



Bringing It Together

A Gathering on Aboriginal
Homelessness in Edmonton

Final Report

Four Winds & Associates
April 12/2005

BUDGET

Budget for rent
Budget for power
Budget for phone
Budget for cable
Budget for groceries
Budget. Budget. Budget.

Didn't have to budget
livin' in a
garbage
bin.

Betty Nordin

Phoenix: Hope from the Ashes (Pg. 10)

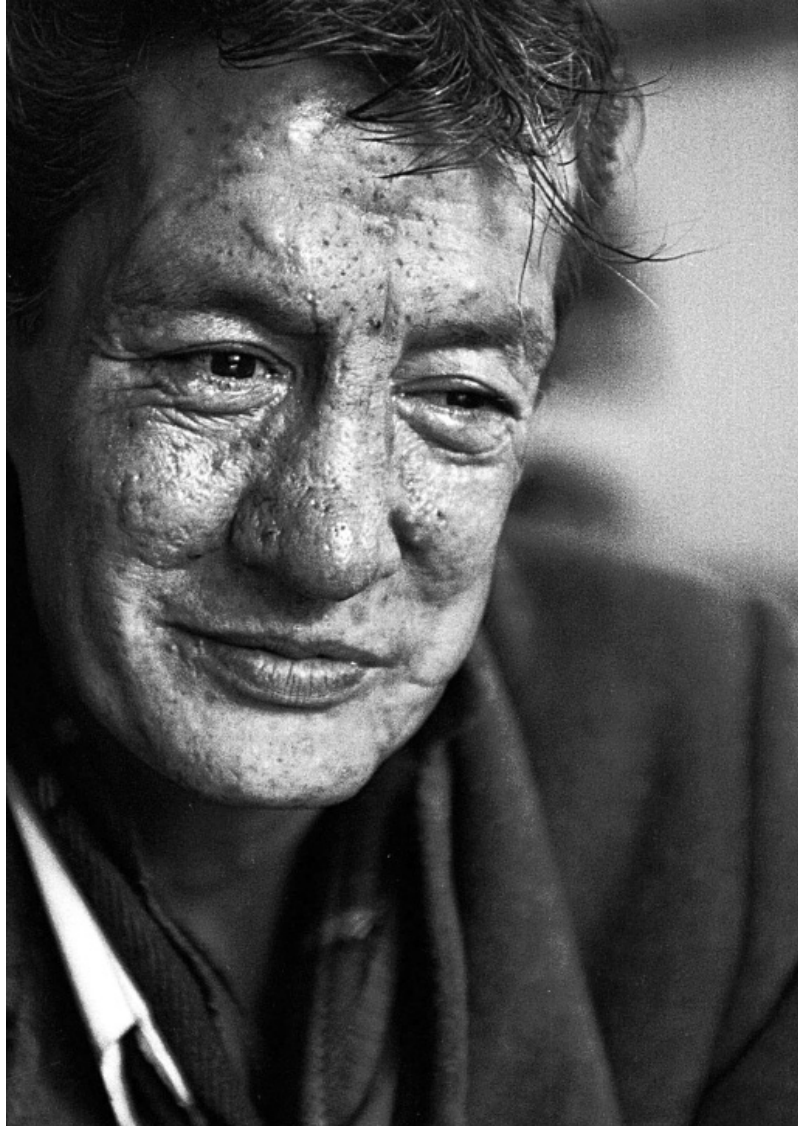
CHANGES

Got to change my ways
or I'm going to die
on the streets.
Getting too old living like this.
Getting up in some back ally,
on a river bank or a flea bag hotel,
just doesn't cut the mustard
for me anymore.
Scrounging for food, standing
in soup line, going through
garbage bins.
There has got to be a
better way of living.
Getting up in the morning
to see my parole officer or
I'll be in trouble again.
Never had to live with a clock before.
Now I'm always late.
Eating in the morning sure
feels good.
Especially when the food comes from
my own cupboards.
Now I've got clean clothes and
sheets to sleep on.

Man life is good.

Betty Nordin

Phoenix: Hope from the Ashes (Pg. 5)



Overview of Workshop

On March 22 and 23/2005 individuals and agencies were invited to a “gathering” at Polish Hall to discuss issues related to Aboriginal homelessness in Edmonton. The workshop was hosted by the *Edmonton Aboriginal Committee on Housing* (EACH) and sponsored by the *Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing* (EJPCOH). Métis Elder Alvena Strasbourg provided leadership and guidance over the two days.

