about inclusion and accessibility

6. Social Isolation (Eg: Urban Design)

It was noted that population growth and increased isolation were causing negative social impacts, and that social connection and inclusion need to be considered more in future urban design.

• Urban Design with no CPTED approach (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)
• The population has grown over the past 8 years
• People feeling more isolated and alone
• Not enough neighbour relations for ethnic people
• In the media - drugs, violence, suicide
• Not a lot of outreach
• [Need] To address racism, jurisdiction issues off and on reserve

7. Income and Unemployment/Job Loss

Workshop participants expressed concern that there is an increase in the population of "working poor" and that a lack of jobs and income support is exacerbating this problem.

• Cost of living outpacing income for fixed income individuals (pension, AISH, etc.)
• Aging low income demographic with a fixed income
• Lack of job skills in individuals that have relied on physical labour jobs and those jobs are getting less common
• Increased working poor - people working full time but unable to make enough to live
• Increase in the "working poor"
• Lack of employment opportunities
• Job loss - now living above means
• Increased financial struggles
• Income support (Alberta Works) doesn't come close to covering living costs

8. Domestic Violence/Crime (break down further)
Participants highlighted the link between homelessness, abuse and crime.
• Criminal activities associated to homelessness are a manifestation of deep social issues
• Fleeing abuse - starting over
• D/V [Domestic Violence]
• Senior abuse

9. Lack of affordable Housing/Increased Cost of Housing
It was identified and agreed upon that there is a lack of available affordable housing options in Spruce Grove. It was also noted that there is an increase in unsheltered homelessness in Spruce Grove.
• New housing is being offered that is smaller in size to make it more affordable
• Lack of appropriate types of housing
• Lack of affordable housing (2 identical responses)
• No or little affordable housing options with population increase
• Lack of affordable rental accommodations
• Increase need/desire for affordable housing
• Affordable housing is not affordable
• Need forms of social housing
• Lower rent housing tends to be much lower quality
• Increase in core housing needs 30%
• Those who are able to house are precariously housed - still at risk
• Couch surfing
• No low income housing
• The planning department received many calls asking about seniors housing that may be built or planned
• Individuals being denied housing due to appearance and social status
• Increase in condo/apartment construction - not affordable
• Revolving door - unable to maintain housing
• Lack of places to shower/dean up etc.
• Rent is expensive in Spruce Grove
• Decrease in resources (eg: rent subsidies, financial assistance for emergencies)
• Housing is a core need and without it other needs are not met
• Increase in unsheltered homelessness (visible)
• Increase in unsheltered persons

How We Work Together: Key Concepts and Approach
As a group, the Core Collaborators discussed how they would work together to approach this project. Concepts such as Theory of Change and Collective Impact were introduced and reviewed, and the group was able to think about these concepts in the context of Spruce Grove.

Collective Impact was defined as: The commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem using a structured form of collaboration.
Then the five elements of collective impact were discussed.

5 Elements of Collective Impact:
1. Common Agenda
2. Shared Measurement
3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
4. Continuous Communication
5. Backbone Organization

What Does Success Look Like In Six Months?

For the second interactive workshop exercise, participants were divided into two groups and asked to discuss what success would entail throughout the next six months of strategy development process, with a particular focus on the success of the process itself rather than final deliverables. Answers from each group are listed below.

Group 1
- Core collaborator group needs to make a firm commitment to be fully involved the whole time
- Every stakeholder/collaborator needs to have an understanding of what each other/each agency does - precursor for a common vision
- Develop a really good community education plan - addressing stigma, misconceptions, diverging views, racism, etc.
- Include methodology with the plan so community understands why each part of plan exists - for validity, trust, credibility (goes back to team members roles)
- Those experiencing challenges with poverty and housing have confidence, less shame, feelings of support from community - will access services
- Strengthen communication among various service providers and service provider awareness so that we can serve our clients more effectively here in Spruce Grove (people want to stay here)
- Address inclusion, diversity, racism throughout the whole process and beyond (stigma-free services)
- Different agencies work together well: "every door is the right door"
- Transparency
- How do we share information with confidentiality/policy?
- Create a convenient and easy service pathway for clients to access services they need - smoothing the pathway, making the process seamless
- All community members are encouraged to be aware and understand the various services/resources that exist and how to connect to them (for when people come and ask for help) - City/FCSS/root of core collaborators take an active role in making this happen
- Developing a very clear/standard measurement tool that can track our progress, can streamline efforts with this in mind
- Recognize and respect the various different mandates of organizations involved - instead of seeing any gaps as challenges, seek them out as opportunities to connect and fill them together
- Theory of change 'plans' analogy - work together in alignment, all working on the 'plan' together, focus on our common goal to decrease homelessness and poverty
- Communicate the stats of poverty and homelessness to the community so that compassion and empathy are at the forefront (take out the fear and build understanding) - getting to know neighbours, more likely to help out, take action
- Put a face and a story to stats, humanize the numbers - 'make it personal'
- Ensure youth are aware of issues/services/programs
• Schools are connected, counsellors are aware of how to support
• Youth hang out at the Log Cabin and Skate park in Spruce Grove
• Personal connection, regular check ins, build relationships
• Build trust - can start with providing food, can find out about other resources that are needed (eg. housing)
• Maximize engagement of First Voices, especially youth First Voices - need to get creative with how we have those conversations, having conversations early in childhood - building trust

Group 2
• Integrated 360 approach - integrated committee of agencies to support, systems approach person centred (RPAC - successful example)
• Strategy is implementable
• Identified the priorities (key contributions)
• Collaborators have identified capacity (what can be contribute) - understand each other's roles, understand gaps
• Collaborative solutions
• Collaborative, sustainable solutions
• Every resident has access to safe, adequate, affordable housing
• Risk - how to keep focus Stony Plain too - re: Parkland County focus
• Working collaboratively with regional partners - identified opportunities to work collaboratively
• Strategy has a sense of priority to it
• Identified roles and responsibilities and TOR [Terms of Reference] (past pledge)
• Long-term lens (re: planning and development) - policy responses
• Keep the humanity in the strategy - this is about people, people first
• Long-term commitment - resources, people, accountability - critical to success
• Reinforcement - consistent commitment, consciousness raising, community desire
• Follow through
• Public education
• Success is a framework for addressing issues - understanding the systems
• Supports individual choice - user friendly
• Consensus - all walk away as one voice
• Regional - one voice
• Understanding roles of organizations - safe to express the paradigm of organization - might need to go for elsewhere - commitment dependent
• Focus on depoliticizing this conversation - identifying problems and solutions from a grassroots perspective - real stories of individuals
• Voice for people who can't/don't have a voice

Participation Opportunities and Constraints

For the third and final interactive exercise, workshop participants were asked to individually record their responses to following three questions around their/their organization's ability to be present, participate and contribute to this initiative:

1. What do you/your org need to get out of participation?
2. What can you/your org contribute (e.g. time, knowledge, resources, etc.)?
3. What participation constraints do you have (e.g. time, policy, etc.)?

The Core Collaborators were then divided into pairs to interview each other and record the others' responses to the three questions.

Some of the common overarching themes that often came up for each question are as follows:
1. What do you/your org need to get out of participation?

- Understand the resources and potential partnerships that exist within the community
- Understand what other agencies/service providers in the community offer
- Collaboration and a unified approach

2. What can you/your org contribute (e.g. time, knowledge, resources, etc.)?

- Front Line support
- Education
- Safety
- Advocacy
- Data/Statistics

*the answers to this question were less unified and were varied based on the organization's services

3. What participation constraints do you have (e.g. time, policy, etc.)?

- The time commitment required to participate in the initiative (how many meetings?)
- Limited resources (staff, time, funding)
- Tight timeline on the project

Below, each Core Collaborator's name, their organization they were representing, and their individual responses to the three questions above are recorded:

Adrienne - AHS (Addictions and Mental Health)
1. Being considered a valuable partner; clearer understanding of other organizations
2. Let people know of our resources - voluntary, therapist, employment, psychiatrist; harm reduction model; listening and learning about the difficulties in accessing our services - maybe change model
3. Concerned about how many meetings - ability to attend; capacity of organization to react

Sue - Alberta Works
1. Understanding of what other services/agencies offer
2. Provide understanding of the criteria, limitations; flexibility given by management to attend
3. Work within regulation - FOIP, time

Brenda Johnson - Spruce Grove Chamber of Commerce
1. Need to educate business community to be involved - appropriate outreach
2. Network through business community; advocacy work
3. Capacity is there, not sure constraints are there

Mark - City of Spruce Grove Planning and Development
1. Understand the issue - scope and scale
2. Community Planning - longer term; vision for housing - need to broaden our scope
3. Difficult to do direct action but over time develop policies to facilitate urban design

Lorne - City Protective Services
1. Better options and approach to deal with the situations/incidents (tools)
2. Frontline support, conduit for services and relationship building
3. As opposed to police, extremely constrained with the limitations in appointments (authorization)

Lori-Anne - Meridian Foundation
1. Create new partnerships with other organizations; want more presence in Spruce Grove; non-profit entity
2. More affordable housing and to broaden from 55+ (seniors) to younger demographic
3. Support of partnerships to operation

Charlene - Children's Services
1. Knowledge of resources within the community; letting people know what Children's Services can offer
2. Safety for children; advocates for families
3. Not 24 hrs - crisis lines exist and supported; legislated constraints by Children's Services

Shane - EMS
1. Understand how EMS can support the community
2. 24hr service for crisis (first responder), experience with homeless people; no profit; AHS
3. Only respond to medical emergencies, not homelessness

Dan - Homeless Link Alberta
1. New/deeper connections - collaborative connections
2. Front line - linking service (any age)
3. Number of volunteers and funding; time and resources

Marlene - Parkland Neighbourlink
1. Better understanding of available resources
2. Works ongoing with homeless and 80% at risk of being homeless
3. Time constraints; resources; funding

Brett - Engage (City Church)
1. Working together across agencies/groups to assist community - serving well, breaking down barriers
2. Millennial age group at the church willing to get involved and volunteer
3. Trying not to move too quickly for sustainability - limited mandate, scaling, financial resources; Reach too far without capacity will cripple an organization

Brenda - FCSS
1. Earn concept - unity approach, promoting collaboration
2. Resources, people, time - education and awareness; "gatekeeper" - centralized hub
3. Resources - staff capacity; social worker - time and capacity; financial resources; trying not to move to quickly; help out clients

Lynne- FCSS
1. Offer better services by collaborating; less people living in poverty; more/better partnerships; community is a decision maker
2. Education; information/stats/experience; the name of the City; marketing; program development; long history of partnerships
3. Limited resources; can connect people to money but can't give it; government rules to follow

Brenden/Megan - FCSS Youth Services
1. Feedback/outcome; youth voice/trust voice
2. Support; keep an eye out for; peer relationships; friends
3. Willingness for youth to participate; tied by what FCSS can do - capacity, mandate, municipal, provincial
Beverley-FCSS
1. Want to see unified approach to homelessness and poverty
2. Time; committed; perspective of case management
3. Tight timeline on the project - make it a priority ("make it a priority if were committed to project")

Elder Ella
1. Bring greater awareness about some of the myths that are present with the City and local communities; education
2. Time; wealth of experience and knowledge about your culture
3. Want to ensure that the group collectively understands the unique needs of indigenous residents; her grandchildren

Sheri - Food Bank
1. Working with all the organizations to end poverty; increased or new partnerships; see fewer clients
2. Information/statistics/technology/data base; commitment to core collaborator
3. Financial resources - no budget

Defining Homelessness
The group had an introduction to the accepted Canadian definition of homelessness, based on what has been created by the Canadian Observatory of Homelessness and the Canadian Homelessness Research Network:

Canadian Definition of Homelessness

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing.

As homelessness is not a single event or state of being, it was important for the group to recognize that at different points in time, people may find themselves experiencing different types of homelessness.

The four different categories of homelessness that the group were introduced to were:
1. Unsheltered
2. Emergency Sheltered
3. Provisionally Accommodated
4. At Risk of Homelessness

Participants were encouraged to think about this definition of homelessness and these four categories in the context of Spruce Grove.

Next Steps
Next engagement is First Voice Engagement on August 1st

- Grove Motor Inn: Block Party Event
- Lion's Log Cabin: Youth Pizza Party
Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness
Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Background
As part of the community engagement process, eight key stakeholders in the community were interviewed to gain their perspectives on the current challenges Spruce Grove is experiencing with respect to poverty and homelessness. The questions were also meant to engage the stakeholders to start thinking about how their organizations can be involved in finding solutions. The eight stakeholders were asked the same ten questions (see Appendix at the end of this document). The stakeholders’ responses are summarized below, with key themes highlighted.

Key Themes
Trend of Poverty and Homelessness in Spruce Grove
When asked about the trend of poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove, most interview respondents felt that poverty in Spruce Grove is generally increasing, especially in the youth population. It was also strongly and frequently voiced that one of the biggest challenges in Spruce Grove right now is the lack of access to affordable housing.

One other main point that came up was stakeholders’ view that the trend of poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove is in line with the booms and busts of the oil industry locally. When people lose jobs, they tend to use support services more (e.g. computers and internet in the library, perhaps because they couldn’t afford to keep theirs at home). Several respondents also believe there is residual/trickle down of people struggling with poverty and/or homelessness that are coming to Spruce Grove from Edmonton.

“We’re seeing poverty of spirit, a lack of morale and lack of investment”

How is Poverty impacting Community Organizations?
When asked about the biggest impacts to the various community organizations and service providers in Spruce Grove, interview respondents claimed that the main issues were:

- Lower literacy seen in their clients
- An increase in social issues including high-risk behavior and lifestyles, and in increase in people using alcohol and drugs. This is seen in community members frequenting their organizations and facilities
- An increase in social workers’ work loads
- Long wait lists to access mental health and crisis supports in various organizations
Where Does the Poverty/Homelessness Exist?
When asked where in the city of Spruce Grove poverty and homelessness exist, several stakeholders commented that poverty is seen:

- At the Grove Motor Inn
- In Rotary Park
- As ‘tent cities’ in the trails, parks and wooded areas
- In the library, as this is the place people can go for resources that is open later in the evening.

One respondent claimed, “You can see it everywhere if you look for it”, while another respondent pointed out that there is lots of hidden homelessness and poverty, so it is sometimes difficult to see.

Who is Being Affected by this Poverty & Homelessness?
Stakeholders that were interviewed came up with a list of common characteristics that they are often seeing in those that are struggling with poverty and homelessness in their work:

- Often male
- Often Caucasian
- Under 60/middle aged
- A mix between seniors and troubled youth (using Augie’s Café)
- Majority have signs of mental health and addiction challenges
- Many cannot get a job or rent an apartment

Several stakeholders also mentioned Paul Band and Alexander Band as two First Nation communities that commonly access services available in the community related to poverty reduction.

Two stakeholders also mentioned that the same families tend to access community services (e.g. the library had the same family that would come in and use services every day and staff were told they mainly live out of their van).

Lastly, a few stakeholders mentioned that there seems to be a trend in the last few years of people getting laid off from their jobs at a big energy project, which can lead to prolonged poverty and/or homelessness.

Where does Spruce Grove hold the most assets, strengths & opportunities?
When asked about where they see Spruce Grove holding the greatest assets, strengths and opportunities, respondents’ answers generally fit into several categories in the following ways:

Organizations: The Foodbank, FCSS, Homeless Link Alberta, Auggie’s Café, Neighbourlink

Health & Safety: Great primary care doctors and the RCMP are assets

Infrastructure & Amenities: Great parks, libraries, schools, and recreation amenities (although recreation is still expensive)
Overall Community Approach: Positive attitudes, safe spaces, the hospitality of the communities, tri-regional approach, collaborative wrap-around care, communication among agencies, the communities’ keenness to get involved and help.

Key Programming: The new Youth Mental Health Hub: grassroots, not dictated by Alberta Health Services, and the doctors and a non-profit specializing in youth mental health are working together. Doctors are getting additional training to specialize in youth mental health, and there is funding to hire a ‘Community Connector’ to help with the work.

Potential for the future: Joint efforts and partnerships, especially between City, developers and builders. Developers have land and relationships with builders, but there is a need to figure out how to reduce costs so that affordable housing can be a reality.

Where are we seeing collaborations? What is working well and what needs to be improved upon?

When asked about great collaborations in the community of Spruce Grove, the following relationships and partnerships were identified:

- FCSSes with one another (Spruce Grove FCSS and Stony Plain FCSS) and FCSSes with other organizations
- Alberta Parenting for the Future, the Primary Care Network, and the School District
- Alberta ParentLink with various organizations (e.g. the School District)
- The Chamber of Commerce with various organizations (e.g. with Auggie’s Cafe)
- RCMP with the Library: RCMP continues to do walkthroughs in the library to keep everyone feeling comfortable and safe

Some of projects and initiatives coming out of the above collaborations are identified as follows:

- The Drug Strategy and Mental Health Youth Hub pilot project (ages 11-24, Fridays for three hours)
- The Blessing Project
- ‘Protection of Exploited Children’
- Town of Stony Plain’s Social Innovation and Systems Thinking certification

One stakeholder pointed out that perhaps the City, the County and the Province should partner on training in this space to save money since funding and resources are limited. Another claimed that there are so many great things going on, but things have to be done differently:

“Many of these organizations have the same clients; it would be great to be stronger together, to share resources and knowledge. There can also be better communication within the community since everyone is eager to jump on board and help, and they shouldn’t be competing if something is already happening”
What are the gaps and the greatest challenges/lack of resources when it comes to supporting people?

