

NO: R222

COUNCIL DATE: **October 3, 2016**

---

## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor and Council** DATE: **September 27, 2016**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development** FILE: **5080-01**  
**City Manager**

SUBJECT: **Update on Activities Surrounding Homelessness and Addictions in City Centre**

---

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the British Columbia Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Natural Gas Development, and the Minister Responsible for Housing that highlights the need for the Province to expedite the design and delivery of the Gateway Shelter replacement, which will include supportive housing, and to consider moving forward on funding and delivery applications submitted for projects within Surrey that are part of the Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing (PIAH) program of \$355 million that was part of BC Housing call for Expression of Interest (project list attached as Appendix "I").

## INTENT

The intent of this report is to provide Council with a summary of activities surrounding homelessness and addictions in City Centre.

## BACKGROUND

Recently, there has been an alarming level of overdoses due to the distribution of opioid drugs containing fentanyl. This phenomenon has been widely reported in the media and Surrey is no exception, with many overdose cases being reported. This prompted the Provincial Health Officer to declare a state of emergency in April 2016. Over the years, the City, along with service provider partners, has been delivering a number of services and activities surrounding homelessness and addictions.

At the last homeless count, the Metro Vancouver region registered 2,777 people; of those, Surrey registered 403 people, which includes both sheltered and non-sheltered people. In comparison, Vancouver registered 1,803 people.

## DISCUSSION

Around City Centre, the number of homeless people and associated tents have increased significantly, as well as the resistance to comply with City By-laws. Further challenging the issues

in and around 135A Street is the number of camps within the wooded areas in the City Centre; thus making the efforts of staff engaged even more difficult. There have been a number of services offered to individuals requiring help in order to be housed or to deal with addiction or mental health issues. Below is an inventory of those services.

**1. Shelters**

**a. Gateway Shelter, 10667 – 135A Street**

Located on 135A Street, this co-ed shelter provides 40 low-barrier beds. It is operated by Lookout Emergency Aid Society (“Lookout”) with funding from BC Housing. The bunk room is closed/not accessible to residents during the day. The shelter residents have access to meals, laundry services, and a common space in the Front Room Drop-in. The shelter is consistently at full capacity, with individuals being turned away every day.

**b. Boulevard (Winter) Shelter, 10677 Whalley Boulevard**

Opened in December 2015, the Boulevard Shelter provides 40 low-barrier beds. The shelter is funded by BC Housing and operated by Lookout. The shelter provides a variety of services on-site for the residents including showers, meals, laundry, and connections to income assistance, disability support, housing support, and health services.

In addition to sleeping areas, the shelter includes a common area with TV and computers, and private outdoor space at the front of the shelter. Only shelter residents can access the shelter. Residents can stay in the shelter 24 hours a day. The Boulevard Shelter takes clients from Gateway Shelter or from referrals (RCMP, Surrey Memorial Hospital, et cetera). This shelter was originally a temporary winter shelter and slated to close in April 2016; BC Housing has provided funding to keep the shelter open until April 2017. The shelter is consistently full.

It is important to note that since the shelter opened and individuals have a guaranteed bed, this has allowed patrons to receive much needed services. As a result, to date 97 people have been housed from the shelter into permanent housing or long-term treatment facilities since December 2015.

A Community Advisory Committee is convened by the City and includes representatives of the BIA, local residents, Lookout, Fraser Health, RCMP, and BC Housing. Committee members have generally reported no complaints about the shelter and that the area is clean and well-maintained.

**c. Proposed Winter Shelter**

The City’s Realty Services Division has been diligently working for the last year to identify a suitable site for a new proposed winter shelter, to be funded in part by BC Housing.

**d. Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Program**

The EWR Program provides temporary shelter spaces (mats on the floor) during periods of extreme weather (EWR Alerts) over the winter (November-March). BC Housing funds EWR in communities such as Surrey, where the number of homeless people exceeds the number of shelter beds. EWR shelters are only open overnight; people are back on the streets at 7am.

In April 2016, in response to the emergence of tents on and around 135A Street, BC Housing provided support to enable EWR spaces to be used during the summer. Currently, a total of approximately 50 temporary 'mats' are being used every night at Gateway Shelter, Boulevard Shelter, Surrey Urban Mission, Positive Haven (in Lookout's North Surrey Health Clinic) and at Options' Hyland House in Newton. All the temporary spaces were immediately filled when they were made available in April and remain at capacity.

## 2. **Supportive Housing Initiatives**

Over the past few years, Council has approved partnership projects with BC Housing in order to deliver much needed supportive housing which greatly helps the homeless or persons at risk of being homeless. Projects built include:

### **a. *Timber Grove Apartments, 13922 - 101 Avenue***

Opened in 2012, Timber Grove has 52 studio apartments for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. Most of the residents have significant mental health issues; none have active addictions. Fraser Health provides on-site support.

### **b. *Pederson Place and Bolivar Court, 13245 King George Boulevard***

Operated by Fraserside Community Services, Peterson Place and Bolivar Court are located in a renovated former Howard Johnson motel on King George Boulevard.

Bolivar Court opened in 2009. It provides 19 supportive, no-barrier units for people with both significant mental health and addictions issues (concurrent disorders). It is funded by Fraser Health.

Peterson Place provides 39 units of independent living units for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (opened in 2012). It is funded by BC Housing.

### **c. *Ted Kuhn Apartments, 13350 Old Yale Road***

Ted Kuhn Apartments is owned and operated by BC Housing. The two high-rise apartment buildings have a total of 492 units, primarily for seniors and people with disabilities. Since 2009, BC Housing has made available some apartment units for homeless people. BC Housing is in the process of selling Ted Kuhn to a qualified social housing operator (RFP was issued in the summer).

## 3. **Homeless Services**

### **a. *Homeless Outreach***

BC Housing funds Lookout and Options to provide outreach services. Outreach workers engage with homeless people (both in the shelters and on the street), connect them to services, and support their transition off the street (initiated in 2006). The outreach program provides some rent supplements to 311 units in 2015-2016, which enables those people to afford the rent for a private market housing unit.

**b. Front Room Drop-in, 10667 - 135A Street**

The Front Room is a 24-hour drop-in centre on 135A Street, operated by Lookout. It is co-located with the Gateway Shelter. The Front Room provides free meals, washroom and shower facilities, and laundry. It also provides housing support and referrals. It is the only 24-hour drop-in centre in Surrey.

Clients include: Gateway Shelter residents, homeless people, people living in poverty and/or precariously housed who come for the meals and/or to socialize, sex workers looking for a safe place, and people with addictions and mental health issues. Approximately 250 people use the Front Room each day, which creates long line-ups for the one washroom and shower. There are no separate rooms for the provision of counselling and/or health services.

The BC Housing operating funding provides 2 staff on duty in the Front Room. Lookout has reported that Front Room staff has been administering naloxone to people on 135A Street on a daily basis, in response to the overdose crisis.

**c. Surrey Urban Mission (SUMS), 10776 King George Boulevard**

SUMS is a faith-based agency with one full-time staff member. It relies primarily on donations. Meals are provided, supplying over 90,000 meals a year (daily breakfast and lunch, and Sunday dinners). SUMS operates as an overnight shelter (mats on the floor) during extreme weather alerts. As described above, it is currently providing emergency mats to about 25 people every night.

**d. Nightshift Street Ministries, 10635 King George Boulevard**

Nightshift is a faith-based agency offering Christian counselling services, outreach services, and a mobile kitchen that serves dinner each night. Nightshift also runs a care bus that includes street level nursing, counselling, library services, and more on 2 nights per week.

**4. Addictions Services**

**a. North Surrey Community Health Clinic, 10697 - 135A Street**

Located on 135A Street, the North Surrey Health Clinic is a low-barrier clinic funded by Fraser Health and operated by Lookout. It offers general health services, addictions referrals, counselling for mental health issues, low-cost dental services, and supports for people who are HIV+ (Positive Haven Program and High-Protein Food Bank). Needle distribution is offered at the Clinic through Positive Point Harm Reduction, including a mobile unit for those unable to get to the Clinic.

**b. Creekside Withdrawal Management Centre, Detox, Daytox and Outpatient Detox, 13740 - 94A Avenue**

Creekside provides 24-hour, medically supervised environment for detox. It operates 24 adult beds and 6 beds for youth, and includes counselling and assistance to find temporary housing/recovery beds. A daytox service offering a group-based day program for withdrawal management is also operated onsite. Creekside Detox, Daytox and Outpatient Detox serves the Fraser Region.

**c. *Quibble Creek Health and Phoenix Transition Housing Centre,  
13670 - 94A Avenue***

Opened in 2012, Fraser Health operates a 25-mat sobering centre that provides a maximum of 23 hour stay for people to safely sober up.

Fraser Health also operates a clinic on-site that offers outpatient counselling, referrals, and treatment and prevention services. The Primary Care Clinic offers an Opiate Substitution Therapy program (methadone and suboxone), as well as primary care services to those with substance use issues.

Phoenix Society operates 15 short-term access to recovery rooms (STAR beds), as well as 52 supported transitional housing units for people in addictions recovery.

**d. *Phoenix Centre, 13686 - 94A Avenue***

This facility opened in 2007 and provides 28 short-term addictions recovery beds for men (90 day stays), funded by Fraser Health. It also operates 36 transitional housing units for those in recovery. The Phoenix Centre also provides education and employment programs on-site, in partnership with other organizations.

The Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society (EMBERS) is a community economic development charity that has been working in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside since 2001. EMBERS offers employment supports and opportunities to people facing employment barriers, and has recently opened an office in the storefront at the Phoenix Centre.

**e. *Phoenix Society – Rising Sun Villas***

This facility opened in 2015. It includes 23 transitional housing units for men and women in addictions recovery; 26 supportive housing beds for men re-integrating into the community; and 23 units providing a new model of affordable, shared-equity home ownership to eligible households. The site also includes a social innovation centre.

**f. *Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Program & Housing First Integrated Case Management Team***

Fraser Health and the Ministry of Health jointly fund two ACT teams in Surrey. ACT teams provide community-based support for adults with serious and persistent mental illness - many have co-existing substance use issues and may be homeless.

ACT teams are mobile and multidisciplinary, providing comprehensive assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, and support in the community.

ACT was initiated in Surrey in 2012 with one team that could support up to 100 clients. A second ACT team was added in 2014, adding capacity for an additional 100 clients in Surrey (200 total).

Fraser Health is working in partnership with RainCity Housing's Integrated Case Management (ICM) Team. The ICM uses a Housing First Approach to house homeless clients with addictions; Fraser Health is providing the health services to the ICM clients.

The ACT and ICM programs fund MPA to procure housing units and manage landlord relationships. ACT and the ICM are City-wide programs.

***g. Wrap-around/Connecting Treatment Services***

Surrey Substance Use Liaison works with clients and ER physicians to liaise with Mental Health and Substance Use Services at Quibble Creek. A Liaison worker also provides services to clients at the Front Room, Boulevard, and Gateway shelters to connect homeless individuals to addictions services, including detox.

**5. By-law Enforcement**

Dedicated By-Law Enforcement officers patrol the City Centre area, including parks and ravines, with the goal of connecting with homeless persons they may find and directing them towards services available to them.

**6. RCMP**

***a. SMART***

The Surrey Mobilization and Resiliency Table (SMART) aims to identify those individuals who are at an acutely elevated risk of harm to themselves or others. The goal of SMART is to reduce the risk by connecting those clients to services. Since the launch of SMART in November 2015, 45 individuals and families have been connected to services that lowered their overall risk of harm.

***b. Whalley Integrated Service Team (WIST)***

RCMP convenes the WIST on a monthly basis. WIST is a partnership between the Surrey RCMP, local service providers, and stakeholders, including the Downtown Surrey BIA.

This is an excellent partnership, as local issues are identified and work plans are identified to deal with issues before they become larger problems. The effect of these meetings has led to positive outcomes with respect to dealing with discarded needles, education for drug users and educating local businesses.

In order to further deal with the issues associated to 'the strip', the RCMP will be assessing the merits of a pilot project to have a full time presence on 'the strip'. This approach will assist in continuously monitoring and assisting those in need, and conducting enforcement on those that are preying on the vulnerable. Local partners, such as By-Law Enforcement and Fraser Health and the BIA, will also be included or consulted regarding this pilot.

**7. Fire Service**

Fire first responders are experiencing an increased demand for service from the City's vulnerable people who are on the street and struggling through active substance use addiction.

The Fire Service has collaborated with the Fraser Health Medical Officer and BC Emergency Health Services to enhance their harm reduction efforts by being equipped to administer Naloxone (Narcan) injections, the opioid overdose reversing drug.

While enhancing the availability and delivery of the overdose reversing drug may save additional lives, harm reduction initiatives alone cannot negate the impacts of a fentanyl crisis and an increasing number of people living on the street. Solutions which span the full continuum from prevention, harm reduction to treatment and stable housing are required to reduce both the number of vulnerable people on the street and the overdose events and deaths.

Fraser Health has been discussing with the City the benefits of embedding supervised consumption services as evidence based strategy to reduce inappropriate needle disposal, public use of substances and overdoses.

## **8. Cleanup of Area**

### ***a. Needle Pick-up***

Lookout's Rig Dig Program conducts daily sweeps of the area, including noted 'hot spots', and responds to reports of needles. The program costs approximately \$50,000 per year to implement, with 86% of funding used for stipends (for clients/peers who are compensated for picking up needles).

In the past, Rig Dig was funded primarily by a Gaming grant along with some funds from Fraser Health. In 2016/17, Gaming did not provide a grant; all Rig Dig funding was used up by September. Additional funding is required in order for the Rig Dig to continue. Fraser Health has been in discussions with Lookout and other similar organizations to ensure the program is maintained and enhanced. Further expansion of the availability and placement of safe needle disposal boxes will also be assessed.

### ***b. 135A Street Daily Clean-up***

Daily clean-ups are conducted by a joint effort of City of Surrey By-laws, Engineering, and RCMP. Staff will patrol the City Centre to pick up any littered items, such as clothing, blankets, and other items that may have been discarded, as well as addressing tent issues and squatters in and around 135A Street and the City Centre.

These clean-ups occur weekdays and weekends, and to date Engineering has spent \$101,967.15 on these services. The projected annual cost will be approximately \$150,000.00. In addition, By-law Enforcement has spent \$300,000.00 year to date in order to deploy additional By-law Enforcement Officers, as well as resources, to the City Centre area 7 days per week. Year to date, the maintenance costs of City owned lands within City Centre have increased \$30,000.00 from the prior year (2015).

The Downtown BIA funds Options Community Services to engage participants of the Options' mental health "club house" program in a street-cleaning program. Litter is picked up in the Downtown business area two afternoons a week.



**c. Storage**

35 pens to store personal belongings were constructed by the City of Surrey in the outside area of the Gateway Shelter in order for homeless to store their belongings when receiving much needed services.

**9. Moving Forward**

On July 8, 2013, Council approved Corporate Report No. R134, "Master Plan for Housing the Homeless" (Master Plan), which was prepared and co-funded in collaboration with BC Housing (attached as Appendix "II"). The goal of the Master Plan was to establish priorities on deliverables that will help prevent homelessness, and also to provide required units within the continuum of housing required for long term success.

The priorities outlined the need for:

- the creation of an additional 450 units of transitional and supported housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness;
- the replacement of the Gateway emergency shelter facility in Whalley with a new purpose built facility that also incorporates transitional housing units; and
- supportive housing, shelter, and drop-in services that focus on vulnerable population groups that have unique needs, including children, youth, women, Aboriginal people, and homeless people with more complex issues.

The Master Plan also recommended continuing to strengthen partnerships and collaboration with BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, and other government funders and foundations in order to help deliver the plan.

City staff has started discussion with local non-profit organizations and private sector organizations in order to prepare competitive proposals that would address the housing needs as outlined in the Master Plan which could be funded as part of the recently announced additional \$500 million Provincial affordable housing initiative that will be managed by BC Housing.

**CONCLUSION**

Although a number of services are provided to individuals with the goal of reducing homelessness and addiction cases in City Centre, the number of people requiring help has increased recently, both throughout the Lower Mainland region and specifically in Surrey.

It is recommended that Council authorize the Mayor to send a letter to the British Columbia Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Natural Gas Development, and the Minister Responsible for Housing that highlights the need for the Province to expedite the design and delivery of the Gateway Shelter replacement, which will include supportive housing, and to



consider moving forward on funding and delivery applications submitted for projects within Surrey that are part of the Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing (PIAH) program of \$355 million that was part of BC Housing call for Expression of Interest.

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

*Original signed by*  
Vincent Lalonde, P.Eng.  
City Manager

JLL/ss

q:\admin\managers\vince\corporate reports\2016\09291040jl.docx  
LJD 9/29/16 6:33 PM

Attachments:

Appendix "I" - Surrey's Projects within the Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing Program  
Appendix "II" - Corporate Report R134; 2013

### Surrey’s Projects within the Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing Program

Current projects, partially funded by BC Housing:

- Options - Bill Reid Memorial Shelter in Cloverdale
  - This project will include a 16 bed homeless shelter and 12 bachelor transition housing units. The project is not currently fully funded and requires additional funding from the Province.
- City Centre Purpose Built Shelter
  - A combined emergency shelter with a transitional housing facility, consisting of 50 emergency shelter beds and 50 transitional housing units. The new shelter and transitioning housing facility is to be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This project has not yet been fully funded and requires additional funding from the Province.

Projects submitted by Non Profit organizations as part of the Provincial Investment in Affordable Housing (PIAH) Request for Expression of Interest:

- Partnership proposal between YWCA and The Centre for Child Development that is comprised of 40 units of supportive housing and programming space at a value of approximately \$18,000,000.00.
- Elizabeth Fry Society proposal for 48 supportive housing units and shelter space at a value of approximately \$17,000,000.00.
- Gateway Shelter Replacement that will include approximately 50 shelter beds and 45 – 50 supportive housing units.
- A proposed apartment in City Centre with 123 rental units.
- A proposed apartment in City Centre with 49 rental units.
- In South Surrey, a proposed rental apartment building with 35 units.
- A mixed-use residential and care facility proposed in City Centre with 202 units.
- A facility in South Surrey with 51 affordable rental units and 20 rental units.

NO: **R134**

COUNCIL DATE: **July 8, 2013**

---

**REGULAR COUNCIL**

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **July 8, 2013**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development**

FILE: **4815-01**

SUBJECT: **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey**

---

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning and Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Adopt the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey (the "Homeless Plan"), a copy of which is attached as Appendix I to this report; and
3. Authorize staff to post the Homeless Plan on the City's website and distribute a copy of the Plan as information to key stakeholders, including BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, Peninsula Housing to Home Task Force, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, and the Surrey Board of Trade.

**INTENT**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the consultations that have been conducted with key stakeholder groups with respect to completing the Homeless Plan and to present a final version of the Homeless Plan for Council's consideration.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Addressing issues of homelessness has been identified as a corporate priority by the City as it impacts the quality of life and social sustainability of the community. The Homeless Plan responds to specific recommendations in the:

- Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents;
- Crime Reduction Strategy;
- Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy; and
- Poverty Reduction Plan.

**BACKGROUND**

In 2011, the City entered into a partnership with BC Housing focused on the development of a homeless plan (Corporate Report No. R129, June 27, 2011). The rationale was that such a plan

would ensure that future actions taken to address homelessness in Surrey would be coordinated and strategic so that resources that are available to apply to issues of homelessness respond to identified priorities and are used to maximum effect. Such a plan was also viewed as being important to assist the City and Surrey-based non-profit organizations to proactively respond to partnership opportunities with the Province and other funders.

On January 28, 2013, a draft Homeless Plan was presented to Council (Corporate Report No. R019). At that time, Council directed staff to undertake a consultation process with key stakeholder groups in the community for the purpose of refining the Homeless Plan prior to forwarding a final version to Council for approval.

## **DISCUSSION**

The draft Homeless Plan was presented to key stakeholder groups at various meetings during February, March and April of 2013. Overall, other government and non-profit stakeholders expressed support for the priorities outlined in the Homeless Plan, which include:

- The creation of an additional 450 units of transitional and supported housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness;
- The replacement of the Gateway emergency shelter facility in Whalley with a new purpose-built facility that also incorporates transitional housing units;
- Supportive housing, shelter and drop-in services that focus on vulnerable population groups that have unique needs including children, youth, women, Aboriginal people, and homeless people with more complex issues; and
- Continuing to strengthen partnerships and collaboration with BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, and other government funders and foundations.

### **Stakeholder Consultations**

The following community stakeholder groups were consulted:

- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society;
- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force;
- Peninsula Homeless to Housing Task Force;
- Surrey Board of Trade Social Policy Team;
- Surrey Homeless Outreach Network;
- Surrey Winter Shelter Community Advisory Committee;
- Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre; and
- City of Surrey Social Policy Advisory Committee.

Overall, the response from these stakeholders to the draft Homeless Plan was very positive. There was support for the Homeless Plan's priorities and its focus on developing additional supportive housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. All stakeholder groups expressed support and appreciation for the City's leadership in creating a Homeless Plan that will guide Surrey's response to homelessness over the next five years. The key themes/issues raised by the referenced stakeholders during the consultations are highlighted in the following sections.

### ***Homeless Count Data***

The Homeless Plan relies on the Metro Vancouver Homeless Count data as the basis for the target number of new supported housing units to be achieved over the next five years. The 2011 homeless count found 400 homeless people in Surrey. The Homeless Plan outlines an implementation program to generate 450 new units of supported housing.

Most of the stakeholder groups raised a concern that the Metro Vancouver Homeless Count is widely recognized as being an undercount of the actual homeless population in the region. In particular, women, children and youth do not always use the traditional shelter system and are often considered "hidden" and so under-represented in counts. Surrey's large geography and natural areas make the homeless count especially challenging. As well, people who are precariously housed in unregulated recovery houses are not included in the count data.

BC Housing's annual shelter occupancy reports indicate that up to 1,368 unique individuals stayed in a shelter in Surrey in 2012. This compares to 1,594 people in 2010 and 1,440 people in 2011. Based on this BC Housing data and research of point-in-time count data, it is likely that the actual number of people who experience homelessness in Surrey in a one-year period is three times larger than the number arrived at by the homeless count.

While recognizing that Surrey's homeless count data is likely an undercount of the actual homeless population, the Homeless Plan's proposed five-year target of 450 new supportive housing units is a reasonable target. Of note is that from 2006 to 2012, 349 new supportive housing units/beds were opened in Surrey. The fact that homelessness did not increase in Surrey during this time period is attributed to these new supportive housing units.

### ***Target Population Groups***

In general, stakeholders agreed with the target population groups that the Homeless Plan identifies as a priority for new supportive housing and services in Surrey. These include:

- "hard to house" people with mental health and/or addictions issues;
- women;
- families with children;
- youth; and
- Aboriginal people.

Non-profit agencies that work with the homeless and at-risk individuals and families were engaged in interviews that shaped the development of the Homeless Plan. During the consultations on the draft Homeless Plan the need for additional supportive housing units for these target population groups was confirmed. There was particular concern expressed about the fact that children and youth are among Surrey's homeless.

### ***Homeless Prevention Programs***

Stakeholders noted the importance of homelessness prevention programs and, specifically, noted the Surrey Rent Bank as an example of an effective homelessness prevention program. A few stakeholders suggested that there should be a greater emphasis on prevention in the Homeless Plan.

While Surrey's Homeless Plan is focused on the provision of additional supportive housing units as a means of addressing homelessness, the "Shelters, Support Services and Other Steps" component of the Homeless Plan includes a recommendation on prevention. It recommends that local groups and key agencies collaborate and establish/expand homelessness prevention programs for those at-risk of homelessness.

### ***Implementation of the Homeless Plan***

During the stakeholder consultations there was some discussion about the implementation of the Homeless Plan. In addition to the fact that provincial and/or federal funding is essential to achieving the target of 450 new supportive housing units in Surrey in the next five years, there was general agreement that on-going leadership by the City of Surrey would be important. Other suggested approaches toward the implementation of the Homeless Plan included:

- Using development fees and community amenity contributions to fund supportive housing projects;
- Encouraging the faith community to consider locating supportive housing projects on their properties; and
- Working in partnership with the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society.

The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society is already aligning their efforts with the Homeless Plan. The Society's 2013 Annual Grant Program's Call for Proposals specifically requested that applicants identify how their proposed project fits with the priorities of the draft Homeless Plan. The Society wants to ensure that its 2013 grants will contribute toward the implementation of the Homeless Plan. In addition, the capital campaign currently being undertaken by the Society is ensuring that projects identified for additional capital support align with the Homeless Plan.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Homeless Plan is consistent with and supportive of the objectives of the Sustainability Charter; more particularly "Action item SC9: Adequate, Appropriate and Affordable Housing".

### **CONCLUSION**

The Homeless Plan identifies goals to target and priorities for action over the next five years to address the homeless in Surrey. Its focus is on creating additional supportive housing units for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Target populations include women, children, youth, Aboriginal people, and "hard to house" people with mental health and addictions issues.

The City developed the Homeless Plan in partnership with BC Housing and the Fraser Health Authority. Other government and non-profit agencies, the business community, and homelessness task forces and committees in Surrey all contributed their knowledge and perspectives to the development of the Homeless Plan. The Homeless Plan will require the commitment and effort of all these partners and others to implement its recommendations and create a Surrey in which everyone has a home.

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Adopt the Homeless Plan that is attached as Appendix I to this report to act as the basis for addressing homelessness in Surrey; and
- Authorize staff to post the Homeless Plan on the City's website and distribute a copy of the Plan as information to key stakeholders, including BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, Peninsula Housing to Home Task Force, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, and the Surrey Board of Trade.

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager,  
Planning and Development

AM:saw

Attachment:

Appendix I Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey



# Master PLAN

FOR HOUSING THE HOMELESS IN SURREY

**Final Report**

**PREPARED FOR THE**  
**City of Surrey**

**PREPARED BY**  
**CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.**

**July 2013**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Master Plan for Housing the Homeless was made possible due to the large number of individuals and organizations that generously contributed their time to meet with the consultant team and to share their insights and local knowledge. This includes a number of key-informants who met with the consultant team as part of the background data collection phase of the project. The list of groups who participated are named in Appendix A: Situation Report.

In addition, the draft Master Plan document was presented to a number of stakeholder groups and their input was incorporated into the final version of the report. These groups include:

- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society;
- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force;
- Peninsula Homeless to Housing Task Force;
- Surrey Board of Trade Social Policy Team;
- Surrey Homeless Outreach Network;
- Surrey Winter Shelter Community Advisory Committee;
- Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre; and
- City of Surrey Social Policy Advisory Committee.

The project's steering committee also provided oversight and input and it included the following members:

- City of Surrey (Councillor Judy Villeneuve, Jean Lamontagne, Don Luymes, Aileen Murphy, Marlis McCargar);
- BC Housing (Darin Froese, Craig Crawford, Armin Amrolia); and
- Fraser Health Authority (Meryl McDowell).



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The Project

The City of Surrey developed the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in partnership with BC Housing and Fraser Health. Other government and non-profit agencies, the business community, and homelessness task forces and committees in Surrey all contributed their knowledge and perspectives to the Plan.

The Plan aims to identify and respond to the needs for long-term housing and support services for people who are homeless, or at-risk of becoming homeless. Additionally, this initiative focuses on the need for emergency shelters and related services.

The project partners initiated the project as a way to ensure future actions to address homelessness in Surrey are coordinated and strategic. In this way, the available resources can be made available to respond to identified priorities and are used to maximum effect. This Plan is also intended to assist the City of Surrey and local non-profit organizations to proactively respond to partnership opportunities with the Province and other funders.

### The Priorities

The 2011 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count found 400 homeless people in Surrey. Widely recognized to be an undercount of the actual homeless population, the Count is seen to particularly under-represent women, children, and youth, groups who do not always use the traditional shelter system. In response, the Plan identifies the following population groups to be in particular need of supportive housing:

- Individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues;
- Women and women with children;
- Youth; and
- Aboriginal people.