Aboriginal Homelessness Trends

The workshop was organised against the backdrop of several notable trends which reveal the seriousness and complexity of Aboriginal homelessness:

1. By all accounts, the rate of homelessness is increasing in Edmonton. The *October 2004* homeless count in Edmonton identified 2192 individuals as being homeless. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the individuals identified were Aboriginal and sixty-six percent (66%) of the Aboriginal individuals were observed to be living on the street;
2. Aboriginal people are over-represented in the homeless population in Edmonton. Aboriginal people only represent about four percent (4%) of the total population of the city, but they comprise about forty percent (40%) of the homeless population;
3. Although Aboriginals comprise only a small percentage of Edmonton's population, their numbers are rapidly increasing. Between 1996 and 2001, the Aboriginal population in Edmonton increased by twenty percent (20%), compared to growth of the general population of thirteen percent (13%). Edmonton has the second highest number of Aboriginal people of major Canadian cities, after Winnipeg;
4. The concentration of Native people in Edmonton is part of a larger migration of Aboriginal people from reserves and rural settings to urban centres. In 2001 about fifty-seven percent (57%) of the Aboriginal population resided in urban areas. Twenty-four percent (24%) lived on reserve and nineteen percent (19%) lived in rural off-reserve areas; and
5. In spite of the size of the urban Aboriginal population, public policy discussions have focused almost exclusively on the rural reserve-based population. Much of this hesitancy is rooted in conflicting views about governmental responsibilities for urban Aboriginal people. Because no one level of government has assumed primary responsibility for urban Aboriginal people, "gaps have developed in the policy landscape."

Purpose and Format of Workshop

Over the course of the two-day workshop, eighty-eight (88) participants—representing forty-five (45) agencies and three levels of government (Federal, Provincial and Municipal)—discussed the pressures impacting homeless Aboriginal individuals and the agencies that serve them.

The workshop was structured as a series of **small group reflections** which moved the analysis systematically from an exploration of the challenges related to the problem of homelessness to the identification of opportunities for specific remedial actions.

The format was chosen in recognition of the fact that homelessness is a multifaceted problem that represents a complex interaction of individual and systemic factors. The hope was that the workshop would help break the larger **problem** of Aboriginal homelessness into smaller **issues**—some of which may be actionable.

A deep appreciation of the human dimensions of homelessness was at the heart of the workshop—namely that homelessness can be best understood from the perspective of those experiencing poverty and inadequate housing. To this end, the term “pressures” was used throughout the workshop to signify the specific and tangible nature of the forces bearing down on individuals and institutions. Pressures have **sources**. They can be “felt” and “named” precisely. They have human consequences.

Five key questions were explored during the workshop:

1. What are the pressures on homeless Aboriginal individuals?
2. What are the pressures on our agencies and how are these pressures impacting our ability to respond to homeless people?
3. What are the upstream sources of these pressures?
4. How can we start pushing back on these pressures?
5. How can we separate the **problem** of Aboriginal homelessness into **winnable issues** that we can act on—either alone or by co-operating with others?

Participants identified a range of pressures impacting homeless Aboriginal individuals and the agencies that serve them. Discussions led to the frank and forthright examination of the challenges facing agencies in their efforts to cope with homelessness.

Some of these pressures were seen as coming from outside of the agencies (external pressures), that is, from the larger socio-economic and political system. Other pressures were seen as existing within agencies and between agencies. These internal pressures had impacts on the morale of staff as well as on the spirit of cooperation between agencies. As one participant said: “We’re too busy to meet...we’re not talking.”

A wealth of information was gathered over the course of the two-day workshop. Three main themes emerged as points of concern, as well as, opportunities for future action:

- Funding
- Co-operation (Working Together)
- Availability, Accessibility and Appropriateness of Services

The following draft report provides a summary of the workshop and of the key findings from the break-away and plenary sessions. The agenda and the PowerPoint presentations that formed the backbone of the workshop are attached as appendices. In addition, a complete list of findings from the small group reflections is also provided in table form.

Summary of Day One

March 22/2005 – 1 PM to 4 PM

Day One of the workshop provided an opportunity for the agencies dealing with Aboriginal homelessness to reflect on the dimensions of the problem of homelessness, as well as, on the progress achieved since the previous Aboriginal Gathering held in July 2003.

A number of service organizations including Amisk Housing, Cunningham Place, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society and Ben Calf Robe provided brief presentations of accomplishments achieved over the past year. Presentations were also made by the Edmonton Aboriginal Committee on Housing (EACH), Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing (EJPCOH), the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund (EHTF) and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS).