Many of the stakeholders acknowledged that the greatest gap or challenge was a lack of a full spectrum of housing in Spruce Grove.

“We are just seeing market housing, therefore we need a shelter, we need supportive housing, and we need below market housing. Especially for a city with a long, cold winter- we need a shelter! Rents are also too high”.

Other gaps, challenges and areas lacking resources were identified as follows:

- There is a lack of a good transportation system; respondents claimed that some developments are on outskirts of town, and some low-income people can’t access foodbank because too far away. When it’s winter, respondents were concerned with how people who cannot afford to have a car will get around to the foodbank, to a job, and to get out of social isolation.
- There is a lack of good mental health and addiction supports:

“Would be nice to have a place for these people to go as they’re transitioning in their lives”

- The tri-region has a strong regional identity, but the municipal governments have different ways of approaching community in the tri-region. The need to talk to each other more and work collaboratively.

“People draw lines, but poverty doesn’t see these lines”

- RCMP are burning out and/or there is a sense of apathy
- The community still needs to work on breaking down stigma around mental health, homelessness and poverty
- Sometimes health and social professionals are looking at social and health challenges and issues too much in isolation; we need to treat the whole cycle and the underlying issues (ie. Look at mental Health, addiction, poverty and homelessness all together and how they interact with each other and affect one another).
- Primary Care Network has different policies and procedures than Alberta Health Services
- There are no supports for women fleeing violence
- There is a sense of Nimbyism (Not In My Backyard); if Spruce Grove were to have affordable housing, how would we screen people to ensure they’ll be able to pay?
- Our communities aren’t resource deficient, there is just a lack of efficient use of resources. There is too much bureaucracy and too much mis-management. Community members should be given more input on how the resources are used
- Other agencies (other than the library) are not open late enough in evenings and on weekends
How can you see your organization having the biggest impact in IMPLEMENTATION of solutions?

When asked how they think they and/or their organization can help with implementation of solutions for these challenges, the following answers were given:

- Helping to reframe the question and conversation (e.g. instead of Poverty Conversations change it to Conversations around how to raise a child in the best place)
- Helping get a pulse of what people actually think and use for a branding strategy, to get buy in.
- We can have the big impact in the upstream, but also need to deal with the downstream issues right. Therefore, it’s important to strike a perfect balance between Prevention and Reaction.
- Ideally, we would be the ones referring people to other organizations
- We’d like to help re-shape a narrative, there are lots of churches in the area with resources and assets, need someone to take the lead- perhaps an ‘interfaith committee’?
- We need one central voice and place

“I have the ability to stay connected and engaged with people and follow up with people. I have the ability to ‘hate the drug and love the addict’. I have the ability to ‘hate the mental illness and love the person behind it’ “.

Would you like to remain involved in this process?

When asked if they would like to remain involved in the process of developing this strategy, most stakeholders were very keen to continue to be involved and have input throughout the development and implementation of the strategy.

One stakeholder (the parent of a youth with lived experience) gave a few suggestions of her peers that would be keen to be involved in this work. Another stakeholder was slightly hesitant, as he was unsure if his input or insight was relevant or helpful at this time. He indicated he was happy to continue being involved if it was helpful to the process.

Appendix

10 Interview Questions

1. Can you please briefly describe the services your organization offers/the role of your organization in the community?

2. From your perspective/your organization’s perspective, what has been the trend around poverty/homelessness in Spruce Grove in the last 2-5 years?

3. Can you please briefly describe how poverty/homelessness in Spruce Grove has affected you /your organization during this time?

4. From your perspective, are there specific places or geographic areas in Spruce Grove that you see are struggling the most with poverty/homelessness challenges?

5. From your perspective, are there specific demographics (age/race/gender, etc.) in Spruce Grove that are feeling the greatest effects of poverty/homelessness?
6. In terms of assets where do you think the community has the most resources and strengths in supporting people who are dealing with poverty-related challenges/homelessness?

7. Are you currently collaborating with other organizations in Spruce Grove towards alleviating poverty and homelessness? Which ones? What is working well and what needs to be improved?

8. In terms of gaps, where do you think the community has the greatest challenges/lack of resources when it comes to supporting people who are dealing with poverty-related challenges/homelessness?

9. How can you see yourself/your organization having the greatest impact in the implementation of solutions around this plan?

10. Would you like to remain involved in the process of developing this strategy?
Introduction and Background

On Thursday, August 1st, facilitators from Urban Matters, FCSS, and NeighbourLink met with residents of the Grove Motor Inn and other adults in the Spruce Grove community who have experienced poverty and/or homelessness in the banquet room at the Grove Motor Inn for lunch and discussion. There were nine participants in total (one of the ‘Respondents’ in the interviews was a couple who wanted to answer the questions together). The intent was to listen to the participants’ perspectives and stories about the current assets and gaps with respect to housing and community services, and to speak with them about potential solutions to establish safe and accessible housing and supports in Spruce Grove.

Interviews

The Lunch n’ Listen began with facilitators asking participants several questions in an anonymous, informal interview. The interview questions are listed below with the responses from each participant recorded under each question.

1. Would you say you’ve experienced poverty and/or homelessness? Has anyone else you know have?

   Respondent 1
   - Yes – both
   - Living on pension – housing too expensive
   - Break down after marriage 30 years ago – traditional meds I would have been addicted or dead

   Respondent 2
   - People camp in bush and beg
   - Poverty for years
   - Make arrangements to eat (have to eat out) = increased cost
   - Living in a motel is close to homelessness = no pool or exercise room and no place for dogs
   - Just a roof over our head = no stove/fridge
   - Can’t cook – it all costs money
   - Rent keeps increasing, but they don’t have to give us notice because it’s a motel – now we have to re-budget
   - Rent went up $100 but our income is still the same
   - 99% at hotel are on assistance
   - Do dishes and laundry in bathroom sink
   - Can’t have milk because no fridge
• Food bank is close, but can’t store food
• We share things (e.g. ride to food bank and they give us a soup)
• Always have newcomers coming and they party and knock on the door = doesn’t feel safe
• Ed the owner understands where we are coming from and the sons increased the rent, but calmer

**Respondent 3**
- Yes and yes
- Living in friend’s car – can’t sleep in car every night
- Have friends struggling in Edmonton

**Respondent 4**
- Challenges paying the bills – consolidate
- Rental is inadequate rental – party house ($500/room – 5 rooms in total)
- Knee issues/arthritis – challenges for getting another job
- Accessing employment (secure)
- Dumpster diving
- City needs more low-cost housing

**Respondent 5**
- Yep – went through 4-5 years of homelessness
- I know everyone in Spruce Grove – people lay in bushes and peace officers move them along [unsure of wording]

**Respondent 6**
- Living on a fixed income makes it tough
- Paycheck to paycheck makes it really hard
- They are people around me, often hanging around that are homeless
- At McDonald’s – some people I know homeless live with addictions

**Respondent 7**
- Has pension (gov and private) so has monthly income. Ended up in a situation that lost everything and is facing high debt. Has enough income to stay housed

**Respondent 8**
- Too many chiefs not enough work – don’t know where to turn
- One thing happens and your life collapses
2. When would you no longer consider someone poor/at risk of homelessness?

**Respondent 1**
- Isolating myself
- Ongoing battle – does not go away

**Respondent 2**
- As long as you can pay bills and feed yourself but you may not be able to entertain yourself – poverty line
- Need proper food = protein
- People pass on their items when they move out (e.g. slow cooker) after they move out of the hotel
- As seniors you can’t find employment

**Respondent 3**
- Really hard to get out of it
- When their appearance looks alright, have had a shower – taking care of themselves

**Respondent 4**
- Getting $15/hour
- $1000/month rent – making $12 – $13
- $850/room – no fridge/stove, water/heat, cable

**Respondent 5**
- When you have food at the table and a place to live
- Nutritious food (one good meal a day)
- A place that is clean; has a bed, bathroom and kitchenette

**Respondent 6**
- Maybe earning $2000 monthly
- Rent max $1000 at most
- When a person can afford to meet their basic needs
- What’s needed varies from person to person

**Respondent 7**
- Food bank and shelter are provided
- Bank account – income meets basic needs

**Respondent 8**
- Pets are all people have – no housing with pets, pets get sick, people go without
- Senior not getting benefits based on taxes
3. Would you say that, in general, over the past three years poverty/homelessness in Spruce Grove has:
   a) Improved greatly
   b) Improved somewhat
   c) Worsened
   d) Worsened significantly
   e) Don’t know

Respondent 1 – a) Improved Greatly
Respondent 2 – e) Don’t Know
   • It depends on individual – if they do something about it and know services; don’t feel like living a normal life; winter time is worse; it’s hard for people who don’t have a vehicle; everything costs money; they can make it if they are survivors

Respondent 3 – N/A
   • Hasn’t changed much – have been here 4 years, see the same faces
   • Bike trails, tents
   • People sleeping under equipment

Respondent 4 – d) Worsened Significantly
   • Clientele that are here – people don’t have disposable income
   • Booms and bust of the oil
   • Older clientele coming in – seniors – worried about pension/benefit (Alberta Health Benefit)

Respondent 5 – d) Worsened Significantly
   • You see more people on bikes, backpacks, dumpster diving
   • Lots of thieves and stuff stolen

Respondent 6 – c) Worsened

Respondent 7 – N/A
   • Has greater awareness once situation changed

Respondent 8
   • No response recorded
4. What would help to reduce poverty and/or homelessness for you and/or the Spruce Grove community?

Respondent 1
- Drug addicts, alcoholics – past the point of no return

Respondent 2
- I make tuques and blankets for people
- Laundry facilities
- Help to get off drugs if they are willing
- Need a fridge to get food
  Need transportation (cabs are expensive)
- Have to know how to budget
- Don’t raise the rents
- Have a home with a bathtub, kitchen and sink
- Trap of cheque cashing places and loans (Moneymart, etc.)
- Knowing each other (peer support) people who watch and look out for each other
- Need safe spaces (can be scary moving into a motel)
- Finding ways to reduce the stress (knitting)
- Hard to answer because have safety zone
- You have to learn to be a survivor or people will walk over you and abuse you

Respondent 3
- Homeless shelter – halfway house – need people off the street
- People have to work hard on it for themselves
- Homelessness needs meetings like AA – support, learning from each other

Respondent 4
- Affordable housing
- Medical costs e.g. puffers, etc.
- Alberta Health Benefit (low income)

Respondent 5
- Everyone is in a different boat. For me it’s hell because I have a hurt hip so it’s hard to walk everywhere
- Homelessness shelter = a place to go when you are low – don’t have to live there but if you are broke it’s a place to be/place for shelter from the elements

Respondent 6
- More affordable rent, that’s nice
- An affordable place that’s central 10-15 min walking
- Distance is important because of my health
Respondent 7
• More awareness
• Make issues about people not statistics

Respondent 8
• Worked whole life then divorce left destitute
• Worked whole life until heart attack

5. If there was one thing you would prioritize to end poverty and/or homelessness, what would it be?

Respondent 1
• Do not throw money at it – it will not work

Respondent 2
• Need proper housing with a sink and amenities
• More hostels (emergency housing) – I think they have a hostel in the winter – time to help people get out of the cold
• You learned how to help out and chip in together to make meals – helped give you a step up
• Temporary housing, but you are living in a better space

Respondent 3
• Cost of living/housing – subsidize housing for low income

Respondent 4
• Cost of housing
• Cost of hydro, heating
• Cost of good food – subsidized fruit and veg

Respondent 5
• Access to employment. There are foreigners who are taking the jobs

Respondent 6
• Pension is too low
• I’m on both AISH and CPP – both agencies need to look at these amounts and cost of living
• Both governments should look at these amounts
• $1588 was implemented over 6 years ago. Not worth or matching cost of living today

Respondent 7
• Jobs (financial security)

Respondent 8
• No response recorded
6. Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding poverty/homelessness in Spruce Grove?

**Respondent 1**
- Children inherit money – still tragic end (Paris Hilton example)
- Satanism is rampant locally. All done in secret. Prayer is the main source of defense against it

**Respondent 2**
- It’s hard losing housing and being scared and lost

**Respondent 3**
- Need somewhere where someone can clean up, shower, access resources (e.g. pass for the rec centre)

**Respondent 4**
- No comments recorded

**Respondent 5**
- No comments recorded

**Respondent 6**
- The transportation in Spruce Grove sucks
- We need public transportation
- Can’t find basic transportation connecting to Spruce Grove and Stony Plain
- If motels had kitchen access/lots of affordable places had proper kitchen
- Access internet – not affordable. Because of hearing
- Spruce Grove is not that safe/safety
- Without emails/instant messenger

**Respondent 7**
- No response recorded

**Respondent 8**
- No response recorded

7. Are you open to commenting on some of our flipchart sheets around the room regarding contributing factors to poverty/homelessness in Spruce Grove? Are you willing to stay around for our important discussion about these factors?

No responses specific to this question were recorded.

**Barriers to Getting Out of Homelessness and Poverty**

During the Lunch n’ Listen, participants were asked to take part in a “dotmocracy” exercise to identify which of the following barriers to getting out of homelessness and/or poverty were the most difficult to overcome:

- Accessing Employment
Participants were each given six sticky dots that they were able to distribute according to which barriers they felt were the most difficult to overcome. They were also allowed to allocate all the dots to one topic if they felt that one barrier was exceedingly difficult to overcome. The headings are ranked below in order of the number of dots that each barrier received, with participant comments expanding on the challenges they experience, and/or possible solutions listed below each heading.

1.) Accessing Housing (18 Dots)
- Housing that is affordable and safe
- Prefer to stay in smaller community because of safety issues (e.g. would rather sleep in bush in Spruce Grove than go to Edmonton)
- Homeless Anonymous – start a support group— “you’re not alone”
- Need pet-friendly housing
- Need seniors’ low-income housing
- Don’t know where to get help – knowledge to find help that’s there
- Red cross provides one-time help
- Army and Navy – helps with damage deposit
- [Need] supports within housing

2.) Accessing Transportation (11 Dots)
- Can’t drive – how do I get to walk and carry food back? Food bank? Shopping cart?
- Most people don’t have vehicles – is there public transit?
- Is there a drive program that can take people to the food bank?
- Bus services – 2x a day, $2 a day (ETS)=limited times of day
- Challenges to accessing routes (e.g. not having a phone to know the routes)
- No transportation to connect the Tri-Regions
- One hospital in Stoney (hard to access) – how do you get to hospital in Stoney from Spruce Grove?
- Need medical clearance to access transportation to hospital
- Not knowing what transportation options exist

3.) (tied) Accessing Healthcare (5 Dots)
- How does one get showers or clean up? (esp. for employment purposes)
- Where does someone even start? Where do you go? Who do you phone?
- If you need to go to the hospital, do you call ambulance? Who pays?
• What if people don’t have a healthcare number? How does one pay?
• Need internet/instant messaging to help with communication – for people with hearing loss
• (Other modes of communication to access it)
• Long waitlist to see specialist
• Shortage of doctors

3.) (tied) Accessing Employment (5 Dots)
• No added comments

5.) Accessing Income Assistance (4 Dots)
• To receive IA one needs an address, how does one bypass this with an NFA?

6.) Accessing Mental Health and Addictions Support (3 Dots)
• Meetings for homelessness (Homelessness Anonymous)
• More awareness around AA/NA meetings: didn’t know they were around Spruce Grove (have communication/posters)
• Access to psychologist/psychiatrist – waitlists are too long, not enough, sometimes not covered by medical
• Have to send people to Edmonton hospital for mental health services – no beds for immediate medical support for mental health
• Need grief counsellors

6.) (tied) Accessing Food (3 Dots)
• Everybody is on a certain budget – roof over head is most important
• No fridge and no stove in GMI units
• Need cooking utensils
• Need help getting to food bank

6.) (tied) Challenges within the Justice System (3 Dots)
• No added comments

9.) Accessing Recreation (2 Dots)
• Need access to a pool and exercise room

10.) (tied) Accessing Cultural and Inclusion Supports (1 Dot)
• No added comments

10.) (tied) Accessing Education (1 Dot)
• No added comments
What’s Missing?
Participants were asked to provide any substantial barriers in their lives or others’ lives to getting out of homelessness and/or poverty that were not listed within the eleven identified barriers at the start of the exercise. The two that were identified were:

Safety
- People don’t want to go to Edmonton because of safety issues – would rather be in the bush than go to Edmonton
- There is a youth Fight Club

Grief Counselling
- Grief can be the start that leads into addiction/homelessness, need supports to help prevent

Overarching Barriers
In addition to the 11 systemic barriers listed in the exercise, participants were asked to highlight any other overarching barriers that they felt fed into all of the eleven systemic barriers to getting out of homelessness and/or poverty in Spruce Grove. Participant responses are listed below:

- Don’t know who to talk to/where to go
- Can’t navigate on their own; need support and direction
- I feel like giving up, support is rare
- Peer support
- Best way to access services = internet – 50% don’t have access to internet – so need billboards, word of mouth

Parting Thoughts
Upon the conclusion of the event, participants generally voiced it was a very helpful experience for them to be able to voice their concerns and thoughts, while also knowing that other people are struggling in the same ways.

One participant shared,

“I needed this. It’s good to know I’m not alone. Those challenges written on those sheets, those are daily struggles for me.”

Another participant observed,

“Amazing things happen when you ask questions.”
**Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness**

**Let’s Talk Housing: Youth Pizza Party**

**Introductions and Background**

On the afternoon of Wednesday, August 1st, facilitators from Urban Matters with the support of FCSS staff, hosted a youth workshop at the Lion’s Log Cabin with Spruce Grove youth that frequent the Log Cabin regularly. The intent of the workshop was to educate the youth on youth homelessness and poverty, and create an awareness of the types of circumstances and occurrences that can contribute to a youth being homeless.