Surrey's Master Plan for Housing the Homeless is focused on the provision of additional supportive housing units as a response to the homelessness situation. However, it also highlights the need for improvements to the emergency shelters that currently work with certain at-risk groups, namely women, women with children, youth, and Aboriginal people. Specifically, it outlines the following priorities:

- Creation of an additional 450 units of transitional and supported housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.
- Replacement of the Gateway emergency shelter in Whalley with a new purpose-built facility that also incorporates transitional housing units.

- Enhancement of supportive housing, shelter and drop-in services that focus on vulnerable population groups with unique needs.
- Continuing to strengthen partnerships and collaboration with BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, and other government funders and foundations.

## Procurement Of Supportive Housing

The Plan outlines an implementation program to generate 450 new units of supported housing over a five year period. The Plan does not include any additional shelter beds. The built units correspond to the number of Surrey residents who were identified in the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count, with a contingency of 10%, which takes into account the likely undercount, and Surrey's continuing population growth.

The Procurement Plan sketches out a framework for new construction, acquisitions and rent supplements for the period 2013-2017 to create 450 units.

- 340 studio units to be created through new construction, and acquisition (renovation, repurposing) of existing buildings. These facilities would be operated by non-market housing providers. The capital cost of the 340 units is estimated at \$45,750,000 and assumes local partnership contributions of 10%, reducing the net capital cost to \$41,175,000.
- 110 rent supplemented units will be made available through market rental housing, with outreach workers providing supports to these tenants. By Year 5 of implementation, the rent subsidy and support costs are estimated to be \$748,000 annually.

By Year 5, 450 people will have permanent housing and be receiving supports to help them live as independently as possible at a much lesser societal cost than repeated stays in emergency shelters, jails, and hospitals.

The Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey will require the commitment and effort of all these partners in order to implement its recommendations and create a Surrey in which everyone has a home.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- Introduction .....1**
- Recap of Situation Report.....2**
  - Housing Gaps.....3
  - Service Gaps .....3
- Achievements to Date.....4**
- Shelters, Support Services and Other Steps.....6**
  - Recommendations – Shelters & Transitional Facilities.....6
  - City Of Surrey .....10
  - An Expansion Of Support Services.....11
  - Involving The Businesses And The Development Community.....13
- Procurement Plan for Supported Housing .....15**
  - Procurement Plan Summary.....15
  - Principles Of The Procurement Plan For Supported Housing .....17
  - Challenges Of Implementation .....18
  - Opportunities Associated With Implementation .....19
  - Details Of The Procurement Plan For Supported Housing.....19
  - Estimated Funding Requirements .....20
- Concluding Comments .....22**

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A - Situation Report**
- Appendix B - A Selection of Good Practices**



## LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

### Tables

Table 1 – Housing Procurement by Initiative Type, Years 1 to 5

Table 2 – Costs new build, acquisition and rent supplement, Years 1 to 5

Table 3 – Housing Procurement by Initiative Type, Years 1 to 5

Table 4 – New Debt Service, operating, support costs, net of tenant rents for new build and acquisition units, Years 1 to 5

Table 5 – Rent Supplement and support costs, Years 1 to 5

Table 6 – Summary Table in Year 5

Table 7 – Unit Sizes and Costs for New Build Projects

### Figures

Figure A – Emergency Services and Housing Continuum

Figure B – Procurement by Year, Over Five Years (Number of Units)

Figure C – Procurement by type, Over Five Years (%)



## INTRODUCTION

The City of Surrey and BC Housing partnered on the initiative to develop a Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey. The initiative aims to identify, and respond to the needs for long-term housing and support services for people who are homeless, or at-risk of becoming homeless. Additionally, this initiative focuses on the need for emergency shelters and related services.

The Master Plan for Housing the Homeless follows on the heels of several policy and planning initiatives by the City of Surrey. The Plan builds on these and other past initiatives in a targeted attempt to address homelessness and housing affordability.

The development of the Master Plan involved two stages.

- **Stage 1 - Background & Research**

The first stage involved research, analysis and stakeholder consultation that is compiled in a Situation Report. This background document serves to set the context and identify the key priority issues in Surrey. In addition, a briefing paper was prepared that described various practices from other municipalities and jurisdictions. Both documents are available as Appendices to this document.

- **Stage 2 - Priorities & Procurement**

The second stage involved the identification of priority projects and program models and the development of an implementation plan for acquiring supported housing units. This included specific recommendations that focus on issues related to shelters and support services raised during the consultation.

Between February and April, 2013, City of Surrey staff undertook consultation with key stakeholder groups regarding the draft Master Plan and the reports have subsequently been updated and refined as a result of those meetings.



## RECAP OF SITUATION REPORT

The background research and analysis outlined in the Situation Report (Appendix A) was undertaken to inform the development of targeted actions and an implementation plan for responding to homelessness in the city of Surrey. The research involved: a) reviewing current policies and practices; b) presenting estimates of the homeless population based on the 2011 Homeless Count information as well as other service provider statistics; c) a listing of emergency services and relevant non-market housing units; and d) interviews with key stakeholders.

Key highlights from the report are presented here to set the context for the recommendations and procurement targets outlined in the Master Plan.

- **Inventory of Beds & Units** — As of July, 2013, there were 85 beds at three co-ed emergency shelters, 26 beds at two women’s shelters, six beds at a youth safe house, 48 additional beds at safe houses, and 688 transitional and supported housing beds and units for individuals. These facilities regularly operate at full occupancy and there are regular turn-aways during the winter months.
- **At-Risk Population Groups** — Among the 400 people counted as part of the 2011 Homeless Count, the majority were *single men* (63%). Service providers identified several other groups, often not well-captured by the Count, to be particularly vulnerable to repeat homelessness. These include:
  - Women, including single women, women with children and sex-trade workers (37% of Surrey’s 2011 homeless population);
  - Youth-at-risk, particularly Aboriginal and immigrant youth; and
  - Aboriginal singles and families (24% identified themselves as Aboriginal in the 2011 homeless count).

Figure A - Emergency Services and Housing Continuum

	DROP-IN SERVICES	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING & PROGRAMS	LONG-TERM HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS	RENT SUPPLEMENTS + MOBILE SERVICES
HOUSING	No Housing Component	Seasonal extreme weather beds and year-round shelters	Safe houses, second stage, treatment programs, longer term housing	Non-market housing for the homeless and at-risk	Units in market rental housing
SERVICES	Access to basic services e.g. laundry, phone, food, counselling	Gateway services connect users to key supports	On-site services focus on stabilization, e.g. crisis management, income, health, advocacy, life skills	High - moderate - low levels of support	Outreach, follow-up and other mobile services tailored to individual, if required

## Housing Gaps

The Situation Report confirmed there are significant gaps in housing and services for homeless people and those at-risk of homelessness, with unique needs of women, youth and Aboriginal people. From across the emergency services and housing continuum (Figure A), the following gaps were identified:

- **Shelters** — A better alignment of emergency services to the homeless population is needed, including a centrally-located low barrier shelter in Whalley that provides longer-term accommodation with support service linkages for users and enhanced shelter services for women, youth and Aboriginal people.
- **Transitional or Second-Stage Housing** — Temporary housing (for a few months or years) that helps individuals to transition to greater independence and permanent housing.
- **Supportive Housing** — Housing with integrated support services, a vital piece of the housing continuum.
- **Low-Barrier Housing** — Housing for Individuals with a mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions and those leaving correctional facilities who face the greatest difficulties with securing housing.

## Service Gaps

The following areas were frequently identified during the background research:

- Housing outreach and follow-up services;
- Health, mental health and addictions services;
- Discharge services from hospitals and correctional institutions;
- Meal programs; and
- Prevention and financial assistance services.

## ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

The City of Surrey's Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan) identifies homelessness as a priority issue and confirmed that there are significant gaps between the supply of, and need for, emergency shelter beds, transition and supportive housing.

Since the Social Plan's adoption in 2006, the City, BC Housing, Fraser Health, and social and housing providers have aggressively focussed their efforts on tackling homelessness in Surrey. There have been a number of significant achievements:

- 2006 Funding provided for six outreach workers through BC Housing's Homeless Outreach Program.
- 2006 Surrey's Extreme Weather Program initiated.
- 2007 The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund was established with \$9.5 million of City funds. This endowment fund provides grants annually for programs and operations. In 2009, a one-time capital grant of \$1 million was directed toward Maxxine Wright Place.
- 2007 The Phoenix Centre opened, providing 28 short-term addiction recovery beds and 36 transitional housing units.
- 2008 The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society was established to oversee the Homelessness and Housing Fund. To date, over \$2 million has been awarded in grants.
- 2008 The City and BC Housing entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to fund three projects, adding 156 units of supportive housing.
- 2009 Gateway Shelter received funding as a year-round, 24-hour shelter.
- 2009 The City initiates a Housing Action Plan (research and consultation).
- 2009-10 Homeless Intervention Project supported 356 homeless people to move to more permanent housing
- 2011 Maxxine Wright Centre, a new integrated centre with 12 emergency shelter beds for women; 24 transitional housing units for single women and mothers and their children; a 59-space child care centre; community kitchen; and health care clinic.
- 2009, 2012 Bolivar Court opens, including 19 supportive units funded by Fraser Health. Peterson Place opens, 39 units of independent living units for homeless or at risk of homelessness in a renovated former Howard Johnson motel.

- 2012 Alder Gardens opens, a new 36-unit supportive housing development for single mothers and their children who were at-risk of homelessness.
- 2012 Timber Grove opens, a new supportive housing development with 52 studio apartments for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.
- 2012 Quibble Creek Health and Phoenix Transition Housing Centre opens – a new addictions and health clinic, 25-mat social detox centre, and 52 supported transitional housing units, and 15 short-term access to recovery rooms (STAR).
- 2012 Fraser Health Authority's ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) program initiated.

## SHELTERS, SUPPORT SERVICES AND OTHER STEPS

### Recommendations – Shelters & Transitional Facilities

While current Provincial funding priorities are focused on supported housing rather than shelter beds, there continues to be a strong need for appropriate shelter resources and related services in Surrey to help provide a gateway to longer term housing options for the homeless.

Existing service providers and facilities will play an important role in continuing to meet shelter and transitional housing needs. It is recognized, however, that there is a need to continue to build operational capacity and physical capacity.

### Recommendations – Gateway Shelter Interim Improvements

- **Keys Housing and Health Solutions Gateway Shelter (Keys)** – The physical conditions of the current shelter no longer meets the expected standards of shelter projects. A resolution of this situation, the condition of the physical facility and operational funding for Keys, is an immediate priority for shelter users and the residents and businesses in the area.
  - As an interim solution in 2012, BC Housing provided capital funding to retrofit the exterior outdoor space of the site. This resulted in better organized, safer and more useful spaces to help mitigate certain nuisance issues until a more permanent solution is found. Improvements included creating an enclosed courtyard, reorganizing parking, as well as secure, covered outdoor storage for carts and pets.
  - Operational improvements are also warranted, including continuation of overnight stays instead of nightly renewals, and reframing the drop-in as part of a 24/7 shelter operation.

### Recommendations – Gateway Shelter Replacement

- **A replacement, purpose-designed Gateway shelter facility** needs to be constructed that could also include transitional housing units. It could be located in the general area of the existing shelter, or moved elsewhere in the Whalley area.
  - **Whalley Area / Co-Existence**  
Homelessness is a community-wide issue and needs community-wide solutions, especially targeted to areas where homeless people tend to already gravitate. For this reason, the new shelter needs to be in the Whalley area. Importantly, it needs to be designed to co-exist with its neighbours. Successful coexistence, given an appropriate design and operational/funding model, has been demonstrated by other facilities in Metro Vancouver. These include the Lookout Society's Yukon Shelter in Vancouver, and the Russell in New Westminster.

- **Appropriate Design**

Most issues associated with the existing facility can be mitigated and some cases eliminated through appropriate design and operational models, as demonstrated in newer shelter and transitional housing facilities. Examples of appropriate design and programming space include interior/private outdoor courtyards, storage for carts, accommodation for pets, and physical separation between the street and on-site activities. Importantly, funding for 24/7 support services is essential to ensure the successful operation of a minimal barrier, “housing first” model.

- **Key Features**

For shelter users, well-planned features and space configurations support individuals to stabilize, and connect with services. These include single/double rooms, storage space, and flex rooms for couples or trans-gendered individuals. Also, it is important that the shelter includes flexible meeting spaces to ensure that service organizations are able to provide on-site counselling, life skills training, and other health-related services. Space to prepare and serve daily meal service must also be part of early space planning.

- **Accessibility**

The replacement facility also needs to be accessible to transit, daily shopping needs and community services.

- **Transitional Component**

Typically, combining a shelter operation with transitional housing results in staffing and operational efficiencies, especially if the development is in the 70-80 bed/unit range. The Yukon Shelter and Transitional Housing (Vancouver) and the Russell Shelter and Transitional Housing (New Westminister) are successful examples of this mix of shelter and transitional housing. One is a new-build solution and the other is a renovated hotel. Both are located within thriving business areas in Vancouver and New Westminister respectively. A combined shelter/transitional housing facility with funding to support 24/7 shelter services would mean that users would not be required to leave the facility in the morning and line up for a bed in the evening. This takes away a significant demand for an associated 24/7 drop-in centre and the issues related to its operation.

## Recommendations – Drop-in Centre

- The question remains regarding the continued operation and need of a drop-in centre and its proximity to a new shelter/transition housing. While drop-in services may still be necessary in the Whalley area, the combination with a shelter and transitional housing may create a more destabilizing situation for those in the shelter and housing. Other models in the Metro Vancouver area usually have, at most, two of the three functions. For example, a resource/drop-in function and transitional housing; or a shelter and transitional housing. Two possible approaches are:

- Co-locating a drop-in centre with a health centre for outreach programs that assist homeless people to access better health and housing options; or
- Providing additional funding to other non-profit service providers in the Whalley area to fill the gap, including providers that focus on women, Aboriginal and youth services.

### Recommendations – Other Existing Shelters and Supported Housing

- **No Significant Bed increase, Plan for Improvements**

While no significant increase in the number of shelter beds is recommended, in the coming months and years, capital improvements will be needed for existing shelters, either for renovation or replacement. The Cloverdale Shelter, in particular, merits early attention. Planning and budgeting for these improvements should be underway in the short-term.

- **Strategic Assessment**

Existing shelters can be an efficient way to create short-term stable accommodation along with supports for single people who are motivated to move to more independent and permanent housing. These shelters should be strategically assessed to ensure they are operating within appropriate physical spaces and operational models.

### Recommendations – Specific Target Groups

- **Women**

There is a critical need for dedicated shelter and transitional housing for women considered to be high-risk, who struggle with addictions and mental health issues. This can be accomplished by building the capacity of existing non-profit organizations that serve this client group.

- **Children**

There is an urgent need for additional shelter and transitional capacity to accommodate families with children. Given the vulnerability of homeless children and the risk that homelessness can have on their development and wellbeing, shelter and supportive housing for families is a priority.

- The Elizabeth Fry Society has indicated it is prepared to increase its services to women through the development of a new building that combines its existing houses into one facility that has a shelter as well as transitional housing units for single women and women with children. The Society has relevant experience operating existing facilities, and the capability to increase their services.



- **Youth**

There is a need to expand existing options to ensure there are shelter beds for youth in safe residential neighbourhoods close to transit and services. Along with youth shelters, more opportunities for short and long term stable housing are needed. Good examples of working models include Bolivar Heights, a co-ed house for youth in Surrey, and the proposed Broadway Youth Resources Centre in Vancouver, which will have housing units above a two-storey youth resource centre. Modest group homes or supported apartment units are good approaches to provide affordable solutions and integrate well in established neighbourhoods.

- **Aboriginal Population**

Aboriginal individuals make up 24% of the homeless in Surrey according to the 2011 Metro Vancouver homeless count but are less likely to stay in a shelter than non-Aboriginal individuals. A targeted Aboriginal shelter response needs to provide the services that would identify culturally appropriate design, and to help address the reasons there is less success in these individuals moving to more permanent and stable housing. A response needs to be developed that includes discussion with the service providers to this community and their funders. Culturally appropriate options need to be considered for Aboriginal youth and low-income families and elders across the entire non-market housing continuum – shelters, supported housing, and social housing.

### Additional Comments

- **Gateway Function**

Surrey's existing co-ed emergency shelters lack the funding to always provide consistent gateway services for shelter clients, particularly those with unique needs – youth, women, and Aboriginal people. Ideally, other Surrey-based service providers who serve these groups will be able to deliver some of their services inside the shelters (i.e., “in-reach” services).

- **Fraser Health Authority – ACT funding**

In 2012, Fraser Health launched the new Surrey Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program. This specialized outreach program takes mental health support to adults with serious and persistent mental illness and functional impairments who do not respond well to traditional outpatient care. It dovetails with a “housing first” approach. The Surrey ACT Program has the capacity to support up to 100 individuals. Some ACT clients require housing, either through a rent supplement unit in market housing or in a low-barrier supported housing development.

## City Of Surrey

The City of Surrey has made significant contributions to the development of supported housing with six recent projects since 2006 – the Phoenix Centre, Maxxine Wright, Bolivar Court/Peterson Place, Timber Grove, Alder Gardens and Quibble Creek. The City's support is vital to ensuring that new, renovated and expanded projects do not meet unreasonable barriers to approval.

The City's continuing involvement in addressing the needs of homeless people and those who are at-risk of becoming homeless is vital. This involvement cuts across a number of areas:

- Advocacy and education;
- Policy and regulation;
- Approvals processes;
- Dedicated staff time;
- Partnerships; and
- Financial assistance (land, capital, property tax and fees).

### Recommendations – City Advocacy and Education

- Consider methods to educate and build awareness among Surrey residents and businesses about homelessness.
- Advocate for increased provincial funding for housing and services to address homelessness.

### Recommendations – City Policy and Regulation

- Continue to provide for a mix of housing and services in all neighbourhoods. Shelters and transitional housing need to be distributed through Surrey's six communities, close to transit and services. This broad distribution will also ensure that homeless people have a better chance to live in a community that is familiar to them, and where they may have significant familial and social connections.
- Develop a strategy and policies that consider the implications of displacement of rental units as a result of redevelopments or conversions in the interest of maintaining an inventory of affordable rental housing units.
- Support the creation of affordable secondary suites and enforce health and safety standards in a way that protects the rights of tenants, while minimizing the loss of affordable units and tenant displacement.
- Consider alternative housing forms to purpose-built complexes, including renovation of single and duplex dwellings that can be reconfigured into multiple self-contained units and operated by a non-profit society. The City's policies and

regulations will need to be revised to allow this form in residential neighbourhoods, as well as Council support for this type of initiative.

- Consider a more comprehensive standards of maintenance bylaw to provide further protection for tenants living in low or substandard housing conditions.

### **Recommendations – City Partnerships**

- Continue to support new purpose-built projects and partnerships with other levels of government through agreements that can leverage City resources such as land, and waiving of municipal fees. The 2008 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and BC Housing to fund and facilitate three projects totalling 156 units of supportive housing is a model of this type of agreement. Consideration should be given to amending the MOU to add additional sites.
- Continue to develop relationships and clear lines of communication between bylaw officers, the RCMP, service providers and outreach workers to address issues with the homeless population, such as through Surrey's Hard Target Committee meetings.
- Continue to build capacity among Surrey's non-profit organizations and participate in local and regional committees and task forces that work to minimize homelessness and improve rental housing affordability and opportunities. Examples include the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, and the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force.

### **Recommendations – Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society**

- Continue to facilitate the growth of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society's (SHHS) fund.
- To work with SHHS to facilitate further development of fundraising efforts for new priority supported housing projects.

## **An Expansion Of Support Services**

There is a great deal of evidence that housing needs to be linked to support services, well-trained staff and good programs. As Surrey grows, the demand for these services will increase, especially for formerly homeless people who are working towards living stably and independently in market housing.

### **Recommendations – Outreach Support**

- More outreach workers are needed throughout Surrey, and specifically to address the needs of at-risk youth, women and seniors.
- Additional outreach workers will be needed to provide follow up and support services to recently-housed individuals to help them maintain their housing and gain further life skills. The client base continues to grow. For example, in Surrey between

2010 and 2012, there was an average of approximately 600 people transitioned off the street and into housing each year.

- More resources are required for the homeless youth population. Many agencies, and, similarly, outreach workers are not mandated to work with individuals under the age of 19.
- Develop resource material and a mentoring program for outreach workers who communicate regularly with landlords in the private market. The value of building good relationships with landlords is vital to ensuring housing success for previously homeless people.
- Adapt and expand the Integrated Offender Management project<sup>1</sup> and other similar initiatives which help individuals who are identified to be at-risk of becoming homeless to access housing and services after they are discharged from corrections facilities. This type of prevention initiative could be expanded to other types of institutions, including hospitals and addictions treatment centres.

### Recommendations – On-Site Services

- There is a continued need for on-site services at existing shelters and drop-in facilities, either through permanent staffing or in-reach services from partner organizations. This may include medical services, income assistance advice, food services and educational or employment-related programs. The Surrey North Community Health Centre is a good example – a free medical clinic, needle exchange and dental clinic for disadvantaged individuals who may or may not have identification.
- Drop-in centres can provide a valuable service if managed and programmed following best practices. The operational model, including hours of operations, can vary depending on the needs of the intended users. For example, operations for vulnerable women or sex trade workers may differ from those targeted for people with mental health challenges. Drop-in centres, where possible, should also expand their services to provide volunteer opportunities or other activities during the daytime to assist people to address their personal goals and to find opportunities for productive activity.

### Recommendations – Partnerships

- Continue to support and increase opportunities for partnerships between service providers, faith based groups, and government agencies (e.g. the Fraser Health Authority). Several efforts are already underway among groups in the social services sector. Future partnerships could include the co-location of services such as housing, social enterprise, medical clinics and food services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Currently delivered by the Elizabeth Fry Society and Keys Housing and Health Solutions.

### Recommendations – Prevention Programs

- Local groups and key agencies should collaborate and establish homelessness prevention programs. While many groups provide services to the working poor and households at-risk of homelessness, there is a need to identify the right mix of supports – life skills education, outreach and rent banks are examples of initiatives that should be funded and expanded where possible.

### Recommendations – Advocacy and Education

- There is a need to further promote the use of BC 211, an information line that provides information and referrals to community, government and social services.
- There should be further exploration and advocacy for a “community court” system for petty crimes and bylaw infractions. Community courts have become a mechanism that helps people to get into rehabilitation programs, or to connect them formally with relevant services. In the long term, this type of intervention may lead to stability and prevent further escalation of unlawful behaviour.

## Involving The Businesses And The Development Community

The Surrey Board of Trade (SBoT), the Downtown Surrey BIA, and the Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce have been particularly proactive in responding to the homelessness issue. The SBoT, together with the Burnaby Board of Trade, prepared and submitted recommendations to the Federal government to address homelessness – funding, reduction targets, “housing first” and further consultation towards a national plan.

In 2012, representatives from the Downtown Surrey BIA spent a day touring several new and renovated shelters and transitional housing projects in Metro Vancouver. This tour gave participants a first-hand look at facilities that successfully integrate with their neighbourhoods.

While there are other positive examples of involvement by the Surrey private sector, there is also opportunity for increased cooperation, and sharing of resources.

### Recommendations

- Renewed efforts should be made to involve the business sector with mentoring, employment, volunteer opportunities and other assistance. The Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce has spearheaded many positive initiatives and is actively involved with many groups serving the homeless. These initiatives should be documented and shared with other Surrey business communities.
- There should be an outreach to Surrey contractors and small developers to learn more about potential involvement in bidding for new and renovated projects (refer to the Procurement Plan for Supported Housing). This could include organizing a

workshop with builder-developers from other municipalities that have been active in the sector.

- Educational and partnering outreach programs to landlords and property management companies could assist to pave the way to securing market rental units that could qualify for rent supplements and help build an inventory.
- Matching particular business donors to non-profit organizations and their respective client group could help to increase awareness and tie donation-giving to a specific project or community program. This matching of projects and funders could take place through the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society acting as the liaison.

# PROCUREMENT PLAN FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING

## Procurement Plan Summary

This component of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless, the Housing Procurement Plan, outlines an implementation program to generate 450 new units of supported housing over the five year period. (**Note:** This Plan does not include any additional shelter beds). When this target of 450 new units of supported housing is achieved, it will match the number of Surrey residents who were identified in the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count, as well as provide a contingency of 10%, which takes into account the likely “undercount”, and Surrey’s continuing population growth.

What are the main components of the Housing Procurement Plan?

- 340 studio units will be created through new construction, and acquisition (renovation, repurposing) of existing buildings.<sup>2</sup>
  - More than 40% of this housing (140 units) will be generated through a “design-build” approach. “Design Build” is a procurement method whereby BC Housing will issue annual competitive proposal calls to private developers to design and construct supported housing. On completion, these facilities will be operated by a non-market housing provider selected prior to the developer proposal call.
  - The capital cost of the 340 newly created units is estimated at \$45,750,000 dollars. Assuming that this cost could be reduced by local partnership contributions of 10% from local government foundations, charitable organizations, businesses and individuals, the net capital cost to be mortgaged over 35 years is \$41,175,000 dollars.
  - By Year 5, the annual operating cost is estimated \$5,435,484 dollars, assuming the units are 100% debt serviced and including operating and support costs.
  - Government or a non-profit housing provider will own or lease the land and buildings.
  - Over a 35-year amortization period, there would be a significant increase of equity in these facilities. If all housing proposed in this Plan were built and acquired, the value of these public assets would be almost \$42 million in 2012 dollars.
- 110 rent supplemented units will be added in market rental housing, with outreach workers providing supports to these tenants. The rent subsidy and support costs are estimated at \$748,000 annually by Year 5.

---

<sup>2</sup> The consulting team used BC Housing’s Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (March, 2012) as the basis for estimating the capital costs. All new build and renovated units are estimated on the basis of studio units.

- By Year 5, 450 people will have permanent housing and be receiving supports to help them live as independently as possible at a much lesser societal cost than repeated stays in emergency shelters, jails, and hospitals.

Figure B – Procurement by Year, Over Five Years (Number of Units)

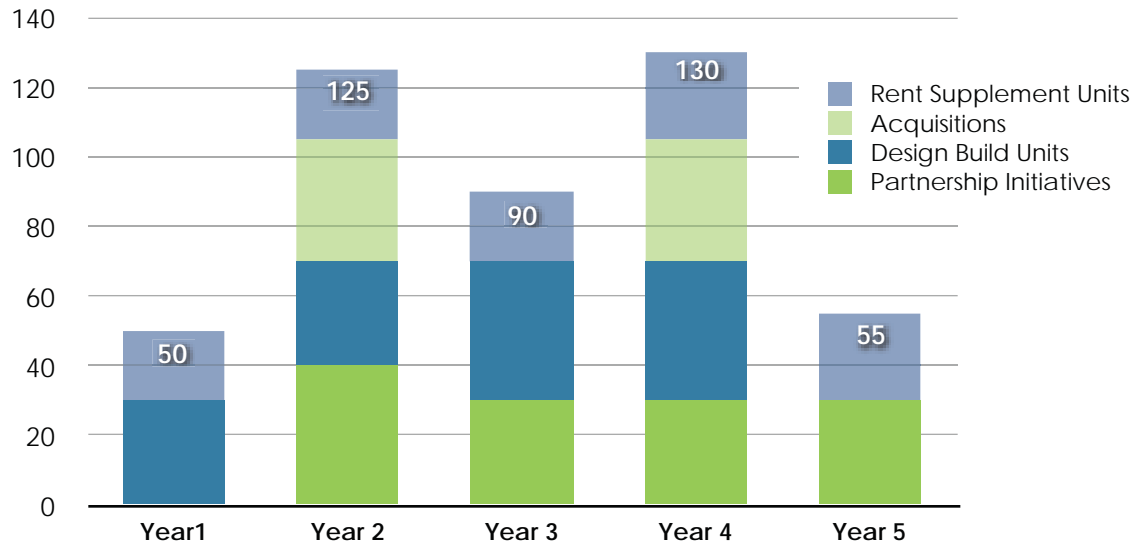
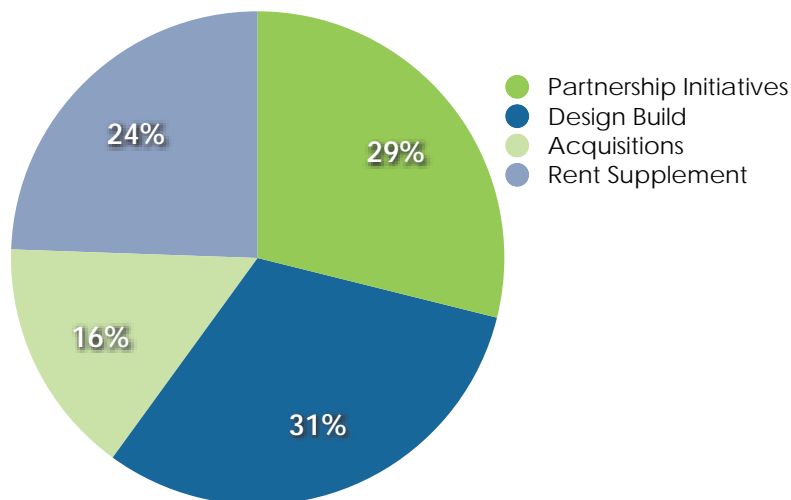


Figure C – Procurement by Type, Over Five Years (%)





## Principles Of The Procurement Plan For Supported Housing

The Housing Procurement Plan is founded on a number of principles that will guide its implementation by the City of Surrey, together with government agencies, housing and social service partners.