In addition to these presentations, participants were given the opportunity to break into small groups to discuss:

- What they accomplished at the working level;
- What they did in concert with other agencies; and
- What they would have liked to do but could not.

Key Findings

Workshop participants provided numerous examples of success in: (a) providing services (such skill development and transitional support); (b) creating new housing; and (c) forming cooperative relationships. Despite these indicators of progress, participants also identified several significant gaps in service that they were unable to address (*See Appendix 1 for a more comprehensive list*). These included:

- A lack of settlement and support services for Aboriginal individuals coming to the City from rural areas;
- Lack of housing (especially transitional and supportive);
- Lack of specific programs and/or policies at the Provincial level that address Aboriginal homelessness (Policy vacuum);
- Lack of involvement from First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders in addressing the problem of Aboriginal homelessness;
- A lack of continuity in program funding (short-term versus long-term funding);
- A lack of co-operation between agencies because of a competitive environment for funding; and
- A lack of culturally appropriate and accessible services.

Summary of Day Two

March 23/2005 – 9 AM to 4 PM

Day Two of the workshop focused the collective energies of the participants on the human dimensions of homelessness. The aim was to look “beyond the numbers” to the specific and tangible pressures bearing down on homeless individuals and on the agencies that serve them. The clear identification of these forces was essential because “you can’t solve what you can’t name.”

To this end, the tone of the day was set by the opening remarks of Métis Elder Alvena Strasbourg who challenged representatives from both the Aboriginal and the larger community to identify clearly the upstream sources of the homelessness problem and to acknowledge their collective responsibility for addressing the situation. Her words were mirrored by Mr. Allen Benson (Chief Executive Officer, Native Counselling Services of Alberta) who made a brief presentation which pointed out that a lack of funding is not solely responsible for the homelessness crisis. Instead, the problem is rooted in the competition for funding by organisations and by the absence of effective partnerships between organisations. As Mr. Benson said: “It is our problem...not a government one.”

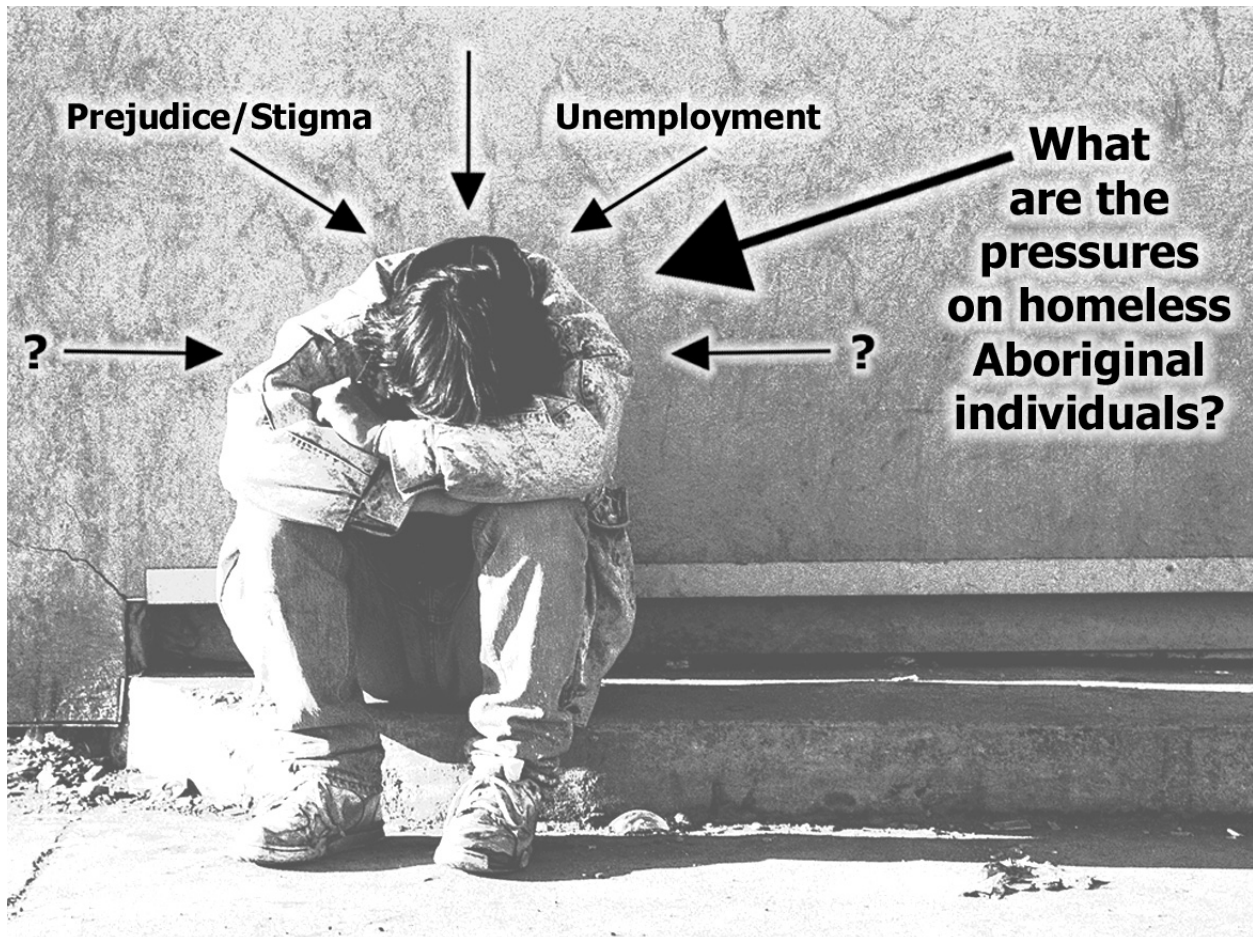
A presentation of powerful black-and-white photographs (by Pieter de Vos, Jr.) depicting individuals living in poverty added to the sense of urgency. The poetry of Betty Nordin—a Métis woman who was previously homeless—provided a poignant counterpoint to the images.