Eleven youth attended the session, along with Log Cabin staff and their FCSS supervisors. The session began with the youth participants introducing themselves, sharing why they frequent the Log Cabin, and their perceptions/experiences with homelessness and poverty. The youth were then given a brief summary of the project, an introduction to what ‘upstream thinking’ is and how it relates to youth homelessness, and were engaged in a ‘True or False’ game around youth homelessness facts.

**Upstream Causes of Youth Homelessness**

When introduced to ‘upstream thinking’, the youth were encouraged to brainstorm the causes of youth homelessness and what opposite conditions would support happily housed youth. Participant responses are recorded in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP 1</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upstream Causes of Youth Homelessness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death in a family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelling in the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids getting in trouble with authority = kicked out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic abuse = can’t go home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Make things more accessible in the community -
hubs
Informal jobs
Lower sales/prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divorce</th>
<th>Therapy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting kicked out</td>
<td>Make plans with other family to go with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and substance use</td>
<td>Support the addiction before addressing poverty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Not having access to education | - Seeking education  
- Government programs  
- Independent learning programs  
- Peer support |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not being taught to manage money</td>
<td>Courses/lessons around managing money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lack of transportation – hard to get to work | Bussing systems  
Food banks – have places all around Spruce Grove where people can access it |

Housing and Supports
Next, participants discussed several types of housing options (i.e. An Emergency Shelter, Foster Homes/Group Homes, Staying with Friends/Extended Family/Couch Surfing, Returning Home, and Market Housing) and what works and does not work for youth in each situation. Participant responses are recorded below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMERGENCY SHELTER</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>What Doesn’t Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Good services and food (nutritious home-cooked meals)</td>
<td>- If you donate lots of money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Hear from people who need this. What would they like to see in a shelter</td>
<td>- If people don’t feel safe there (because of other violent people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Go to the community</td>
<td>- Substance abuse within the facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- People/grocery stores donating food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Resources and staff to help get permanent housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Separate room for transgender people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gender separation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gift cards/meal cards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure 24/7 supervision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Schedules</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- More on street advertising – billboards, posters around town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Advertising – emergency centre commercial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Outreach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Card system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOSTER HOMES AND GROUP HOMES</td>
<td>What Works?</td>
<td>What Doesn’t Work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staying with family</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Foster parents not properly taking care of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supervised activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Impacts of foster care: lack of attention, mentoring environment (can see at a young age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Healthy recreation</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Too much freedom without supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not feeding kids properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support even as you age</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unclean homes – too many kids and pets, not cleaning properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>out of foster care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You can call foster home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if you see youth out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good support and love</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unplanned check-ins on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foster care parents to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ensure positive/healthy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good hygiene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community helping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Foster parents not</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>properly taking care of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impacts of foster care:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of attention, mentoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment (can see at a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young age)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Too much freedom without</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not feeding kids properly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unclean homes – too many</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kids and pets, not cleaning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>properly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAYING WITH FRIENDS/EXTENDED FAMILY (COUCH SURFING)</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>What Doesn’t Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Staying somewhere with basic essentials (e.g.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Staying in a house with bad habits (e.g. partying, drugs) or that isn’t healthy (no shower, no laundry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shower, laundry, breakfast)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• It’s not permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Person on couch helps with household chores</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Can get too comfortable with it – not encouraged to find permanent housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(teaching discipline, gratitude, teaching life</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Abandoned homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skills)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Couch may not be available long-term – unpredictable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staying with extended family; they know what you</td>
<td></td>
<td>• If bad spot, police can come and then you’re really out for the night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like and what you need</td>
<td></td>
<td>• If person who is couch surfing can’t be trusted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asking to help pay the bills</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Stigma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td>• It is hard to couch surf if you don’t have friends/people to turn to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETURNING HOME</th>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>What Doesn’t Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Asking them if they have a different parent/guardian</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Locking your kid in a box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Freedom</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maybe no one is at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independence</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unemployed parents, parent with substance abuse challenges (drinking/on drugs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trust (between parent and young person)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Unsuitable living conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Asking them if they have a different parent/guardian</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Abusive step parents (domestic violence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Freedom</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Going home to unchanged conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trust (between parent and young person)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### MARKET HOUSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Works?</th>
<th>What Doesn’t Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Affordable</td>
<td>• Becomes a party house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Setting up with a roommate – accountability to check in with them</td>
<td>• Damaging the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Older staff members in the building</td>
<td>• Paying rent/bills is hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maids/housekeeping staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• People to teach how to clean, take care of unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respect for the place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inspections (monthly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get educated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Program if you do community service, you get housed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Identifying Housing Supports

After a small break, participants worked with facilitators to identify necessary supports that youth need along a four-point continuum of housing conditions:

- When homeless
- To get into housing
- To keep housing
- To obtain a sense of purpose (once housed)

The participants were given time to come up with ideas about which supports are needed at each point on the continuum independently, wrote them down on sticky notes, and placed them next to the corresponding continuum point. Some of the ideas were applicable to more than one stage of housing, and were placed between stages accordingly. Participant responses are shown on the continuum graphic on the following page.
Supports that Youth Need

**WHILE HOMELESS**
- Money
- Food
- Coats
- Shelter
- Blankets and pillows
- Have youth education locally (log cabin) if they are homeless for prep
- Homeless shelters
- Access to a laundromat
- Ads for places to stay
- Available community help
- I think that homeless youth would want advertising so youth would know to go in a foster home
- Hampers (not just at Christmas or special events/times)
- Access to a social worker or counsellor inside of schools if youth is still in school
- Tri-leisure passes for access to healthy activities and showers/water

**TO GET INTO HOUSING**
- They need therapy and a good role model
- Find a person to guide them through housing, money etc.

**TO KEEP HOUSING**
- Friends and hobbies
- If youth is struggling to keep housing they may be able to apply for benefits from the government, especially if they are still in school
- Help to pay bills
- People that are there for support (leaders, role models)
- Weekly check ups from the people you’re renting from
- I think that youth in foster homes should double check that they are in a safe place
- Choosing to change your choices
- Availability and easier level of access
- Their own community involvement (giving back helps them)

**TO OBTAIN A SENSE OF PURPOSE**
- Do all the other things people did for you
- Help homeless people
- The continual support of friends and people you meet along the way
- People to help keep you on track
- Get a car and pay for gas
- Find something you love to do
- Repeat
- Advertise possible careers for life
- Give them info for shelters
- Obtain a hobby and job
- Community service to keep housing
- Selling things to people
- Give what you don’t use to other people
- By trying to pursue a job or career that interests them
Additional Activity - “If I Were Mayor of Spruce Grove”

Sparked by discussion during some of the other activities, participants engaged in a spin-off discussion regarding what they would do to reduce poverty and homelessness if they were Mayor of Spruce Grove. Their responses are recorded below:

If I were mayor of Spruce Grove...

- Develop a fancy transport system
- Offer temporary housing
- Lower sale prices
- Provide informal jobs
- Provide a service at the bank to help [people] figure out expenses
- Develop a Homeless bus – pick people up and take them to a home – provide support staff to bring them to a shelter
- Make things more accessible – community hub, access to transportation
- Create a space, give people a card to access essentials (e.g. food, water)
- Give all homeless people a card to buy things
- Provide a store for people experiencing poverty, can provide essentials and then provide jobs for these people in store
- Give out free food on the streets

Conclusion

Concluding all of the exercises, the youth, Log Cabin and FCSS staff, and Urban Matters facilitators sat in a closing circle to reflect on the day and what was learned. At the beginning of the session during the introductions, several youth had communicated sentiments that homeless people ‘do drugs and make poor choices’. Once they participated in the exercises, many of the youth seemed to understand that ‘life can be difficult’ and ‘homelessness can happen to anyone’.

Each youth was also asked to share a one-word reflection about their work together. Some of the words and phrases that emerged were:

- Hopeful
- Learning
- Peace
- Implementation; Make Change; Action
- Insight
- Excitement
- Amazing
- Get Out there and Help
- Education
- Nice to Know People Care
- Inspired
Youth participants were also told that they were welcome to attend and participate in the next Stakeholder Workshop. Four youth in particular showed interest and shared their contact details, which will be forwarded along to FCSS staff.
Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness

All Stakeholders Workshop #2
What We Heard & Meeting Summary

Introductions and Background
On the morning of Thursday, September 13th, an all-stakeholders workshop was held at the Holiday Inn Express in Spruce Grove. A total of forty-nine stakeholders attended the session including city staff, social service providers, faith-based organizations, health organizations, those with lived experience, business owners, and political leaders. The intent of the workshop was to provide the stakeholders with an update of the project progress, share some of the preliminary background community data that has been collected, gain some insight into existing service assets in Spruce Grove, and identify root causes and challenges around poverty and homelessness in the community.

The session began with a welcome prayer from Elder Ella Arcand, followed by table introductions. The group re-visited the project overview, timeline, and key messages, and went over the definition of homelessness. Next, the stakeholders were provided with background demographic data and socio-economic data trends such as income, housing profiles, and core housing need statistics. Lastly, the group was provided summaries from all engagement to date, including the lived experience luncheon at the Grove Motor Inn and the youth session at the Log Cabin. With all of the information provided in the presentation, table groups briefly discussed the data and feedback together.

Identifying Assets in Spruce Grove
For the next exercise, it was discussed that it is important to identify existing strengths and assets in the community that can be drawn upon and scaled up to tackle some existing health and social challenges. The stakeholders were given twelve categories written out on flip chart paper to group their input, and were encouraged to think of assets in terms of infrastructure, people, programs, and initiatives. Participants were also encouraged to detail why the particular community asset they identified works well.

The following sections represent the categories that were written on the flip chart poster paper, along with the input that participants wrote on sticky notes listed underneath. Similar/duplicate answers are grouped under a sub-category with a number indicating how many sticky notes there were for that topic.

Working Together: Collaboration Amongst Government Social Serving Sector and Business
It was evident that stakeholders felt that there are great existing collaborations occurring in the tri-region, as this flipchart category was filled with the greatest number of sticky notes.
Auggie’s Café – St. Augustine’s Parkland Anglican Church (X3)
- Auggie’s Kitchen
- Auggie’s
- Auggie’s Kitchen

Alberta Parenting for the Future Association (APFA) (X3)
- APFA (Alberta Parents for the Future Association)
- APFA – Parent link services
- APFA – Alberta Parenting for the Future Association

Patient Care Network (PCN) (X2)
- PCN social worker – FCSS with physician space
- PCN – Caroline

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) (X3)
- FCSS – Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Neighbour link partnership
- SP FCSS
- Collaboration between Spruce Grove FCSS and Stony Plain FCSS – community receives increased programming and increases services

Bredin Employment Centre Spruce Grove (X2)
- Bredin
- Bredin (employment)

Meridian Foundation (X2)
- Meridian
- Meridian Foundation

Neighbourlink Parkland (X2)
- Neighbour link
- Neighbour link

Homeless Link Alberta (X2)
- Homeless Link – front line service – assist with helping homeless access services and housing
- Partnerships with Homeless Link Alberta

Church-related services (X4)
- Pastors group
- Engage the church
- Local pastors and churches supporting neighbour link
- Churches Secular Services

Other Assets
- PSC – Mental health hub (Queen St right now) – working in memorial right now
- LGBTQ – distribution – skill building program
- Library – Stony Spruce – seniors, multi generations
- We realized our community has homelessness – why? We can reach solutions building a stronger community
- Inter-municipal collaboration in communities
- Tricala
• Coats for kids and families – Stoney dry cleaners, Grove fashion, Bridgeport
• Family Connection Centre – Hub, social purpose enterprise
• Collaboration between all service providing agencies – increase and timely supports
• PSD – Parkland School Division – committed to work with other agencies
• Community cares about the greater good
• Act Achieving Community Together – collective multi sectoral
• Parkland Pregnancy
• Parkland Pregnancy Support Centre, food bank, neighbour link, FCSS Spruce Grove and Stony Plain, other community’s agency partnerships
• Alberta Works – support for all AISH, ABSr – Income support
• Community that cares – Wilhaulk
• Business and elected officials working together – city and chamber collaboration and recognition of civic social challenges
• Brett’s Bus
• Chamber of commerce – Businesses like Wilhaulk, dry cleaners, Bridgeport, Grove
• Sunrise youth/family support
• Salvation Army
• Strong working relationships with service providers and landlords – key for integrated service for clients
• Critical connections
• RCMP who care
• A willingness to work collaboratively
• Local business supporting non-profits
• Connecting with our indigenous neighbours’ group

Accessing Support Services

FCSS (X5)
• Food bank FCSS
• FCSS
• FCSS
• FCSS – working to connect people with resources in the area
• City/FCSS communications dept is a significant asset

Other Assets
• Community compass – can put everything on this site
• Connections between those in need with citizens/community organizations on social media
• Parent Link
• Engage bus (food) and church (community support)
• Parkland Pregnancy Support Centre
• Homeless link – Alberta
• Community group organizations (everyone) public to reach out to and access for resources/support
• Income support
• Food bank
• Neighbour link
• Crisis response emergency medical services (CREMS) – mental health access
• AHS mental health and addiction
• Compassionate connections – support immediate
• EMS – community health and prehospital support (CHAPS)
• Our community knows who to go to ... we know what each other does
• Provides a ‘full’ need for individuals “we can build a complete plan”

Services and Supports for Youth

Log Cabin (X6)
• Log Cabin – SP youth centre
• Log cabin – reason: place to be – support
• The log cabin – provides a safe place for youth to hang out. Staff really care about the youth that come in
• Log Cabin Staff – front line approach
• Log Cabin
• Log Cabin

Stony Plain Youth Centre (x2)
• Stoney Plain Youth Centre – identifying gaps in service in youth resources – doing their best to fill in the gaps
• Stony Plain Youth Centre

Patient Care Network Youth Mental Health Hub (X2)
• Youth hub PCN
• Youth mental health hub – yeah!!!

Other Assets
• Library
• Parkland Village Youth Night – provides a safe place for Parkland Village youth and provides youth with something to do that is positive and fun
• Parkland Village School Micro Society – engages youth in real life economics
• Alberta Works – independent learners’ benefits – For youth who wish to be able to finish school so then they can have more opportunity in the future. This allows them to achieve success and can drastically improve life conditions in the meantime.
• PPSC – parkland Pregnancy Support Centre – Youth advocates partnerships
• Safe place for youth
• Safe place for youth/students to stay so they can continue education
• RCMP who care
• Parkland Pregnancy
• FCSS Youth

Education and Awareness

*Tri-Community Adult Learning & Literacy Association (Tricala) and Spruce Grove Public Library*

• Tricala – English as a second language
• Library, Tri-Cala, FCSSes
• Library

*Other Assets*

• Parkland and area response to family violence committee – focus on educating and raising awareness on the impact of domestic violence
• Columbus Academy
• Connections for learning (Stony Plain) family connection program
• Big Brothers and Sisters
• Outreach school programs (between Evergreen and Parkland schools)
• Drug Strategy council – making people aware of the opioid crisis - ongoing
• VTRA – Violent threat risk assessment
• FCSS
• Spiritual living – meditation for self-awareness – grass roots group – Spruce Gove
• B.I.L.Y – (Because I love you) – parenting support group

Establishing Community/Social Connections

*Achieving Community Together (ACT) (X3)*

• Act
• Achieving community together instrumental for community/social connections
• ACT – achieving community together

*Other Assets*

• Caring and engaging community – why: strength in numbers – reach solutions
• Neighbours meeting neighbours community supper storey
• PSD – Parkland School District
• Neighbour link
• Tricala community dialogues
• Auggies café
• Rural woman’s conference – seniors conference
• Library
• Public library

Access to Employment

*Bredin Employment Services*

• Bredin
• Bredin Institute
• Bredin
• Employers can post jobs at no cost – Bredin Worksource – local employment, resume and career planning focus at no charge

Other Assets
• Alberta Works – career and employment funds for workwear
• Worksource – resume review, employment counselling, job boards
• Tricala
• Norquest

Getting Around Spruce Grove and the Region

The stakeholders identified that Neighbourlink Parkland is the greatest community resource and asset for transportation around Spruce Grove and the region. They also identified a new bus service that is in development:

• Neighbourlink
• Neighbourlink provides rides when volunteers are available
• Neighbourlink volunteer drivers – medical of foodbank
• New buses getting funding from the city of Spruce Grove for local transportation. Will provide much needed local access
• Handy bus – affordable and convenient
• Neighbourlink – drive program
• Engage bus
• Specialized transport
• Specialized transit service – assist seniors and those in need.