- **City-wide solution for homelessness**  
Homelessness knows no neighbourhood boundaries. It is essential to take a City-wide approach to solving homelessness. A coordinated approach will be seen positively by BC Housing, and other potential major funders.
- **A people-centred approach**  
Surrey is a culturally diverse city. It is important that the initiatives to end homelessness are well grounded in a people-centred approach.
- **A mix of housing models and forms**  
New housing should be able to respond to the diversity of need among homeless people by providing for a variety of housing forms and support levels.
- **Provincial government funding is essential**  
It has been demonstrated that the costs of housing with supports is far less than having homeless people living “on the street” or regularly using shelters. The BC government, through BC Housing, will continue to be the major capital funder (or lending broker) of any form of non-market housing.
- **Partnerships are essential**  
Non-profit societies, local government, the Province, the private sector and the community are all involved in this Plan in a variety of partnerships. Maximizing opportunities for participating in ending homelessness is an essential ingredient for success.
- **Builds on available resources**  
It is essential that new initiatives take full advantage of the significant resources already working to address homelessness, including existing non-market housing providers, as well as social service and health agencies.
- **Key role for the private sector**  
The Plan looks to the creativity and energy of the private sector to work with the non-market sector to build new, or repurpose existing buildings, for supported housing.
- **Support for neighbourhood integration**  
In established neighbourhoods, providing shelter and supported housing for people who are homeless or require considerable support to remain housed can be misunderstood. This plan envisages small developments that will integrate well into the neighbourhoods.

## Challenges Of Implementation

Creating 450 studio units of supported housing in five years is achievable, but considerable effort will be needed to overcome the challenges that were identified during the consultation process, and subsequent research.

- **Finding appropriate sites**  
It is very important, but sometimes challenging, to identify and secure sites that are safe, well-served by transit, with access to shops and community services.
- **Neighbourhood concerns**  
Most recommended sites are likely to face opposition from local neighbours, yet the fears and objections most often expressed are seldom, or ever, realized. There are more consequences and community impacts from leaving individuals living on the street than living in appropriate housing, especially when it is accompanied with supports. Surrey's recent experience in establishing Community Advisory Committees for two projects has significantly improved the integration of each project into existing neighbourhoods.
- **Increase in land prices**  
There has been an escalation of land prices and lease rates, including in Whalley, which has traditionally been a more affordable area of the city.
- **Few opportunities for acquisition**  
There are very few smaller sized older apartment buildings, hotels or other commercial buildings that might be suitable for conversion.
- **Private rental market is tightening**  
CMHC's Fall 2011 rental report shows a decline in the apartment vacancy rate in Surrey with rental rates increasing marginally.
- **Demand will increase for outreach workers**  
An increasing number of rent supplemented units over the five-year period will stretch the resources of outreach workers.
- **Constructing new housing and repurposing buildings takes time**  
If a site has been identified, a project can easily take two years through design, approvals, working drawings, commitment financing, permits, construction. If rezoning and development permits are required, this typically adds 6 to 8 months.
- **Scarce public funding**  
The BC Government is required by legislation to balance the budget in 2013/14. In the recently adopted 2012/13 budget, the Government confirmed that it will "hold the line on spending". Capital spending will continue to be constrained.
- **Fund-raising 10% of capital costs**  
Local fund-raising to achieve the full implementation of this Plan is estimated at \$4.6 million. This will require well organized, dedicated efforts.

## Opportunities Associated With Implementation

While there are significant challenges, there are also unique opportunities that will enable the implementation of the Procurement Plan.

- **Construction is more somewhat more affordable**  
Although Metro Vancouver remains one of Canada's least affordable regions, there has been a stabilization in the key components of development and renovation. The Construction Price Index for new housing (apartment building) has decreased by 13% between 2008 and 2011 (Statistics Canada). Year-over-year, the rate of increase in construction union wage rates has also decreased – in 2008 the annual increase was 4.4%, in 2011 it was 1.1%. As well, the cost of capital borrowing remains historically low.
- **The private sector will bring creative approaches**  
Working with the private sector through a design-build approach is likely to generate privately-held sites throughout Surrey. This procurement technique will be public and competitive, with the intent of encouraging "sharp pencil" pricing.
- **The achievements of the last several years provide a spring-board**  
As noted earlier, the housing and social services community has been extremely pro-active with notable successes over several years. These groups are central to implementing the Housing Procurement Plan.
- **Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society to embark on fund development**  
The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society is committed to ongoing fund-raising for specific priority projects, and to build capacity and sustainability. In 2012, the Society recruited a fund development manager.

## Details Of The Procurement Plan For Supported Housing

This Plan sets annual targets for supported housing in Surrey over five years. Table 1 shows the annual targets by three initiative types.

- **New Construction** – 270 units. This anticipates that 7-8 projects could be built over five years. About 50% will be created through a "design build" procurement, through annual proposal calls to the private sector, issued by BC Housing. The remaining 50% could be initiated by existing non-market housing providers and faith-based groups. It is anticipated that these projects will be staffed 24/7, with a full meal program, and programming space for counselling and life skills development.
  - The use of "design build" as a procurement technique anticipates the likely challenge of land availability. This initiative also capitalizes on the strengths of the private sector and may facilitate more timely development. To be successful, this method does need expertise in managing the proposal call, and

in the specification of requirements. BC Housing has been identified as the lead on this procurement process, but it could involve non-market providers at all stages.

- **Acquisition** – 70 units. This cost-effective approach foresees repurposing and conversions of existing buildings by non-market housing providers and faith-based groups. It is recognized that the supply of potential conversions is limited in Surrey, and only two projects are anticipated over five years. Similar to the new construction projects, it is assumed that these projects will have 24/7 support staff, meal service, and space for programming.
- **Rent Supplements** – 110 units. This is a very cost-effective and flexible approach to supporting individuals who are able to live independently in market rental housing. Outreach workers in Surrey attribute success in housing people in privately-owned apartments or secondary suites to good relationships with landlords, crisis intervention when difficult situations arise, and regular and ongoing support to the tenants.

## Estimated Funding Requirements

Estimating the costs of implementing the Plan is important to all parties – lenders, rent subsidy provider, donors, non-market housing operators, as well as health and social service providers. CitySpaces has drawn on BC Housing’s Design Guidelines and Construction Standards, published in March 2012, as the basis for construction costing. We have also drawn on other reliable sources for operational and support costs. Table 6 – also shown in the Summary of the Housing Procurement Plan – rolls up the total capital costs and shows the annual outlay costs of a fully implemented Plan in Year 5. Estimates are based on a number of assumptions, each footnoted on the Tables.

### Capital Costs and Operating Costs

This refers to the capital cost of the new housing that will be purchased, constructed and or renovated, including land costs. This cost may be paid in two main ways:

- **Mortgaging** paid for by monthly payments. If arranged through BC Housing this will likely be over a 35 year amortization period. These estimates have used an interest rate of 5%, with a term of five years, and a 35-year amortization. Some societies have funded projects through conventional lenders and private mortgages.
- **Grants/Donations.** These contributions reduce the cost, or completely remove, the need to take out a long-term mortgage for a project. Grants or donations may be from a variety of sources. In recent years, BC Housing has moved to funding non-market housing through capital grants. This may continue to be the preferred option; however, the tables show the estimated costs if this debt is mortgaged. Other sources include the Government of Canada Homelessness Partnering

Strategy, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund, other charitable organizations, private donations and community fund raising.

Estimated capital costs in this Plan are in the order of magnitude of \$41,975,000 (2012) dollars. While construction costs were characterized by significant inflation through the 1980s and 1990s, the Construction Price Index has declined since 2008. Interest rates are expected to remain low over the early parts of the Plan implementation period.

- **Operating Costs** - These are costs associated with running the day-to-day operations of any housing project, including maintenance, taxes, project utilities, insurance, landscaping and other items.
- **On-site Support Staff Costs** - These costs relate to staff employed by the non-market housing provider that manages and operates the project. Staff provide assistance in many ways, including counselling and job preparation. Support staff may provide 24/7 coverage. The level or presence of support staff will depend on the type of housing and service provided.
- **Off-site Support Staff Costs** - Other staffing not on-site may include Homeless Outreach workers, and ACT teams who provide support services to people who are living in rent-supplemented market rental housing.

### Overall Capital Costs

As shown on Table 2, the order of magnitude capital cost of the 340 units to be purchased, renovated or developed is estimated at \$45,750,000 dollars, averaging \$134,559 per unit, including soft costs, land, fixtures, furnishings, equipment and costs of a project kitchen.

Assumptions about the form of this funding are shown on Table 3. A total of \$41,175,000 is assumed to be debt financed via mortgages arranged through BC Housing over 35 years at an average mortgage rate of 5%. An additional \$4,575,000 is assumed to come from grants and local fund raising.

Table 4 shows the annual debt servicing and operating costs of the program of new and purchased units. The figures are cumulative, with units being added each year for five years. For simplicity, the full annual debt service, operating and support costs of each year's target units are shown in the year they come on stream. This Procurement Plan includes support costs of \$3,200 per unit (tenant) per year for the rent supplement units.

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This Housing Procurement Plan's successful implementation depends on the participation and support of the BC government, through BC Housing as the key capital lender or broker. BC Housing must be "at the table" in providing funding for rent subsidies for people who are transitioning to more independent living. The Fraser Health Authority also has a very significant role in paying for support services. And, assuming this funding is available, the involvement of the private sector is essential — providing building(s) for lease and units with rent supplements, and responding to design-build proposal calls.

In some respects achieving the targets for 270 newly built units and 70 units through acquisition may seem daunting. However a quick look at Surrey's latest successful new projects since 2007 demonstrates that this is possible — 36 transition housing units for addiction recovery (Phoenix Centre, 2007); 12 short stay units and 24 transitional apartments for women and their children (Maxxine Wright Centre, 2011); 52 units of supportive studio units (Timber Grove 2012); 36 supportive family apartment units for women and children (Alder Gardens, 2012); 52 units of supportive housing and 15 recovery beds (Quibble Creek 2012); and 58 studio and two-bedroom units in four renovated buildings (Bolivar Court and Peterson Place, 2012).

Inevitably, as circumstances change, as new opportunities unfold, and the funding environment shifts, there will be changes to this Housing Procurement Plan. Knowing this, management and monitoring are very important. Flexibility will also be important to maintain the targets, should the level of need change, or some procurement initiatives vary from their targets and timeline.

Constructing new housing will provide permanent housing and add to the publicly-supported existing stock. This five-year program will add considerably to the Province's assets over 35 years. We note that rent supplements, although advantageous in providing units quickly and affordably, are not necessarily permanent.

In Surrey, as in many urbanizing communities across Canada, adding more supply of new non-market housing is crucial to meet the housing needs of people who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless – youth-at-risk, people battling substance abuse and mental illness, women in vulnerable situations, and recent immigrants. The Federal government, once a champion of special needs and affordable housing, has stepped aside. Today, it's a local imperative – defining the need and setting out a realistic plan to champion a coordinated solution.

**Table 1 – Housing Procurement by Initiative Type, Years 1 to 5**

Column A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Years 1-5
	Units by New Construction					
Individual non-profit and faith based groups initiatives partnering with others		40	30	30	30	130
“Design Build” RFPs called by non-profit societies (funding pre-dedicated by BC Housing)	30	30	40	40		140
	Units by Acquisition					
Acquisitions by non-profit societies, faith based groups (e.g., conversions of existing institutions, conversion of motels, rooming houses, etc.)		35		35		70
	Units through Rent Supplements					
Rent Supplement units in market housing	20	20	20	25	25	110
	Cumulative Units					
Cumulative units	50	175	265	395	450	
Turnover of units (5% of previous year’s total units – base year 2012 of 543)	27	30	36	40	47	
<b>Total New and Turn-over Housing Units</b>	77	205	301	435	497	
<b>Variance from goal of 450 units</b>	-373	-245	-149	-15	47	

**Table 2 – Costs New Build, Acquisition and Rent SupplementS, Years 1 to 5**

A	B	C	D	E
	Partnership initiatives	Design Build	Acquisitions	Rent Supplements
Number of Units	130	140	70	110
Acquisition Cost Per Unit			\$70,000	
Construction or Renovation Cost Per Unit, including soft costs	\$108,000	\$108,000	\$30,000	
Land Cost Per Unit	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	
Sub-Total Per Unit Cost	\$138,000	\$138,000	\$100,000	
FF&E Per Unit	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	
Contribution to Project Kitchen Per Unit	\$3,000	\$3,000		
Total Per Unit Costs	\$143,000	\$143,000	\$102,000	
Rent Supplement Per Year				\$3,600
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$18,590,000</b>	<b>\$20,020,000</b>	<b>\$7,140,000</b>	<b>\$1,134,000</b>

Note: For per unit calculations (e.g. size, land, construction costs), refer to Table 7



**Table 3 – Housing Procurement by Initiative Type, Years 1 to 5**

A	B		C		D		E	F	G
Year	Partnership initiatives		Design Build		Acquisitions		Total Initiatives	Less 10% Grants & Contributions	Net Capital to be Borrowed
	# units	\$M	# units	\$M	# units	\$M	\$ per year	\$	\$
Year 1			30	\$4,290,000			\$4,290,000	\$429,000	\$3,861,000
Year 2	40	\$5,720,000	30	\$4,290,000	35	\$3,570,000	\$13,580,000	\$1,358,000	\$12,222,000
Year 3	30	\$4,290,000	40	\$5,720,000			\$10,010,000	\$1,001,000	\$9,009,000
Year 4	30	\$4,290,000	40	\$5,720,000	35	\$3,570,000	\$13,580,000	\$1,358,000	\$12,222,000
Year 5	30	\$4,290,000					\$4,290,000	\$429,000	\$3,861,000
Years 1-5							\$45,750,000	\$4,575,000	\$41,175,000

Note 1: \$41,175,000 debt financed via mortgages arranged through BC Housing | 35 years, average rate 5%

Note 2: \$4,575,000 to be raised locally through foundations and local, corporate and individual donors

**Table 4 – New Debt Service, Operating, Support Costs, Net of Tenant Rents for New Build, and Acquisition Units, Years 1 to 5**

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Year	New Debt Service <sup>1</sup>	New Operating and Support <sup>2</sup>	New Gross Cost	Cumulative Annual Costs	Less Cumulative Tenant Rents <sup>3</sup>	Net Cumulative Annual Costs
Year 1	\$232,308	\$396,000	\$628,308	\$628,308	\$135,000	\$493,308
Year 2	\$735,396	\$1,386,000	\$2,121,396	\$2,749,704	\$607,500	\$2,142,204
Year 3	\$542,076	\$924,000	\$1,466,076	\$4,215,780	\$922,500	\$3,293,280
Year 4	\$735,396	\$1,386,000	\$2,121,396	\$6,337,176	\$1,395,000	\$4,942,176
Year 5	\$232,308	\$396,000	\$628,308	\$6,965,484	\$1,530,000	\$5,435,484

Note 1 – Debt service calculated from Table 3, Net after Grants and Contributions @ 10% of capital

Note 2 – Operating and support – per unit, per month computed at a blended estimate of \$1,100

Note 3 – Tenant rents assumed at \$375 per unit per month

**Table 5 – Rent Supplement and Support Costs, Years 1 to 5**

A	B	C	D	E	F
	Annual Rent Supplement Per Unit <sup>1</sup>	Annual Support Costs Per Tenant <sup>2</sup>	Annual Rent Supplement + Support	Cumulative Number of Units	Cumulative Costs of Rent Supplement + Support
	\$3,600	\$3,200	\$6,800		
Year 1				20	\$136,000
Year 2				40	\$272,000
Year 3				60	\$408,000
Year 4				85	\$578,000
Year 5				110	\$748,000

Note 1 – Rent Supplements assumed at maximum of \$300 per unit per month – \$3,600 per year

Note 2 – Support costs computed at \$3,200 per unit (tenant) per year

**Table 6 – Summary Table, Year 5**

	A	B	C
	New Construction & Acquisition Units	New Rent Supplement Units	Total Units
Number of Supported Units	340	110	450
Total Capital Costs	\$45,750,000		
Per Unit Capital Costs for New Build and Acquisition / Renovation	\$134,559		
Less Grants and Contributions @ 10%	\$4,575,000		
Net Capital Costs	\$41,175,000		
Cumulative Debt Service, Operating and Supports Costs in Year 5	\$5,435,484		
Per Unit Debt Service, Operating and Support Costs Per Year (Net of Rents)	\$15,987		
Rent Supplement Units (Rent Subsidy and Support Costs in Year 5)		\$748,000	
Per Tenant Rent Supplement + Support Costs		\$6,800	
Cumulative Debt Service, Operating & Supports Costs – New, Acquired, and Rent Supplement in Year 5			\$6,183,484

**Table 7 – Unit Sizes and Costs Used for New Build Projects**

4-Storey Wood Frame Building with Surface Parking	Studios	Building
Total Units (#)	40	
Unit Size (sq. ft.)	365	14,600
Circulation & Service Rooms (sq. ft.) @ 18%	63	2520
Programming Area (sq. ft.)	15	600
Kitchen and Meal Service (sq. ft.)	55	2200
<b><i>Sub-Total - Square Footage</i></b>	<b>498</b>	<b>19,920</b>
Base Cost (per sq. ft.)	\$135	
Adjustments (per sq. ft.)	\$20	
<b><i>Cost Per Square Foot</i></b>	<b>\$155</b>	
Soft Costs and Contingency (per sq. ft.) @ 34%	\$53	
<b><i>Plus Soft Costs &amp; Contingency</i></b>	<b>\$208</b>	
Total Cost Per Unit Before Land	\$103,435	
Land Value Per Unit	\$30,000	
<b><i>Total Cost Per Unit for New Build Projects</i></b>	<b>\$133,435</b>	
<b>TOTAL BUILDING COST</b>		<b>\$5,337,384</b>



Suite 585, 1111 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC V6E 2J3 | 604.687.2281  
5th Floor, 844 Courtney Street, Victoria BC V8W 1C4 | 250.383.0304  
Suite 300, 160 Quarry Park Boulevard SE, Calgary AB T2C 3G3 | 403.336.2468

[www.cityspaces.ca](http://www.cityspaces.ca)

# Master PLAN

FOR HOUSING THE HOMELESS IN SURREY

## Appendix A: Situation Report

PREPARED FOR THE  
City of Surrey

PREPARED BY  
CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

MARCH 2012  
*Updated June, 2013*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Situation Report provides background research and context information that will help to inform future planning and policy development on homelessness in Surrey. This report was made possible due to the large number of individuals and organizations that generously contributed their time to meet with the consultant team and to share their insights and local knowledge. A complete list of key-informants is included in the appendix of this report.

Special thanks are also warranted for the members of the project's steering committee, including:

- City of Surrey (Councillor Judy Villeneuve, Jean Lamontagne, Don Luymes, Aileen Murphy, Marlis McCargar)
- BC Housing (Darin Froese, Craig Crawford, Armin Amrolia)
- Fraser Health Authority (Meryl McDowell)

The consultant team included Noha Sedky, Andrew Hiscox, and Kate Lambert of CitySpaces Consulting Ltd. The research and strategic directions are the result of the consultants' work and do not necessarily reflect the views of the City of Surrey or BC Housing.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Surrey and BC Housing have partnered on an initiative to develop a Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey. The initiative aims to respond to the city's needs for long-term housing and support services for the homeless and at-risk of homelessness as well as the need for emergency shelters and related services. This Situation Report provides background information and context details to inform the development of this Master Plan and is based largely on key-informant interviews as well as research and analysis of earlier documents and data.

### **The Numbers:**

According to service providers, the number and type of shelter and supportive housing beds available in Surrey do not adequately respond to the demand.

- There are a total of 85 beds for adults at three emergency co-ed shelter sites located in Whalley, Newtown and Cloverdale. There are 26 beds available in women's shelters, 12 of which can accommodate women and children. Additional beds are available at safe houses for women in crisis and at-risk youth.
- There are 691 transitional and supported housing beds and units for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. This includes housing for women, youth, individuals with addictions and mental health issues and other at-risk groups.
- There are approximately 4,600 units of non-market housing in Surrey, of which 1,800 are dedicated to low-income seniors and 155 are for Aboriginal households. The remaining 2,700 are for low-income families and individuals who are able to live independently.
- 400 homeless people were counted in Surrey according to the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, which accounts for 15% of the regional homeless population. This demonstrates little change since 2008. In 2011, the majority (58%) of the homeless population in Surrey was "unsheltered", that is individuals who were sleeping outside, in camps or vehicles or other arrangements.

### **Key Population Groups:**

The majority of the homeless population counted in 2011 consisted of single men (63%) and, as such, many of the emergency service providers target single men as the primary target group. However, service provider agencies also identified the following at-risk groups to be particularly vulnerable of repeat homelessness and would benefit from dedicated housing and services.

- Of the homeless population counted, 37% were women, and they were often not well served by traditional shelters and emergency services. Single women leaving transition houses, women with children and sex-trade workers were noted to be in particular need of second stage, supportive or transitional housing.

- Children are found among Surrey's homeless population. Additional shelter and housing for homeless families with children was identified as an immediate need as families with children are being turned away from the one existing shelter facility.
- Agencies reported a growing percentage of homeless or vulnerable youth, in particular Aboriginal and immigrant youth. The need for a continuum of housing and services dedicated to youth was stressed, including shelter, supported transition housing and appropriate/affordable independent housing options. There is also a perceived lack of trained staff available in mainstream or adult-oriented facilities to provide appropriate support services to at-risk youth.
- Of the homeless population in Surrey, 24% identified themselves as Aboriginal, representing 15% of the region's entire Aboriginal homeless population. This is disproportionate to the City's total population where 2% are Aboriginal. Aboriginal homeless people have a unique set of needs and circumstances and have greater success when services are tailored to their cultural needs. Aboriginal-specific housing and services are needed.
- The "situational homeless" or working poor were identified as a growing segment of the homeless or at-risk population. This includes people who have full or part time employment and lower income seniors, who are unable to make ends meet and are increasingly accessing food bank and other basic services.

### **Housing Gaps:**

Service providers and stakeholders reported a shortage of adequate housing and shelter options in Surrey that are appropriate to meet the needs of the city's homeless population. This includes emergency shelter, temporary housing, supportive housing and affordable and appropriate market housing. Essentially, housing options across the entire housing continuum were identified, with sub-sets to meet the specific needs of women, youth and Aboriginal people.

- ***Shelters.*** While a vast expansion of shelter capacity is not warranted, there is a need for a better alignment of emergency services to the homeless population. This includes a centrally-located low-barrier shelter that can provide longer-term accommodation with support service linkages to users. An expansion of existing services, including an expansion of hours, resources and staff training, can help to better meet the needs of other vulnerable groups who do not access traditional shelters.
- ***Transitional or Second Stage Housing.*** Temporary housing (for a few months or years) that helps individuals to transition from a situation of homelessness or crisis to the next stage of housing and greater independence. This type of housing provides an opportunity for tenants to learn or re-learn basic lifeskills that can help them to maintain their housing as well as have time to deal with situations of stress and trauma in a supported environment.

- **Supportive Housing.** Surrey has a limited stock of supportive housing, that is, housing with integrated support services, a vital piece of the housing continuum.
- **Low-Barrier Housing.** Service providers noted the difficulties in finding low-barrier housing that is suitable for their clients facing multiple barriers. Most commonly, individuals with a mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions or those with a criminal record or history of criminal activity were noted to face the greatest difficulties.

## Service Gaps

While a broad range of service gaps were identified, the following areas were most frequently noted.

- **Housing Outreach and Follow-Up Services.** Individuals living in scattered private market rental units have been able to successfully maintain their housing and independence through housing outreach and follow-up services. An expansion of these services is warranted.
- **Health, Mental Health & Addictions Services.** A shortage of health drop-in services was noted, including clinical and dental services, addictions-related services such as detox treatment and withdrawal management, and mental health services and training for front line staff.
- **Discharge Services.** Resources are needed to help individuals when they are leaving health care facilities, treatment programs and the criminal justice system.
- **Meal Programs.** Having a broader range of food programs that provide access to regular, nutritious meals and food lifeskills is a key service that should more frequently be included in the toolkit of solutions.
- **Prevention Services.** A variety of financial tools could be developed or expanded to assist people to manage independently, as well as to prevent people from becoming homeless. For example, streamlining income assistance applications and procedures; adapting and expanding the rent supplement program; and facilitating access to local rent banks.

## Top Priorities

Based on the background research to date, including the research on good practices; document and data review; and key-informant interviews; seven priority areas have emerged. They provide initial direction and focus for the City of Surrey, BC Housing, other government agencies, local service providers and the private sector to consider. These priority areas will inform the development of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless.

1. A suitable **replacement facility** in Whalley that includes an emergency shelter, transitional housing units as well as health care and other basic services.

2. Expansion of **drop-in and shelter services** provided by local service providers, with a particular focus on groups that are not well served by traditional shelters, i.e. youth, women, Aboriginal individuals and the working poor.
3. **Transitional and supportive housing** in a mix of forms including conversions and new builds.
4. Expansion of **outreach and housing follow-up services** to provide continual contact and support to previously-homeless and at-risk individuals living in private market rentals.
5. Review and update of **municipal bylaws and regulations** to support special needs housing projects and to protect tenants living in substandard conditions.
6. Establishment of ongoing **liaison groups** with the business community and service providers at a city-wide and neighbourhood level.
7. Continued **partnerships** and collaboration between BC Housing, the Fraser Health Authority, Ministry of Social Development and other agencies to introduce/improve key services and new initiatives.