Key Findings

The themes that emerged in Day One were expanded upon in Day Two of the workshop as participants reflected on the pressures related to Aboriginal homelessness in a step-by-step and targeted fashion.

In small reflection groups, participants engaged in a systematic **four-stage** analysis of Aboriginal homelessness that included an examination of:

1. The pressures on homeless Aboriginal people;
2. The pressures on agencies;
3. The upstream sources of the pressures on homeless individuals and the agencies that serve them; and
4. The opportunities to push back on these pressures—either alone or in cooperation with others.



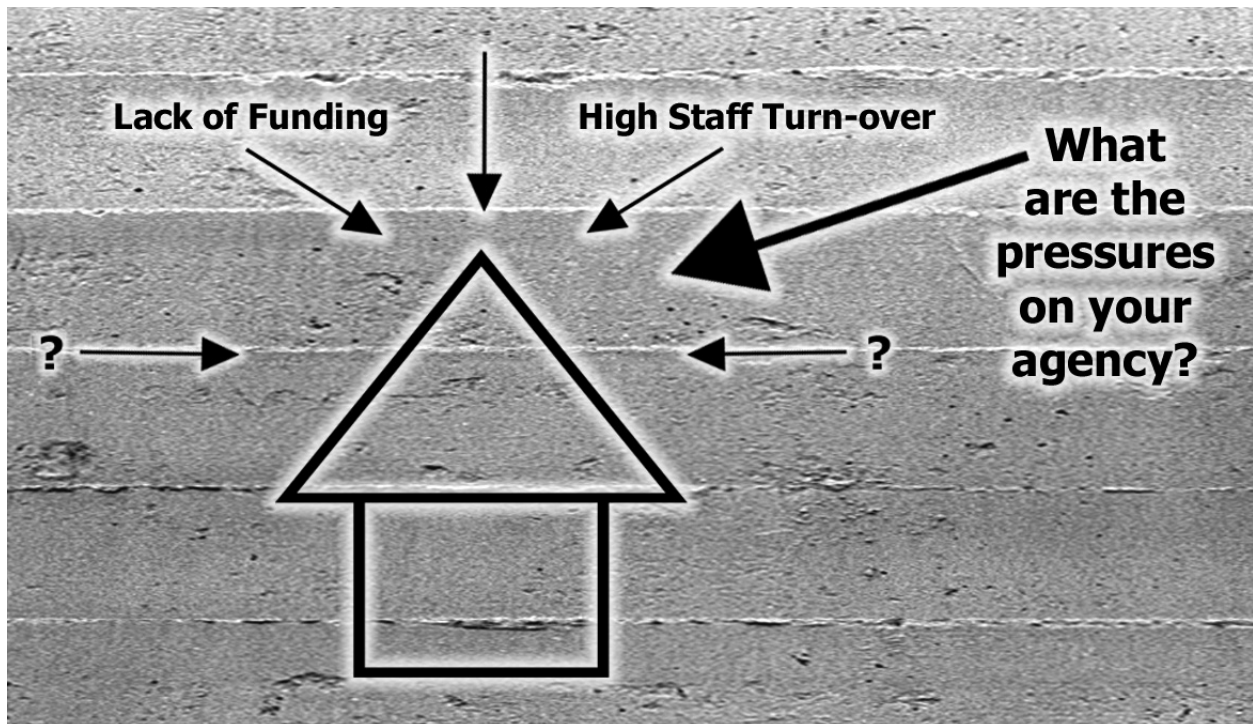
STAGE 1: Pressures on Homeless Individuals