Funding

When asked about funding, stakeholders gave several examples of community resources, but it was acknowledged by the group that most examples focused on funding for housing:

• Neighbourlink
• Winspear – grant for housing for individuals
• Salvation army
• Provide deposit for rental
• Direct rent subsidy – allows people to stay in their homes
• Private landlord rent subsidy – offers homes to families/households on low income
• City of Spruce Grove
• Neighbourlink filling the financial gap
• Income support – Alberta works
Housing Type and Diversity

In terms of housing type and diversity, the group identified housing which may be possible for the city, and related it back to safety, affordability and age-friendly development:

- 1) Affordable
- 2) seniors’ low income
- Crime free multi-housing – make people feel safe
  - Sign a contract re: criminal record check – agree to eviction if they are charged with a crime.
- Range of new housing types are possible in city – smaller homes, diversity, market driven

*Native Counselling Services of Alberta* as well as *Aboriginal Parent Link Centre* were identified as assets that refer Indigenous services and housing options to local populations in the community:

- Aboriginal parent link centre
- APLC (Aboriginal Parent Link Centre)
- Native counselling services
- Native counselling services
- Native counselling services of Alberta – court worker
- Connecting with indigenous neighbours’ group – events funding libraries – tri community started by rotary

Housing Affordability

A couple of options for rental subsidies were identified (*Meridian* was identified twice), but the list was more sparse than other categories:

- Meridian
- Capital Region Housing – rent subsidy
- We have some low-income housing – also crime free for seniors
- Meridian Foundation – subsidized housing

Housing First Approaches

Lastly, while none of the stakeholders wrote sticky notes related to Housing First Approaches, in the discussion that followed the exercise, the Spruce Grove FCSS Case Management team identified that their program works within a Housing First philosophy.

Identifying Root Causes and Opportunities

The stakeholders engaged in group discussion with their tables (ten tables with approximately 4-6 people per table) to brainstorm the types of root causes they believe contribute to homelessness.
• Hub for service, place that is well known – Library/chamber of commerce/social services
• harm reduction support in programming and housing
• high risk of homeless-vulnerable seniors – “difficult to engage”
• motivation and support to empower individuals to seek support
• geographical location – hub to include services in one building – accommodate resources across communities

Outcomes Used to Measure Progress
• reducing barriers to accessing services
• empower people and motivate to seek resources
• improve communication between resources
• improve outcomes in areas of housing and poverty

Lack of a Full Spectrum of Housing

Contributing Factors
• lack of affordable/no low-income housing
• no shelter for young families
• no support for perm support housing
• transitional housing lacking

Strategies and Actions
• research viability/incentives offered
• getting community to build homes for all
• NOT give up hope
• Increase strategies supply of housing and type (communal housing, supportive housing, low income housing, apartments, bachelor suites, suits within existing homes, duplexes, small houses, temporary shelters, transitional housing – pregnancy, single moms, mental health, elderly and youth)
• Subsidizing options/research

The Role of Education and Skills Training

• School curriculum could be enhanced – yes, maybe change life skills focus at schools
• Financial literacy
• Mentorship programs
• Made more tangible/real – update to curriculum
• Community resources – what is available locally? How is it assessed? (youth often help educate their parents in this)
• Taking student views into account – student driven learning
• Hubs of community resources
• Schools – so how is FCSS linked to schools and aware of the needs – youth centres do this? HEROS program and youth program
• Where is the knowledge housed and how is it shared?
• Early Pregnancy – Education/Daycare
• Greater supports to existing resources/people – Tri-Cala, Bredin, Norquest etc.
• Continued adult programming – FCSS, library, APFA
• Engaging community and reducing stigma – simulations “real life”
• Re-examining learning environments
• How to reach those in need – outreach mentoring
• Life skills

Behavioural and Life Challenges (Mental Health, Physical Health, Addiction, Domestic Violence)

**Contributing Factors**
- Mental health – chemical imbalance
- Environmentally caused
- Onset at any point
- Unhealthy relationships/heredity/generational
- Substance abuse

**Strategies and Actions**
- Immediate response/crisis intervention
- Overview of what exists – How to increase/support diversity what we currently have
- Increase sustainability
- Reducing stigma
- Culturally educated/sensitive
- Awareness and education of new resources and support
- Continuity/wrap around
- One-stop shop/one umbrella

**Top 3 Actions (5-year plan)** *mental health professionals in school*
1) Shelter/resource centre
2) Focus on youth resources – wrap around (collaboration)
3) Funding – community education – group homes/care

**Outcomes to Measure Progress**
- Surveying families/youth through schools
- Evaluating available resources
- Seeing increased accessibility and wrap around

**Regulatory Environment**

**Contributing Factors**
- High rental costs – low income subsidy support
- Multi-housing policies (can’t have rental suites)
- Reasons for eviction – behaviour, guest management, substance use
- Pet policies
- Unrealistic caps - $200 subsidy
• High mortgages – have to rent to cover cost

**Strategies and Actions**

- Prioritizing housing needs in new developments
- Regulations to support social housing
- Support/subsidies/incentives for landlords
- Streamline application processes
- Regulate rent ‘negative’ policies ex. no pets, crime, drugs, etc.
- City recognition program for business that meet certain criteria ex: environmental, social
- City provides incentives to landlords that offer low income options
- Incentives to new developers to construct extra units that rent geared to low income
- Multi-unit housing policies

**Community Awareness and Attitudes**

**Contributing Factors**

- What we don’t know is scary – fosters
- LGBTQ issues
- Judgement
- Denial of issues
- Send the “problems” to Edmonton (NIMBY)
- Intolerance – “just go get a job”
- “it’s not my problem”
- NIMBYISM

**Strategies and Actions**

1) Raising awareness of the “realities” around someone’s situation
2) Telling/listening to the ‘stories’ of an individual
   - Get rid of Ageism/Awareness – LGBTQ etc “ism”
   - Advocates – Everyone – not just agencies
3) Access to education – free/accessible

**Outcomes to Measure Progress**

- Feedback – ask for awareness and if its increased
- See/advertise statistics on reduction of issues
- Cost of keeping someone homeless is higher than housing costs
- See an increase in supports/accessibility
- Community education ex: define homeless/cause

**Home Environment and Family Dynamics**

**Contributing Factors**

- Lack of life skills
- Substance abuse
- Lack of positive role model (home/society)
- LBGTQ non-acceptance
• Family violence/anger issues
• Lack of family support

**Strategies and Actions**
• Offer options for those fleeing from violence
• Community resources for mental health/addictions/domestic violence
• Woman’s shelter/men’s shelter
• *Long term solutions*
• Drop in youth centre
• 24 hr – leaders
• Direction on purpose
• Feedback from youth’s experiences prior to implementing strategies (before and after)
• Coping skills in Education
• “takes a village to raise a child”
• Educate community
  - More community resources
  - Awareness of 24 hr
  - Resource fair for ‘real’ challenges
  - What does FCSS do?
• Build an Outreach ‘program’ that encompasses all available resources in region
• Educate public/culture change: how do we get info out in different ways
• Early Pregnancy resources
  - Daycare, support etc.
  - Everything is post/after high school
• Resources at the cabin
  - closed Sunday and Monday
  - causes challenges for youth
• Schools
  - stronger pressure of mental health councillors at the schools
  - bring some of the services to the schools
• Need somewhere with access after 5pm (other than library)
  - scale – Auggie’s 1 day a week only

**Income, The Economy and Financial Resources**

**Contributing Factors**
• Demographics changing dramatically with representation of a large demo of single parenting homes – 1 income – job availability
• At capacity (in capital region) for rental subsidy – currently only 40 in S.G area
• “Stigma attached”
• Increase in economy actually has negative affect on poverty (rent goes up, cost in general goes up)

**Strategies and Actions**
• Subsidies for income and housing need to be re-evaluated to meet C.O.L
- Set incomes
- income support – HISH – senior pensions – do not increase vs cost of living
- Public awareness
  - Campaign
  - Cost of poverty to each resident in Spruce Grove
  - Build trust to encourage empathy. Process needs to go slowly
  - Event that brings together people in vulnerable circumstances with community members
  - Common language

**Outcomes to Measure Progress**
- Feedback from people who use it – involved in design and evaluation

**Conclusion**
The session concluded with the project team reviewing the next steps in the project:

- Best practices research;
- A synthesis of local context data with provincial trends; and
- Core Collaborators Workshop on October 30.
Appendix

Group 1
- Health (mental and physical) (harder to house) – (being evicted)
- Addiction/substance abuse
- Violence/abuse
- Income and the economy (funding)
- Education/life skills training
- Demographics (age, age, gender)
- Community culture – attitudes and stigma
- Regulatory environment – ex. pets, no address, being evicted for addiction/mental health
- Home environment – lack of family support, single parents, fighting in the home, break up of family
- Cycle of Poverty – integrated cycle/transfer
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of services
- Have not heard all voices/perspectives/doing things different
- Nimbyism is a response to poverty/homelessness

Group 2
- Lack of rent geared toward income housing
- Length of time to access supports ex. Domestic violence – lack of access to community support or any emergency (death in family)
- Stigma for people accessing resources
- Living wage
- Economic downtown/ upswing ex. Oil boom didn’t need education to get work but once the boom stopped, people then struggled
- No on-going supports for people that need it
- Cultural difference ex. Multiple family living in a home = normalcy in some cultures – puts people at risk of losing homes
- Lack of education
- Lack of parenting support – puts young at risk
- Substance abuse, dysfunction and mental health

Group 3
- Mental health/addiction
- No federal funding for affordable housing
- Lack of family support
- Abuse/trauma
- Eviction
- Unemployment/lack of skills
• No harm reduction housing/programs
• Lack of life skills learned early in the school system
• “live within means’
• Hard to house due to: criminal record, mental health, guest management, drug use
• Access to sup ports: transportation, interagency communication, privacy
• Lack of follow-up
• Lack of inter-agency task force – 24hrs support referral
• Hospital discharge to homelessness
• Lack of weekend/evening resources
• Lack of trust in the systems: health, justice and mental health

Group 4
• Fleeing domestic violence
• Mental illness and lack of or delay in services
• Addictions
• Not enough support and resources for LGBTQ youth
• Lack of affordable housing and subsidies
• Intergenerational trauma
• Family breakdown
• Family history of poverty, inability to break cycle
• Teen pregnancy
• School drop out
• Societal beliefs
• Impact of employment on housing
• Supply of jobs locally
• Transportation issues
• Lack of family support
• Financial literacy: need better curriculum in school to teach life skills and budgeting
• Social and physical isolation
• Age – seniors primarily
• Poverty line in Alberta is too low
• Job loss

Group 5
• Reactionary community – infrastructure not in place to ‘wrap’ services around someone
• One stop shop place where someone can access multiple services
• Funding for people/agencies/longer hours outside of 9-5
• Lack of understanding or knowledge of issues
• Lack of access to training

Group 6
• Limitations on subsidy funding – lack of trained professionals (mental health and counsellors)
• Shortage of subsidized housing stock
• Economic climate (unemployment)
• Drug crisis
• Lack of youth programming
• Aboriginal/Indigenous residential schools
• Addictions
• Increasing debt
• Stigma
• Out-dated legislation/silos
• Lack of emergency housing/shelters
• No ‘hub’ for support (one stop shop)
• Cycle of violence and poverty

Group 7
• Domestic violence
• Lack of jobs, lack of adequate funding
• Inflation
• Cost of living
• Disabilities, mental health, addictions
• Lack of affordable housing, pet friendly
• Toxic stress contributing to functioning issues
• Lack of specific services for most vulnerable ex. Permanent supportive housing
• Transportation limitations
• Non-inclusive services for those without personal transportation
• Cycle of poverty
• Young single parents
• Pets
• After hours child care

Group 8
• Mental health/physical health
• Substance abuse and addictions
• Family violence and dysfunction
• Economics – minimum wage and downturns
• Education – lack of institutional and learned skills
• Age, gender, race... isms
• Regulatory environment – no address = no access
• Community culture
• Long-term sustainment
• Lack of access – generally because of transportation/funding/access
Group 9
- Mental health/addiction services are lacking
- Physical barriers
- Fear of disclosure
- Abuse – all kinds
- Lack of funds for resources
- Lack of awareness or no desire to be aware
- Break down of home ex. Parents or caregivers split/need medical care
- NIMBYS

Group 10
- Mental health issues
- Generational, cycle of poverty hard to break
- Systematic barriers, red-tape (gov’t)
- Lack of funding for social services
- “not in my back yard” discrimination
- Lack of local/transitional facilities
- Need more funding for social innovation
- Family dynamics/trauma crisis
- Physical health
Spruce Grove Survey: Summary of Findings

A public survey was held earlier this fall to understand perspectives related to homelessness and poverty amongst residents.

DATA-KEY FINDINGS

- Number of survey responses received: 75
- Age breakdown: Majority of respondents in the 46-65 age range (25)
- Neighbourhood: Majority of responses from Jesperdale (5), Grove Meadows (5), Harvest Ridge (5), Spruce Village (7), and Other (9)
- 60% of respondents are aware that the City of Spruce Grove is developing a strategy to reduce poverty and homelessness.
- 40% of respondents think that poverty has somewhat increased in the past three years.
- 69% of respondents consider that solving issues surrounding poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove is important.
- Mental health and addictions support, housing, and employment have been identified as the most important factors in relation to ending poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove.
- Housing was identified as first priority and employment as second priority.
- Emergency housing and transitional housing were identified as two types of housing options that can help reduce poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove.
- 48% of respondents strongly disagreed with the idea that Spruce Grove has access to emergency shelter services for homeless and at-risk populations.
- 44% of respondents strongly agreed that they would be supportive of new transitional housing or emergency housing being built in their community.
- 43% of respondents strongly disagreed that Spruce Grove has access to supportive/transitional housing to support individuals leaving shelter, detox, incarceration, and transitioning towards independent living.
- 51% of respondents do not spend more than 30% of their gross income on shelter costs while 44% do.
- 44% of respondents somewhat agreed with being concerned about youth homelessness and addictions in the community.
- 60% are not sure that the City of Spruce Grove provides appropriate tax incentives to increase the stock of affordable rental units in Spruce Grove.
- 45% are not sure that the City of Spruce Grove’s development policies and procedures encourage affordable housing in Spruce Grove.
- 44% somewhat agree that the City of Spruce Grove invests in social programs and services.

PERSPECTIVES SHARED

In response to more open-ended questions, respondents offered extensive feedback.

- When would you no longer consider someone to be poor/at risk for homelessness?
  - Safety was identified as a key indicator. The person does not fear for their safety and risk indicators are lowered.
  - The person has access to stable housing and is no longer at risk of losing their home.
  - The person counts on a reliable and steady income.
  - They have the capacity to access and maintain employment.
  - They have access to and receive mental health support when needed.
  - They have a support network.
- The person has food security.
- They can cover all their basic needs, such as food, shelter, water, clothing, heat, etc.
- They can sustain themselves without support and are self-sufficient on their own.
- Support is provided to those who need it.
- The person has enough money to spend beyond their basic needs. This can include wellness, leisure, and recreation.
- Individuals live above poverty level.

*Do you have any specific comments or suggestions related to housing and homelessness in Spruce Grove?*

- Supporting the housing continuum is important.
- Homeowners should be accounted for as key stakeholders.
- People can be displaced multiple times in a season.
- There is a lack of awareness in terms of programs offered and gaps that may exist.
- Lack of information can generate negative attitudes toward marginalized populations.
- Root causes must be addressed instead of offering quick solutions. Understanding the root causes of homelessness makes it easier to understand the overall situation.
- Education and greater mental health awareness play a role in being able to direct people to the proper resources.
- More resources need to be put towards addressing the needs of vulnerable people.
- Lack of affordable housing is a key concern.

"I think we should stop handing them everything, yes some families are struggling but for the youths that are homeless follow the rules at home and my guess is you would have a place to stay, we are quick to hand out to all these people who are sitting in bars eating in restaurants and carry cell phones and I have seen it first hand, yes help those who try and help themselves but for the others always looking for handouts NO."

"The homelessness problem in Spruce Grove is either non-existent or invisible. I hear that it exists, but I don't see it first hand, and it does not affect me. However, I would be in favour of helping those that do need assistance."
Introduction and Background

The purpose of this third workshop was to start building out the strategy as a collaborative group, and to think through how the strategy will have the greatest impacts for the local context in Spruce Grove. The workshop began with an acknowledgement of traditional Treaty 6 territory and welcome words and a prayer from Elder Ella Arcand. Brief introductions from Core Collaborators, FCSS staff, and Urban Matters CCC staff took place with each person identifying in a word how they were feeling at this point in the strategy collaboration process.

The group welcomed one of the project team members, Dr. Alina Turner, via videoconference for the first part of the session. Dr. Turner is a leading practitioner and researcher in the areas of poverty and homelessness with particular expertise in system planning and collaboration to advance solutions. The slides used during Dr. Turner’s presentation are included in Appendix A.

Macro Trends/ ‘Pressure Points’

Dr. Turner identified macro trends or ‘pressure points’ that are affecting communities throughout Canada and placing pressure on local and regional support systems. Spruce Grove shares these challenging dynamics:

- Drug use changes (e.g. fentanyl, meth, opioids, cannabis legislation)
- Violence across lifespan/contexts/gender/income
- Diversity: immigration, Indigenous background
- Layered complexities: mental health, FASD, addictions, trauma
- Social disorder: public intoxication/safety perception
- Income inequality & future of workforce/technology
- Performance, accountability & innovation
- Provincial political election outcomes
- Aging aground groups, including the homeless

Best Practices for Reducing Poverty and Homelessness

Dr. Turner outlined a series of best practices for reducing poverty and homelessness along with examples of strategies and tools used successfully in other communities.

The best practice theme areas informed and guided the rest of the session:

1. Housing First
2. Systems Approach to Homelessness
3. Collaborative Leadership
4. Community Awareness and Education
Workshop participants were provided with a Best Practices Summary document one week before the workshop that outlined background information and case study examples about each theme.

### Identification of Critical Shifts, Adapting to Local Context & Roles & Responsibilities

#### ROUND 1: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION - HOUSING FIRST MODEL & SYSTEMS APPROACH TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

#CriticalShifts

Critical Shifts are useful for identifying and testing assumptions about part of a system that needs to change. A critical shift has two parts:

1. A statement that succinctly describes one part of the system that isn’t working right now (the current state)
2. A statement that describes how that part of the system should look in the future if we’re successful.