**OUTLINE**

- Introduction .....1**
  - Project Overview .....1
  - Purpose of Situation Report .....2
  - Approach to the Research.....2
  - Key Definitions .....2
  - Emergency Services & Supportive Housing Continuum.....4
  
- City of Surrey’s Current Policies & Priorities.....6**
  - Official Community Plan Policies.....6
  - Sustainability Charter .....6
  - Plan for the Social Wellbeing of Surrey Residents.....6
  - Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society .....6
  - Partnerships with BC Housing .....7
  - Housing Action Plan.....8
  - Key Provincial Initiatives in Surrey (2006-2012) .....8
  
- Inventory of Non-Market Housing & Emergency Services.....10**
  - Emergency Services .....10
  - Transition and Supportive Housing .....10
  - Non-Market Housing .....11
  
- The Homeless Population in Surrey.....14**
  
- Understanding Key Population Groups.....17**
  - Women.....17
  - Youth.....19
  - Aboriginal People .....20
  - The Situational Homeless.....21
  
- Reported Challenges .....23**
  - A Shortage of Housing and Shelter Options .....23
  - A Lack of Client-Centred Support Services .....26
  - Challenges Facing New Projects .....28
  - Crime and Legal Issues.....29



**Opportunities & Suggested Strategies.....29**  
Recommendations for the City of Surrey .....29  
Housing-Specific Recommendations .....30  
Recommendations for Support Services.....32  
Partnerships with Businesses & Development Community .....34

**Top Priorities Moving Forward .....35**

**APPENDICES .....37**  
A - Sources & Contacts .....38  
B - Relevant BC Housing Programs.....40  
C - City of Surrey Official Community Plan: Draft Policies on Affordable Housing42  
D - Inventory of Transition & Supportive Housing .....45



## INTRODUCTION

### Project Overview

The City of Surrey has identified homelessness to be a high priority issue and has partnered with BC Housing in developing a Master Plan for Housing the Homeless. The Master Plan aims to respond to the immediate needs related to emergency shelter and services for the homelessness, but it will equally focus on the long-term housing and support service solutions needed throughout Surrey's neighbourhoods and to minimize the need for shelters in the future.

This project builds on several policy and planning initiatives that have taken place to date. First, a city-wide social planning process was undertaken in 2004 to 2006 that identified key issues and priorities. Second, the City embarked on the development of a Housing Action Plan in 2010. The Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey will build on these and other past initiatives in a targeted attempt to address homelessness and housing affordability.

As a plan that prioritizes "Housing First", the Master Plan will address the need for emergency shelters, while prioritizing the need for permanent housing solutions as a means of eliminating homelessness in Surrey's neighbourhoods.

The project is divided into two main stages:

- Stage 1 - Background Review & Preliminary planning, and
- Stage 2 - Housing Procurement Action Plan.

Stage 1 involved research, analysis and stakeholder consultation that is compiled in this Situation Report. This background document serves to set the context and identify the key priority issues in Surrey. Accompanying this Situation Report is a briefing paper that describes various practices from other municipalities and jurisdictions, highlighting some of the strategies and approaches used by other communities for reference and consideration when developing a Master Plan for the City of Surrey.

Stage 2 includes the identification of priority projects and program models and the development of an implementation plan for acquiring these units. This is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2012.

A steering committee comprising representatives from the City of Surrey, BC Housing, and Fraser Health was established to review and oversee the research and planning process. The members of the steering committee are listed in the Acknowledgments at the beginning of this report.

## Purpose of Situation Report

This Situation Report presents an overview of the background research. Specifically, the report aims to inform the development of targeted actions and implementation plan by:

- describing the current capacity of service delivery and housing for the affected population groups;
- identifying the gaps in housing and emergency services;
- identifying the population groups that are most in need and will require priority attention in future initiatives;
- presenting a set of considerations for future planning, including opportunities and challenges that were identified by local stakeholder groups; and
- describing innovative solutions and strategies.

## Approach to the Research

Service providers and stakeholders have an intimate understanding of the priority issues and gaps in housing and services in Surrey. As such, the qualitative research forms the backbone of this report. The report also refers to existing data sets and inventory on the homeless population and available housing and services. Specifically, the research involved the following:

- A review of the City of Surrey's current policies and practices that are most relevant to housing and homelessness.
- Estimates of the homeless population in Surrey, based on 2011 homeless count information as well as other service provider statistics.
- A listing of the emergency services and relevant non-market housing units available in Surrey.
- Interviews with key stakeholders who work with individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. A list of the individuals interviewed is included in Appendix A of this report.

## Key Definitions

This report and subsequent Master Plan is a response to the needs of individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The report and plan will be premised on a "housing first" philosophy, which includes emergency services and long-term housing.



For clarification, key definitions are included here:

<b>Absolute Homeless</b>	Individuals and families who are living in public spaces without legal claim (e.g. on the streets, in abandoned buildings, in tent cities); a homeless shelter; or a public facility or service (e.g. hospital, care facility, rehab or treatment centre, correctional facility) and cannot return to a stable residence. This definition also includes individuals and families who are financially, sexually, physically or emotionally exploited to maintain their shelter.
<b>At-Risk of Homelessness</b>	Individuals and families who are living in temporary accommodation where: a) they do not have control over the length and conditions of tenure (e.g. couch surfing, name not on lease); b) they do not have adequate personal space; c) tenancy is expected to be terminated (e.g. given an eviction notice); or d) they are living in a facility or centre and do not have permanent housing to move to (e.g. leaving a hospital or corrections facility).
<b>Housing First</b>	Involves the direct placement of homeless individuals into stable housing. Support services are made available to tenants through direct engagement, but active participation in these services is not required. Sobriety is not a precondition and relapses into drug or alcohol use do not result in tenants losing their housing or access to services.
<b>Continuum of Supports</b>	An approach to addressing the needs of homeless individuals where it is recognized that a range of supports and services are needed to assist individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The continuum includes drop-in services, emergency shelters, outreach, addiction services, transitional housing, and a range of support and prevention services.
<b>Gateway Services</b>	Gateway services facilitate the movement of shelter clients along the housing continuum and act as a bridge to more stable housing and support services. Gateway services include assessment, case planning, information and referrals that assist clients to access key support services in their community. These services may be provided on-site, but are more typically provided by other agencies outside the shelter.
<b>Harm Reduction</b>	Harm reduction refers to policies, programs and practices that aim primarily to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of legal and illegal substances without necessarily reducing the level of consumption. Harm reduction benefits people who use drugs, their families and the community.

## Emergency Services & Supportive Housing Continuum

A housing continuum typically spans the spectrum from emergency services and non-market housing through to market-based rental or ownership housing. Compared to elsewhere in the region, Surrey has been successful in its ability to provide a diversity of market rental and ownership housing. This array of housing has provided low, moderate and higher income residents with some choice in the housing market. With the focus of this report and subsequent Master Plan being on the homeless and the most at-risk groups, only the most relevant housing forms and related services are included in the continuum to be used as part of this project.

The continuum begins with temporary services and shelter that help to connect individuals without housing to key supports. It then progresses to short and medium-term housing for individuals who would benefit from treatment or a stabilization period. Other forms include medium or long-term supportive housing for those who require support services in order to maintain their housing. Lastly, housing units that are available through the private market through rent supplements, outreach and housing follow-up, as well as other mobile service teams.

The following continuum does not include market or non-market housing for low-income individuals and families who are able to live independently. It is presumed that these forms will be addressed through other plans and initiatives.

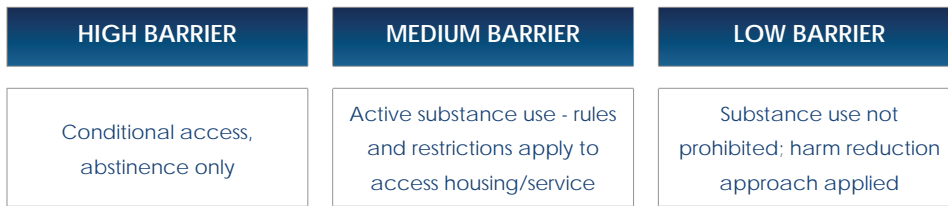
Figure A - Emergency Services and Housing Continuum

	DROP-IN SERVICES	EMERGENCY SHELTERS	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING & PROGRAMS	LONG-TERM HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS	RENT SUPPLEMENTS + MOBILE SERVICES
HOUSING	No Housing Component	Seasonal extreme weather beds and year-round shelters	Safe houses, second stage, treatment programs, longer term housing	Non-market housing for the homeless and at-risk	Units in market rental housing
SERVICES	Access to basic services e.g. laundry, phone, food, counselling	Gateway services connect users to key supports	On-site services focus on stabilization, e.g. crisis management, income, health, advocacy, life skills	High - moderate - low Levels of support	Outreach, follow-up and other mobile services tailored to individual, if required

In Surrey, the majority of available services and housing is operated by non-profits. Each agency has its own philosophy or mandate, resulting in a variety of service approaches and program models. In order to meet the varied needs of the at-risk population, it is valuable for a community to have a variety of housing options, but it is also valuable to

have a mix of service approaches so that it can best to respond to the needs of different population groups.

**Figure B - Low to Medium Barrier Program Models**



One of the critical aspects of a program model is how an agency deals with substance use on the premises. Figure B presents a spectrum of approaches from a high barrier facility that requires users/tenants to be sober at all times to one that is low or minimal barrier where substance use is permitted and a harm reduction approach is followed. It is valuable for a community to have a mix of high to low barrier sites.

## CITY OF SURREY'S CURRENT POLICIES & PRIORITIES

To set the context for the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless, it is valuable to understand the policy and planning context at the City of Surrey. The Master Plan takes as its starting point a number of city-wide policy initiatives and programs that are of particular relevance to this work. The top initiatives are described in this section.

### Official Community Plan Policies

The current Official Community Plan (OCP) has policies to “Build Complete Communities” and to “Improve the Quality of Community,” which call for a range of housing types in Surrey to accommodate different ages, incomes, tenures, household compositions and abilities (special needs).

The OCP is being updated with final adoption anticipated in the fall of 2013. The new OCP will include a more comprehensive set of policies on affordable housing. Appendix C outlines the affordable housing policies in the June 2013 draft of the new OCP.

### Sustainability Charter

The Sustainability Charter was adopted by Council in September 2008 as a framework to guide the City's actions and decisions. The Charter identifies housing as a key component of “Socio-cultural Sustainability” and articulates a vision of a sustainable Surrey as being a city with “livable communities that provide a range of affordable and appropriate housing options” that “meet the needs of households of various sizes, compositions, and income levels” and where “those with special needs will have the supports they need to enable them to live as independently as possible.” The development of a Housing Action Plan is listed as one of the immediate actions to be undertaken to advance the Vision and Goals of the Charter.

### Plan for the Social Wellbeing of Surrey Residents

Council adopted the Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan) in February 2006, to provide strategic direction for the City's actions on social issues in Surrey. The Social Plan identified housing and homelessness as a priority issue and noted that there were significant gaps between the supply and need for emergency shelter beds, transition and supportive housing and low-income housing in Surrey. The Social Plan also identified the need for homeless outreach services, employment programs and addictions treatment services.

### Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society

The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund was established in 2007 with the allocation of over \$9.5 million in funding from the City of Surrey. The Fund is managed by the

Vancity Community Foundation on behalf of Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (the Society). The aim of the Society is to raise, manage and distribute funds to support initiatives that address homelessness. The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society, with a community-based board of directors, was established to oversee the Fund.

The Society was officially launched in April 2008. An inaugural, one-time grant of \$1 million was awarded in October 2008 to Atira Women’s Resource Society toward the development of Maxxine Wright Place in Surrey. Maxxine Wright Place addresses homelessness among at-risk women who are pregnant and/or parenting new babies.

In 2009, the Society initiated its Annual Grants Program. Each year, the Program aims to distribute \$200,000 which represents the earnings from the endowment fund. To date, the Society has awarded over \$2 million in grants.

The Society also provides “responsive grants”. These grants are awarded outside of the regular annual granting cycle in response to an emergency, such as where the health and safety of Surrey residents are in jeopardy, or when there is a compelling opportunity that may otherwise be missed.

### Partnerships with BC Housing

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the City of Surrey and BC Housing in March 2008 to develop two supportive housing projects, was strengthened in October 2008 with the addition of a third site that is part of the Olympic Legacy Affordable Housing initiative. Under the terms of the MOU, the City has committed to long-term lease of City property at a nominal rate and to waive municipal development cost charges and fees. The City also committed to expediting the approval process for these housing projects.

- *Quibble Creek Health and Phoenix Transition Housing Centre* – Quibble Creek accommodates a substance use counselling clinic and a health clinic, a 25-mat sobering and assessment centre, 15 short-term transitional recovery beds, and 52 supportive housing units for men and women recovering from addictions. This facility is located in the Surrey Memorial Hospital precinct.
- *Timber Grove* – A partnership between the Province, VANOC and the City of Surrey, this project involved the relocation and conversion of modular units from the Olympic Games into 52 studio apartments at a City-owned site as permanent supportive housing. Coast Mental Health operates the housing project, located in



Coast Mental Health - Timber Grove Supportive Housing

Whalley, which provides supportive housing for seniors (50+ years) who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness or people with disabilities. The project focuses on individuals dealing with mental health issues. Fraser Health provides on-site mental health services and one daily meal to residents.

- *Alder Gardens* – This is a partnership between the Province, City of Surrey and the YWCA of Metro Vancouver. The project, located in Newton, now provides 36 supportive housing units for single women with dependent children who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.



YWCA - Alder Gardens Supportive Housing

## Housing Action Plan

Council authorized staff to proceed with the development of a Housing Action Plan (HAP) in March 2009. The initial phases of developing the Housing Action Plan have been completed. These include research and analysis of demographic and housing stock data and consultations with community stakeholders on housing needs and issues in Surrey, as well as suggested remedying actions. The background research and results of the consultation process to date are available on the City's website: [www.surrey.ca/social-planning](http://www.surrey.ca/social-planning). The HAP will articulate a vision, guiding principles and a plan for achieving the goal of an adequate supply of housing to meet the full range of incomes and needs in Surrey. This is relevant in that it identifies the efforts on the part of the City to fulfill the broad spectrum of housing needs beyond those of the homeless and at-risk groups.

In addition, eliminating homelessness was clearly identified as a priority issue by stakeholders involved in the HAP consultations. The need for additional transition/ supportive housing and low income rental housing to accommodate this population was a suggested solution. The Master Plan represents a response to this community stakeholder feedback.

## Key Provincial Initiatives in Surrey (2006-2012)

A number of relevant projects and initiatives have been introduced in Surrey in the past seven years (since the Social Plan was adopted). These include:

- BC Housing's *Homeless Outreach Program* was introduced in 2006. Surrey now has six outreach workers who work out of three community-based agencies linking homeless people to housing and other support services.

- BC Housing's ***Extreme Weather Response Program*** was introduced in 2006 in communities where the number of homeless people exceeds the shelter beds available. The Program funds time-limited temporary shelter spaces on mats in churches and community agencies during periods when the temperature or weather conditions threaten the health and safety of homeless people. Surrey has its own Extreme Weather Coordinator who develops an Extreme Weather Plan and coordinates its implementation.
- In 2009, Keys Housing and Health Solutions' (formerly called South Fraser Community Services Society) ***Gateway Shelter*** moved to BC Housing's new enhanced emergency shelter model. In other words, the shelter was to be open 24-7 on a year-round basis, include the provision of daily meals, and access to support services. Previously, the Gateway Shelter had been a "cold wet weather shelter" that was only open from November to March.
- Under the leadership of the Ministry of Housing and Social Development (MHSD), the Province initiated the ***Homeless Integration Project*** in March 2009 in five BC communities, including Surrey. Its purpose was to focus on the chronically homeless population and integrate resources across community agencies and government. A team was set up in Surrey that includes representatives from Ministry of Social Development (MSD), BC Housing, Fraser Health, agencies with homeless outreach workers, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, the RCMP and the City. From March 2009 to December 2010, 356 homeless people were moved off the street or from shelters and into more permanent housing as a result of this new initiative. Data collection was discontinued in 2011.
- In February 2012, Fraser Health initiated the ***Surrey Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Program***, a specialized outreach program that provides "wrap-around services" in a community setting to adults with serious mental illness. This includes comprehensive assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and support activities. Most of the clients will receive services directly in their homes, in emergency shelters, drop-in centres or parks. The ACT team has capacity to support 80 to 100 individuals.

# INVENTORY OF NON-MARKET HOUSING & EMERGENCY SERVICES

According to the City of Surrey’s updated inventory of non-market housing units, there are approximately 7,700 housing units available for low income and special needs households in Surrey. This inventory provides the base of units upon which future emergency shelter services, housing conversions, new builds and other types of housing will be considered.

## Emergency Services

There are a total of 165 emergency shelter beds located throughout Surrey. For homeless adults, there are 85 shelter beds at three co-ed emergency shelter sites located in Whalley, Newtown and Cloverdale. There are 26 emergency shelter beds for women, and women with children. In addition, there are six beds in a safe house for youth and 48 beds in women-only facilities.

Table 1 - Summary of Emergency Shelter Facilities in Surrey

Emergency Shelters	# Beds				
	Youth	Women	Men	Unspecified	Total
Hyland House				35	35
Gateway Shelter		8	32		40
Cloverdale Shelter				10	10
Cynthia’s Place (women only)		14			14
Sheena’s Place (women and children)		12			12
All Nations Youth Safe House	6				6
Women’s Safe Houses/Transition Houses		48			48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>165</b>

## Transition and Supportive Housing

There are a total of 528 beds and/or units in the form of transitional or medium-term housing for at-risk individuals and families. Some of this housing is in a group home setting with shared kitchens and bathrooms and others include self-contained units where residents can live independently within a supportive environment and while participating in a program. This housing is located throughout Surrey, largely in residential neighbourhoods.

The transitional housing typically has a time limit which varies from program to program, ranging from several months to several years. In Surrey, there are 378 beds/units for people recovering from addictions; 43 for men who are exiting the federal corrections system; 20 units for men and women transitioning out of homelessness; 83 beds/units for women fleeing abuse or other crisis situation; and 4 beds for at-risk youth.



In Surrey, there are currently 163 self-contained units of supportive housing located at four sites, providing long-term housing for homeless or at-risk households. These projects target single moms, individuals with mental health issues and other at-risk groups.

Table 2 - Summary of Transition/Second Stage & Supportive Housing in Surrey

Transition / Second Stage & Supportive Housing	# Beds / Units				
	Youth	Women	Men	Unspecified	Total
Addictions		17	277	84	378
Corrections			43		43
Homeless/At-Risk of Homelessness				20	20
Women’s Second Stage Housing		83			83
Youth	4				4
<b>Transition / Second Stage Subtotal</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>528</b>
Supportive Housing (Long-Term)		28		135	163
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>691</b>

Table 2 only includes housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, and does not include any supportive housing for other population groups. There are over 400 beds in group homes throughout Surrey for people with other special needs such as mental health and developmental disabilities. These have not been included in this summary.

### Non-Market Housing

There are approximately 4,600 units of non-market housing in Surrey (Table 3). Roughly 1,800 of these units are dedicated to low-income seniors and an additional 155 are specifically dedicated to Aboriginal households. An additional 2,700 units are in the form of social housing for low income households or co-op housing — units that do not include any support services and are tailored for individuals and families who are able to live independently.

Table 3 - Summary of Non-Market Housing Units in Surrey

Non-Market Housing	# Units
Low-income Seniors	1,760
Non-Profit and Co-op	2,701
Aboriginal Housing	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,616</b>

Figure C shows the location of emergency shelters and transitional and supportive housing units in Surrey. It does not include, however, the location of transitional/ supported facilities that provide beds to youth, women and people with addictions as many of these locations are confidential. Figure D shows the rest of the non-market housing stock including non-profit and co-op housing for individuals, families, seniors and Aboriginal households.

Figure C - Map of Emergency Shelters and Transition/Supportive Housing

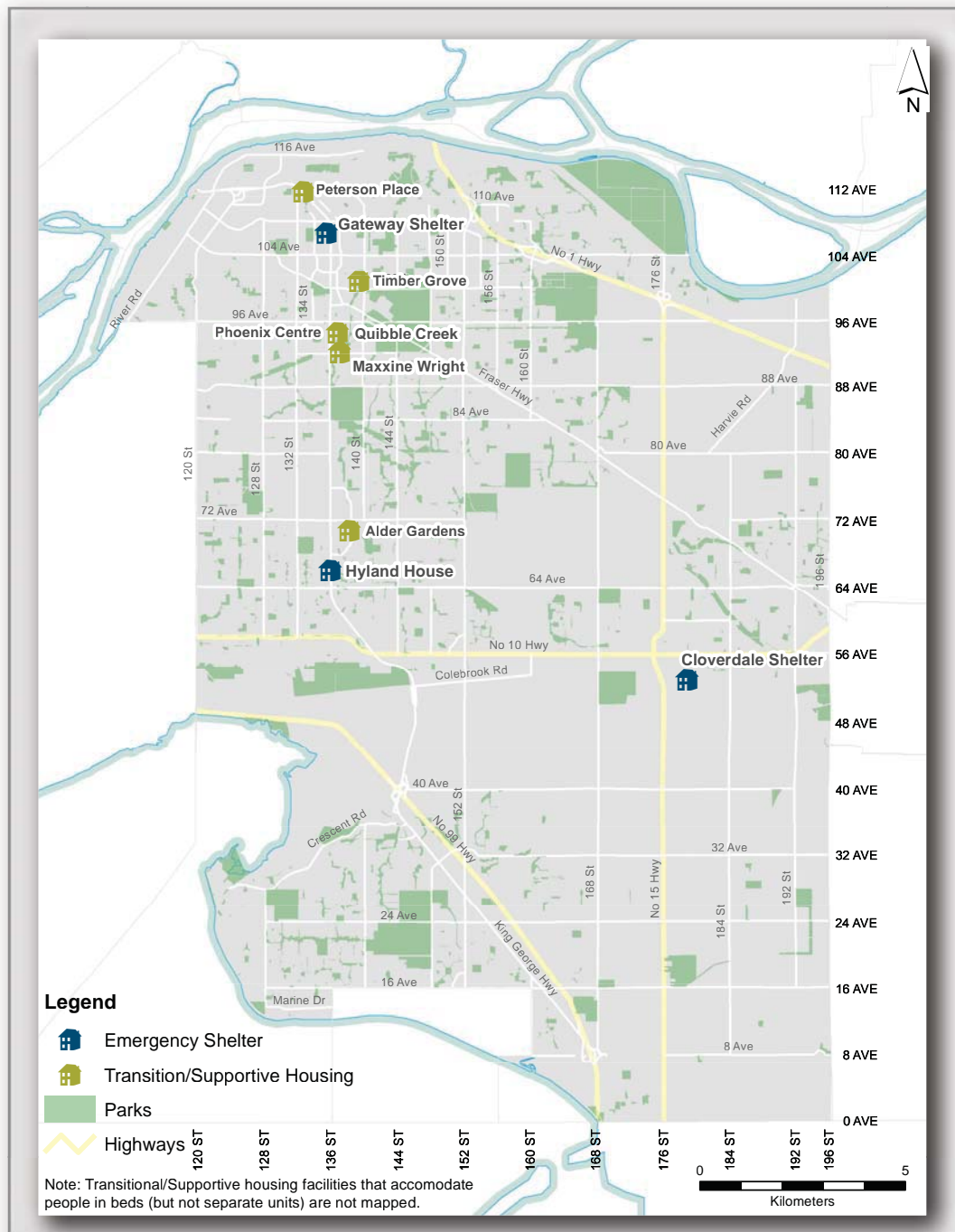
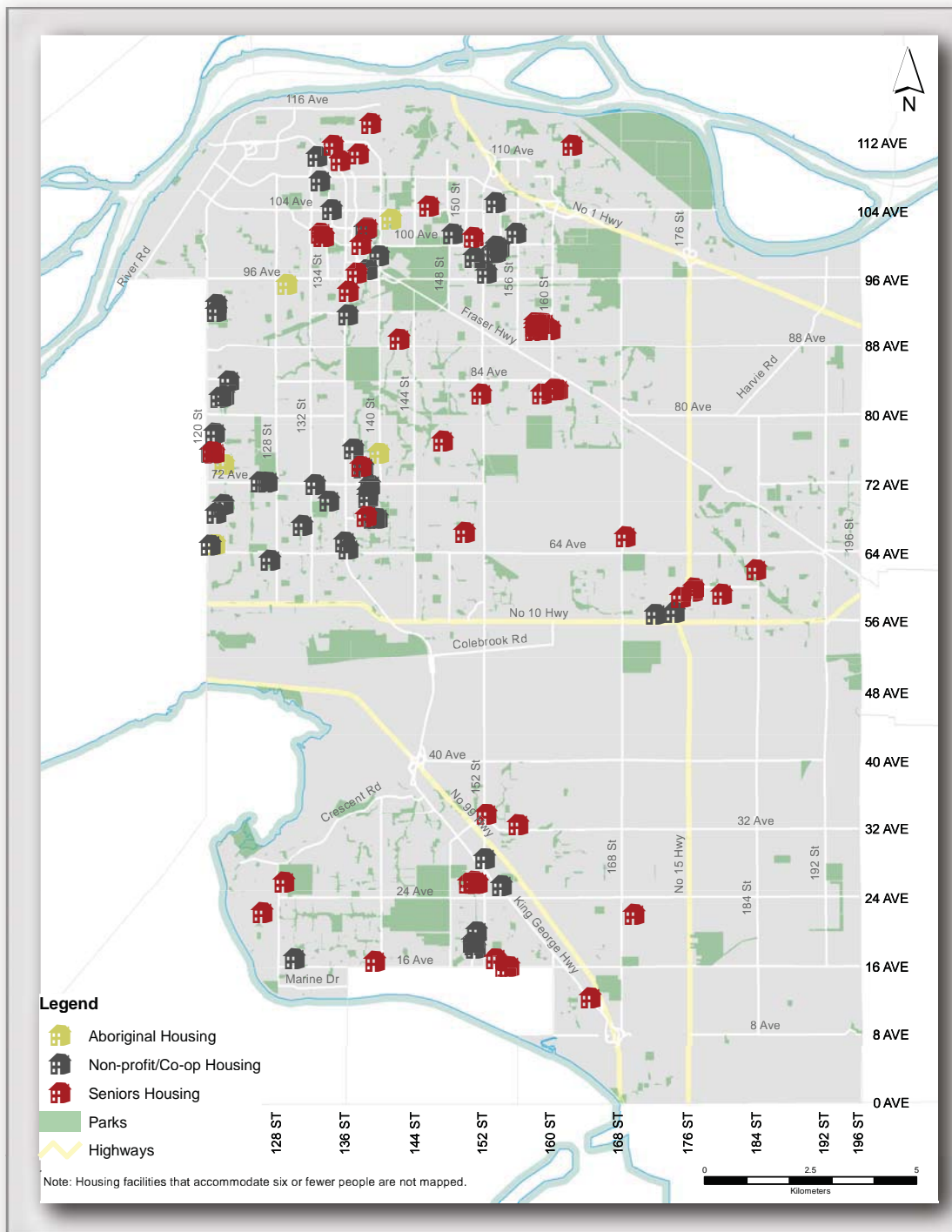


Figure D - Map of Non-Market Housing for Seniors, Families and Aboriginal Households in Surrey



## THE HOMELESS POPULATION IN SURREY

As it stands to date, the best estimate for the number of homeless people in Surrey is available through the Metro Vancouver Homeless Count (the Count).<sup>1</sup> However, due to the limitations of counting the homeless population, it is widely recognized that the homeless count numbers are likely an undercount, particularly for those populations who do not always use the traditional shelter system such as women, children and youth. The Count does not include those incarcerated for less than 30 days or people staying in recovery homes.

**Table 4 - Adult Homeless Population in Surrey and Metro Vancouver (2008, 2011)**

Adult Homeless	2008			2011		
	Sheltered	Not sheltered	Total	Sheltered	Not sheltered	Total
Surrey	95	307	402	170	230	400
	24%	76%	100%	43%	58%	100%
Metro Vancouver	1086	1574	2,660	1892	758	2,650
	41%	59%	100%	71%	29%	100%

Note: Those individuals who were “sheltered” include those who were staying in emergency shelters, youth safe houses, transition houses and those who had somewhere to sleep, such as a hospital or a detox centre, but otherwise had no fixed address.