I think that is one of the reasons people are so afraid to do something... to make a change for themselves. Because once you've had something good and you lose it, it's the most horrible, horrible feeling to end up with nothing... after you've had everything.

Homeless Individual

Workshop participants identified several pressures impacting homeless individuals (*See Appendix 2 for a comprehensive list of pressures*). These included:

- Culture shock/migration pressures
- Stigma and discrimination
- Isolation and marginalisation
- Threats to personal safety
- Lack of resources to meet basic needs (food, shelter and clothing)
- Health concerns including addictions and mental health issues
- Barriers to the access of services
- Poverty and unemployment
- Lack of skills/education
- Cultural barriers including language barriers



STAGE 2: Pressures on Agencies

You're always waiting.
 Like today I can't
 stand line-ups...
 you're waiting for
 the sandwich...
 you're waiting,
 you're waiting,
 you're waiting.
 Waiting for what?
 And when you get
 to the front,
 it's all gone.
 There is nothing
 left for you.

Homeless Individual

Participants engaged in a candid discussion of the forces bearing down on their agencies—and thereby affecting their ability to provide responsive services to homeless people. These pressures fell into two broad interrelated categories—pressures **external** to agencies and pressures **internal** to agencies (*See Appendix 3 for a comprehensive list of pressures*).

External pressures included:

- Lack of funding and increased competition for limited resources
- Government policies
- Project-based funding creates a lack of continuity in services
- Rigid funding criteria and reporting requirements
- Legislative barriers and bureaucratic complexity (red tape)
- Lack of community support
- Lack of housing and essential services—the level of need exceeds the available resources
- Lack of effective partnerships
- Lack of coordination and cooperation between agencies

Participants revealed several pressures that were **internal** to their organisations and which, in turn, were diminishing the capacity of their organisations to provide responsive services:

- A shortage of “time” and a corresponding culture of “busyness” within organisations—*“Because we are so busy chasing money, we don’t have time to do strategic thinking.”*
- Staff burn-out—*“There is too much to do.”*
- Lack of staff appreciation, low morale and high staff turn-over
- Low staff salaries and a lack of staff incentives
- Internal politics and communication problems within agencies

STAGE 3: Upstream Sources of Pressures

In analysing the vast range of pressures that were identified by workshop participants, three broad categories emerged. These are as follows:

1. Pressures related to **funding** (manner of, amount of)
2. Pressures related to spirit and nature of **co-operation** between agencies (Working together)
3. Pressures related to the **availability, accessibility and appropriateness of services**

In reflecting on the upstream sources of the pressures on homeless individuals and on the helping agencies, participants identified various causal factors that contributed to the three broad categories of pressures (*See Appendix 4 for a comprehensive list of sources of pressures*). These included:

Inadequacy/Inappropriateness of Funding (Upstream sources)

- Government priorities—*“We’re not part of the decision-making!”*
- Too many agencies chasing too few dollars—*“We’re not organised!”*
- Jurisdictional disputes— First Nations, Métis, non-Status, Federal-Provincial-Municipal
- Government and community attitudes towards social programs
- Funding formulas and lack of continuity of funding

Lack of Cooperation between Agencies (Upstream sources)

- Turfism—*“People aren’t sharing information because of competition”*
- Disconnect between First Nations and Métis leadership and the grassroots
- Tunnel vision—*“We’re too busy to meet with each other.”*
- Lack of communication between agencies
- Funding encourages competition between agencies.
- Politics and history
- Cumbersome bureaucratic structures discourage collaboration

Availability, accessibility and appropriateness of services (Upstream sources)

- Barriers to accessibility, including language and cultural barriers
- Lack of a centralised source of information on available services
- Lack of culturally-sensitive staff
- Complexity of the system—“*Too many hoops!*”
- Policy-makers are out of touch with the real needs
- Exclusion of Aboriginal people from decision-making

STAGE 4: Pushing Back on the Pressures

Effective actions are aimed at something we can do something about. They require us to break a larger **problem** into smaller winnable **issues**. A **problem** is not something that can be isolated and tackled on its own. It is made up of multiple **issues**—some of which may be actionable.