Participants were asked to review the sample critical shift statements provided, and either change the statements, or write new statements. The sample statements are provided below, and the participant additions are shown in *italics*.

The first exercise that the Core Collaborators took part in involved looking at the first two themes in the Best Practices list – Housing First and Systems Approach to Homelessness. These two topics were looked at together since strategies and tools used for these topics are often analysed and used in tandem.

**Housing first model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing with supports doesn’t exist in Spruce Grove. <em>(more availability for single parent families)</em>.</td>
<td>A strategy for rapid housing replacement with supports is established and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of shelter for young families.</td>
<td>Clients are offered reasonable choice in terms of housing, as well as the services they wish to access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of transitional housing. <em>(Grove Motor Inn is sold- no transitional housing available)</em></td>
<td>Housing is integrated into the community to encourage client recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of financial literacy programs and an adequate learning environment.</td>
<td>The Housing First Model focuses on a recovery-based approach that promotes self-sufficiency through access to supports. These supports can focus on education, financial literacy, and employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable housing for single families (zero)</td>
<td>Affordable Housing: 100 units. Have a conversation about whether it’s a single building or it is integrated throughout the community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lack of affordable housing for single parent families and seniors

Identification of needs within the community, and conversations about best practice for accessible and integrated housing

A specialized Housing First Intake Worker

Housing First program/Community Hub – more rent subsidy and a one-stopshop

Formal Housing First program (X2)

Housing First program with supports in place once individuals are housed

Have transitional housing - longer term recovery housing with support specific for addiction

Shelters: D.V. (specific), emergency for both males and females, youth emergency shelter

Mental health specific housing: single and group homes type housing to support and manage mental health issues

Lack of actual affordable housing (not only ‘below market’)

A robust stock of affordable housing, both transitional and permanent

Housing supply is increased and integrated into the community to encourage client delivery

Systems approach to addressing homelessness

CURRENT STATE
There is a lack of 24 hr. service and fixed address for supports.

There is a lack of coordination, which leads to a duplication of efforts.

Program options are limited.

There is a lack of clarity as to where knowledge is housed and how it is shared.

Lack of temporary housing/shelter for anyone who is homeless.

FUTURE STATE
Co-ordinated Service Delivery is in place to facilitate access and flow-through for best client and system level outcomes.

System mapping and ongoing collaboration amongst service providers is used to make sense of existing services and create order moving forward.

Coordination and alignment of services enables a broader set of programs in the community.

Service providers collaborate to centralize information. (Meetings to share info on clients and who should help them)

Mobile Services Across the Board

Multi-generational housing complexes

Partnerships with developers for an increase in bachelor and one bedroom-type units

Spruce Grove should have a 24/7 services that is open for homeless people to access. Spruce Grove should also have an overnight place for youth/anyone to access

Spruce Grove should have affordable housing throughout the City and this affordable housing should come with other services/supports for people who truly need it.
Integrated housing and mobile resources
More Affordable Housing Stock
Coordinated Approach; regular cross-sectoral meetings

(Lack of solutions and capacity?)
Formalized group to discuss issues [and finds solutions], but also has the capacity to do the work [associated with the solutions]

Indigenous youth, seniors and those with lived experience are at the decision tables.

Service providers learn all networks and services
Need champions to coordinate a gathering of all critical services in order to begin asset mapping

Coordinated access to housing-triage
Recognize that some of the need comes into Spruce Grove from other places—identify who is needing poverty and homeless support and where they are from. Could qualify for a regional solution (e.g. do for housing supply what is done for recreational facilities)

Need a full housing continuum, with transitional housing and housing with supports
Have a full housing continuum— with transitional housing & housing with supports

Faith community gap: small project vs. collaborative projects
Agency collaboration including faith community

Current lack of information regarding programs and services
Working together with agencies

Affordable Housing does not exist
Parkland 211 is more efficient and educated/trained on where to refer people

Centralized service access: one stop shop to access income support, job support, FCSS etc.

More variety of affordable housing for those who don’t need supports

#Wins – Identifying Strategies Appropriate for the Local Context

The groups were then asked to reflect on the following set of questions about the best practices topic they were discussing:

1. What’s working well on this issue that we need to continue?
2. What are other communities or sectors doing well that we can learn from?
3. What factors are unique to Spruce Grove that we need to keep top of mind in developing our response?

They were also provided with the list of proposed solutions that were formed in the Stakeholder Workshop #2 around the topic.

For Housing First and Systems Approach to Addressing Homelessness, the following ideas were provided:

- Research viability and incentives.
- Research subsidy and support options.
- Involve community in initiatives to increase housing.
- Establish strategies for different types of supporting housing.
- Understand the overview of what exists to increase access to and diversity of services.
- Ensure continuity of services.
- Cultivate awareness of new resources and support.
- Centralize information.

Below are the responses that the three groups listed:

Working Well that We Need to Continue

- Willingness to acknowledge the issue and find solutions
- Willingness from a variety of sources/sectors to collaborate
- Existing services work collaboratively
- PCN Youth Mental Health Clinic and Youth Community Connector – both great assets for youth mental health
- NeighbourLink, Tracy- Native Counselling
- Community gardens
- Collaboration with agencies
- Salvation Army + NeighbourLink + Alberta support to keep people housed
- In + Out program Spruce (Grove) (outside)
- Limited affordable housing + rent subsidy
- Aspire Homes: AB Health approved homes

Ideas From Other Communities – Adapted to Spruce Grove

- There are great examples of what works, don’t need to re-invent the wheel, maintain openness and be innovative
  - Medicine Hat, Calgary, St. Albert ‘Hub’ model, Family Connection Centre in Stony Plain
- Medicine Hat- Champion Table
- Indigenous Advisory Committee
- Community education and awareness – NIMBY
- Regional collaboration on supply of housing – Parkland County, Stony Plain
- Asset Mapping
  - Client journey mapping
  - Health and social service mapping
- Housing First Program (x2)
- St. Albert Emergency rental assistance funding
- Greater Edmonton Foundation (GEF) : whole housing continuum
- Edible landscape- Grande Prairie
- Need targeted and strategic housing options- single parents/youth/single males
- Need cultural inclusion/appropriateness
- Involve Homeward Trust to spread use of ETO software
- Keep the public informed about what is happening as this moves forward
- Look to access federal and provincial funding (x3)
- Include indigenous perspectives on delivery models
- Keep the solutions do-able
- Link all agencies with a journey map???
- How do we access funds and planning for housing options?
- Community Group as fundraising group? We all have mandates.
- What do we need to be collecting for data? What about determining standards of practice for groups?
- Having conversations about the issue of poverty and homelessness
- Business buy-in
- Collaboration amongst stakeholders and service providers
- Relationship with landlords
- Agency mapping

**Unique Factors to Spruce Grove**

- Perception: safe, well-resourced community
- Close proximity to Edmonton
- Caution - there’s a sentiment that ‘If you build it, they will come’ (x2)
- Young population (average age 35)
- Tri-region tied to one another (Spruce Grove doesn’t stand alone)
- More forward thinking on the business side – makes sure that the City itself has a diverse income source
- Branding of City (‘Community of Choice’)

**ROUND 2: STICKY NOTE BRAINSTORM**

Participants stood up and went around the room to populate ideas related to the other four Best Practice themes: Innovative Approaches to Housing, Community Awareness and Education, Healthy Food and Accessible Transportation. Participants contributed to the critical shifts and solutions questions for each theme area.

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO HOUSING**

**#CriticalShifts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rental costs are high.</td>
<td>Rental costs stabilize and availability of appropriate units increases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents and newcomers to Spruce Grove have little choice about where to live that is appropriate for their life circumstances.</td>
<td>There is a diversity of housing types across the spectrum, from temporary, to supportive, to a variety of below market and market housing options that include rental and ownership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are shelters for diverse issues (D.V., youth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a Housing First Team</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supportive homes for brain injured, mental health disorders and addictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Housing Continuum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transitional housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider funding and /or incentivize subsidized/affordable units in market projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider a city-owned transitional house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initiate a rent subsidy program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supportive Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aging in place housing for seniors</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Low income housing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider innovative shelter in extreme weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subsidized housing- single parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
#Wins- Adapting to Local Context

The participants were provided with this list of proposed solutions that were formed in the Stakeholder Workshop #2 for ideas around Innovative Approaches to Housing:

- Provide individuals with income support.
- Offer support, subsidies, and incentives to landlords who offer low-income options.
- Streamline application processes.
- Regulate rent ‘negative’ policies such as no pets, crime, drugs, etc.
- Offer incentives to developers to construct extra units that offer low-income options.
- Evaluate multi-unit housing policies.
- Offer daycare support.

Below are additional responses that were offered from participants to add to the list around existing strengths of the community, what Spruce Grove can learn from other communities, and what is unique to Spruce Grove:

- Partnership of agencies to coordinate and triage system of entry
- Mobile resources: go to the client where they are
- Container Homes and structures
- Services that can be one-stop shop
- Commit to collaboration
- National Housing Strategy Funding
- Assess, track and change land use bylaws to allow for secondary suites and small apartment units
- Partner with housing developers to build housing that is specific to need (e.g. more bachelor and one bedroom suites)

#Roles

Participants were then asked to provide ideas around roles and responsibilities for organizations in Spruce Grove to work towards some of these #wins. The following were suggested:

- Champion Table: AHS, AMH have multiple housing programs
- Help resource contractors, developers and builders in a project
- Planning Department: review existing policy and bylaws as to allowing for any identified but missing housing potential (change policy)
- Our relationship with landlords that are willing to housing ‘hard to house’ clients (e.g. single parents leverage that for other agency clients)

COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

#CriticalShifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Not in my backyard” (NIMBY) attitudes, stigma, and prejudice persist.</td>
<td>Citizens have increased empathy for people facing homelessness and poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinated awareness and advertising effort to raise awareness on services and supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community education on poverty and homelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of a Community Communication Plan: what services are available and which ones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No education in the secondary system to support our youth (i.e. LIFESKILLS) can be accessed. Tell ‘stories’ of the clients struggling in the community

In the Planning class that is mandatory to help assist our children in basic life skills: banking, mortgages, etc.

Discover ways to promote this growing resource: have more community safe spaces where youth and families can access needs

Hosting a meeting once every 2-3 weeks that involves youth to come for food and learn about the supports that Spruce Grove offers and encourage them to educate their friends

A series of well-written articles on poverty and homelessness that is well advertised and connected to the community

By speaking to high schools and all school students, I could talk to teachers from SPA and see if they would like to pass this knowledge of how we are reducing homelessness and poverty on to the students ~ Brendan Fartham, Youth Advocate

Publish statistics on situation and need on City newspaper page

School presentations: re budgeting, housing, choices and expectations

Collaboration between agencies

Presentations in the schools in the community. These will be the youth that may be facing poverty and homelessness themselves currently or in the future

City Brand: Community of Choice- can foster stigma

Education and Awareness on Mental Health and Addiction concerns and the impact of the social determinants of health (e.g. housing) Inform people who want to help how to help

#Wins- Adapting to Local Context

The participants were provided with this list of proposed solutions that were formed in the Stakeholder Workshop #2 for ideas around Community Awareness and Education:

- Offer city recognition programs for businesses that meet certain environmental and social criteria.
- Raise awareness as to the root causes of homelessness.
- Offer opportunities to share and listen to individual ‘stories’.
- Encourage citizens to become advocates.
- Consider different ways of reaching the community and sharing information.
- Provide resources for mental health, addictions, domestic violence, and other risk factors.
- Build trust to encourage empathy through events and initiatives.
Below are responses that were offered from workshop participants to add to the list around existing strengths of the community, what Spruce Grove can learn from other communities, what is unique to Spruce Grove, and what some initial roles and responsibilities may be in the community:

- Community is supportive
- Information services to direct persons in crisis
- Education and information
- Lived Experience are engaged and involved as participants, not just recipients
- Community is aware and involved
- Providing information/resources on homelessness and poverty to youth program participants where there is need
- One stop shop for clients
- Successful clients of housing programs may become volunteers in educating
- Continuum of these gatherings (i.e. multi-sectoral, core collaborators workshops)
- Supportive City Council
- Informing business of opportunities to support/ fund/volunteer (i.e. Corporate Responsibility)

#Roles

Participants were then asked provide ideas around roles and responsibilities for organizations in Spruce Grove to work towards some of these #wins. The following were suggested:

- Alberta Works: be part of coordinated intake
- City researching grants and funding opportunities
- City taking the lead on facilitating the conversations

HEALTHY FOOD

#CriticalShifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food insecurity is a symptom of homelessness and poverty that further exposes individuals to poor health outcomes.</td>
<td>Individuals have access to supports and services that allow them to access and prepare healthy food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to fresh vegetables and health foods with less of a cost- affordable food is usually frozen or unhealthy</td>
<td>Developers’ ‘residential’ should incorporate community gardens in their plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner clubs rather than soup kitchens</td>
<td>Access to fresh vegetables and health foods with less of a cost- affordable food is usually frozen or unhealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Kitchen: more education around food baskets</td>
<td>Dinner clubs rather than soup kitchens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edible Landscaping</td>
<td>Community Kitchen: more education around food baskets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstream community gardens</td>
<td>Edible Landscaping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free school lunches and after school snack club</td>
<td>Mainstream community gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing within walking distance to grocery stores, community gardens, farmers markets</td>
<td>Free school lunches and after school snack club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having clients become volunteers
Broader (hours?) for food bank
Transportation (to food bank) for accessibility

#Wins- Adapting to Local Context

The participants were provided with this list of proposed solutions that were formed in the Stakeholder Workshop #2 for ideas around Healthy Food:

- Provide supports that allow people to meet their basic needs.
- Provide access to resources during regular hours, as well as in the evenings and on weekends.

Below are some responses that were offered from workshop participants to add to the list around existing strengths of the community, what Spruce Grove can learn from other communities, what is unique to Spruce Grove, and what some initial roles and responsibilities may be in the community:

- New community garden (x4)
- Volunteer-based fruit harvesting of private gardens/trees for Food Bank
- Food Bank Staff
- Mobile Services: go to people that are challenged
- Educational support (e.g. food prep, nutrition)
- Community kitchens (x2)
- Cultural exchanges
- Move away from charity model to solidarity; allow people to participate. Tap into their strengths and talents
- Diversion Strategy: divert food that might be thrown away and get it to people who need it

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

#CriticalShifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT STATE</th>
<th>FUTURE STATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The link between transportation and access to other services is unclear.</td>
<td>Individuals in vulnerable circumstances have access to transportation, which enables access to other services that lower risk factors. This can mean that an individual is able to go to their housing appointments, have access to healthcare, and move safely while they find stability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implement a Regional Transit Plan

#Wins- Adapting to Local Context

The participants were provided with this list of proposed solutions that were formed in the Stakeholder Workshop #2 for ideas around Accessible Transportation:

- Partner with transportation services to ensure equitable access to transit.
- Raise awareness as to the importance of transportation in allowing vulnerable individuals to reach other services and mitigating risk factors.
Below are responses that were offered from workshop participants to add to the list around existing strengths of the community, what Spruce Grove can learn from other communities, what is unique to Spruce Grove, and what some initial roles and responsibilities may be in the community:

- Free bus to the food bank
- Engage Bus (x2)
- Subsidized transit passes (x2)
- NeighbourLink Parkland volunteers
- Low income (mental health) bus passes
- Local transit in 2019!
- Keep and expand specialized transit services
- On-call, off-peak transport to employment areas
- Free bus transportation for homeless people and those in need to access resources
- Transportation between communities (Stony/Edmonton)
- City bus passes on new transit systems

Reflection and Discussion

Upon working through the two rounds of exercises, the group reflected back on what was uncovered through the session. The group shared that they are excited for the possibilities moving forward, and that they feel that they are very resourceful and can use their great collaborations with one another to approach these possibilities.

When asked if any of the best practices feel risky to adapt to Spruce Grove moving forward, it was identified that Housing First actually doesn’t feel risky because it is the philosophy that is already being used in several organizations. It was suggested that having a panel or coalition of champions that inform people that Housing First is actually informally already happening in the community (without full supports), and to actively bring awareness of the benefits of Housing First to the community as a whole would be beneficial. It was identified that this approach will help to mitigate stigma and misconceptions head on instead of waiting for negative perceptions to take root. Participants also spoke to the importance of having an awareness campaign around how anyone in the community can be affected by poverty and/or homelessness (‘It’s seniors, it’s youth, it’s your neighbour’).

Lastly, the group was asked how they felt about the idea of coordinated service provision and a ‘Champions Table’. One participant shared that they would welcome it. Their rationale it is based on existing relationships, and to formalize this group into something stronger would help with the dynamics of change. The group was made aware that one of the systemic reasons why collaboration often doesn’t work is because funding models often work against it. One participant acknowledged that if there is a large investment of resources at the local level, more funding and resources will need to be accessed through other levels of government. A Champions Table would help with this.

To sum it up, one of the participants that works with youth in the community stated, “Anything we do, we’re trying to increase the quality of life of all the members of our community. So, all of this doesn’t feel all that risky”

Next Steps

The project team will begin to build out the 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness. Draft actions for the strategy will be provided to Core Collaborators in the third week of November. Core Collaborators will be asked to respond to the email with their thoughts on how they or their organization may be involved in achieving the actions. This will help the project team build an accountability framework to go with the strategy. The next stakeholder meeting is targeted for the 2nd week in December.