- The 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count found 400 homeless people in Surrey, which accounts for 15% of the regional homeless population. As a point of reference, Surrey is home to 20% of the regional population. Practically the same number of homeless individuals were counted in the 2008 Homeless Count, which also amounted to 15% of the regional population.
- According to the last two homeless counts (2008 and 2011), the majority of the homeless population in Surrey was “unsheltered” — that is individuals who were sleeping outside, in camps or vehicles or other arrangements. In 2011, 58% of the homeless were not sheltered compared to 29% of the homeless in Metro Vancouver as a whole. This is an improvement over the previous 2008 count where 76% of the homeless were not sheltered. It is also important to note that it is easier to count individuals who are staying in shelters than those who are not. For this reason, homeless counts are often believed to present an undercount of the unsheltered.
- In Surrey, the majority of the homeless individuals who were not staying in shelters were found in Whalley (82%). Most of the remaining 18% of unsheltered homeless individuals were found in Newton or Cloverdale. While this clearly indicates a

<sup>1</sup> For the 2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness is planning to use a formula developed in the United States by the Corporation for Supportive Housing to estimate the number of people who are homeless over the course of a year.

concentration of unsheltered homeless individuals in the Whalley area, it is important to note that many homeless individuals who are not in urbanized areas are living in makeshift camp sites or wooded areas that are difficult to find. Many of those living outside of Whalley have also reported to service providers that they do not want to be in Whalley where they are more likely to be preyed upon by drug dealers or other predators. Many individuals prefer being alone and will avoid contact with others, making it particularly difficult to count them. Due to these counting difficulties, it is presumed that the proportion of Surrey's unsheltered homeless population living in Whalley is inflated.

**Table 5 - Homeless Population by Gender in Surrey and Metro Vancouver (2011)<sup>2</sup>**

Gender	Men	Women	Transgender	Total
Surrey	63%	37%	0.6%	100%
Metro Vancouver	69%	31%	0.4%	100%

- Among the homeless in Surrey for which this information was provided (in 2011), there were 125 women counted, representing 37% of the total population surveyed. Comparatively, only 31% of the population surveyed region-wide was female. Surrey in fact represents the largest proportion of “unsheltered” women in the region at 34%, compared to Vancouver at 22% of the unsheltered.
- In 2008, 33% of the homeless population was reported to be female, showing a possible increase in the proportion of homeless women since this earlier count.
- Two individuals were identified in 2011 as being transgendered.

**Table 6 - Aboriginal Homeless Population in Surrey and Metro Vancouver (2011)**

Aboriginal Homeless	Sheltered	Not sheltered	Total Aboriginal
Surrey	25%	75%	100%
Metro Vancouver	50%	50%	100%

- Among those counted in 2011, 24% were reported to be Aboriginal (approximately 100 individuals), a similar proportion as the rest of Metro Vancouver where 27% of respondents identified themselves as Aboriginal. By comparison, Aboriginal people make up 2% percent of Surrey’s total population. Of the total number of Aboriginal homeless people counted in the region, 15% were found to be in Surrey.
- The majority of Aboriginal homeless individuals counted in Surrey were found to be living “rough” (75%) rather than in a shelter (25%). By comparison, the Aboriginal

<sup>2</sup> The demographic information available in this table and subsequent tables represents a sample of respondents and is not based on 100% of the homeless population counted. For example, in Surrey, only 341 individuals were surveyed (or observed) to determine their gender. For Aboriginal identity or age-related data, the sample of respondents is smaller.

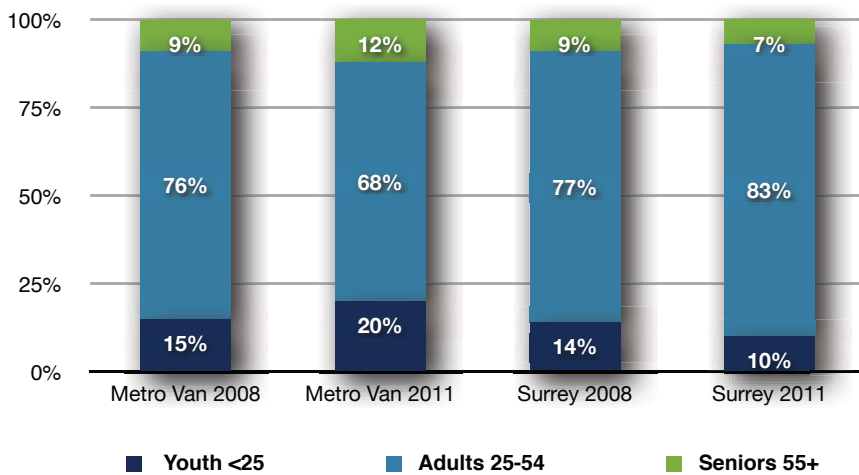
population in the region was split between those who were unsheltered (50%) compared to those staying at shelters (50%).

**Table 7 - Youth Homeless Population in Surrey and Metro Vancouver (2011)**

Unaccompanied Youth	Sheltered	Not sheltered	Total Youth
Surrey	23%	78%	100%
Metro Vancouver	38%	62%	100%

- With a total of 40 individuals counted, unaccompanied youth (under the age of 25) made up 10% of Surrey’s homeless population. This amounts to 6% of the region’s population of homeless youth. The majority of the youth were not found to be staying in a shelter (78%), as was the case throughout the region where 62% were unsheltered (62%).

**Figure E - Distribution of Homeless Population By Age Groups (2011)**



- In terms of the age distribution, it appears that there was a decline in the share of the homeless population under 25 years in Surrey, although the proportion of homeless youth in the region has increased since 2008. Given the small numbers of homeless youth in Surrey as a whole and the challenges in counting youth who are not staying at shelters, this should not necessarily be seen as an improvement in the situation for youth.
- People who are 55 and older are classified as seniors due to the rapid onset of aging and health consequences of homelessness. Among this group, there was very little change overall across the two counts, with a small proportional increase noted across the region as a whole and a marginal decline seen in Surrey.
- While the majority of the homeless individuals surveyed reported that they were alone (71%), 10% reported that they were with their partner/spouse. Others reported that they had friends, pets or children with them.

## UNDERSTANDING KEY POPULATION GROUPS

The homeless population in Surrey, as is the case in most communities, has a large proportion of single adult men. In Surrey, 63% of the homeless individuals counted, both sheltered and unsheltered, were male and many of the service providers report that the chronic homeless whom they work consists largely of men. Traditional emergency shelters typically focus on the need to accommodate adult men who make up the largest percentage of the client base.

That said, the homeless population in Surrey has also been described by key-informant groups as diverse, including people of all ages, abilities, ethnic backgrounds, and circumstances. Through the interview process, several sub-population groups among the homeless in Surrey were repeatedly identified as having specific characteristics, needs and challenges. Based largely on the key-informant interviews, this section describes these “other” key groups in an attempt to gain a better understanding of their situation and unique set of needs. This information will help to identify if dedicated facilities or services are warranted.

### Women

Based on the recent Count, 37% of the visibly homeless population in Surrey is estimated to be female. However, service providers suggest that women are often under-reported in the homeless counts because many of them do not want anyone to know that they are homeless. Some women fear losing custody of their children if government agencies were to find out they are homeless, and social stigma is another contributing factor. As such, they will resort to alternatives that may or may not be suitable before using emergency shelters. For example, women will often partner with men (sometimes putting themselves or their children in unsafe situations), use an address of a friend, couch surf or find other means to secure shelter to avoid sleeping outside.

Service providers and agencies in Surrey indicate that their female clients are generally in their 30s, but some report seeing more middle-aged female clients, as well as some elderly clients, over the past five years.

Service provider agencies working primarily with women have identified the following particular needs for this group:

- **Second Stage or Transitional Housing** — A lack of second stage or transitional housing for women was identified as a major gap. Many women leaving women’s transition homes do not have safe housing to return to; others have never lived on



their own.<sup>3</sup> Service providers find that 30 days (maximum length of stay at women's transition homes) is not enough time for women that have experienced a crisis to stabilize and prepare for independent living. The time restriction prevents women from fully dealing with their immediate personal and health issues and does not allow enough time for them to apply for and start receiving income assistance. For such women, the option to move into second stage housing would extend the time that they are living in a supported environment, enabling them to manage the crisis and gain lifeskills that would help them to achieve independence.

- **Supportive Housing** — Also in short supply is longer term supportive housing which could be another potential stepping stone between temporary or crisis-based shelter and fully independent living. This type of housing would provide some support, administration of medications, communal dinners and other support that helps individuals move towards independent living, while providing some autonomy.
- **Affordable Private Market Rentals** — Ideal housing options for women could include apartments, townhouses, secondary suites that are in safe neighbourhoods located close to local services and transit routes. This type of housing can be hard to find at affordable rental rates. In particular, single women often have a difficult time accessing private market housing because their income is too low. In order to afford market rents, many women seek shared housing or find roommates to move in with them, and occasionally this can lead to exploitive or dangerous situations.
- **Building Trusting Relationships** — Women are also more likely than men to feel isolated and to suffer from anxiety and emotional issues. It is therefore particularly important for them to have positive, trusting relationships, be that with support service staff, friends, family or others. Elderly women especially, often prefer not to live alone, and are said to prefer congregate living models.
- **Larger Units** — Women with children need larger accommodation than is often available in typical non-market housing. In private market rentals, larger units of three bedrooms or more are rarely available or affordable to lower income households.
- **Appropriate Housing for Children** — Women with children are significantly challenged to find housing that is safe, affordable and appropriate for children. Not surprisingly, a two-bedroom unit will be more expensive than a one-bedroom unit of comparable quality in a similar neighbourhood. This is a serious concern for women

---

<sup>3</sup> There may be some confusion with the term “transitional housing”. Women's Transition Housing refers to group homes where women who are in crisis or fleeing abusive situations can stay for up to 30 days. They are largely funded by the Provincial program with the same name. They are also often called safe homes. There is a distinction between these types of transition houses and transitional housing for people who were homeless and need shelter for a longer period of time (a few months up to a few years) to help them to transition towards independent living or other permanent housing option. For women, this type of housing is often known as second stage housing.



with children, who risk losing custody of their children if they are not able to meet Ministry standards for housing.<sup>4</sup>

- **Children in Custody** — For those who have lost custody of their children, one of the biggest barriers to their success is their ability to re-connect with their children on a regular basis. To facilitate this, women need access to a flex space or rental unit where they can stay with their children when they visit.
- **Dealing With Addictions** — Women with addictions are reported to suffer from greater physical effects of substance use than men. Drug use, in particular, is reported to lead to cardiovascular issues, heart, lung, liver, joint and other health issues that reduce women’s ability to work or live independently.

## Youth

From 2008 to 2011, the number and proportion of homeless youth counted in Surrey declined. This is inconsistent, however, with the observations from service providers and local agencies, who reported an increase in the number of youth accessing resources and support services in Surrey. Many organizations in Surrey reported a growing percentage of homeless youth among their clients over the past five years. In addition, they are seeing more Aboriginal and immigrant youth. Similar to women, youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, often “fly under the radar,” couch surfing or shuttling back and forth between family members. This makes it difficult for service providers to identify and provide services to vulnerable youth. Highlights of specific issues and needs include:

- **Transitioning Out of Foster Care** — Service providers suggest that youth who are about to transition out of foster care (a group which includes a high percentage of Aboriginal youth) are at a high risk of homelessness when they turn 19 and are no longer supported by the foster care system. Having been dependent on system supports in the past, many youth in this situation face a range of housing barriers and often end up in transient or unstable housing situations.
- **Lack of Basic Life Skills**— Homeless youth, or those at-risk of homelessness, often lack the life skills to successfully access and maintain housing and employment on their own and need services and staff that can assist them to gain stability and independence. They are often unaware of the resources that are available to them and may not have the information or skills to access resources on their own. Areas of support that are needed include lifeskills training and “how-to” information related to budgeting, learning how to be a tenant, grocery shopping, cooking, housekeeping and others. Another area is assistance with “navigating the system”, particularly income support and other government programs.

---

<sup>4</sup> The recently completed project, YWCA Alder Gardens, has 28 units of long-term housing for single moms and their children and an additional 8 second-stage units for women who are staying at safe houses or otherwise in crisis. The housing project includes 2, 3 and 4-bedroom units. The society reports considerable interest in the larger 3 and 4-bedroom units.

- **Youth-Specific Services & Staff Training** — Most emergency services, shelters and drop-in facilities, are available for adults over 19 years with few options available to meet the needs of homeless youth. This further limits the access to support services and resources to under-age youth. In addition, there is a perceived lack of trained staff able to provide services to youth within adult-serving agencies. Having youth-friendly drop-in and emergency services would provide a place where staff can connect and build trust with at-risk young people.
- **Staffing & Funding Resources** — Staffing and funding shortages also affect the operating hours of youth services and the extent of lifeskills programming or referrals, goal planning, and other services. An emerging issue for service providers is the need to respond to the needs of youth with mental illness and disabilities. It was reported that some facilities are not equipped, in terms of their physical layout or staff training, to provide adequate services to these individuals.
- **Appropriate Housing** — On the whole, service providers stress the need for a range of housing and services that is dedicated to youth. This could include supported transitional housing and appropriate/affordable independent housing options, but that appropriate housing needs to be in areas where young women and men will feel safe, i.e. areas that are not commonly associated with drug dealing or violence. Youth, typically, need shared accommodation in order to afford market rental housing, although finding suitable roommates can be challenging.
- **Housing Conditions** — It is reported that housing that is comfortable and well-finished is more likely to be well maintained than housing that is in poor condition. Similarly, if young people feel “at home”, they are more likely to take care of their unit. As such, assistance with household goods such as furniture, personal supplies and home goods (pots/pans, plates, bedding etc.) was also suggested as a way to help young people to feel at home and maintain their housing.

## Aboriginal People

Approximately one quarter of the homeless population in Surrey is Aboriginal, which amounts to 15% of the region’s entire Aboriginal homeless population. This represents a disproportionate share of the homeless population that is Aboriginal, as only 2% of the total population in Surrey is Aboriginal. Aboriginal homeless people have a unique set of needs and circumstances that differentiate them from the rest of the homeless and at-risk population. For Aboriginal youth and adults, a set of specific needs were reported by key-informants:

- **Complex Housing Barriers** — Aboriginal households are reported to face complex housing barriers that make it more challenging for them to maintain traditional market housing (e.g. independent apartment or suite). This is due in part to family and cultural expectations that can lead to conflicts with landlords or neighbours. For example, extended family and friends may move in without prior consent,

resulting in crowded living conditions. Aboriginal people who were formerly homeless are also reported to face challenges maintaining housing due to their lack of experience with landlord-tenant relationships and tenancy obligations and also due to cultural differences and common practice of living communally. Shared housing models or communal living arrangements — single detached homes, townhouse and apartment complexes where families and friends could live close together — were suggested.

- **Aboriginal Youth** — Aboriginal youth were identified as a specific sub group with distinct needs. In Surrey, many of the Aboriginal youth who are homeless or at-risk have been “in the system” (i.e. foster care) for most of their lives. Many Aboriginal children that have been removed from their families at a young age and placed in foster care are found to be particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Such children and youth are reported to become “service resistant” over the years, avoiding public or non-profit services. This often means that they have less contact with individuals at either government agencies or community service providers who can connect them to key services or provide them with assistance before they slip into a situation of homelessness.
- **Lack of Resources** — One of the key challenges facing the Aboriginal homeless population and the service providers working with them is the lack of resources, including staff, funding and available beds or housing units. The Fraser Region has only one Aboriginal outreach worker that is based in Surrey but responds to requests for housing and outreach assistance from Aboriginal individuals from throughout the Fraser Region. The outreach worker typically does not have the resources to adequately respond.
- **Culturally-Appropriate Services** — Aboriginal people are reported to respond more effectively to services that are offered in a culturally-appropriate setting. Emergency shelter and support services that can be tailored to Aboriginal people are needed and this may include having a core cultural component and related programs. Services which acknowledge and address historic and generational issues were noted to be of particular value, for example, the Residential School Syndrome affects the 50+ age group but its negative effects can have an impact on several generations.

## The Situational Homeless

Another population group was identified by several interviewees as a growing segment of the homeless or at-risk population — the “situational homeless” or working poor. The characteristics and associated needs of these groups may overlap with the rest of the homeless or at-risk population, but there are unique factors that are worth noting as part of this review.

- **Low Wage Job Earners** — People working minimum-wage jobs are reported to be the most at-risk of homelessness. It has been reported that more and more people who have full or part time employment are unable to make ends meet and need to access basic services. For example, the food bank and other service providers have reported that young families and new immigrants are using their services over extended periods and not merely in emergency situations. Temporary assistance in the form of food banks, meal programs, rent supplements or other prevention activities may help such low-income households and those in tenuous housing situations from losing their homes.
- **The Formerly Homeless** — The formerly homeless are particularly vulnerable to a return to homelessness. Those who are employed in low-wage or part time jobs or those capable of living independently through the rent supplement program are at risk of homelessness if work is scarce or the rent supplement is removed. Others do not initially have the lifeskills to maintain their housing independently. Outreach workers provide the type of assistance that is needed to help such individuals to maintain their housing: ongoing contact and follow-up support; client-centred services; and access to basic services such as meals or household goods. Outreach workers are burdened, however, by a growing client base and are unable to support all their clients equally or when needed.
- **Lower Income Seniors** — Elderly individuals or couples have been repeatedly identified as being at-risk of homelessness. Lower income seniors are reported to be accessing community services, food banks, transition houses and other resources. Many are having difficulties managing their rents on limited incomes. With increasing physical health needs, this group is considered to be particularly vulnerable. Some of the elderly homeless, those in the 50+ age group, are noted to be dealing with issues related to drug addiction or prostitution. For them, in addition to the challenges related to being homeless, they are often dealing with a mix of physical health issues that are further exacerbated by their homelessness, substance use and/or sex work.
- **The Seasonal Homeless** — There is another group that is known to be seasonally homeless. During the summer months, some individuals living in trailer parks face homelessness, as they cannot afford to rent the mobile homes or pad rental fees at summer prices. For them, they may spend the summers camping in tents or in their vehicles/trailers if they own them.

## REPORTED CHALLENGES

### A Shortage of Housing and Shelter Options

Service providers and stakeholders have reported a shortage of housing and shelter options in Surrey that are adequate and appropriate to meet the needs of the city's homeless population. This includes emergency shelter, temporary housing, supportive housing and affordable and appropriate market housing. Essentially, housing options across the entire housing continuum were identified, with sub-sets to meet the specific needs of women, youth and Aboriginal people.

The following section highlights some of the housing and shelter-related gaps and other considerations identified through the consultation with service providers, organizations and agencies working with the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness:

#### Emergency Shelters and Drop-In Centres

Surrey shelters have high turn-away rates in winter, which is an indication that the existing supply of beds and available housing is not meeting the demands of the homeless population. The demand for shelter beds dedicated for women, Aboriginal individuals and youth was noted to be particularly high as well as they do not typically access traditional adult shelters. Temporary or emergency accommodation that is suitable for families was also noted to be in need; the one Surrey-based shelter that can accommodate women with children reported turning away over 200 families a year.

In terms of suitability, many of the current drop-in and shelter facilities in Surrey are functioning out of buildings that were not designed for the purpose of providing emergency services. There are many lessons learnt from other jurisdictions regarding building design and other features for shelters that enable shelters to better integrate into the neighbourhoods and adequately respond to the needs of users. For example, providing space for users to store their belongings such as bikes and shopping carts is a feature that could determine whether a homeless individual will choose to access the shelter or not. Similarly, few facilities have interior courtyards or covered spaces away from the public street where users can smoke or “hang out”.<sup>5</sup> This often results in friction with local businesses and other neighbours as groups of people congregate outside the facility.

In terms of location, shelters should ideally be located close to transit, close to a town centre or accessible to medical facilities, food shopping, government offices and other services. The suitability of different locations depends largely on the target population

---

<sup>5</sup> This type of space also minimizes the risk of homeless individuals who are congregating on the street from being preyed upon by drug dealers and other unscrupulous individuals.

anticipated to use the facility. However, finding neighbourhoods that are welcoming of new emergency services is often a challenge.

### **Transitional or Second Stage Housing**

Another housing form that was noted to be in short supply is housing that can help individuals to transition from the street or emergency shelter into the next stage of housing (ie. supportive housing, independent living or some other form of accommodation). For many individuals, transitional housing was reported to be a key step towards future independence and housing success. This type of temporary housing provides an opportunity for tenants to learn or re-learn basic lifeskills that can help them to maintain their housing. It also enables tenants to obtain a rental reference that is needed when seeking long-term housing through the private market.

Second stage housing is particularly important for women who are leaving transition homes (safe houses for women fleeing abuse), but continue to be dealing with situations of crisis and trauma. It is also a housing form that is valuable for youth who have stayed at safe houses, but are unable to live on their own. This housing form can be costly to operate as it requires ongoing staff support. While smaller buildings with self contained units may be well-suited to this type of housing, it can be difficult to get municipal approval for the use; it may also be costly to operate due to the need for regular staffing to provide ongoing tenant support.

### **Supportive Housing**

Surrey has a very limited stock of supportive housing, that is, housing with integrated support services. While the level of support service and the method of delivery can vary depending on the population that is housed, the link between housing and supports was emphasized in the consultation as a vital piece of the housing continuum and one that was in short supply in the city.

### **Low-Barrier Housing**

Service providers noted the difficulties in finding housing that is suitable for their clients facing multiple barriers to housing and reported the need for a broader range of housing options. Most commonly, individuals with a mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions or those with a criminal record or history of criminal activity were noted to face the greatest difficulties. For these individuals, finding housing that will accommodate their background or behaviours can be challenging as there are very few low-barrier housing options in Surrey.

Sex trade workers is one particular group that would benefit from a safe, yet low- barrier housing option where they can access support services and other resources in a secure environment.

## Private Market Rentals and Supports

It was acknowledged that the private rental market is an invaluable source of supply for people who are able to live independently, including people with low-incomes, people with disabilities, families and people transitioning out of homelessness (potentially with roommates). This may include apartments, townhouses and single-detached dwellings. However, these units are often inaccessible to those who are homeless or at-risk of homeless because of a number of reasons. For example, the rents are not affordable, the individuals do not present well to landlords when they apply for units, or they do not have the lifeskills or experience in managing their tenancy after they rent a place.

Outreach workers rely heavily on private market rentals as homes for their homeless clients. They attribute their success in housing people in privately-owned apartments or secondary suites to good relationships with landlords, crisis intervention when difficult situations arise, and regular and ongoing support to the tenants. Other key factors in the success of these housing arrangements include the availability of rent supplements to assist with housing costs and finding good room-mates. As outreach workers continue to increase their client base, however, it is becoming more difficult to provide the type of regular follow up and support that is needed to help clients to maintain their housing.

## Housing Conditions

A consistent thread in the conversations with key-informants was the **quality of the rental housing** that is available to low-income households. Several agencies reported that some of their clients have stayed in housing that is of substandard quality and they identified concerns around health and safety, pests and poor management. Such conditions were reported to be found in all forms of housing including market and non-market housing; single detached homes, apartments or basement suites; and units managed by private owners or by established management companies. As in many Metro Vancouver communities, bed bugs were also found to be an ongoing concern.

A related issue is the status or condition of **unregulated “recovery houses”** in Surrey. It is estimated that there are over 1,000 people housed in such recovery houses in Surrey, potentially in precarious living situations. A large number of such recovery houses are operating in Surrey without provincial or civic regulation and no protection for residents under the Residential Tenancy Act. Issues including sub-standard living conditions, overcrowding, unfair evictions and over-charging were reported. This situation is said to put tenants and users at risk with possible negative impacts for those who are attempting to access recovery services.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> A committee comprising the City of Surrey and other provincial and regional agencies has been meeting on a regular basis to consider the city's unlicensed recovery houses and identify solutions. This process is currently under way and a number of measures are being implemented to respond to the situation. For this reason, solutions related to recovery homes in Surrey will not be directly addressed as part of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless.



**Secondary suites** and rooming houses have been identified as an important housing option, but it was noted that some clients have been housed in suites/houses with low quality conditions and even unsafe standards.<sup>7</sup> Those tenants that are concerned about finding alternative housing at equally low rents do not complain to landlords or the city about these conditions. The more vulnerable tenants are the ones that are often most affected.

## **A Lack of Client-Centred Support Services**

The general perception by interviewees was that Surrey lacks sufficient support services to adequately address the needs of the local homeless population. Many felt that the chronically homeless population would be in need of the greatest range and intensity of support services, but that in all cases, the supports should be tailored to meet the needs of the individual, reaching out to clients and meeting them “where they are at” and “on their own terms.” This client-centred approach to support service delivery is becoming broadly recognized as one of the more effective methods for working with at-risk individuals.

Specific service-related gaps that were identified include health-related services; linkages to housing and supports for those who are leaving institutions; meal programs; and financial services.

## **Health, Mental Health & Addictions Services**

A shortage of health drop-in services was reported. This includes clinical and dental services that are non-discriminatory to individuals who may or may not have proper identification and those with other barriers to access.

Several agencies described a gap related to addictions-related services such as detox treatment and withdrawal management for both adults and youth. It is often difficult to place clients into detox or licensed recovery programs when it is most in need or a client is ready.<sup>8</sup> Capacity issues and long wait periods were reported, as well as intake restrictions that prevent certain clients from receiving timely access.

A lack of mental health services and training for front line staff who are working with individuals with mental health issues was noted as a critical shortfall across many services and facilities.

---

<sup>7</sup> Secondary suites refer to self-contained units in single detached homes, often located in the basement or ground floor of a house. The zoning bylaw was recently amended to allow one secondary suite in every single detached house. Registered suites must abide by the current Building Code, which may deter some of the older illegal suites from becoming registered. Rooming houses are typically single detached houses where individual rooms are rented out to different tenants who share the kitchen and bathroom(s).

<sup>8</sup> Quibble Creek, which opened in 2012, includes substance use, assessment and clinical health services; 15 short-term recovery beds; and 52 transition housing units.



## **Discharge Services**

Older or chronically ill homeless individuals often end up “bed-blocking” in health care institutions because they have nowhere to go when released and may not have a suitable care environment for recovery. Resources are needed to help people find transitional housing where they can receive care services or other support and more adequately recover. Similarly, assistance with finding suitable long-term housing is needed for individuals who are leaving treatment programs or other health facilities.

There is also a need to help offenders connect with services and housing before they are released. An example is a pilot project between the Elizabeth Fry Society and BC Housing to help chronic offenders who are homeless get connected to services and housing as/before they leave the system. Elizabeth Fry is working with women and Keys Housing and Health Solutions (formerly South Fraser Community Services) is working with men who are leaving the corrections system, and both agencies have reported positive outcomes in their project’s preliminary stages. This is the first time that this type of in-reach work has been funded by BC Housing.

## **Meal Programs**

Access to regular, nutritious meals is increasingly attributed to individuals’ success in maintaining their housing. While there are some options for meals and food in Surrey, there are often limitations for certain clients. For example, food bank users are required to have proof of a Surrey address in order to receive food boxes. There are free meals served at the Front Room drop-in centre, but families or young adults are less likely to visit this centre because of its location and neighbourhood reputation. It is also less likely for supportive housing buildings to integrate a meal program as part of the package of supports that is provided to tenants. Having a broader range of food programs for those who are homeless or those living in supported housing is a key service that should more frequently be included in the toolkit of solutions.

## **Financial Assistance & Other Prevention Services**

In some cases, an individual may need financial support to prevent homelessness but the current procedure to obtain Employment Insurance or Income Assistance can take too long. The delay between an individual realizing they need income assistance, submitting the appropriate forms, waiting to receive confirmation and getting the first cheque, is often protracted and may lead to homelessness if they are in a tenuous housing situation and in need of financial assistance.

Improved coordination between outreach workers and the responsible ministry (Ministry of Social Development) was identified as a potential area of intervention that could prevent homelessness. Rent supplements are another prevention tool that service providers can utilize. This has been identified as an invaluable resource that should be maintained in the future. Expansion of this resource or added flexibility in how this type

of financial assistance would further enable outreach workers or service providers to assist tenants in achieving their housing goals.

Similarly, having access to rent banks can prevent crisis and possible homelessness. A pilot rent bank project operated by Sources Community Resources Society provides access to emergency loans to households throughout Surrey, while offering tools to help households to better manage their limited financial resources. Efforts to publicize the availability of such programs to low-income households are needed, along with an evaluation of their effectiveness as this can provide a rationale for their continued funding and expansion. Rent banks in other jurisdictions rely on ongoing funding from senior levels of government.