Appendix A
Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness

Dr. Alina Turner, Turner Strategies
Spruce Grove in Sum

Growing population has grown by 140% over past 20 yrs to 34,000

Generally, high employability & solid incomes for most households
| Macro Trends: “Pressure Points” on Spruce Grove’s social support systems |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| **1.** | **4.** | **7.** |
| **2.** | **5.** | **8.** |
| **3.** | **6.** | **9.** |
You are now leaving Alberta
Hope you enjoyed your job
Areas of Need

Urban level so of housing stress: 46% of renter households in Core Housing Need - about 3,000 (2016 Census)

- Financial & housing need: 316 active cases for FCSS - note half weren’t residents (data for 6 mo. in 2018)
- Food bank use on the rise: projections suggest 2018 is significantly higher than previous years: 1,400 in first 6 mo. vs. 1,600
- 211 calls mostly mental health/addictions/life stressors: seems on trend to surpass 2017 (280) as first 6 mo are at 140 calls
- Top referrals: counselling services and Alberta Works (i.e. income and employment supports).
Homeless-Serving Systems Workshop

Key Themes

- Lack of interventions, services and wrap around supports
- Lack of a full spectrum of **housing**
- The role of **education** and skills training
- **Behavioural and life challenges** (physical health, mental health, addiction, domestic violence)
- The **regulatory** environment
- **Community awareness** and attitudes
- Home environment and **family dynamics**
- **Income**, the economy and financial resources
Best Practices: Homelessness

- Housing First
- Systems Approach to Homelessness
- Collaborative Leadership
- Community Awareness & Education
- Coordinated Service Provision
- Innovative Housing Models
A Broader Lens

1. Leadership and Systems Change
2. Community System Planning
3. Income Security
4. Business Innovation
5. Energy Poverty
6. Affordable Housing
7. Homelessness
8. Food Security
9. Transportation
10. Health & Wellness
11. Learning & Literacy
12. Resilient Families
13. Community Safety
System mapping: City of Lethbridge

Banking accessibility: Edmonton ATB

Community Food Centre: Medicine Hat

Low Income Transit Pass: Calgary
What’s Now & What’s Next

Federal return to housing: $40B over 10 years to ramp up affordable & supportive housing.

Reconciliation Calls to Action & ending homelessness.

Emergence of innovation culture with focus on agile development & design thinking.

New technology opportunities through Big Data, AI, and mobile tech. & data integration.

Systems Integration accelerating strategic alignment at the systems level.

Promise of prevention & moving upstream - “Systems Level Leadership”
Your Turn!

Small Group Discussion

- Housing First Model
- Systems Approach to Addressing Homelessness
  - Collaboration
  - Coordinated Service Provision
- Community Awareness and Education
- Innovative Approaches to Housing
- Healthy Food
- Accessible Transportation
#CriticalShift:
- Review the sample critical shift statements for the theme areas.
- Prioritize 2-3 critical shifts

#Win:
- What’s **working well** on this issue that we need to continue?
- What are **other communities or sectors** doing well we can learn from?
- What factors are **unique to Spruce Grove** that we need to keep top of mind in developing our response?

#Roles:
- What is you/your organizations role in delivering the #wins?
ROUND 2 - Add thoughts to the flip charts in each category

Your Turn!
#CriticalShift:
- Review the sample critical shift statements for the theme areas.
- Prioritize 2-3 critical shifts

#Win:
- What’s working well on this issue that we need to continue?
- What are other communities or sectors doing well we can learn from?
- What factors are unique to Spruce Grove that we need to keep top of mind in developing our response?

#Roles:
- What is you/your organizations’ role in delivering the #wins?
NEXT STEPS

Stay informed on our process & support participation in engagement sessions

Action Items:
Watch for our email to review a draft set of strategies, and specifically to add to the ‘roles and responsibilities section.

December: All Stakeholder meeting to review Draft Strategy

Contacting Us
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250.215.5193
ewelk@urbanmatters.ca

Dr. Alina Turner, Turner Strategies
403-827-8722
alina@turnerstrategies.org
Thank You!
ATTENDANTS:
• 19

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE STRATEGY? WHAT ARE YOU HOPEFUL FOR? (THINK INDIVIDUALLY AND SHARE WITH YOUR NEIGHBOUR)
• Excited that the Council has approved the community development officer position; this can help leverage federal dollars in the reaching home strategy; accessing federal dollars is important; getting the Champions Table solidified is key
• Strengthening community partnerships; being more aware of what is offered; cultivating sense of being in it together
• Must create a defined intake process; channel people; work on relationships; the goal is that everybody knows how to access resources
• Increase collaboration and communication across sectors; build trust; get people excited about action steps and seeing where you are in the strategy

THOUGHTS ON THE NAME
• Feels good; people can get behind it

THOUGHTS ON THEMES
• Identify what is already happening to identify duplication
• What about identification? (Example: people do not have a mailbox or an address and cannot get started on anything.) Do we need to connect with Vital Statistics? Does that need to be in here? Do we need to connect with people we have not considered?

EXERCISE - 5 GROUPS, ONE PER THEME AREA; THOUGHTS ON WHAT STOOD OUT
• Want to get a sense of who will make up the Champions Table
• There is so much to talk about. There is so much to learn from each other. We found it hard to stay on task
• The strategy is so broad, robust, and expansive. We look at it through the lens of where we come from. What is our role within all of it? How do you roll this out? Who are the team leads? There are a lot of unknowns. That is very challenging.
• What would be the priorities? What are the initial goals? How do we move forward? That would help us to focus. How do we get to the key priorities?
• The need for a central intake process that works effectively is in fact a key priority.
• There are some linkages to establish when it comes to fundraised money. Some money filters out of community. We need to focus that a bit more to keep it in the community.
• Some Strategy items were very operationally focused while others were more culturally focused. On the one hand, there are knots and bolts to take care of. On the other, there is a change in culture to promote and consider.

THOUGHTS ON WHAT IS EXCITING
• It is exciting to see where churches could fit in a lot of actions; the openness to be involved
• So much of this is dependent upon Greater Edmonton cooperation; there is a regional impact and a political dimension that requires stewardship; all levels need to be involved
The amount of stuff that is actually being done is encouraging; everybody at this table understands what they are doing; there is so much to pull from.

THOUGHTS ON WHAT IS FRUSTRATING
- How much there is to do
- How to get financing for housing? Who runs it? Who is responsible? This is a major challenge.
- Worry about the push back

THOUGHTS ON WHAT AFFECTED YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE STRATEGY
- Seeing some really good ideas and thinking of some people to reach out to
- We almost have to have a governance structure; there is also going to be a lot of sub-committees; you need the decision-makers to work with recommendations; lots of pieces to connect. For example, how do you connect the sub-committees to the ground and the community?

THOUGHTS ON FEEDBACK THAT HAS NOT BEEN OFFERED YET
- The room was tired and did not offer extra feedback
Appendix C

Best Practices Summary
Spruce Grove 5 Year Strategy to Reduce Poverty & Homelessness

Best Practices Summary

OCTOBER 2018
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Introduction

Best and emerging practices offer insights, tools, and approaches to address challenges related to poverty and homelessness in Spruce Grove. Research findings are primarily drawn from Canada as communities in this geographic region share common social, political, economic and regulatory contexts.

Key themes to guide the research were identified through stakeholder engagement on September 13, 2018 where 49 stakeholders attended a Homelessness Serving Systems Workshop. Workshop participants engaged in group discussion to brainstorm the types of root causes they believe contribute to homelessness and poverty in Spruce Grove and the surrounding communities. A list of eight overarching root causes were collectively summarized by the group:

- Lack of interventions, services and wrap around supports
- Lack of a full spectrum of housing
- The role of education and skills training
- Behavioural and life challenges (physical health, mental health, addiction, domestic violence)
- The regulatory environment
- Community awareness and attitudes
- Home environment and family dynamics
- Income, the economy and financial resources

The following summary outlines key best and emerging practices that address the root causes. The complex nature of homelessness and poverty makes it challenging to identify a single best practice that addresses each root cause in isolation. Instead, it is much more likely that a tool or approach will touch on a number of the root causes. As such, the following key best practice areas were developed in order to address the eight root causes listed:

- Housing First Model
- Systems Approach to Addressing Homelessness
- Community Awareness and Education
- Innovative Approaches to Housing
- Healthy Food
- Accessible Transportation

Although not discussed directly at the Stakeholder Workshop, the lack of coordination and integrated service delivery is a key best practice that has been identified in other communities.¹ This approach is increasingly seen as a best practice in community-based homeless serving systems across Canada. As well, the single, overarching best practice to addressing homelessness that has been embraced across North America and Europe is the Housing First model. Using a Housing First and a systems approach can have a significant positive impact on

Homelessness, and in some cases can completely eliminate homelessness. ² Both will be integral to addressing root causes of homelessness and poverty in Spruce Grove.

**Housing First Model**

Housing First is “a recovery-oriented approach to homelessness that involves moving people who experience homelessness into independent and permanent housing as quickly as possible, with no preconditions, and then providing them with additional services and supports as needed.”³ This approach differs significantly from a treatment-first model, which requires compliance with treatment and an abstinence from alcohol and drugs. The Housing Partnership Strategy has defined six Housing First principles:

1. **Rapid housing placement with supports**: This involves helping clients locate and secure accommodation as rapidly as possible and assists them with moving in.
2. **Offering clients a reasonable choice**: Clients must be given a reasonable choice in terms of housing options as well as the services they wish to access.
3. **Separating housing provision from treatment services**: Acceptance of treatment, following treatment, or compliance with services is not a requirement for housing tenure, but clients agree to monthly visits.
4. **Providing tenancy rights and responsibilities**: Clients are required to contribute a portion of their income towards rent.
5. **Integrating housing into the community**: This is to encourage client recovery.
6. **Recovery based and promoting self-sufficiency**: The focus is on capabilities of the person, based on self-determined goals, which may include employment, education and participation in the community.⁴

All Housing First programs strive to include these core elements; however, the implementation of the Housing First approach will differ significantly from community to community, and will change according to the population served, resources and local context.⁵

**Case Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| At Home/ Chez Soi Project⁶ | Vancouver = Winnipeg Toronto Montreal Moncton | Between 2009 and 2013 the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) funded the world’s largest and most comprehensive study of Housing First, the At Home/Chez Soi project. It set the foundation for the broad adoption of Housing First by examining it as a means of ending homelessness for people who are living with mental illness, with a particular focus on individuals with multiple barriers. The study was implemented in five Canadian cities, with each community focused on a specific demographic group.
The final summary report for the At Home/Chez Soi project outlines seven key learnings:
- Housing First can be effectively implemented in Canadian cities of different size and different ethnoracial and cultural composition.
- Housing First rapidly ends homelessness. |

⁵ Ibid.
- Housing First is a sound investment.
- It is Housing First, it is not housing only.
- Having a place to live with supports can lead to other positive outcomes above and beyond those provided by services.
- There are many ways in which Housing First can change lives.
- Getting Housing First right is essential to optimizing outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys and Girls Club of Calgary: The Infinity Project</th>
<th>Calgary, Alberta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considered an innovative Housing First program, the Infinity Project. The project uses a scattered site model to aid youth in obtaining housing in the private market. It serves youth, ages 16 to 24, by providing them with the supports they need to maintain housing. Youth are free to live as they choose in the home and community of their choice. From the beginning, most of the homeless youth who have exited the program have been able to maintain permanent housing, as well as stable incomes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://www.boysandgirlsclubsofcalgary.ca/programs/youth-housing-and-shelters/youth-housing/">https://www.boysandgirlsclubsofcalgary.ca/programs/youth-housing-and-shelters/youth-housing/</a></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adapting the ‘Housing First’ strategy to local context</th>
<th>Medicine Hat, Alberta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Medicine Hat Community Housing Society (MHCHS) leads the implementation of the Housing First strategy which leads to redefining what that means for the city. In Medicine Hat, it means connecting any person or family experiencing homelessness with a caseworker and putting them on a waiting list for a housing program within 10 days. The process requires creating space to innovate, formalizing a systems approach, and visioning beyond an end to homelessness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/4.6%20Turner.pdf">http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/4.6%20Turner.pdf</a></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing First Landlords</th>
<th>City of Grande Prairie, Alberta</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grande Prairie’s Housing First Program includes the opportunity of being a Housing First Landlord. This part of the program offers landlords the opportunity to be part of the plan to end homelessness. They are eligible for financial support on any incurred damages. Landlords can receive support, participate in the Rental Enhancement Program, and have access to benefits including third party direct to landlord payment established with a tenant.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://www.cityofgp.com/index.aspx?page=2287#Housing%20First%20Landlords">http://www.cityofgp.com/index.aspx?page=2287#Housing%20First%20Landlords</a></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Streets to Homes</th>
<th>Victoria, British Columbia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This program follows the “Housing First with Supports” approach and offers tailored supports to the clients. Housing stability reduces the use of law enforcement and emergency services. Initially, the pilot was a collaborative effort of the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness and eight partner organizations. The pilot was proven successful in January 2012, at which time it was transferred over to Pacifica Housing Society. It has now been replicated in different Canadian cities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://victoriahomelessness.ca/community-resources/streets-to-homes/">http://victoriahomelessness.ca/community-resources/streets-to-homes/</a></td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Windsor-Essex Housing Connections (WEHC)</th>
<th>Windsor, Ontario</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windsor-Essex Housing Connections (WEHC) is a partnership of agencies who work together to help people find affordable rental housing and end the cycle of homelessness. Through the Housing First Program, Family Services Windsor-Essex (FSWE) helps people with the greatest level of need find affordable rental housing. FSWE works with people who have been chronically homeless (i.e. 6+ months) and have a significant mental health and/or addiction concern(s). This project’s promising practices include: using a trauma-informed approach to providing support and utilizing a successful partnership between experienced support agencies, housing outreach services and the municipal housing corporation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://fswe.ca/support/rental-housing/">https://fswe.ca/support/rental-housing/</a></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homes First Society –</th>
<th>Toronto, Ontario</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homes First was a 1980s pioneer of permanent housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness in Toronto. It provides supportive housing and emergency shelters across the city of Toronto. The project’s promising practices include:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Systems Approach to Addressing Homelessness

Taking a systems approach to homelessness means moving beyond the simple introduction of new programs and instead ensuring “that all key players in our Homeless-Serving System follow the same vision, and are committed to working together towards realising it.” In “Beyond Housing First”, Alina Turner outlines seven key elements of a systems-approach:

1. Planning and Strategy Development process follows a systems approach grounded in the Housing First philosophy.
2. Organizational Infrastructure is in place to implement homelessness plan/strategy and coordinate the homeless-serving system to meet common goals.
3. System Mapping to make sense of existing services and create order moving forward.
4. Co-ordinated Service Delivery to facilitate access and flow-through for best client and system level outcomes.
5. Integrated Information Management aligns data collection, reporting, intake, assessment, and referrals to enable co-ordinated service delivery.
6. Performance Management and Quality Assurance at the program and system levels are aligned and monitored along common standards to achieve best outcomes.
7. Systems Integration mechanisms between the homeless-serving system and other key public systems and services, including justice, child intervention, health, immigration/settlement, domestic violence and poverty reduction.

Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Plan to End Homelessness – Systems Planning & Housing First | City of Medicine Hat, Alberta          | In 2014, the City of Medicine Hat launched a renewed Plan to End Homelessness, with an end date of 2015. Their approach to ending homelessness, based on Housing First principles and a system planning approach, has led to widespread recognition of their role as the first Canadian city to end homelessness. Research on Medicine Hat’s approach identifies five critical factors in their success:  
  - Initiatives to address homelessness had a shared community ownership, not held by any single stakeholder alone  
  - The right people at the right time: a diversity of key proponents of the plan, combined with external expertise and a strong group of core leaders created space for innovation and action. |


The plan focused on data, performance and continuous improvement: the use of a coordinated data and decision-making approach ensured actions were based on up-to-date, reliable evidence that had broad service provider and stakeholder support.

- The system planning approach had community-wide buy in beyond the coordinating body, and there were intentional efforts to integrate efforts with other institutions and systems (e.g. health, corrections, etc.)
- An adaptive, ‘nimble’ coordinating body allowed the coordinating body to shift between community development and system planning roles, with integration between the two approaches, in order to address emergent needs.

| Calgary Homeless Foundation | Calgary, Alberta | System integration has been identified as a key component in better serving the homeless population and in coordinating efforts to address homelessness. The Calgary Homeless Foundation acts as the backbone to the homeless-serving sector by coordinating actors, as well as sharing information and best practices. It also uses Housing Management Information Systems (HMIS) to follow-up on services, their efficiency, and level of use. In this instance, the Foundation offers strategic direction to improve services and is a key piece in integrating the serving system. Additional information can be found at: http://calgaryhomeless.com/ |

**Collaboration**

Collaborative decision-making models are a core component of a systems approach to addressing homelessness. In this context, collaboration usually means government (including local, provincial and federal government stakeholders) and non-government (i.e. non-profit housing and service providers) working together to make collective decisions about priority needs, strategies to address these needs, and resources required to implement strategies.

**Case Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
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<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESOLVE Campaign</td>
<td>Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>RESOLVE is a partnership of nine established, experienced and respected Calgary social service agencies that have come together along with government with a single one-time goal: create affordable rental housing, with supports, for up to 3,000 vulnerable and homeless Calgarians. This level of collaboration is a first in Calgary and in Canada to address affordable housing. Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://www.resolvecampaign.com/about/">http://www.resolvecampaign.com/about/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Alberta’s Seven Cities Partnership | Calgary Homeless Foundation, City of Grande Prairie, City of Grande Prairie | This regional partnership enables 7 cities to work together towards ending homelessness through systems integration, knowledge sharing, and funding coordination. Through this

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Lethbridge, Homeward Trust Edmonton, Medicine Hat Community Housing Society, City of Red Deer, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo partnership, Housing First and ‘plans to end’ were determined as the most cost-effective solutions based on best practices research. The partnership efforts have resulted in increased funding for affordable housing initiatives, homelessness projects, capital development, and rent supplements. All seven cities work on system planning and integration, funding and performance management, and knowledge leadership and innovation. At the same time, this offers a platform to connect with both the provincial and federal governments.

Additional information can be found at: https://www.7cities.ca/

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force North Vancouver, British Columbia The North Shore Homelessness Task Force aims to “address homelessness and issues related to homelessness on the North Shore.” Membership includes non-profit organizations, the local health authority, the RCMP, the faith community, municipal employees, service providers, and committed residents. The Task Force was initially formed in 1998. The District of North Vancouver provides meeting space and pays for the coordinator’s contract. A Steering Committee consists of the Task Force chairperson, social planners from the three municipalities, two agencies, and Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH). The Steering Committee decides on the agenda for the Task Force and generally is the main decision maker. The Task Force works collaboratively to pursue the objectives of a 10-year plan (2008-2018). The Task Force is action oriented, and members are expected to play an active role; working groups are created to respond to specific needs, and these are where the majority of work happens. Working groups have included groups responding to family shelter needs, dental services, data coordination and communications. The 10 year plan identified 6 primary areas for work: 1. Maintaining linkages to related initiatives and work, 2. Fathering of information and evidence, 3. Establishing and maintaining a communications strategy, 4. Advocating for a continuum of housing, 5. Advocating for a continuum of support services, and 6. Advocating for adequate income levels and employment training.

**Coordinated Service Provision**

It is important to coordinate of activities among front-line service providers that reduce barriers and facilitate access to all services available in Spruce Grove and the region to support long-term client recovery. Systems must be properly resourced, simple to navigate, and must target the community’s resources quickly and efficiently to the people who are most in need. In Housing First, client support is typically provided by a case management team and/or a case manager that serves as a main point of contact for a client from assessment to follow-up.

An assessment of various coordination approaches to social work identified some commons success factors:

- Client Level Factors- Complexity of needs on the one hand can drive the dependence of various service providers upon one another in servicing a client. However, complexity, with an increasing number of service providers involved, can tax coordination.

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Personal Relationships - Personal relationships between service providers can be valuable in different ways depending upon at which level these personal relationships exist. When there exists (positive) personal relationships between administrative or executive levels, coordination between organizations can be facilitated. Between service providers that are at the case-worker levels, personal relationships can facilitate effective communication, and help to avoid the dangers of conflict in coordination.

Decision Making Power in Coordination - Decision making power being present within the coordination can be helpful, as one interviewee of the study noted, “things get done because there were people with power.” Having the appropriate authority represented in the coordination so that resources can be exchanged as needed can improve the effectiveness of the collaborations.

Incentives for Coordination - Funding schemes that encourage, require, or provide incentives to providers for coordinating can be helpful in fostering the conditions, and the relationships for ongoing coordination.

Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsford Intensive Case Management</td>
<td>Abbotsford, British Columbia</td>
<td>Abbotsford Intensive Case Management follows an assessment process focused on acuity which uses a vulnerability assessment tool, in addition to other assessment tools, used in partnership with Fraser Health Authority. Moderate to high acuity clients are streamed in to an inter-agency team. These clients receive supports related to housing, health, income assistance, and other support connections. The program has up to 32 active spaces of case management at any one time. The program focuses on Housing First, but once individuals are housed, ongoing supports are provided in order to support clients in retaining housing beyond the active 32 spaces. A number of key factors in the success of the program have been identified. First, all components of the integration and coordination are based on stakeholder consultation and driven by working groups. Second, the program is reviewed by stakeholders annually, leading to substantial buy-in in the process. Finally, having a position funded by the City and the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) allows high quality coordination work with the committee and a broader stakeholder network. Based on an interview with Dena Kae Beno, Homelessness Coordinator, City of Abbotsford.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Community Outreach Teams</td>
<td>Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia</td>
<td>These teams help unstably housed individuals who are offenders with complex needs and who have frequent contact with police and emergency services. Team members have daily contact with clients. The team is comprised of a probation officer, mental health social worker, mental health outreach worker, psychiatric nurse, income assistance worker, and a police officer. They help clients get housing, fight addictions, overcome mental health issues, and access employment. The Victoria Integrated Community Outreach Team (VICOT) helps clients develop life skills. The Vancouver Intensive Supervision Unit (VISU) helps reduce hospital and jail admissions. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/corrections/reducing-reoffending/integrated-community-outreach-teams">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/corrections/reducing-reoffending/integrated-community-outreach-teams</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized Access to Housing</td>
<td>Victoria, British Columbia</td>
<td>CASH is a cross-organizational hub where applications for and referrals to mental health and addictions supported housing in Victoria are collected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supported Housing (CASH) program

Through CASH, there is a single intake process for assessing and matching client needs and supported housing site’s service levels. Five Coalition partners from the Service Integration Working Group collaborated to simplify the intake process. This initiative streamlines the application process. It used to be that each housing provider had its own referral and intake process, which complicated clients’ access to services.

Additional information can be found at: [http://victoriasupportedhousing.ca/](http://victoriasupportedhousing.ca/)

**Community Awareness and Education**

Stakeholders have identified a need for greater resources on engaging the community around issues of homelessness and poverty.

**Case Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming NIMBYism</td>
<td>Victoria, British Columbia</td>
<td>The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness created a “NIMBY Fact Sheet”. This sheet highlighted facts relating to common ‘Not in my back yard” provided information that challenged the common assumptions. In particular, the NIMBY Fact Sheet addressed concerns regarding property values, crime and safety, density and congestion, neighbourhood character, new resident behaviours and values, and unfair distribution of affordable housing projects within the city. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://victoriahomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NIMBY-Package-Print_FINAL.pdf">https://victoriahomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NIMBY-Package-Print_FINAL.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Overcoming NIMBYism | New York, USA      | The following outlines an approach to community engagement for a housing project in New York City for the formerly incarcerated. This project had two advantages: first, the project did not use public funds, so there was less of a requirement for political support, and second, the site was already appropriately zoned. The project began with a 5 year plan, including an outreach element. The outreach strategy included the following actions::  
  * Reaching out to elected officials  
  * Identifying and reaching out to community stakeholders and leaders  
  * Hiring of a community liaison, who lived in the neighbourhood, and was involved constantly  
  * Top leadership was available, accountable, and gave the project weight  
  * The group balanced client needs with the need to give voice to community concerns, but also debunked myths, and educated people  
  * The project focused on the importance of being a good neighbour and responding promptly to community concerns  
  * Creation of a community advisory board  

Overall, the approach, and its key themes can be summarized as a focus on, and commitment to: a) organizational readiness, b) identifying and engaging stakeholders, c) trust, accessibility, and accountability, d) being a good neighbour, and e) effective leadership. Additional information can be found at: [https://issuu.com/thefortunesociety/docs/fortune_news_-community](https://issuu.com/thefortunesociety/docs/fortune_news_-community)
Innovative Approaches to Housing

Ensuring there is a diversity of housing types across the spectrum, from temporary, to supportive, to a variety of below market and market housing options, including both rental and ownership, is the key to healthy housing system. While housing types on the affordable end of the spectrum often require resources from senior government (capital or operating funds), forms of housing can be regulated by local government to encourage a greater diversity of housing, which in turn can help encourage new low-end of market and market rental and ownership options. Local governments can also encourage different forms of tenure (e.g. through zoning that allows secondary suites or carriage homes, rental incentivization programs, etc.).

The term ‘missing middle’ housing often refers to middle density-housing: homes that are more dense than single-family dwellings, but lower density than high-rise apartments. Missing middle homes can include carriage homes, secondary suites, duplexes, multi-plexes, townhomes and small apartment buildings. The examples described below show some examples of how local governments have encouraged diversity of tenure and housing form.

Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carriage houses</td>
<td>City of Kelowna</td>
<td>The City of Kelowna currently allows carriage homes, a small house located on a property that can be used for family or rentals. Typically there are size and height restrictions relative to the principal dwelling. The City of Kelowna allows carriage homes in certain zones within the Permanent Growth Boundary. Carriage homes can provide private market rental housing through infill development, that will not affect the form and character of a community or neighbourhood, but over time has significant potential to increase available rental stock. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://www.kelowna.ca/homes-building/carriage-houses">https://www.kelowna.ca/homes-building/carriage-houses</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixing housing in institutional buildings</td>
<td>Regional Municipality of York</td>
<td>Local governments, places of worship, and community organizations are exploring how to enhance institutional uses with services for social good. It presents an opportunity to scale and combine capital infrastructure funds and deliver housing close to – and within – buildings that provide community amenities. In doing so, jurisdictions can actively incorporate residential and affordability goals into services and institutions supplied on public land. The Regional Municipality of York has laid out in their Regional Official Plan “…affordable housing initiatives be given priority on publicly owned lands with a focus on locations on or near transit corridors.” Currently, Housing York manages Richmond Hill Community Hub, which provides 202 affordable housing units for seniors, singles, and a mix of subsidized and market rental units. 360°kids, a non-profit, incorporates housing with a youth-focused drop-in centre, recreational space, activity rooms, and emergency bedrooms. Additional information is available here: <a href="http://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/0dc3cfc2-2e0f-49d2-b523-dc7c14b08273/15001_yropConsolidation2016AccessibleMay42016.pdf?MOD=AJPERES">http://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/0dc3cfc2-2e0f-49d2-b523-dc7c14b08273/15001_yropConsolidation2016AccessibleMay42016.pdf?MOD=AJPERES</a> and here:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Affordable housing incentive programs | City of Kamloops | The City of Kamloops currently provides a range of incentives to encourage affordable rentals within the community. Developers can receive contributions from the City’s Affordable Housing Reserve Fund of any from $2,000-$5,000/unit, depending on the size of the development. The City also provides a downtown revitalization tax exemption, reduced parking requirements, and expedited processing support and application processes. These tools can reduce the cost of affordable housing for non-profits or developers, and can be leveraged to access support from senior government, such as the province or CMHC.

Additional information can be found at: [https://www.kamloops.ca/sites/default/files/docs/homes-businesses/16-kamloopsaffordablehousingdeveloperspackage.pdf](https://www.kamloops.ca/sites/default/files/docs/homes-businesses/16-kamloopsaffordablehousingdeveloperspackage.pdf)

| Encourage greater diversity of forms, particularly ‘missing middle’ housing | Metro Vancouver | Research in Metro Vancouver into tools and measures for local government to address housing diversity and affordability show that a number of the tools most commonly used by local governments to shape housing trends have to do with form and density of housing. Some of the most widely used measures included:

- Increased density in areas appropriate for affordable housing
- Secondary suites permitted in all single family residential zones
- Infill housing measures encouraged
- Smaller lots in new subdivisions
- Broadening ‘missing middle’ zoning such as townhomes and duplex

These measures can have a significant long-term impact on the type of housing being built which affects future supply of housing.

Additional information can be found at: [http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/CMHC_MunicipalMeasures.pdf](http://www.housing.gov.bc.ca/pub/CMHC_MunicipalMeasures.pdf)
Healthy Food

Stakeholders have identified a need to integrate healthy food and food programming into any efforts to address poverty and homelessness. Food programming often takes the form of food banks or soup kitchen meal programs. While these have long been a cornerstone of the homeless and at-risk-serving sectors, there are examples of food programming that go beyond the traditional charitable model and embrace an enterprise or choice-based approach to food security. Three examples below outline some recent innovations in food programming.

### Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food for Friends by Operation Sharing</td>
<td>Oxford County, Ontario</td>
<td>Food for Friends is a program operated by Operation Sharing, serving individuals and families experiencing low-income or financial difficulties in Oxford County, Ontario. Families and individuals in need of emergency food assistance receive a specially designed food card in pre-determined denominations (typically $25 for individuals and $45 for families) as an alternative or supplement to the food bank. Households can use these cards to do their grocery shopping at any of the participating grocery stores in Oxford County. Operation Sharing fundraises for the program through the donation of quarters by the public at local businesses. This method of providing food assistance is vital for those with special diets or serious health issues, and allows significantly more choice in food planning for households experiencing food insecurity than a food bank program. Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://homelesshub.ca/blog/are-grocery-cards-better-approach-food-banks-solving-food-insecurity">http://homelesshub.ca/blog/are-grocery-cards-better-approach-food-banks-solving-food-insecurity</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnegie Centre Cafeteria</td>
<td>Vancouver, BC</td>
<td>The Carnegie Community Centre cafeteria is open seven days a week, 365 days a year. The cafeteria “provides nutritious, tasty hot meals with a different menu each day.” Meals are provided at an extremely low cost to assure that local low-income residents can readily access nutritious, fresh and affordable food. Meals are produced using seasonal, local ingredients where possible. The Cafeteria program steps away from a charity-driven model of food provision, that relies on donations, and the free provision of food. Instead, the Carnegie model is based on a cost-recovery model, where patrons pay between $1 and $3.00 depending on their meal. Individuals can also volunteer in the kitchen in order to receive meal credits. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://dteskitchentables.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/DTES-Kitchen-Tables-Community-Action-Plan-Phase-1-FINAL-REPORT.pdf">https://dteskitchentables.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/DTES-Kitchen-Tables-Community-Action-Plan-Phase-1-FINAL-REPORT.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeftOvers Rescue Food Society</td>
<td>Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>LeftOvers Calgary is an organization that strives to divert food away from the garbage and toward those in need. With nearly half of all food worldwide being wasted, this program ensures that good food that might go to a landfill is redirected to service agencies who can use it. LeftOvers delivers perishable food to a range of food service agencies, including food banks, shelters, and other services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or low-incomes. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://rescuefood.ca/what-we-do/">https://rescuefood.ca/what-we-do/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accessible Transportation

Lack of access to (affordable) transit is often cited as a key barrier to service access for individuals experiencing homelessness and low-income. Better supporting individuals to access transit can strengthen their ability to access services, seeking housing, or retain employment. Below are some Alberta-based examples of innovative transit-related programs.

Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routes to Home, Transit and Social Skills Support</td>
<td>Edmonton, Alberta</td>
<td>Routes to Home project was a transit and social support intervention for homeless youth. The project was researching the impact of free or subsidized transit passes (monthly bus passes or bi-weekly bus tickets) had on personal safety, social exclusion, access to social supports and negative interactions with transit authorities. The study found that the impact of receiving a monthly bus pass or biweekly transit tickets was overwhelmingly positive for homeless youth, reducing negative interactions with transit authorities and allowing them to access social supports beyond their normal walking range. Additional Information can be found at: <a href="http://homelesshub.ca/resource/routes-homes-transit-and-social-support-intervention-homeless-youth">http://homelesshub.ca/resource/routes-homes-transit-and-social-support-intervention-homeless-youth</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Low Income Monthly Transit Pass              | Calgary, Alberta | In spring 2017 City Council approved the cost of a low income monthly pass with a sliding scale pricing system. The sliding scale assesses income and assigns a purchase price. There are three tiers of pricing for different income levels (2018 prices)  
  - Band A: $5.15/month  
  - Band B $36.05/month  
  - Band C: $51.50/month |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Additional Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turning the Key (TTK)</td>
<td>Nanaimo, British Columbia</td>
<td>Through the Nanaimo Women’s Centre, TTK offers tenancy support to all individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. The program offers outreach services for viewing rental homes, mediation services between the tenant and landlord, assistance filling out B.C, housing &amp; other non-profit housing applications, support towards finding and maintaining a safe home, support claiming all relevant benefits, support reporting repairs &amp; problems to your landlord, start-up kits, and help finding furnishings. Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://www.nanaimowomen.com/programs">http://www.nanaimowomen.com/programs</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CMHA Lambton-Kent</td>
<td>Lambton Kent, Ontario</td>
<td>CMHA Lambton-Kent provides a range of mental health supports from crisis intervention, to ongoing case management, clinical services and mental health promotion activities. The project’s promising practices include: supporting tenants to transition from living in group homes to self-contained supportive housing units; housing tenants with private landlords under a housing first model. Tenants receive the mental health supports they need to be able to maintain housing. In the CHPI funded program, the first reporting cycle of 8 months, there was an 80% reduction in ER visits across their entire supportive housing program. Additional information can be found at: <a href="https://amho.ca/wp-content/uploads/Prom-Prac-Resource-Guide-Final02.pdf">https://amho.ca/wp-content/uploads/Prom-Prac-Resource-Guide-Final02.pdf</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homeward Trust</td>
<td>Edmonton, Alberta</td>
<td>This is one of the leading organizations addressing homelessness in Edmonton and one of the key partners in the 7 Cities initiative. Homeward Trust also uses the Housing First model and funds and coordinates the development of new housing for homeless, at-risk, and in-need populations. One of the key distinguishing factors of the organization is the active participation of Indigenous people at the decision-making level through the Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC). The IAC provides knowledge, cultural perspectives, and awareness of the urban Aboriginal experience to the advisory process. It reviews all funding applications and provides feedback and recommendations as to the cultural appropriateness of delivery models. Indigenous relations and perspectives are a key component in the organization’s approach to end homelessness. Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://homewardtrust.ca/who-we-are/committees/">http://homewardtrust.ca/who-we-are/committees/</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer Native Friendship Society</td>
<td>Red Deer, Alberta</td>
<td>Considering the over-representation of Indigenous people in the homeless population in cities across Canada, culturally sensitive housing practices are integral to effectively ending homelessness. The Native Friendship Society is an Aboriginal agency that provides culturally based supports and services to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people through programs and services where cultural diversity is understood, and Aboriginal identity is nurtured. The Aboriginal Housing Team aids in housing prevention for individuals, couples or families at risk of losing their home. It offers Cultural Connections by serving those in housing programs who are interested in support through cultural teachings and ceremonies. PIMACIHOWIN offers intensive care for those who have been chronically homeless. Additional information can be found at: <a href="http://rdnfs.com/housing/">http://rdnfs.com/housing/</a></td>
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Appendix D

Actions to Support Implementation
### Themes & Key Ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grounding Concepts</th>
<th>Key ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration &amp; Partnerships</td>
<td>Champions table</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Systems lens &amp; governance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reconciliation</td>
<td>Integrate cultural lens to service provision</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase collaboration with surrounding Indigenous communities</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Key ideas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Supports</td>
<td>Implement Housing First</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coordinate Service Provision</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Innovative Approaches to Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Inclusion &amp; Capacity</td>
<td>Elevating voices of Lived experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Increasing youth connections</td>
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<td>Healthy Living</td>
<td>Citizen education and awareness</td>
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<td>Income &amp; employment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Healthy food</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accessible transportation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Organizing Notes**

- For each of the 5 themes, body of the document will tell a story about the theme area including: Brief context about what is happening in Spruce Grove
- Assets to build on (good things that need to be scaled up)
- Actions (from the Actions column on tabs following)
- Doing this (and putting greater detail in an Appendix), ensures that the document is accessible and readable.