## Challenges Facing New Projects

Some social service organizations reported challenges when developing new housing projects or expanding social services.

- It is often difficult for organizations to identify locations in Surrey that are appropriate for their clients and where they are not likely to face strong opposition from the local neighbourhood. Access to transit and close proximity to services are key considerations for those with limited incomes and the safety of a neighbourhood is another factor, especially when housing women and youth.
- Selected non-profit organizations cited difficulties obtaining approval to build new projects or to renovate or convert existing single detached houses for special needs housing initiatives. In one case, a group of neighbourhood residents organized a campaign against a proposal for a purpose-built housing project to be operated by an experienced service provider. In such situations, it would be helpful to have clear direction and support from staff and Council to aid groups in their plans and prospects to facilitate the development of new projects in suitable locations.
- Another factor influencing the ability of organizations to provide new housing or service facilities is the price of land. Areas where real estate prices were historically lower, such as Whalley, are finding that leasing rates are increasing and there is increasing pressure for services to relocate out of these areas.
- In terms of possible acquisitions, it has been noted that there are very few smaller size apartment buildings, hotels, or other commercial buildings in Surrey that might be suitable for conversion to supportive or lower income housing. In an environment of limited funding, converting existing buildings is often seen to be a useful alternative — as it requires a smaller capital investment, re-purposes some of the older stock of buildings and the renovation work can be completed in a much shorter time frame than new builds. This is not the case in Surrey.

## Crime and Legal Issues

Consultation with the RCMP as well as the local business community identified the Whalley area as one of the key areas affected by crime and illegal activity. Service providers and the RCMP recognize that Whalley and Newton are service hubs that need to continue to provide basic services to the population in need and acknowledge that “relocating” these services would not necessarily resolve the issues around crime. However, the concentration of services in certain areas has resulted in people congregating in the streets, parks and vacant lots and can be attributed to these areas becoming a draw for drug dealers and other predators.

Some of the top homelessness issues that the local RCMP detachment is dealing with include littering, loitering, use of doorways for sleeping, shoplifting, aggressive panhandling, public disturbance, trespassing and metal theft. Police report that the main issues they deal with when people are housed tend to be domestic disturbance and drug-related incidents. Police and the business community identified a need for the City of Surrey to give greater attention to abandoned buildings, both commercial and residential, which can become magnets for crime, squatters, fires and theft. Empty, overgrown lots also need to be monitored to limit squatting, littering and other public safety issues.

The RCMP attempts to prevent arrests of homeless individuals by establishing dialogue with local service providers and developing relationships with the homeless. However, if a homeless person is arrested, it is often difficult to release them on bail because they do not have a credit card, a lease or a job. This results in extended detention periods for the homeless, particularly women.

## OPPORTUNITIES & SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

While many gaps and deficiencies were identified in the key-informant research, many ideas and suggestions were also generated. The following section presents some of the recommendations that came forward from this consultation.

### Recommendations for the City of Surrey

Service provider organizations that have attempted to provide new housing projects, expand services or introduce change into established neighbourhoods have reportedly encountered barriers related to City bylaws or policy. The following suggestions are aimed at overcoming some of these barriers:

- Through this Master Plan, identify the City’s housing priorities and provide **strategic direction and vision** for how to achieve or implement the City’s objectives. To be effective, this Plan needs to be supported by staff and Council.

- Continue to develop **planning objectives and policies** that facilitate the inclusion of a mix of housing and services in all neighbourhoods. Dovetail such policies with regulatory mechanisms and staff support to assist organizations working towards providing a range of housing and service options to be able to successfully integrate into existing communities.
- Support the creation of **affordable secondary suites** and enforce health and safety standards in a way that protects the rights of tenants, while minimizing the loss of affordable units and tenant displacement.
- Continue to identify solutions and to develop a comprehensive strategy for **regulation of recovery houses** and advocacy for a provincial funding program.
- Consider the **implications of displacement** during redevelopments or conversions of buildings.
- Continue to develop relationships and clear lines of **communication** between bylaw officers, the RCMP, service providers and outreach workers to address issues with the homeless population, such as through Surrey's Hard Target Committee meetings.
- Continue to **support local groups** and participate in local committees and taskforces.
- Consider methods to **educate and build awareness** among the general public about homelessness and how it affects our communities. This type of communication can identify ways that the public can be compassionate and how to support long term solutions.

## Housing-Specific Recommendations

While there are many gaps and challenges related to housing in Surrey, there are also approaches and models that have been working well. Groups working with at-risk youth, women and Aboriginals shared examples of housing that works for their clients, and strategies that could be used more broadly:

- While Provincial funding priorities are focused on housing as opposed to shelter beds, there continues to be a strong need for **appropriate shelter resources** and related services to help provide a gateway to longer term housing options for the homeless. A number of key features of shelter locations were identified as ones that would help individuals stabilize and connect with services. This includes private rooms, storage space, and flex rooms for couples or transgendered individuals. In addition, it is useful to have flexible meeting spaces that allow organizations to set up on-site clinical, dental, counselling or other health-related services. In particular, Keys Housing and Health Solutions' Gateway Shelter needs to be relocated to a more appropriate facility that better meets the needs of the user population.

- The **expansion of existing facilities** was also suggested as a strategic and efficient way to bridge the housing gap. For example, expanding existing shelters to add medium-term transitional housing units is one way to create medium term stable housing with supports for individuals who are interested in moving on to the next stage of housing. The exact balance between housing and shelter beds needs to be carefully considered to ensure that all users benefit from being in a stable and appropriate environment.
- Similarly, providing service providers (outside the shelter system) with more **resources** to connect with the homeless and offer links to housing and services is an efficient way to enhance the gateway function of local agencies. Such groups can then target the sub-populations (women, youth, Aboriginal, elderly and families) who are not well-served by Surrey's traditional emergency shelters.
- **New build supportive housing** is an important component in the housing continuum and one that was noted to be a high priority for Surrey. The recently completed units in Surrey's Timbergrove development were cited as a good example of a new-build development.<sup>9</sup> This 52-unit apartment building of supported, long-term housing is operated by Coast Mental Health. The building provides affordable units with 24-hour support staff on a referral basis, plus on-site Fraser Health services.
- Supportive housing, however, does not need to be only located in purpose-built complexes, but can be located in **alternative housing forms**. One group noted that single dwellings and duplexes that can be renovated into multiple self-contained units have worked well for them as a housing form in other communities. This type of housing gives organizations a place to manage a small number of individuals needing similar types and levels of support (mental health, physical disabilities, youth, women, etc.) within a neighbourhood setting. The City's policies and regulations would need to be revised to allow this form in residential neighbourhoods and City Council support would need to be granted.
- All forms of **housing for youth** is currently lacking. Expanding the options currently available for youth with a mix of housing forms that includes emergency shelters and housing that is linked to support services was identified as a high priority. The location of youth housing was cited as a critical consideration with a preference to safe residential neighbourhoods and areas that are close to transit and services. Good examples of working models for youth included Bolivar Heights, a co-ed house for youth in Surrey, and Broadway House in Vancouver, which has housing units above a ground-level resource centre. Both initiatives are run by the Pacific Community Resources Society.

---

<sup>9</sup> Timber Grove is a new development that uses existing modular housing that was used to accommodate athletes during the 2010 Winter Olympics. The modules were adapted and stacked to form a 3-storey apartment building.

## Recommendations for Support Services

“Housing is not enough,” as one interviewee stated. To become part of the solution to homelessness, housing units often need to be linked to support services, well-trained staff and good programs.

- While the outreach workers in Surrey have been praised for their success at reaching out to the homeless and helping them to get connected to housing and services, there are few workers relative to the overall size of the community. **More outreach workers** are needed in certain geographic areas that are less well served, but also to address the needs of specific groups such as youth, women and seniors.
- Outreach workers currently have two primary functions — one is to engage with homeless individuals and assist them to connect with housing and support services; the second is to provide **ongoing follow up and support** to the recently-housed individuals to help them to maintain their housing. For outreach workers to adequately provide such follow-up services, especially in the Surrey context, where their client base continues to grow over time, it will be useful to consider additional staffing or a division of roles to ensure their success in the future.
- **Rent supplement programs** are extremely important in getting people housed, and helping people maintain housing. The continuation of this important tool was cited as a critical funding resource that outreach teams heavily rely on. These flexible funds are often used to top up rents so that individuals can afford to live in market rental units.
- There was an emphasis on increasing the amount of **services and programs dedicated to youth**. Many agencies cannot offer services to individuals under the age of 19 and it was felt that there was a dearth of resources and services available specifically for the youth homeless population. Similarly, outreach workers are not mandated to work with youth under 19 years. It was suggested that a similar program could be developed for youth to assist them to access clean, safe housing.
- At the existing shelters and drop-in facilities, there is a continued need for **on-site services** to be provided through permanent staffing or in-reach services from partner organizations. In this way, the services are provided to users in a welcoming, non-intimidating environment. This might include medical services, income assistance, food services and educational or employment-related programs. An example of this includes the Surrey North Community Health Centre, a free medical clinic, needle exchange and dental clinic for disadvantaged individuals who may or may not have identification which is often a barrier to health care access for homeless individuals.
- Surrey is in a good position to explore and increase **opportunities for partnership** between service providers, faith based groups, and government agencies (e.g.

health authorities). There is a very active homelessness taskforce; regular meetings between outreach workers and front line service staff; as well as the local Homeless Intervention Project that brings together government agencies in an attempt to streamline and integrate programs and services. Future partnerships could include the co-location of services such as housing, social enterprise, medical clinics and food services.

- There is potential for local groups and agencies to **collaborate and establish prevention programs** for the working poor and households at-risk of homelessness. There are many agencies providing selected services to these populations, but it would be advantageous for key agencies to work together to identify the right mix of supports and work collaboratively towards finding solutions. Lifeskills education, outreach and rent banks are examples of initiatives that should be funded and expanded where possible.
- Many outreach programs and service providers work with landlords in the private market to establish good relationships and help to resolve potential conflicts between landlords and tenants. Much of this relationship building is done independently by the outreach workers. **Resource material** could be developed to communicate consistent information to potential and existing landlords. To help strengthen ties between private landlords, tenants and service providers, a mentoring program was also suggested to help people learn skills to be good landlords or good tenants.
- Drop-in centres provide valuable gateway services that include meals, laundry, showers, parenting support, high school equivalency courses and lifeskills training. Women's groups advised that a drop-in centre should remain open on a 24-hour basis in order to be accessible to more vulnerable women. South Surrey has a women's centre, but it is only open during office hours and generally serves higher functioning women. As such, the expansion of **drop-in services** with extended hours is a noted recommendation. Drop-in centres, where possible, should also expand their services to provide volunteer opportunities or other activities during the daytime to assist people to address their personal goals and to find opportunities for productive activity.
- Another important consideration is the development of **discharge programs** that help individuals who are leaving institutions (treatment programs, hospitals, or corrections facilities) to access housing and services. This type of prevention service has been funded by BC Housing through a pilot program in Surrey. The Integrated Offender Management project connects individuals identified to be at risk of becoming homeless. There is potential to adapt and expand this service, not only within the corrections system, but also to other types of institutions such as hospitals and treatment centres.



- **Crisis lines and hotlines** have been a successful method of providing support services. Having the crisis lines provided in the Punjabi language was recommended as one way to reach the local South Asian community. This is primarily helpful for women facing violence or other abusive situations, but would be potentially useful for seniors, people with mobility limitations and others who are not comfortable visiting service providers in person. Similarly, it was suggested that agencies can further promote the use of BC 211, an information line that provides information and referrals to community, government and social services.
- The RCMP suggested the need to establish **community courts** for petty crimes and bylaw infractions as it is not in the public interest to prosecute small crimes. The intention of this model is to address root causes of crime (i.e. agree to get treatment for addictions rather than go to jail) and break the cycle of homelessness. Community Courts have become a mechanism that helps people to get into rehabilitation programs or to connect them formally with relevant services.

## Partnerships with Businesses & Development Community

Many positive examples of partnerships with the private sector and between service providers and agencies were shared. Opportunities for increased cooperation, sharing resources and building on past successes were also discussed.

- Efforts can be made to involve the business sector with mentoring, employment, volunteer opportunities and other assistance. The Cloverdale BIA has spearheaded many positive initiatives and is actively involved with many groups serving the homeless. It would be useful to document their example and share this information with other business communities throughout the city.
- There are emerging opportunities to engage a range of businesses in Surrey, particularly, with the recent interest and involvement of the Surrey Board of Trade (SBoT). SBoT prepared a policy position in 2011 that outlines how local businesses can get involved in a collective response to address homelessness. The SBoT also operates the LinkLine, a phone line that businesses can phone to report seeing a homeless person at their location. Outreach workers are then dispatched to the location to remedy the situation for the business, but also to coordinate access to services to the homeless individual(s).
- There is an opportunity to provide information to the development community and the not-for-profit sector about successful partnerships from other jurisdictions. Currently, there are few private developers building affordable or non-market housing. Some may be interested in opportunities to provide affordable/social housing, but they are limited by available funding and a lack of knowledge or experience in delivering such projects.



## TOP PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD

Largely based on the key-informant interviews from within Surrey, this Situation Report has highlighted a range of housing and services that are of particular demand in the community. Based on this background research, along with the research on good practices and document and data review, seven priority areas have emerged. These priorities provide initial direction and focus for the City of Surrey, BC Housing, other government agencies, local service providers and the private sector to consider. They will provide some direction to the consultants in the development of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless.

1. **A suitable replacement shelter in Whalley** — one that is designed to perform the gateway role of an emergency shelter, including longer term stays with 24-hour access and links to support services; and one that is designed and managed to be well-integrated within the neighbourhood. It is suggested that this shelter should be combined with transitional housing units as well as key health care and other basic services that enhance the shelter's gateway function.
2. **Expansion of drop-in and shelter services provided by local service providers** — to meet the needs of target groups that have unique needs and are currently underserved by local emergency services. This includes at-risk women, particularly sex trade workers, youth, Aboriginal people and the situational homeless or working poor.
3. **Transitional and supportive housing in a mix of forms** — This can include new build housing (where funding permits), but also acquisitions of existing buildings (where available), and acquisitions and conversions of larger houses into self-contained units for key groups (e.g. at-risk women, youth, individuals leaving institutions, and others with higher support service or care needs).
4. **Expansion of outreach and housing follow-up services** — Providing continual contact and support to individuals living in private market rentals is a key service that helps to prevent homelessness or minimize the cycle of homelessness from re-occurring. Providing support services to at-risk individuals in scattered private units can take a variety of forms, from clinical-based mobile teams to outreach support to meal delivery programs. Partnerships between government agencies (particularly through the Homeless Intervention Project) will be needed to facilitate and expand this type of client-centred mobile support.
5. **Review and update of municipal bylaws and regulations** — To support special needs and supportive housing projects, which may include conversions of houses/buildings and to further protect existing tenants from low or substandard housing conditions.
6. **Establish ongoing liaison groups with business community** — At a city-wide and neighbourhood level, such groups should be established to create a positive

environment between service providers, businesses and residents where all groups work together to maintain good relations and identify solutions to neighbourhood issues. Joint liaison groups will also establish a venue for communication about possible partnership initiatives.

7. **Work with BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority and other agencies to introduce/improve key services** — Focus on support services and initiatives that are of particular demand, including programs that assist individuals discharged from institutions; provide nutritious meals and food lifeskills; streamline financial assistance; offer health, mental health and addictions services; and offer training for front line service provider staff.

These priority areas will be reviewed and considered in context as part of the development of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless. Key considerations will include the availability of funds, ease of implementation and timing.

## APPENDICES

A - Sources & Contacts

B - Relevant BC Housing Programs

C - City of Surrey Official Community Plan: Draft Policies on Affordable Housing

D - Inventory of Transition & Supportive Housing

## A - Sources & Contacts

### List of Documents

- BC Housing. November 2007. Emergency Shelter Program: Program Framework Fact Sheet. <http://www.bchousing.org/Partners/Operating/ESP>
- BC Housing. March 2008. Emergency Shelter Program: Program Framework. <http://www.bchousing.org/Partners/Operating/ESP>
- City of Surrey. June 2010. Action Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents. 2008-2009 Annual Report.
- City of Surrey. January 2010. Housing Action Plan. Background Information.
- CitySpaces Consulting. Pathways Out of Homelessness: Regional Study. 2011. Prepared for Metro Vancouver & BC Housing.
- Greater Vancouver Steering Committee on Homelessness. March 2010. Homelessness in Metro Vancouver: A Comparative Community Profile.
- Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. May 20, 2011. Metro Vancouver Homeless Count 2011. Preliminary Report.
- Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. February 28, 2012. One Step Forward: Results of the 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count.
- Social Planning & Research Council of BC (SPARC BC). March 2006. Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents.
- Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society. 2010. Everyone has a home: Annual Report.

### Key Contacts & Agencies

Agency or Group	Key Contact(s)
Atira Women's Resource Society	Janice Abbott Maddy Carlington Shawna Baylis
Coast Mental Health	Darrell Burnham
Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association	Elizabeth Model Bonnie Burnside
Elizabeth Fry Society	Shawn Bayes Bonnie Moriarty
Fraser Health Authority	Susan McKela David Poulette
Fraserside Community Services Society	Jill Bloom

Agency or Group	Key Contact(s)
Metro Vancouver Homelessness Unit	Kingsley Okyere Diana Hurford
Ministry of Social Development, Fraser Region	Patricia Boyle Morten Bisgaard
Nightshift Ministry	MaryAnn Connor
Options Community Services Society	Darrell Ferner Peter Fedos
Peninsula Homelessness Unit Taskforce	Peter Greenwell
Pacific Community Resources Society - Surrey Youth Resource Centres	Michelle Shaw
Phoenix Society	Michael Wilson
South Fraser Community Services Society	Shayne Williams Megan Baillie
Surrey Development Corporation	Jim Cox
Surrey Food Bank	Marilyn Hermman
Surrey Homelessness & Housing Taskforce	Alice Sundberg
Surrey Urban Mission	Jonquil Hallgate

## B - Relevant BC Housing Programs

### Emergency Shelter Program

In 2007, BC Housing introduced a new program framework for the Emergency Shelter Program, which was developed to better integrate the Program along the housing continuum, enabling homeless individuals to more easily move from shelters to permanent housing. The new program framework requires emergency shelters to provide 24/7, year-round service so that shelter clients can be connected with support services and housing in addition to overnight accommodation, meals and showers. The framework is guided by a set of key principles:

- Core services are to be accessible and client-focussed. All homeless persons age 19 and over have the right to access shelter services regardless of ethno-cultural background, religious beliefs, physical disability, mental health status, gender identity, and/or sexual orientation.
- Operations will be transparent and accountable. Shelter providers will maintain reliable and consistent records, fulfill reporting obligations and develop meaningful policies and procedures.
- A welcoming, safe and secure environment will be provided. The health and safety of residents, volunteers and staff is of the highest importance.
- Shelter providers will work in a collaborative and innovative sector environment. Shelter providers will work in partnership with the local community and local service agencies as well as their clients or former clients to ensure that the shelter and its support services are responsive to the community needs.

As its primary function, an emergency shelter provides temporary accommodation and essential services to respond to the immediate needs of people who require shelter, food, access to hygienic facilities, and security. While shelters provide a short-term response, they are an essential part of the continuum of housing, and importantly, serve as a “gateway” to stable housing and support services.

BC Housing has “operating agreements” in place with more than 60 shelter providers in communities of all sizes throughout BC. Once these agreements are in place, BC Housing provides most, if not all, of the funding for the shelter’s operation. In addition to the shelter agreement, shelter providers are required to enter into a “Support Services Agreement” with BC Housing. Funding for these support services varies depending on local needs.

As part of entering into these agreements, shelter providers are required to set up an outcome monitoring process to track progress and ensure that the shelter is meeting the program’s objectives. Providers are also required to submit annual reports and financial information.

## **Extreme Weather Response**

The Extreme Weather Response Program is funded and monitored by BC Housing. BC Housing does not deliver this service directly. Instead, it contracts with existing service providers — community organizations, faith-based groups, and existing 24/7 shelters. The program enables communities to temporarily increase their shelter capacity during extreme weather conditions between November 1st and March 31st. Unlike emergency shelters that provide a 24 hour, year-round service, the Extreme Weather Response Program provides only temporary sleeping spaces for those whose health and safety is at risk sleeping outside in extreme conditions.

## **Women’s Transition Housing & Supports**

The Transition Housing program includes short-term accommodation for women (with or without children) who are at risk of violence. These safe places or shelters have 24/7 staffing and provide emotional support, crisis intervention as well as other assistance to women, e.g. accessing housing, financial, medical and legal assistance. These facilities are similar to emergency shelters in that they provide temporary accommodation that seeks to provide basic shelter services and create a safe environment from which users can potentially stabilize and receive access to gateway services.

## **Supportive Housing**

BC Housing also offers long-term low barrier supportive housing for the homeless or at-risk of homelessness who require support services to achieve successful tenancies and need safe, affordable housing. Some of these units are directly managed by BC Housing, although the majority are operated by non-profit housing agencies.

## C - City of Surrey Official Community Plan: Draft Policies on Affordable Housing

The Official Community Plan is being updated with final adoption anticipated in the fall of 2013. Section F3 outlines the City of Surrey's policies on affordable housing (June 2013 draft).

### OBJECTIVE F3 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Strive to provide appropriate and affordable housing for everyone.

Adequate, affordable and appropriate housing is fundamental to building strong, healthy communities, allowing people to live with honor and dignity regardless of income level or abilities. A complete community enhances livability in neighbourhoods by providing a variety of housing choices in terms of cost and type.

Appropriate housing meets the diverse needs of households in terms of size, location and design. Affordable housing is generally considered to be housing (either for rent or for ownership) which meets the needs of individuals or families in the low-to-moderate income range and which costs less than 30% of gross household income. The affordable housing spectrum includes non-market, supportive housing as well as affordable market housing provided by the private sector. The City has a role to play in ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet demographic needs, working in partnership with the development and home-building industry, senior levels of government and community-based housing societies.

In order to meet Objective F3, the City will:

#### F3 POLICIES | GENERAL

F3.1 Maintain and regularly update an Affordable Housing Action Plan to guide City policy and actions supporting the provision of affordable housing.

F3.2 Work with government agencies, community groups and private developers to accommodate a full range of affordable and accessible housing that meets the needs of Surrey's diverse population.

F3.3 Support affordable housing projects that:

- strengthen and enhance the well-being of the community
- address the need for clean, safe, suitable and affordable housing
- demonstrate partnerships with other service providers and businesses.



F3.4 Affordable housing projects should generally be located:

- on transit routes
- in close proximity to schools
- in close proximity to shopping and medical services
- where support service, such as counseling and training, are accessible to residents
- where there is no overconcentration in one area.

F3.5 Actively advocate to senior levels of government for housing services to address homelessness, including homeless outreach, addictions and mental health services, food services, employment services and rent supplements.

F3.6 Coordinate with BC Housing and Provincial and Federal agencies to establish a full range of non-market housing to meet the current and future needs of residents.

F3.7 Support the development and on-going operation of a range of non-market housing, including emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, low-income housing and co-op housing.

F3.8 Support non-market housing for the diversity of low-income households, including: mental health and addictions, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, women, low-income singles and families with children, Aboriginals and refugees.

F3.9 Support the development of non-market housing through actions such as expediting applications, decreasing parking requirements, waiving development fees or charges, contributing land, etc.

F3.10 Continue to support the Surrey and Homelessness Society and Fund.

F3.11 Continue to support community and/or regionally-focused forums for addressing housing and homelessness issues in Surrey.

F3.12 Ensure an adequate supply of rental housing units in all areas of the city.

F3.13 Restrict the demolition or strata conversion of existing rental units unless city-wide vacancy rates are higher than 4%.

F3.14 Encourage and support the development of new purpose-built rental apartments through such actions as expedited development applications and reduced parking requirements, where appropriate.

F3.15 Advocate to senior governments for policy and taxation changes that will encourage the construction of purpose-built rental apartments.

F3.16 Coordinate and partner with landlords and Provincial agencies to ensure that adequate and appropriate rental housing is available throughout the city. Ensure adequate standards of building maintenance and management are followed.

F3.17 Recognize secondary suites and coach houses as a significant stock of rental housing. Encourage homeowners to legalize their existing suites to sensitively integrate into neighbourhoods.

F3.18 Encourage innovative zoning, design and development solutions for affordable housing units, particularly for infill development, that is sensitive to neighbourhood context.

F3.19 Where a density bonus is granted in exchange for community benefits or amenities, the first priority community benefit shall be to provide affordable housing (or cash-in-lieu), in conjunction with the market housing residential units.

F3.20 Where redevelopment of a Manufactured Home park is proposed, ensure that adequate consultation and compensation for relocated residents is implemented as part of the development application.

F3.21 Encourage the development of accessible and adaptable units using the BC Building Code Adaptable Housing Standard for all new apartment housing, to allow for "Aging in Place" and to create greater housing options for persons with disabilities.

F3.22 Promote affordable family housing in City Centre, Town Centres and other locations accessible to frequent transit service by encouraging a mix of unit types include two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments in new developments.

## D - Inventory of Transition & Supportive Housing

The following table provides an inventory of the transitional and supportive housing beds and units available in Surrey at the time of publication of this report.

Transition & Supportive Housing	# Beds / Units				
	Youth	Women	Men	Unspecified	Total
<b>ADDICTIONS HOUSING*</b>					
Phoenix Centre			64		64
Quibble Creek			15	52	67
Path to Freedom Treatment Centre			10		10
Ellendale (Elizabeth Fry)		10			10
Freedom House			24		24
Luke 15			24		24
Vision Quest 1,2,3			30		30
A Better Place				20	20
Realistic Success Recovery			10		10
Options Community Services Society			10		10
Launching Pad			20		20
It's Up To You			24		24
Keys Housing and Health Solutions				12	12
Step by Step		7	40		47
Cwenengitel			6		6
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>POST-CORRECTIONS</b>					
Phoenix Centre			20		20
Cwenengitel			6		6
John Howard Society			17		17
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>HOMELESS/AT-RISK</b>					
Hyland House - Transitional Units (Options)				20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

Transition & Supportive Housing	# Beds / Units				
	Youth	Women	Men	Unspecified	Total
<b>WOMEN'S SECOND STAGE</b>					
Arbour House (YWCA)		8			8
Koomseh (Atira)		11			11
Promise & Grace Houses (Servants Anon.)		20			20
Harmony House (PICS)		8			8
Maxxine Wright (Atira)		36			36
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>YOUTH</b>					
Bolivar House (PCRS)	4				4
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>TOTAL TRANSITION/SECOND STAGE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>528</b>
<b>SUPPORTIVE HOUSING</b>					
Timber Grove (Coast Mental Health)				52	52
Peterson Place (FraserSide)**				39	39
Len Shepherd (Fraser Health)				25	25
Alder Gardens (YWCA)		28			28
Bolivar Court (FraserSide)				19	19
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>TOTAL TRANSITION &amp; SUPPORTIVE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>691</b>



Suite 585, 1111 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC V6E 2J3 | 604.687.2281  
5th Floor, 844 Courtney Street, Victoria BC V8W 1C4 | 250.383.0304  
Suite 300, 160 Quarry Park Boulevard SE, Calgary AB T2C 3G3 | 403.336.2468

[www.cityspaces.ca](http://www.cityspaces.ca)

# Master PLAN

FOR HOUSING THE HOMELESS IN SURREY

## Appendix B: A Selection of Good Practices

PREPARED FOR THE  
City of Surrey

PREPARED BY  
CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.