An Appendix will include the more detailed table of Actions, Action Steps, Timeline, and Key Collaborators
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>ACTION STEPS</th>
<th>TIMELINE (Start By)</th>
<th>KEY COLLABORATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Formalize a Champions Table made up of passionate people from multiple diverse organizations (private companies, social serving sector, all levels of government, researchers, people with lived experience) to coordinate Strategy implementation, including government relations and funding, prioritization of action steps, monitoring and evaluation, and collaborative accountability.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS Additional Partners: Landlord Tenancy Association; CMHC; Reaching Home Representative; Justice Representation; Alberta Seniors; MLA &amp; MPs; local media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determine the ‘host’ backbone organization of the Table, its funding structure, and its relationship to the City of Spruce Grove.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare an annual workplan to guide the activities of the Table.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS/Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare Terms of Reference, including how the group will make decisions, work together, meeting frequency, and membership.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Designate a Chair and Co-Chair.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Create a comprehensive System Map to better understand current resources, assets, gaps, and duplications to capture efficiencies in service delivery.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage in a series of focus groups with youth, families, seniors and others with lived experience to identify their needs and explore how they find help.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scale up the use of virtual support system tools (211 and HelpSeeker) by ensuring that end users know about and have access to the services.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS Support: ACT, Community Compass, TriRegion partners,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate System Map and work to eliminate service duplication.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Align service provision to Strategy goals.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formalize partnerships in the Tri-Region, with surrounding Indigenous Bands, and with the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Metropolitan Region.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: Mayor &amp; Council; Urban Development Institute (UDI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Host an annual regional homelessness and poverty reduction Summit for the Tri Region and local Indigenous Bands to explore and prioritize up to three capstone initiatives for implementation each year.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: Mayor &amp; Council; Urban Development Institute (UDI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage in regular conversations with Edmonton agencies to align services and the homeless and poverty systems maps.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create ways to better track migration of homeless individuals across Tri-Region and Edmonton Capital Region. Integrate the PIT Homeless Needs Estimate count into the ETO database.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS Support: Tri-Region Ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Engage development industry, landlords and realtors as key partners in delivering a housing first model and increasing the supply of affordable and rental housing units in Spruce Grove.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS and City of Spruce Grove: UDI &amp; Canadian Homebuilders Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invite developers and landlords to both the Champions Table and the Regional Housing Summit.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS and City of Spruce Grove: UDI &amp; Canadian Homebuilders Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage and listen to landlord needs in supporting both low and high acuity clients in the housing first program. Ensure value proposition and risk management is defined and included in the housing first program model. (see #2 Housing and Supports).</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS Support: Capital Regional Housing; Landlord Tenancy Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize MOUs with participating landlords to establish mutually defined terms and expectations. Establish a budget to cover arrears, subsidies, clean ups, as well as support staff for clients and landlords.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage the development industry to determine interest, value proposition, and potential partnership models for delivering a portion of the housing first units through scattered site programming and in market rental units.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table and City of Spruce Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage the development industry to identify and advocate for specific housing needs in the community (i.e. studio and one bedroom units).</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table and City of Spruce Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize MOUs with participating developers and operating partners to establish mutually defined terms and expectations.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table and City of Spruce Grove Support: Chamber of Commerce; UDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Set up an integrated data management system for use by all service providers.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Participate in learning communities to share and learn best practices and champion preventing and ending poverty and homelessness.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: FCSS, Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with service providers to align data collection to one consistent system.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participate in learning communities to share and learn best practices and champion preventing and ending poverty and homelessness.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: FCSS, Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>ACTION STEPS</td>
<td>TIMELINE (Start By)</td>
<td>KEY COLLABORATORS</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1 | Recognize accountability for Indigenous homelessness, poverty, and income, education, and health disparities as ongoing forms of colonialism, as identified in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action | Raise awareness and support education about the TRC Calls to Action in both the social serving sector and the broader community. | 2019 | Lead: FCSS  
Support: Native Counselling Services, Aboriginal Parent Link, Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers; Treaty 6 Chiefs, SG Library, PSD, Aboriginal Outreach representative at Health Services. |
| 1 | | Formally adopt the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness definition of Indigenous Homelessness. | 2019 | Lead: Champions Table  
Support: First Nations and Indigenous community leaders, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, ARDN |
| 2 | Work with Indigenous organizations and people to embed Indigenous cultural practices and cultural safety into homelessness and poverty reduction services and approaches. Consider a liaison position for education and awareness building. | Work with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to improve service design and delivery. | 2019 | Lead: Champions Table  
Support: Mayor, Council, FCSS, those with lived experience, First Nations, Indigenous community leaders, Counselling Services |
| 2 | | Support Indigenous organizations and programs embedding cultural and healing practices into service delivery. | 2020 | Lead: Champions Table, everyone |
| 2 | | Work with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to raise awareness about cultural safety and sensitivity among all service providers, businesses, and landlords. | 2019 | Lead: FCSS  
Support: local secondary school principals or representatives, Community Elders and Knowledge Keepers |
| 2 | | Explore the possibility of building a Friendship Centre | 2020 | Lead: Indigenous Community Leaders |
| 2 | | Celebrate Treaty Days to increase awareness and inclusion | 2019 | Lead: FCSS |
| 3 | Formally invite local Indigenous organizations, Elders and Band leadership from the Enoch Cree Nation, Paul First Nation, Alexander First Nation, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Michel Band, and the Tri-Area Metis Local to be active participants at the Champions’ Table. | Present the Strategy to local Indigenous Bands, and Metis to invite them to discuss how they would like to participate in the implementation | 2019 | Lead: Champions Table |
| 3 | | Work with Indigenous organizations and representatives to identify and invite participation from local Indigenous Bands | | Lead: Champions Table |
### ACTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>ACTION STEPS</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
<th>KEY COLLABORATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adopt Housing First as a defining practice among all service providers.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, Support: homeless-serving agencies (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with all social serving organizations who are members of the Champions Table to embed Housing First as a key strategy principle and philosophy into the strategic plans of each organization.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, Support: homeless-serving agencies (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct training and capacity building for Housing First for all service providers. Identify key partners to deliver Housing First programming in Spruce Grove.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table, Support: GOA - Alberta Supports, Federal Government - Youth Hub, FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homeless service providers, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure funds to support individuals at imminent risk of homelessness by creating engage in the system for:</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assertive Community Treatment</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Rapid Rehousing</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Prevention (SavemornCARE)</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support individuals to access and maintain housing in the rental market through the creation of a system designed using a Housing First and right to housing lens.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore how to support individuals who do not have identification documents to access the system.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Potential lead: Alberta Privacy Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an integrated service model specific to seniors that drive collaboration and coordination between housing serving agencies, housing and health care services to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to care.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a data collection system that enables evidence based recreation and community centres.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop an easy to use guide for people at risk of becoming homeless to access support quickly. Provide more detailed information than current experiences that basic cooking appliances and food storage (i.e. fridge and a stove) are essential.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Social Services agencies at the Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure Housing First Standards include safety, basic furniture, access to a common data base. Develop a common referral process.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create a Service Provider table of case workers to provide coordinated, wrap around supports.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a strategic plan for fund, plan, develop, and operate 30 units of supportive housing in Spruce Grove.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Build 30 of purpose built, supportive housing with targeted to people experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness with higher needs, and 54 units of affordable housing.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table, Support: Homeless Serving System (homelessness service providing, mainstream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Align data collection and analyze individuals across all homeless-serving agencies in Spruce Grove (and ideally the Tri-Municipalities)</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a data collection system that enables evidence based outcomes to be captured across all housing serving agencies in Spruce Grove (and ideally the Tri-Municipalities) and use it to conduct a system review and future planning. Focus on contracted intake and access to common data base.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Establish a Coordinated Access Process.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a common evaluation protocols and systems, including standardized Key Performance Indicators, and ensure they align with Housing First (Federal Government’s strategy).</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct a system review and future planning. Focus on contracted intake and access to common data base.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage partners and advocate to senior levels of government for funding through local donations, grants, or tax incentives to provide additional funding for affordable housing projects.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table/ FCSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Build 30 units of affordable housing. Work with the Alberta Government and CMHC to secure capital contributions from government.</td>
<td>2019-2022</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create criteria for funds appropriate for the development of affordable housing across the spectrum, and work to conduct a review of City of Spruce Grove land resources to identify parcels available for affordable housing projects.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Chiefs Table, City of Spruce Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Advocate to Alberta Government for ongoing adjustments to rent and income subsidies to better support people at risk of homelessness.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare and undertake an ongoing Governance Relations strategy that sets a clear additional funding towards the homelessness strategy.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct feasibility analysis on implementing a range of financial incentives tools to encourage affordable housing, including community amenity contributions, municipal relief on affordable housing projects, restrictions or grants for development fees and loans, etc. This study should also review tools that have been implemented in other jurisdictions (e.g. density bonuses).</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify flexible opportunities for investment in affordable housing through a broad based strategy for affordable housing development of an affordable housing target to support grants to non-profits (these could be used for a wide range of things, including capital development, capital contributions, land acquisition or contributions to development fees and leases). Explain reasons that existing measures (e.g., density bonuses) have not had developer uptake, and whether providing a cash in lieu option to help develop a housing reserve is feasible for developers.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work to close the gaps between the nonprofit housing sector and the development sector to encourage partnerships to provide a range of affordable housing options. This could be done through formal convening (e.g. annual housing forums) or informal facilitating of introductions.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement opportunities for seniors to age in place.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: City Council, HMN, FCSSAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Spruce Grove Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness: Housing &amp; Supports</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Develop and launch a public education and awareness campaign to address stigma about homelessness and poverty. &lt;br&gt;Secure funding or establish partnerships with media. Consider grants and sponsorships. &lt;br&gt;Prioritize target groups and key messaging. Consider engaging members of the target group in developing key messages and communications roll out. &lt;br&gt;Develop communications collateral (blog posts, websites etc.) and social media presence. Invite community members and youth to create platforms. &lt;br&gt;Partner with media and communications agencies in Spruce Grove and the Tri-Region to expand reach and scope of campaign.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table, FCSS, COSG Communications Dept.  Lead: Champions Table, COSG Communications Dept.  Lead: Champions Table, FCSS, COSG Communications Dept, Community Compass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Engage community members in a series of dialogue sessions to promote understanding and reduce stigma about individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness and poverty. Make sure to meet people where they are at. &lt;br&gt;Engage people with lived/living experience in designing and participating in community conversations. &lt;br&gt;Explore opportunities to screen relevant and engaging films that promote understanding of homelessness and poverty. It may be possible to show a video at Landmark Cinemas or offer public screening at Horizon Stage.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Support: Albert Parenting for the Future Association (APFA), Service Groups (ie: Kinnettes, Rotary); Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Create opportunities for citizens and businesses to contribute to homelessness and poverty reduction. &lt;br&gt;Create a Citizen Pledge that allows citizens, community organizations, and businesses to commit to supporting efforts to end homelessness and reduce poverty. Attract participation through engagement with local businesses on media platforms and on social media, and through interviews with citizens. &lt;br&gt;Develop and then roll out a business engagement program.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: COSG Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Facilitate a Lived Experience Circle in the community to build connections among people with lived experience, service providers and the Strategy’s Champions’ Table. &lt;br&gt;Determine a lead convener for the Lived Experience Circle. &lt;br&gt;Work together with the lived experience circle to begin a peer mentorship program. &lt;br&gt;Work with agencies such as the Library and churches to provide safe places for peers to connect with one another.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table Support: NeighbourLink  Lead: FCSS Support: Aboriginal Groups, Library, AADAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Expand connections of youth to other parts of the community to ensure each young person has a voice and multiple access points to community supports. &lt;br&gt;Host ‘Youth Nights’ two times per month with food to promote youth connections and help all young people learn more about the services available in Spruce Grove. Get the word out through online apps such as HelpSeeker. Work on having multiple access points. &lt;br&gt;Increase youth access to mentorship and positive role models in the community. Consider a Reading &amp; Running program with various organizations. Consider a way to offer youth engagement in helping young families and seniors in their homes (yard work, shoveling, child minding) for mental health and connecting generation.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS Youth Services  Lead: FCSS Youth Services Support: Faith groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Advance access to, and learning about, healthy, sustainable, and financial literacy in the school system.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, Food Bank; Support: Tri-region ministerial group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore creative partnerships (Food Bank, Youth Hub), to improve youth access to healthy and fresh food. Introduce cooking nights at the Youth Hub and explore community kitchen programs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support: Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partner with the School District to implement a course that teaches all families about financial literacy skills, including budgeting, banking, rental agreements and tenancy law, and mortgages.</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Support: Champions Table, Youth Services, Bredin Credit Counselling Society; Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with the School District and especially teachers to help them learn how to make referrals for youth and/or their families for other support in the community.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Community Connectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Support low income individuals shifting from eating processed food to accessing and cooking healthy food. Work with donors to encourage them to donate ingredients instead of processed food.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: FCSS, Food Bank; Support: Tri-region ministerial group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce a program for low income individuals and families that includes cooking classes, community kitchen and bulk food preparation, food education, gardening, and supported access to wholesale purchasing. This will help to expand the existing community kitchen.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Before funding to expand services provided by the food bank to incorporate healthy food skills - preparation and access to a community oven, community meals, and affordable produce.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: Food Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore opportunities for innovative food redistribution strategies to reduce food waste across retailers and producers.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Encourage local food production and consumption in all neighbourhoods.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table; Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage developers to incorporate community gardens into new multi-unit or apartment style development. Consider the use of vacant Church land, as well as community park space for community gardens.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create a program to facilitate harvesting and processing of unused fruit from private residences to be donated to the Food Bank.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Food Bank; Support: FCSS, Chamber of Commerce; Tri-ministerial group, grocery stores and restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During the roll out of the City of Spruce Grove’s new transit routes and service, introduce a Low Cost Transit Pass for individuals with lower incomes. Ensure that the subsidy aligns with income support benefits for transportation.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: City of Spruce Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support the Engage Bus by encouraging ridership.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with TriRegion government partners and Indigenous communities to create a Regional Transit Plan.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: Environmental Science and Transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocate to senior levels of government for increased regional transportation options, in particular for improved transit infrastructure and coverage, and a low cost transit pass.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore alternative methods of transportation appropriate for small cities including formalized ride-share, carshare, or bikeshare. Explore creating a Community Access Pass for low income individuals or families.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Champions Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate the usage data and user experiences on specialized transit/transportation services. Use the findings to explore creative opportunities to provide increased service and improved user experience.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: COSG; Support: FCSS, SG Specialized Transit Service, Stony Plain HandiBus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Expand transportation options to facilitate access and connection to all services in Spruce Grove and the TriRegion.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: First 5 Forever; Support: YMCA, Kincare; Child Support Services; Alberta Supports; Native Counselling; APFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support: Champions Table, Youth Services, Bredin Credit Counselling Society; Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Expand and strengthen support to families for early childhood development.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: ParentLink; Support: APFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advocate to senior levels of government for child care subsidies.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: First 5 Forever; Support: YMCA, Kincare; Child Support Services; Alberta Supports; Native Counselling; APFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide peer to peer training and support for early childhood development.</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Lead: ParentLink; Support: APFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Advance literacy, income security and supports.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: ATB; Support: United Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance supported employment and training opportunities to increase employment for Spruce Grove residents, especially alongside individuals who have faced barriers to employment. Explore social enterprise models.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: ATB; Support: United Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work with local financial institutions to increase access to a banking and financial services, especially for people with low incomes or who are or have experienced homelessness.</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Lead: ATB; Support: United Way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Increase access to recreational activities</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Wishing You Wellness; Support: Tri-Leisure; Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sponsor a recreation program that provides low cost/free recreation and/or admission for those living in poverty.</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Lead: Wishing You Wellness; Support: Tri-Leisure; Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>