NOVEMBER 2011

# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose .....	1
Approach & Report Structure .....	1
<b>GOOD PRACTICES FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES</b>	<b>2</b>
Homeless Outreach & Service Linkages .....	2
Housing Follow-Up & Prevention Services.....	3
Drop-In Centres & Resource Centres .....	7
Good Management Practices for Shelters & Supportive Housing .....	10
Design Solutions for Emergency Shelters.....	14
<b>GOOD PRACTICES IN PARTNERSHIP &amp; INNOVATION</b>	<b>22</b>
Social Enterprise Initiatives.....	22
Employment Programs Connected to Housing.....	26
Co-Location and Partnership Arrangements.....	28
<b>SOURCES &amp; CONTACTS</b>	<b>31</b>
List of Documents .....	31
Agency and Program Websites.....	31
Key Contacts .....	32



# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

The City of Surrey and BC Housing are jointly undertaking a Master Plan for Housing the Homeless. Many municipalities in BC have been involved in developing plans and strategies to respond to homelessness in their communities. While each community has a unique set of challenges and opportunities, it is helpful to consider the policies and programs implemented locally, as well as in other jurisdictions, in terms of their effectiveness and reach.

This briefing paper is therefore intended to provide background information and case examples of initiatives, good policies and practices in the provision of housing and emergency services for the homeless as implemented in communities outside of Surrey. A number of key topics are explored in this paper; representing a range of practices, from design, funding, and operations to prevention measures and other considerations. Many of the examples are those of local agencies and initiatives, although a small number of national and international projects demonstrate particular relevance or innovation. This is not intended to be an exhaustive review, but rather, it highlights selected topics and practices experienced elsewhere that can inform the development of a Master Plan in Surrey.

## Approach & Report Structure

The topics that have been included in this paper were identified as a result of conversations with City staff and Steering Committee members at the outset of this project. They were selected because of their particular relevance to situations or challenges currently experienced in Surrey, as well as examples of collaboration and partnership that could potentially be replicated in the Surrey context.

The research included: a) web-search and documentation of key practices from other jurisdictions throughout North America and b) consultation and interviews with representatives of selected agencies. The consulting team also referenced examples and approaches based on their in-house expertise in the areas of public consultation; shelter planning and design; and working with non-profit agencies.

The paper is structured into two sections. The first looks at emergency services and good practices around design, management and resource centres. The second considers partnership and innovation initiatives across the range of housing and support services. A complete list of sources and key-informant contacts is included at the end of the paper.



## GOOD PRACTICES FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

### Homeless Outreach & Service Linkages

In the past five years, homeless outreach services have become an integral part of the solution to end homelessness. The provincial Homeless Outreach Program has grown to include outreach workers in communities around BC and funding has expanded to extend follow up support and rent supplement dollars. This section considers the outreach and follow-up support services from BC that were found to be effective at helping people to stay housed.

#### BC's Homeless Outreach Program

Selected lessons from the Homeless Outreach Program (HOP) and Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program (AHOP) in BC:

- Applying a “housing first” approach means that the focus of the program or support service is to provide homeless people with immediate access to housing. Abstinence from drugs or alcohol is not a requirement, nor is the participation in any defined program. Participants may not be “housing ready”, but receive the support they need to assist them to stay housed and gain those skills after they have moved indoors and are in a better position to pursue their personal goals.
- Adopting a client-centred approach that focuses on the specific needs of the client is a key principle of outreach work. This characteristic recognizes that each individual has a unique set of needs and circumstances and that it is most effective to meet homeless individuals “where they are at.” In BC, many outreach workers have responded by assisting homeless individuals to attain the mix of housing and supports that is best suited to them.
- Being creative, flexible and resourceful are key characteristics of successful outreach work. Many outreach workers apply their experience and insight into their service, helping clients and landlords to find housing, deal with crises and manage their expectations. They are often extremely creative in their use of available tools and community resources.

#### On-Site Services at Emergency Shelters & Drop-Ins

Bringing staff from outside service agencies to the emergency shelters and drop-in centres helps to connect homeless individuals to key services. For example, the regular presence of employment and assistance workers (EAW) on site at an emergency shelter gives clients an opportunity to connect with an EAW outside of the government office environment, which may be an intimidating environment for some individuals. This requires EAWs to find ways to complete an application with a client on the same day, which involves an adjustment to standard procedures.

Similarly, there is particular importance placed on having mental health workers on site at emergency shelters. Here, the health authorities have to be in a position to complete an assessment of a client and connect them with an ongoing mental health worker as a first step towards their case planning goals. Two Downtown Vancouver emergency shelters, Lookout's Yukon shelter and Raincity's Triage shelter, both include on-site mental health staff.

## Housing Follow-Up & Prevention Services

**Outreach workers and other front line workers help homeless clients to get housed. Once they are housed, however, clients continue to face a range of housing barriers and possible risk of eviction or loss of housing. Outreach teams do not often have the capacity to provide adequate and ongoing support to all the clients who they originally housed. This is a challenge. Two examples from Toronto provide an alternative approach to housing support work. Similarly, the United Kingdom offers a breadth of experience in the area of homeless prevention with many lessons for BC.**

### Streets to Homes Housing Follow-Up (Toronto, Ontario)

Streets to Homes is a housing outreach and placement program operated by the City of Toronto since 2005.<sup>1</sup> The program helps homeless people to move into permanent housing and maintain that housing through an extensive network of follow-up supports. It is delivered by City staff and partner agencies. This approach is applied, more or less consistently with clients<sup>2</sup>:

- Step 1 - A street outreach counsellor approaches a rough sleeper and explains that the focus of the program is providing permanent housing.
- Step 2 - If an individual shows interest, an intake assessment is undertaken.
- Step 3 - Housing options are developed for that individual.
- Step 4 - Staff assist the individual to take care of outstanding issues such as access to income support.
- Step 5 - Staff accompany individual to see housing units.
- Step 6 - Once appropriate housing is found that the individual likes, the lease is signed.
- Step 7 - A joint meeting is held between the individual, street outreach counsellor who has been working with the individual so far and a new follow-up support worker who will be providing follow-up support to the individual.
- Step 8 - Follow-up support services by the new support worker are provided for up to one year. This includes informal counselling, finding furniture, connecting to resources, dealing with the landlord, grocery shopping, transportation, and accessing health services.

---

<sup>1</sup> In Ontario, the Province directly funds municipalities to deliver housing and homelessness services.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from *Homelessness, Program Responses and an Assessment of Toronto's Streets to Homes Program*.

Streets to Homes funds approximately 30 agencies to assist with the delivery of its services. Many of these agencies have had their programs realigned to better meet the objectives of Streets to Homes. An additional set of agencies that do not receive funding have signed formal service agreements.

To facilitate the follow-up support, intensive goal setting is pursued with the client. Over time, the frequency of the visits decreases. At the end of the first year, clients are expected to be able to live independently without ongoing support or are transitioned to more appropriate ongoing case management services. Staff sometimes make exceptions and continue to work with clients beyond the first year.

### **Streets to Homes Youth Program (Toronto, Ontario)**

The pathways out of youth homelessness are different than those that adults go through. To be successful in working with at-risk or street-involved youth (under 25 years), support workers need to have a different skill set than the outreach workers and support staff who work with at-risk or homeless adults. In Toronto, the Streets to Homes Youth Program has street outreach counsellors dedicated to working with young people. They help people to get housing and keep it, and to support them as they become more stable and integrate into the community.

A partner agency, Youthlink Inner City, has specialized counsellors who help homeless youth to access housing and who provide follow up supports once they are in their homes. Streets to Homes leverages the resources available to Toronto's homeless youth by providing linkages across multiple youth-serving agencies not funded by Streets to Homes, thereby maximizing the housing and stabilization outcomes for street involved youth and youth living outdoors.



Youth Link Inner City Centre.  
Photo: [www.youthlink.ca](http://www.youthlink.ca)

A number of programs help people to keep their housing, by providing a wide range of services including mediating with landlords and eviction prevention. They also teach life and parenting skills, address immediate needs such as food and transportation, provide counselling, emotional and practical supports and reconnect youth with their families.

## Prevention Efforts (Various Locations, United Kingdom)

Agencies in the UK have placed particular emphasis on efforts to prevent homelessness or prevent repeat homelessness. Good practice examples include:

- ***Protocol for Preventing Repeat Homelessness and Evictions*** — Newcastle City Council developed an agreement between the housing and service provider agencies to assist them to identify vulnerable tenants and ways in which joint working can be implemented if problems occur. The protocol involves three areas:
  - a) contacting support workers who are already involved with these individuals and making a referral to the in-house support team if needed;
  - b) where there is concern about a tenant's ability to maintain a tenancy, holding a case meeting with the applicant and relevant agencies and developing a support plan; and
  - c) implementing the actions to prevent eviction or housing loss.
- ***Vulnerable People Protocol and Training Package*** — West Berkshire Council developed a proactive approach to identify, assess and support people who are, or who may become, vulnerable to losing their tenancies. Indicators or points of vulnerability include:
  - hospitalisation and time period following discharge;
  - rent arrears or other debt problems;
  - change from supported accommodation to independent living;
  - during and following substance abuse etc.

The training package enables frontline staff to understand potential vulnerability and learn how to respond, make an assessment, and review and evaluate.

Once support needs are identified, a case conference with relevant support agencies is held in a pre-tenancy meeting.

- ***Discretionary Funds*** — Bournemouth Borough Council set up a "fix it" fund that is to be used at the discretion of housing officers. This can be used for one-off payments to a tenant to help pay off arrears, damage costs or for rent advances.<sup>3</sup>
- ***Joint Protocols and Information Sharing*** — Newcastle City Council created a protocol around hospital discharge as a means to prevent homelessness. The protocol outlines key steps for participating agencies to take to prevent a patient from being discharged into the street. This includes a process to be followed on admission; seeking help from other agencies in finding accommodation and arranging support; and making

---

<sup>3</sup> BC's Homeless Outreach Program provides outreach workers a rent supplement fund that is typically used to offset the difference between private market rent and a client's shelter allowance. Often outreach workers use these resources to avert crises or provide other types of one-off support to the client.

information available for patients and staff. The protocol was developed by a working group, which helped to provide information to health service providers about the resources and agencies available. It also led to the introduction of a clear set of guidelines for the assessment of all patients' accommodation needs on admission to hospital, which has had multiple benefits for patients and hospital and housing staff. Similar protocols and programs have been developed for ex-offenders and people leaving the justice system.

#### KEY APPROACHES TO HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

- Setting up systems to identify and assess households at risk of homelessness
- Providing training that provides frontline staff with a range of skills, tools and information
- Early and timely intervention before housing or financial problems become too serious
- Youth respond better to age-specific advice and peer mentoring
- Flexible and individualized support that reflects the particular needs of the client
- Providing resource information and assistance with making the links to doctors, dentists, mental health workers, and any other professionals. Support might include applying for income assistance or employment programs, whatever is needed
- Liaising with landlords when appropriate
- Working jointly and effectively with other agencies
- Providing information about services and resources
- Removing barriers to advocacy services
- Develop tenancy sustainment schemes

Source: Adapted from *Good Practice: Guide - Homelessness: Early Identification and Prevention*

## Drop-In Centres & Resource Centres

In BC, many drop-in centres tend to be focused on immediate issues like showers, meals and laundry. Essentially offering a warm, dry place to hang out. In addition, there is often an additional emphasis on service linkages, whereby frontline staff help clients to connect with health services, income assistance, recreational opportunities or other immediate needs such as housing or food programs. Some drop-in centres target particular groups, such as youth, Aboriginal people or women, and are often credited as providing a critical connection point for service agencies. They create an opportunity for front line staff to build trust with homeless and/or at-risk individuals and to serve as a gateway to key services and programs. The following are some good practice examples from across Canada.

### **Coast Mental Health Resource Centre (Vancouver, BC)**

The Coast Mental Health drop-in and resource centre offers programs and services for people with mental illness, including those who are homeless. The centre is often the first point of contact that clients have with mental health services. Some of the services the resource centre provides include:

- Affordable meals
- Laundry and shower facilities
- Social and recreational activities, psychosocial programs and volunteer opportunities
- Housing outreach services
- Mental health outreach services and referrals

The resource centre is located on the ground and second floors of Seymour Place, a 12-storey building in the Downtown South area of Vancouver. The building also contains 136 apartments of affordable housing, supported mental health housing and housing for persons with HIV/AIDS.

### **The Fire Pit Cultural Drop-in Centre (Prince George, BC)**

The Fire Pit is a drop-in centre, located in downtown Prince George for the support of Aboriginal people infected or at-risk of HIV/AIDS and the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). The centre, which opened its doors in 2003, is operated by Positive Living North in partnership with the Central Interior Native Health Society. The Fire Pit is a place where Aboriginal people can do crafts and artwork, eat nutritious food, join a talking circle, connect with

support staff or get information about health, HIV/AIDS and HCV. The prevention model at the Fire Pit puts the emphasis on participation in cultural activities that lead to healing and that help to reduce risky behaviours. The centre offers a daily meal and an opportunity to connect with housing outreach workers as well as other services. The centre is a valuable resource in Prince George as a cultural centre, a safe place to get indoors, and as a front-line service in the prevention of HIV and HCV.

### **YouthLink Inner City Drop-in Centre (Toronto, Ontario)**

YouthLink is a service organization that offers services and programs to people between the ages of 12 and 24 and their families/caregivers. The inner city drop-in centre provides access to services, programs and outreach for street-involved and homeless youth. It offers youth a welcoming place where they can access a continuum of services:

- Food, clothing, showers, laundry facilities, internet and phone access and personal hygiene supplies.
- Community referrals and connections as well as on-site services, provided by partner agencies, e.g. nurses, mental health workers, employment counselling, legal clinic, infectious diseases clinic and anonymous testing for HIV and sexually-transmitted diseases.
- Housing support through the Streets to Homes program.
- HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C support and education, including healthy sexuality workshops.
- Pre-employment supports and life skills training.
- Through a Peer Education Program, youth who have accessed the drop-in can work at the Centre as a street youth outreach/peer support worker.



*The Fire Pit Drop-In Cultural Centre  
Source: [www.positivelivingnorth.ca](http://www.positivelivingnorth.ca)*



## Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation Day Health Program (Vancouver, BC)

The Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation is a not-for-profit organization in Vancouver's West End neighbourhood. The Dr. Peter Centre provides a community of care for people living with HIV/AIDS, addiction and/or mental illness, ensuring people have access to treatments that will improve their overall well-being and help prevent further transmission of HIV/AIDS.

The Day Health Program at the centre allows individuals who are members of the program to access a range of services including:

- Hot, nutritious meals including breakfast and lunch
- Counselling services
- Medical services, including highly active anti-retroviral therapy (HAART) treatment
- Alternative, recreational and complementary therapies, ranging from massage, yoga, music and art
- Basic personal needs such as showers, sleep rooms, as well as laundry facilities, computers, and telephone



Dr. Peter Centre, Vancouver's West End  
Source: [www.drpeter.org](http://www.drpeter.org)

**Note:** *Successful drop-in and resource centres are well-integrated into their neighbourhoods. By ensuring there is no loitering outside the building (through building design and management practices), but also by having regular liaison meetings with local businesses and residents, many drop-in centres can adequately support their clients without causing a disruption to the local community. If the centre is well designed and well run, it can often become an asset to the local community, helping to revitalize older neighbourhoods and contributing to local area improvement initiatives. Some drop-ins, such as Coast Mental Health Resource Centre and the Dr. Peter Centre are membership-based, ensuring that users are aware of the expectations of both the facility and the neighbourhood.*



## Good Management Practices for Shelters & Supportive Housing

Good management practices refers to a range of practices around the operations of emergency shelters or supportive housing, and also the agreements and approaches in place that help to foster a collegial and respectful relationship with local neighbours and businesses. Some common examples are presented in this section.

### Good Neighbour Agreements

Good neighbour agreements are voluntary agreements between a service/housing provider and a neighbourhood association or other group of individuals representing a local area. They are seen as tools that enable funders, licensing agencies, neighbours and service providers to develop facilities that meet the needs of users or clients, while minimizing the impact on neighbourhoods. The pursuit of these types of agreements helps to bring together residents, businesses, social agencies and the local municipality to address areas of concern. Above all, these agreements provide a means for all neighbours and key players to work effectively together to achieve a joint vision.

In a new-build situation, the developer of the social service facility (e.g. emergency shelter or social housing project) is typically responsible for facilitating the process and ensuring that all key parties are able to participate. Good neighbour agreements typically address issues related to property maintenance and appearance, codes of conduct, communication protocols and monitoring. An advisory committee is typically established to negotiate the agreement and to provide a longer term structure for communication and conflict resolution.

Specific **objectives** of a good neighbour agreement might include:

- Promoting communication, respect and trust among neighbours, residents of proposed housing or facility, providers and funders by assuring the rights and responsibilities of all parties are understood and monitored.
- Assuring that the safety, security, codes of conduct and property management standards are established and upheld.
- Establishing successful long-term relationships, while providing all affected parties with the opportunity to be involved in planning, monitoring, and re-negotiating agreements, specifically with respect to safety, security, codes of conduct and property management.
- Providing a structure and process for the resolution of conflicts minimizing the incidence of litigation.
- Identifying a contact list for individuals that represent the key parties involved.

**Principles** of effective good neighbour agreements include:

- Clear and honest communication.
- Working together to address concerns and solve problems in a positive and timely manner.
- Being respectful of the residents or clients and engaging them in resolving issues.
- Commitment to following through on agreed upon actions.

**Tips** for setting up good neighbour agreements include:

- Drafting an agreement that fosters good will and two-way communication between neighbours and service providers.
- Using language that demonstrates mutual responsibility, e.g. “ABC Housing has responsibilities, but so do our neighbours to help make it work and together lets build a better neighbourhood.”

#### KEY ELEMENTS OF GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENTS

- *Condition of Property and Premises*— maintenance and appearance standards; design input.
- *Neighbourhood Codes of Conduct* — neighbours and residents uphold mutual behaviour expectations as outlined in codes of conduct; includes tenant activities; approaches to mitigate disruptive behaviour and ensure all residents can continue to enjoy the area.
- *Community Safety* — crime prevention, block watches, security lighting.
- *Communication & Information Sharing* — disclosure about property concerns; process for continued communication among parties; participation in neighbourhood committees; responsibility for media relations; mechanism for informed planning and decision-making.
- *Monitoring and Compliance* — Compliance mechanisms; implementation of agreement; enforcement of regulations; dispute resolution mechanism; fair eviction procedures; reaffirming agreements.

Source: Adapted from Good Neighbour Shelter Certification Standards. Community Shelter Board.

## **Community Liaison Committees or Good Neighbour Groups**

Once a new development is complete and occupied, community liaison or good neighbour groups are often established to continue to respond to issues that may arise as a result of the new development. The life of these groups is dependent on the members and whether neighbourhood issues emerge from the building's operations. In Vancouver, the development of supportive housing projects resulted in the formation of a number of community liaison committees or good neighbour groups. Many of these groups were disbanded over time.

*What is the objective of such groups or committees?*

It is largely to deal with issues that have an impact or a perceived impact on a neighbourhood. The groups do not have any responsibility on the internal operations of the facility/housing, e.g. tenant selection or other management approaches.

*Who participates?*

Typically, participants include representatives from the local municipality, police, local health authority in addition to tenants, neighbourhood residents and businesses. The membership can be fixed with named representatives from various agencies, businesses, local associations or strata condominiums. Sometimes meetings are open to the public.

*Frequency of meetings?*

The frequency is to be determined at the outset of the formation of the group. Often meetings are held monthly or quarterly depending on the situation, but then adjusted over time as needed to maintain regular communication and discuss emergent or ongoing issues.

*Who coordinates?*

Often, the local municipality will be expected to coordinate and staff the group. In some instances, however, the housing provider might be in a better position to lead this process.

*Alternative approaches?*

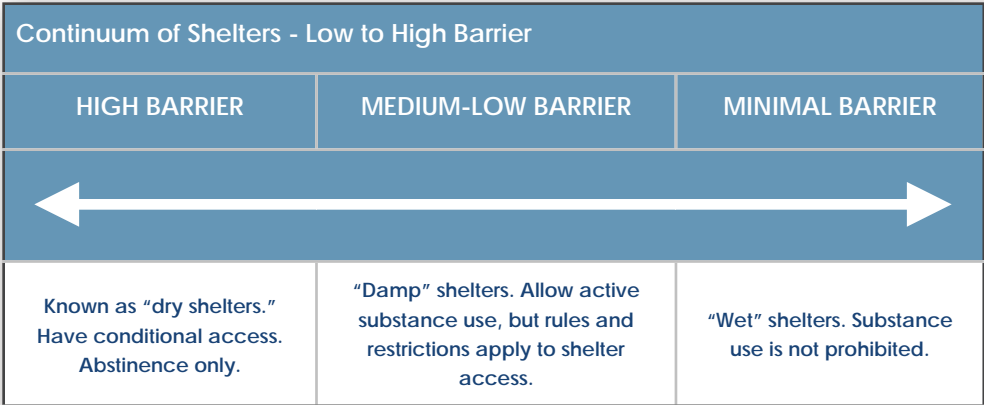
Where possible, the new development and society may have an option to join the local community association or business improvement association as a means to ensure ongoing cooperation and communication. This reduces the time burden on participants, particularly municipal staff who are expected to attend multiple meetings.

## **Management Approaches**

Operating an emergency shelter or supportive housing involves multiple considerations. For example, protecting the safety of tenants is to be achieved while minimizing the sense of institutionalization at a facility. In a neighbourhood, it is important to maintain positive relationships with others and minimize problems or perceptions of problems that

might be seen to arise from the development. A number of management approaches and considerations have been identified as part of this:

- Considering the safety and wellbeing of different user groups when **developing the program** for the facility. This might include whether the shelter will be dedicated to a particular group, i.e. a separate shelter for men and women, youth and/or families. If a shelter will accommodate multiple groups together, then consideration needs to be taken in terms of how the building can protect vulnerable user groups and ensure there is efficiency and flexibility in how the building is used. This could involve the development of separate or flexible use areas for men, women, families, and/or couples.
- Developing **operational plans or operational agreements** that consider the range of operational issues and values underlying the building’s management approach. For example:
  - Determining whether the facility will be a low barrier or high barrier shelter. High barrier shelters typically expect all users to be clean and sober when they stay at the shelter, while medium, low and minimal barrier shelters allow users to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol to varying degrees on the nights when they stay at the shelter. Large communities typically benefit from having a variety of emergency services that span the low to high barrier continuum.



- Using techniques that create a warm and welcoming environment for users. For example, some shelters opt to keep the front door open at all times as a means to make users feel like they can come and go.
- Applying approaches that ensure the safety and security of all clients, particularly if a mix of different population groups are jointly using the facility. For example, ensuring there is an adequate staff to client ratio; maintaining separate areas for men and women; implementing guest policies among others.
- Developing approaches to client intake and discharge that do not result in disrespectful or undignified situations for clients. For example, developing

pre-determined intake times inevitably results in long line ups for clients. Allowing longer term stays or allowing intakes at all times of the day would prevent such situations.<sup>4</sup>

- Developing **key policies and procedures** around all aspects of shelter management, e.g. admission and discharge approaches; substance use policy; procedures for managing violent behaviour or dealing with inappropriate behaviour; how to respond to critical incidents; managing client confidentiality and privacy; building maintenance; staff training; workplace safety; and neighbourhood relations.<sup>5</sup>
- Ensuring that **staffing ratios, recruiting practices and training approaches** adequately reflect the needs of the population groups who will be accessing the facility. For example, if it is anticipated that many of the shelter users will have complex mental health issues or concurrent disorders, then it is important that staff have the qualifications or receive training to enable them to work with such clients in a safe and effective manner. The number of staff to client ratio is determined by BC Housing emergency shelter guidelines, which set a minimum of 2 staff on shift 24 hours per day, seven days per week as the standard. However, each facility should ensure that there are adequate staff to client ratios and the presence of appropriately-trained staff at all times.

## Design Solutions for Emergency Shelters

The design of emergency shelters is a key factor in their success. BC Housing's Emergency Shelter Design Guidelines lay out basic design requirements for shelters. In addition to these guidelines, experience from service providers, clients and designers reveals additional design details that may improve the success of shelters. The following section outlines "things to think about" in the design of shelters.

### *Site Specific Considerations*

- The location of an emergency shelter should be carefully considered. Integration of a shelter within a neighbourhood is important for its acceptance by the local community.
- Scale and design should be appropriate for the neighbourhood context. For example, in residential areas, the building should have a residential "look and feel" and avoid an "institutional" look through design, landscaping and exterior materials selection, e.g. roof pitch and window styles. An emergency shelter building should be scaled to fit the general scale of the neighbouring buildings.

---

<sup>4</sup> **Note:** BC Housing's emergency shelter guidelines have standardized a 30-day stay period throughout most funded shelters in BC.

<sup>5</sup> **Note:** BC Housing has developed a set of sample policies and procedures for emergency shelters. [http://www.bchousing.org/resources/Programs/ESP/ESP\\_Documents/ESP\\_Sample\\_Policies\\_and%20Procedures.pdf](http://www.bchousing.org/resources/Programs/ESP/ESP_Documents/ESP_Sample_Policies_and%20Procedures.pdf)

- Size and scale should also be considered in relation to the number of people who can be appropriately accommodated in a shelter and the particular neighbourhood location. For example, shelter size should be compatible with the neighbourhood and client group served. In general, however, smaller shelters tend to create an intimate, less institutional setting that can facilitate positive staff-to-client relationship building.
- The selected site should be able to accommodate a sufficiently large shelter that allows for the variety of program space needed to ensure the shelter is able to assist people to connect with services and move from homelessness to permanent housing.

Emergency Shelters: Program Space Considerations	
Core Spaces/Program Areas	Description/Notes
Secure entrance, reception area/counter	Requires surveillance cameras on the outside
Administrative office space (including a separate bathroom for staff)	Main record keeping, storage of supplies, computers
Computer area and lounge	For shelter and drop-in users
Meeting Room and counselling room	Quiet spaces for staff and service providers to work with users
Medical office/ examination room	For clinical staff to provide on-site medical support
Bathrooms	Number of day use toilets, sinks, showers to reflect drop-in or day users and number of staff
Kitchen and eating area, as well as dry storage and freezer area	Consideration of number of seatings in dining area
Bike parking and storage lockers	For use by shelter users
Laundry facilities	Number of washers/driers needed. Commercial grade
Bedrooms	What is configuration of bedrooms - four beds/room or two beds/room etc.?
Bathrooms	Number of day toilets, sinks, showers to reflect number of overnight shelter users
Garbage room/Janitorial storage	
Bed bug room	With immediate access to the outside

- Designing internal courtyards create an “off the street” outdoor space where clients can “hang-out” and spend time without blocking the sidewalks or disrupting the tenants or businesses in neighbouring buildings. Since the establishment of BC’s legislation that prohibits smoking within 3 metres of windows and doorways, it is important to consider the size and layout of such

courtyards during the design stage so that users who smoke are not forced to go outside the complex.

- Another valuable design consideration are lobbies and/or intake areas. It is important to allow for a large enough lobby or entrance area that ensures that all clients have an indoor or sheltered outdoor space to stand or sit upon intake. Such areas should minimize the indignity and street impact of line ups. *Please see section on management approaches.*

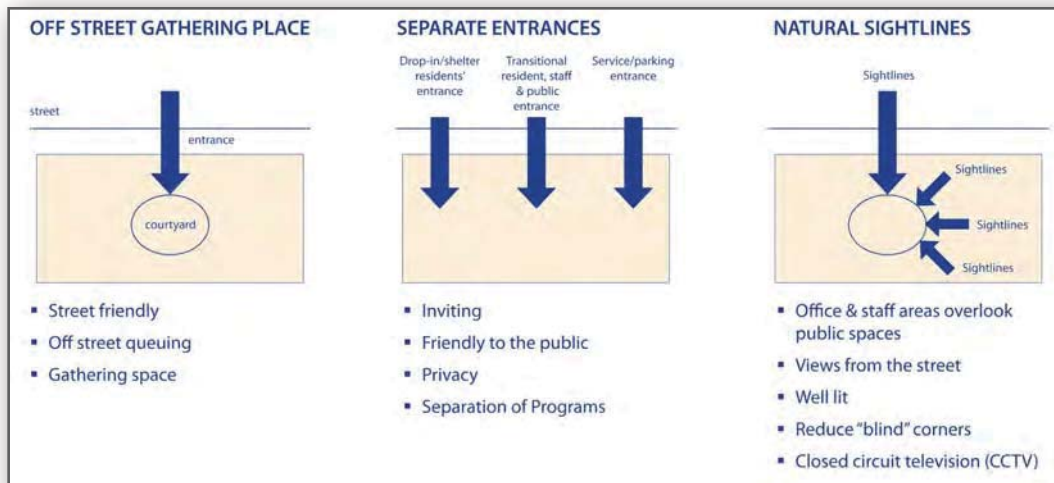
#### *Common Area Considerations*

- **Safety issues:** Separation of sleeping areas for men and women and, for certain population groups, separate common areas may also be needed to protect high-risk women.
- **Lighting:** Motion detecting lighting should be sensitive, ensuring that it is never dark in hallways or other common areas.
- **Facilities:** Ensuring there are adequate washrooms and laundry facilities to reflect the number of users and anticipated demand levels.
- **Beg Bug Prevention:** An increasingly critical aspect of housing or shelter facilities is the availability of a bed bug room where residents/users belongings can be heated in order to remove bed bugs before such belongings enter the facility. An often neglected consideration is the importance of having access to the bed bug room directly from the outside.
- **Storage:** The homeless or at-risk of homelessness often carry all of their personal belongings with them at all times. This may include large items such as bicycles or shopping carts. If a shelter cannot accommodate these belongings, often the homeless individuals will not stay at the facility. Creating a large enough area to park carts and bicycles, as well as having storage for other belongings, is critical.

#### *Other Considerations*

- At the outset, shelters should be designed for the population group that it is expecting to serve. Shelters that are dedicated to specific population groups are recommended in many situations. For example, women, youth or Aboriginal clients are seen to be better served by dedicated shelters. Women who are fleeing violence or are active in the sex trade are seen as particularly vulnerable and also at-risk youth are another group where a joint shelter would not be considered appropriate.
- Designing and planning the interior and exterior of the building with warm colours and an architectural style that is residential in feel would avoid the institutionalization of the building for users, but also help to integrate it into the surrounding area.

- There are many subtle design issues that help to ensure workplace safety for staff and maintain the safety of users. Examples include having wide reception desks for staff, placing mirrors in stairwells, good sight lines to all exit doors and outside spaces, and motion or heat-sensored lighting in all common areas. The Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles offer multiple strategies to address safety through design, e.g. lighting along pathways, placement of windows, and minimizing the use of sight-limiting fencing or landscaping.



- In shelters that might accommodate couples or families, having flexible rooms or lock-off rooms with access to separate bathrooms can greatly improve the accessibility of these shelters to such users. Another group that could benefit from such flex space are transgendered individuals.
- Security measures such as a fob system for getting in and out of different parts of the building easily. This allows staff to enter and exit rooms easily to be able to quickly respond to a crisis or deal with a difficult situation.
- The use of automatic faucets and hand dryers in the bathrooms help to minimize the spread of germs and maximize water conservation and operational efficiencies. Please note that automated faucets do not typically allow the user to adjust the temperature of the water. As such, drinking fountains or other source of drinking water is needed for the benefit of users.
- Flexibility of design that allows for future conversion of units to permanent housing or other purposes.



## Case Examples

The following case examples present three emergency shelter situations where design considerations featured prominently in the planning and operations of the facilities.

### Rock Bay Landing (Victoria, BC)

The Victoria CoolAid Society runs a purpose-built facility that includes emergency shelter, transitional housing and community policing office. The building includes 84 permanent shelter beds co-located with 23 units of transitional housing and the first two units of family shelter in the Capital Region. The building can also accommodate 20 extreme weather mats when needed. The facility opened in 2010, with land that was granted by the City of Victoria and project funding by BC Housing.

The facility provides a large, secure courtyard for clients and guests, day storage for non residents and a variety of meeting rooms. The shelter also provides washrooms, showers laundry training workshops, computer access, kitchen and dining facilities. There is also space for a community policing office within the shelter. The building is targeting LEED Gold certification. Some highlights of the planning context and program include:

- Strong commitment by government, health and social agencies to address homelessness.
- Potential clients were already in the neighbourhood without supports or services.
- Designed as a purpose-built building adopting best practices.
- Flexible design to allow for conversion over time to permanent housing.
- Co-location with Victoria Police Department.
- Cool Aid Society is the operator of the shelter, with experience working successfully in many different neighbourhoods. There was a strong commitment to working in partnership with neighbours of Rock Bay Landing.
- Tenants and shelter users are involved in daily one-on-one goal planning.
- Programs include life skills and training for clients, including work training and volunteer opportunities.



Rock Bay Landing  
Source: Victoria Cool Aid Society

## **Triage Shelter & Windchimes Long Term Housing (Vancouver, BC)**

Windchimes is a long-term supported housing program operated by RainCity Housing & Support Society. It has been in operation since 1993 and serves people living with mental illness. Windchimes includes 27 units and is located in the same building as the Triage Shelter, which provides additional access to services and support such as medication administration and a low-cost meal service.

Triage is a low-barrier shelter for men and women with a mandate to accept people with mental health issues, substance use and other issues. There are 28 shelter rooms and each client has a private room. Clients are able to stay longer than at most shelters, giving staff time to help them access appropriate support services based on their needs and circumstances. Many of the clients who stay at the shelter have been turned away from other shelters due to their complex health needs.

There is a good balance between the number of shelter beds and longer term housing units in the building, which has been noted to be one of the building's success factors as the long-term tenancies help to create a more stable environment for all clients.



Triage Shelter & Windchimes Housing  
Source: raincityhousing.org

## **HEAT Shelters - Operated by RainCity Housing (Vancouver, BC)**

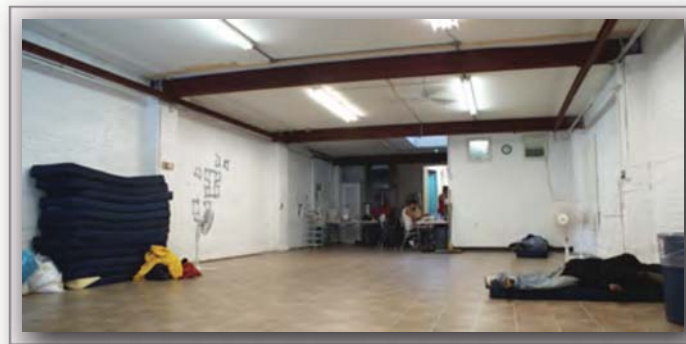
In 2008, the City of Vancouver, in partnership with the Province and Streethome Foundation funded several emergency shelters to house the homeless during the winter months. The temporary shelters, which were known as HEAT (Homeless Emergency Action Team) shelters were quickly established in spaces found around the city, and were not located in purpose-built facilities. Selected HEAT shelters have continued to be funded every winter since 2008.

RainCity Housing & Support Society ran three of the shelters in 2010. These were primarily located in large, open spaces, with minimal infrastructure. Each of the RainCity-operated shelters housed approximately 40 people and was operational on a temporary basis between December and April. While the locations were not originally intended for shelter use and the buildings/spaces were often inadequate, RainCity developed techniques and program approaches to ensure their shelters operated efficiently and safely for guests, staff and neighbours. Highlights of the shelter features include:

- The shelters generally housed 40 people on mats in a large open space. Mats and bedding were provided and laundered.

- Guests were allowed to bring furniture into the space to create more privacy for themselves.
- Shelters accepted men and women. Initially, only 20% of guests were female. In one shelter, where the manager and most staff were female, the number of female guests increased to 50%.
- In at least one shelter, a glassed-in room was available for women to sleep separately. The room was also used to separate pets on occasion (eg. cats from dogs). This added flexibility for a variety of uses.
- Two private locking bathrooms were used by guests and staff, although staff retained a key that could be used in emergencies. Two bathrooms were found to be insufficient for 40+ people. In the first year of the HEAT program, neighbours in the immediate area complained about loitering and nuisance in the area. For this reason, as well as other issues, the HEAT shelters in the later years were open during the days rather than just at night.
- The shelters included showers that were available for the guests to use.
- While limited kitchen facilities (fridge, sink, storage) were installed, meals were catered and not prepared on site. Two meals and snacks were provided.
- Covered outdoor gathering place where guests could get fresh air, smoke or hang out was noted to be important. This was found to build community among guests and reduced conflict with neighbouring residents. Where the shelter facilities did not have adequate outdoor areas, temporary covered spaces were created.

Since operators were not able to significantly change the physical spaces, the program approach was an important factor in the success of the shelters. The program was designed to remove barriers to access, ensuring the shelters were accessible to all street homeless. This included allowing pets, providing space for guests to store belongings (e.g. bags and shopping



HEAT Shelter Interior  
Source: City of Vancouver - Jay Black

carts), being accessible by foot or transit and being open 24 hours a day. Some additional program features include:

- RainCity staff had a zero tolerance policy for violence, sexualized language or behaviour. This approach contributed to community building within the shelter and helped to make the environment safer and accessible (e.g. women, youth, gay, transgendered).
- Vancouver Coastal Health regularly visited shelters to connect people with medical and mental health services. People with pets were connected with veterinarians and provided basic education about pet care.
- Rather than a first-come first-served system, reservations could be made for up to a four month stay. This reduced the number of people waiting at intake line ups, avoided publicly visible line ups, and gave guests certainty that they had a place to stay during the winter.
- RainCity staff focused on creating a community within each shelter. There was significant interaction between staff and guests due to the physical layout of the spaces. The no-barrier approach meant staff were able to connect with people who do not typically access housing services for a variety of reasons. In some cases, staying in the HEAT shelters led people to seek health and housing services and transition into more stable housing after the shelters closed.



HEAT shelter sleeping mats  
Source: CBC News

## GOOD PRACTICES IN PARTNERSHIP & INNOVATION

### Social Enterprise Initiatives

As funding dollars are reduced, non-profit organizations have begun to increasingly look towards social enterprise projects as a means to supplement their revenues and further their missions. More and more organizations have begun to develop and operate social enterprises to create employment opportunities for their clients and create change in their communities. Social purpose or social enterprise projects essentially involve an activity that generates revenue for the non-profit by exchanging goods and/or services in the market. These activities help the organizations to realize their objectives.

In the case of housing providers, operating a social enterprise may help to generate funds that can support the costs of building maintenance and upgrades, but it can also create opportunities for work experience for tenants and clients. Many approaches have led to a decrease in organizations' dependence on government funds.

#### Good Shepherd Non-Profit Homes (Hamilton, Ontario)

An Ontario housing provider, Good Shepherd Non-Profit Homes, manages the Good Shepherd Works initiative which provides landscaping, unit clean up at tenant turnover and pest treatment services to non-profit and private market landlords as well as homeowners. The initiative creates opportunities for paid training and employment for individuals facing barriers to employment. For eight years, Good Shepherd hired tenants to fulfill basic maintenance and janitorial services at their buildings. The program was then expanded in 2009 with funding through the Homelessness Partnership Initiative in 2009. Since then, Good Shepherd has continued to operate the service as part of its social enterprise activities.

#### St. Stephen's Conflict Resolution Service (Toronto, Ontario)

The St. Stephen's Community Conflict Resolution Service was initiated in 1985 in response to a need for a service that assists individuals to resolve interpersonal disputes. The St. Stephen's Community House, a Toronto-based social service agency that addresses issues of poverty, homelessness, racism, etc., initiated the program. What began as a grant-dependent program shifted to a revenue-generating social enterprise by the mid 1990s. The service includes consultation and training in



Source: Good Shepherd [www.goodshepherdcentres.ca](http://www.goodshepherdcentres.ca)

dispute resolution; conflict management and de-escalation; and mediation services. The services, which are offered to the public and private sectors, are provided by a roster of trainers. The revenue generated from these activities allow St. Stephen’s House to continue to provide free community-based mediation services for clients in need.

**Wigwamen Incorporated (Toronto, Ontario)**

Wigwamen is a 405-unit Aboriginal housing provider in Toronto. The organization operates Green Tech Services, a licensed service organization that provides home energy audits. Green Tech is a wholly-owned subsidiary corporation incorporated in 2007, from which the retained earnings are invested in Wigwamen initiatives or re-invested in the enterprise. Green Tech is one of three social enterprises run by Wigwamen, alongside Wigwamen Non-Profit Residential Corporation and Upper Canada Property Management. Combined, the social enterprises have allowed the non-profit to develop new programming and partner on new social housing projects.

**YWCA Hotel (Vancouver, BC)**

Vancouver’s YWCA hotel is a social enterprise hotel, where all the proceeds go to support the YWCA’s community programs. By providing reasonably-priced accommodation for travellers, the hotel generates revenues that sustains the YWCA network of programs. The YWCA provides a range of integrated services for women and their families — from early learning and care to housing, health and fitness, employment services and leadership.



Source: YWCA. [www.ywcahotel.com](http://www.ywcahotel.com)

**Habitat for Humanity’s ReStores (Canada-wide)**

ReStores are building supply stores run by Habitat for Humanity that sell donated new and used building materials. The ReStore concept was started in Winnipeg in the early 1990s and today, there are 65 ReStores across Canada. The funds generated are used to help with funding Habitat homebuilding projects. The income generated from operating ReStore may not be a significant component of the organization’s funding, however, it does generate some income and contributes to the re-use of construction related



materials. In this way, the ReStore helps to support the agency's broader objectives of environmental sustainability, as most of the product that is sold at the ReStore would likely have ended up in a landfill.



### **Cornerstone Cafe - Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group (Victoria, BC)**

The Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group (NRG) operates The Cornerstone Cafe out of one of its buildings in the Fernwood neighbourhood in Victoria. All the proceeds from the coffee shop are reinvested into the organization's programs and services. The Fernwood NRG Society offers a range of programs and services including child care, family drop-in classes, and other recreation activities. The Society also runs ten units of low-end of market rental housing in the neighbourhood and provides employment for 45 people, many of whom are neighbourhood residents.

### **H.A.V.E. Cafe (Vancouver, BC)**

H.A.V.E. Café is a social enterprise dedicated to developing job and life skills for students. Students are selected based on need and put through an 8-week culinary training curriculum. HAVE trains individuals from the Downtown Eastside and surrounding



Source: Fernwood NRG. [fernwoodnrg.ca/](http://fernwoodnrg.ca/)

neighbourhoods who face barriers to employment. The program includes lifeskills and occupational training to prep cook level for five to eight students per course.

Students receive Food Safe certification as well as bus tickets, meals, uniforms, tools and a \$100 honorarium upon successful completion of the training. Those who successfully complete the course are introduced to potential employers and receive placement in entry level jobs in restaurant kitchens and receive counselling support for three months. Students prepare the meals served to customers at the HAVE Cafe and proceeds from the cafe are reinvested into the program. The rent collected from H.A.V.E. also goes to keep the transition house, located upstairs, operational.

Similar to HAVE, Lookout Emergency Aid Society operates the North Shore Culinary Training Program ([www.northshoreculinaryschool.com/](http://www.northshoreculinaryschool.com/)) and FareStart in Seattle ([www.farestart.org](http://www.farestart.org)) runs a barista training program for street youth and a 16-week culinary program for homeless and disadvantaged individuals.

## SOCIAL ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES — KEY LESSONS & CONSIDERATIONS

There are many examples of non-profit led enterprises throughout North America for organizations to learn from and be inspired by. Some lessons for non-profits to consider:

- *Entrepreneurial spirit is key.* Willingness to explore new ideas and opportunities on the part of the Board of Directors and senior management is needed.
- *Capital investment is required.* Organizations need the financial capital and sound management to be able to operate at a deficit for some time.
- *Building on strengths and opportunities.* Successful examples are based on a niche/area of need in the local community to which the organization has a strong interest or expertise.
- *Starting small.* As few organizations have the business acumen or background, it is best for an organization to start with a small venture, thereby allowing staff and the Board to learn about operating an enterprise.

Source: Adapted from "Case Studies of Social (Purpose) Enterprise in the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Sector."

**Note:** Success with social enterprise ventures is not guaranteed. Non-profits need to fully assess their capacity and strengths and evaluate whether they will be able to run a business while continuing to pursue their primary mandate as a social service provider. While this section has focused on positive examples of social enterprise, there are many other examples of non-profits that were forced to close down their social enterprise due to a lack of funding, business training or knowledge, or an inability to manage the enterprise with short-term losses. To start a social enterprise often requires substantial capital investment, and this may be initially supported through grant dollars if that is available. However, an ongoing dependence on grant funding is not sustainable. As in any business venture, there is always a substantial risk involved, a factor that non-profits need to be aware of in advance.



## Employment Programs Connected to Housing

Gaining job skills and work experience is one of the variables for success for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The following initiatives illustrate a connection between training and job experience with housing for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The programs are directly operated by housing providers or by an organization that has an ongoing connection to a housing project.

### Cool Aid Construction Skills Training (Victoria, BC)

While not an ongoing program, Victoria's Cool Aid Society implemented a unique skills training opportunity as part of the development of the Sandy Merriman, an emergency shelter for women. The shelter was built by women who were "employment disadvantaged" and who were interested in learning construction skills. These women, alongside professionals, renovated a house in downtown Victoria which now operates as a 25-bed emergency shelter and daytime drop-in centre.



Cool Aid Society - Sandy Merriman House  
Source: youthcore.ca

### Cool Aid's Community Casual Labour Pool (Victoria, BC)

Cool Aid Society runs the Community Casual Labour Pool, a free service that matches employers with workers looking for short term, casual positions. The program connects clients to short term temporary work such as moving, gardening, construction trades, house cleaning, office or clerical work. A number of the individuals who find work through the program end up finding permanent full time or part time employment. The jobs and incomes have a strong impact on the lives of Cool Aid clients and the community. The Victoria Cool Aid Society operates a range of programs including supported housing, community health and dental services, emergency shelter, mental health and employment services and other programs.

### Harbour Light Volunteer Work Experience Program (Vancouver, BC)

The Salvation Army's Harbour Light is located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and provides a continuum of care and services including emergency shelter, drop-in, detox and treatment services, as well as second-stage housing for those leaving the treatment program. The Volunteer Work Experience Program at Harbour Light is a pre-job readiness program. The program helps clients to gain transferable job skills and work experience

through volunteer work, training and education, so that they can focus on becoming self-sufficient when they leave Harbour Light. Each participant is individually assessed and a job skills development program is tailored for them. The aim is to provide participants with certified training and education. The program includes training in basic First Aid, Food Safe, Serving it Right, janitorial training and life skills.

### **Potluck Cafe and Catering (Vancouver, BC)**

Potluck operates a cafe and catering business that serves corporate and non-profit clients throughout Vancouver. The business is located on the ground floor of the Portland Hotel, a low barrier housing development for individuals with mental health and addictions. As a registered charity and social enterprise, catering revenues from the cafe are invested back into the organization's community social programs including:

- Food Services & Lifeskills Training and Employment — for DTES residents with barriers to employment.
- Meals for Portland Hotel residents — One free meal per day and three free meals for residents who are HIV positive.
- Community Kitchen Program — DTES residents learn basic cooking and nutrition at the Cafe twice a month.



Potluck Cafe & Catering. [www.potluckcatering.com](http://www.potluckcatering.com)

### **Eva's Initiatives (Toronto, Ontario)**

Eva's Initiatives work with homeless and at-risk youth in Toronto (16 to 24 year olds) to help them get off the streets. The initiatives include emergency shelters, transitional housing, harm reduction services to address drug and alcohol use, counselling, employment and training programs, and housing support services. Eva's Phoenix opened in June 2000 and provides transitional housing for 50 youth for up to one year in shared townhouse style units with access to common areas. The young tenants develop the skills to live independently through hands-on programs that are delivered in a supportive environment. Those living at Phoenix must be involved in a training or employment program. Eva's staff also provide counselling, job placement assistance, housing search support, mentorship as well as other services to help youth achieve and maintain self-sufficiency.

Eva's Phoenix also includes a youth employment program that provides at-risk youth with employment opportunities that assist them to get the foot in the door to a career of their choice. Up to 160 youth can participate in the employment and pre-apprenticeship program. The program includes 5-week employment preparation, followed by employability and career-exploration workshops that help to prepare participants for a work placement. The program helps to match youth with employers of their choice for a 12-week placement and offers them guidance and support to ensure they're meeting their goals and objectives.



Eva's Phoenix Print Shop. Photo: Toronto Star

## Co-Location and Partnership Arrangements

The following examples demonstrate partnership arrangements and collaborative environments between non-profit organizations.

### The NonProfit Center (Various Locations, USA)

Across the United States, multi-tenant nonprofit centers have proven effective in addressing the needs of nonprofits to have secure, affordable office space. The Centers can provide an environment of stability and collaboration. Tenants typically share a commitment to communicate with and educate each other about program and advocacy work.

The NonProfit Center in Boston is an example of a multi-tenant nonprofit building founded by Third Sector New England in 2004. The building comprises nine floors with over 110,000 of rentable square feet. The center offers affordable office space for a diverse range of tenant organizations

*"Co-location is a mechanism to create social innovation, or synergy. The idea is to bring organizations together, in close physical proximity with the belief that the dialogue between those organizations will produce innovative ideas and partnerships and new projects. The physical environment has to be positive, you have to be co-located with organizations that have the same values as you do, and otherwise there won't be much opportunity for synergy. It's really about finding the right partners, or tenants, or sub-tenants, depending on the relationship. That's what, I think, makes the difference, and having organizations that are pretty entrepreneurial."*

*-- Don Palmer, Executive Director, Causeway*

and also provides numerous meetings rooms equipped with state-of-the-art communications technology that are made available to tenants.

### **Crabtree Corner & Sheway Housing (Vancouver, BC)**

Crabtree Corner and Sheway are the result of a partnership of two lead organizations — the YWCA of Vancouver and Vancouver Native Health Society. Both facilities serve primarily Aboriginal women and their children. Located in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Crabtree Corner is a family resource centre run by the YWCA. It provides emergency childcare and support services to women and families who are overcoming substance abuse issues. Crabtree Corner also includes 12 units of transitional housing for parenting and pregnant women who are managing substance abuse challenges. Led by Vancouver Native Health Society, Sheway provides comprehensive health and social services to women who are pregnant or parenting children less than 18 months, particularly those at risk of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Sheway brings together multiple partners including the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, the YWCA among others.

The location for the building was secured through funding from Human Resources Development Canada's (HRDC), BC Housing, fundraising and a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Vancouver for a capital grant towards lease and construction costs. The shared facility provides the following:

- 12 non-market housing units
- Medical clinic
- Emergency daycare centre (24 spaces)
- Two drop-in centres
- Commercial kitchen serving breakfast and lunch programs
- 24-hour housing support staff
- Programs for women and families



NonProfit Centre, Boston  
Source: nonprofitcenterboston.org



Crabtree Corner & Sheway  
533 East Hastings, Vancouver

## Lookout Society & Avalon Hotel (Vancouver, BC)

Lookout Society entered into partnership agreements with privately-owned hotels in order to improve the living conditions for residents in SRA (Single Room Accommodation) hotels in Vancouver. Lookout provides support services to residents and acts as a resource for non-program tenants. These might include assistance with medication, help with money management and budgeting, teaching lifeskills, referrals to other services and agencies, crisis intervention and monitoring of physical and mental health. The support workers also accompany tenants to appointments, visit them in hospital, or join them on shopping trips to increase their ability to plan healthy meals and improve their nutrition.

At the Avalon Hotel, Lookout provides support to 35 of the 86 units of affordable housing for those at risk of homelessness in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. A Tenant Support Worker (TSW) is available on-site seven days a week to support the Lookout clients, but also to act as a resource person for hotel staff who are working with the remaining tenants, providing suggestions and referral information.



Photo: Simon Kirby (Flickr)

## Storehouse 39-3-10, (Calgary, Alberta)

Storehouse 39-3-10 is an umbrella non-profit established by three founding partners. The organization's goal is collaborating to be more efficient and expand program capacity to address the needs of Calgary's growing homeless and those living in poverty. The three founding organizations include:

- Community Kitchen Program of Calgary Society
- NeighbourLink of Northwest Calgary and Beltline Inc.
- Calgary Eye Way Society

Each of the agencies works in the area of poverty reduction and homelessness in the city of Calgary. With contributions from a broad range of funding sources including federal and provincial government as well as foundations and private donors, a building was purchased in Northeast Calgary. The building has been converted to provide shared warehouse space, meeting rooms, training rooms, boardroom, volunteer and staff lunch room, copy room, reception areas etc.

Storehouse 39-3-10 is unique in that it involves more than the co-location of non-profit agencies, but also embraces program collaboration. Working together, the founding agencies have jointly developed programs such as a one-stop shop helpline and pre-employment programs.



## SOURCES & CONTACTS

### List of Documents

- City of Toronto. 2008. *How Toronto is Solving Youth Homelessness*. [http://intraspec.ca/youth\\_homelessness.pdf](http://intraspec.ca/youth_homelessness.pdf)
- CitySpaces Consulting. 2011. *Pathways Out of Homelessness: Regional Study*. Prepared for Metro Vancouver and BC Housing.
- Colahan, Sara. 2000. *Community Advisory Committee Final Report - Good Neighbour Agreements and Shelter Certification Standards*. Community Shelter Board. Columbus: United States.
- Cullen, S., Byrne, S. and Hayes, P.. 2007. *Good Practice Guide: Homelessness - Early Identification and Prevention*. Shelter.
- Falvo, Nick. 2009. *Homelessness, Program Responses, and an Assessment of Toronto's Streets to Homes Program*. Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association. April 2010. *Case Studies of Social (Purpose) Enterprise in the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Sector*.
- Pati, Anita. January 10, 2011. "Social enterprise has found a new home in housing." *The Guardian*. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/social-enterprise-network/2011/jan/10/social-enterprise-and-housing>
- Svedova, Jana. 2009. *Approaches to Financially Sustainable Provision of Affordable Housing by Not-for-Profit Organizations and Co-operatives: Perspectives from Canada, the USA, and Europe*. Prepared by UBC Centre for Sustainability and Social Innovation. <http://isis.sauder.ubc.ca/files/2010/06/Existing-Models-and-Trends-toward-Financial-Sustainability-BALTA-A9.pdf>

### Agency and Program Websites

- City of Vancouver - HEAT Shelter Program. <http://vancouver.ca/heat/>
- Coast Mental Health. <http://coastmentalhealth.com/resourcecentre.html>
- Eva's Initiatives. <http://www.evasinitiatives.com>
- FareStart. <http://www.farestart.org/>
- Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group. <http://fernwoodnrg.ca/neighbourhood/cornerstone-cafe/>
- Fred Victor. <http://fredvictor.org/>
- Habitat for Humanity - ReStore. <http://www.habitat.ca/en/community/restores>

- Lookout Emergency Aid Society. North Shore Culinary Program. <http://www.northshoreculinaryschool.com/>
- NonProfit Center, Boston. <http://www.nonprofitcenterboston.org/>
- Potluck Catering. [www.potluckcatering.org](http://www.potluckcatering.org)
- RainCity Housing. <http://www.raincityhousing.org/>
- Salvation Army Harbour Light. <http://www.harbourlightbc.com/>
- Victoria Cool Aid Society. Community Casual Labour Pool. <http://www.coolaid.org/>
- Wigwamen Incorporated. Green tech Services Non-Profit. <http://www.greentechservices.ca/>
- YouthLink. <http://www.youthlink.ca/innercity.html>
- YWCA Hotel. <http://www.ywcahotel.com/socialenterprise>

## Key Contacts

- Michael Anhorn — BC Housing
- Brenda McBain, Andrew Hiscox, Gwyn Symmons — CitySpaces Consulting
- Lesley McMillan — Eva’s Phoenix
- Denise Bryan — Fred Victor
- Aaron Munro — RainCity Housing & Support Society



5<sup>th</sup> floor, 844 Courtney Street, Victoria BC V8W 1C4 | 250.383.0304 | 866.383.0304

Suite 585, 1111 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC V6E 2J3 | 604.687.2281 | 888.687.2281

[www.cityspaces.ca](http://www.cityspaces.ca)