As previously indicated, many of the pressures identified by participants were **internal** to their organizations (E.g. Low staff morale). Others came from outside their organizations (**external**). Some of the identified pressures (such as improving staff retention) could conceivably be addressed by individual agencies while others (such as changing a specific policy) would require the collaboration of two or more agencies.

In analysing the various pressures brought forward by participants over the two days, it became apparent that many of the pressures identified were outside the reach of a single organisation and would require the concerted effort of more than one agency to address. Therefore, the challenge of finding ways to improve cooperation and collaboration between agencies became of paramount importance.

Conclusion & a Beginning

Workshop participants identified “grassroots action” and “working together” as being prerequisites to dealing with the issues related to Aboriginal homelessness. To this end, participants resolved to continue exploring opportunities for collective action. The most visible expression of this commitment was that the participants arranged to meet on the sixth of April 2005 at the Canadian Native Friendship Centre to further the conversation.

Follow-up Meeting

On April 6/2005, participants from the previous workshop gathered to discuss future collaboration. The session was hosted by the Canadian Native Friendship Centre and focused on identifying action items. Seven key areas were highlighted (*See Appendix 5 for a comprehensive list of action items*):

1. **One-Stop Shop:** Participants identified the need to coordinate the services provided to homeless Aboriginal people in Edmonton. This included having information readily available to help homeless people access programs and navigate the maze of available services.
2. **Involving Aboriginal Leaders:** Participants explored strategies for increasing the involvement of First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders in addressing the problem of Aboriginal homelessness in Edmonton.
3. **Research:** Participants identified the importance of developing a centralized and easily accessible clearinghouse of information and research on homelessness including best practices and models of successful service delivery from other cities in Canada (e.g., Winnipeg).
4. **Outreach Workers:** Participants suggested that the agencies providing services to homeless Aboriginal individuals should develop a network of outreach workers that can link the agencies together, as well as provide street-level services.
5. **Identify Strengths of Agencies:** Participants suggested that an environmental scan be conducted to identify the strengths, assets and capacities of the agencies providing services to homeless individuals in Edmonton.
6. **Focus on Personal Development:** Participants suggested that agencies work together to enhance the skills and personal development of homeless Aboriginal people so that they can escape the cycle of poverty.
7. **Construction:** Participants identified the importance of Aboriginal agencies, government and the private sector partnering to produce affordable housing for Aboriginal people. The example of an Aboriginal “Habitat for Humanity” was provided.

The follow-up meeting to *Bringing It Together* illustrated the dedication of participants to finding creative ways of working together to address the issues related to homelessness among Aboriginal people in Edmonton. A demonstration of this was provided by the fact that the participants established *action groups* with team leaders to undertake work in the seven areas listed above. This bodes well for a coordinated and coherent response to addressing Aboriginal homelessness in Edmonton. However, the success of subsequent efforts to move forward a strong agenda for collective action will depend largely on the availability of resources to support partnership-building. It is important that the momentum established over the workshop and the follow-up session be maintained into the future.

The “View from the Trenches” – Service Gaps

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<p>Funding criteria need to be revisited</p> <p>EHTF should build houses and have agencies propose to operate them</p> <p>Process needs to be dictated by community</p> <p>More people transitioning to major centres while the focus remains on the reserves and settlements</p> <p>KISS process needs to be established</p> <p>Evaluation needs to be based on services that fit our needs—not imposed standards</p> <p>There is a gap in transitional support for youth</p>	<p>No specific programs/policies at the Provincial level that deal specifically with Aboriginal homelessness (Policy gap)</p> <p>Lack of available shelter space for women fleeing abusive situations</p> <p>There is a need for transitional support for youth to independence</p> <p>Lack of involvement of the Aboriginal (FNMI) leadership.</p> <p>“Our people come from a home. Where are our leaders?”</p> <p>Urban Aboriginal Issue</p> <p>More families are getting involved in other systems (e.g. Child Welfare) because of what is essentially a “housing” issue.</p> <p>Partnerships cost money. Where is this funding?</p> <p>Partnerships have to include the private sector (e.g. Suncor)</p> <p>Social support system needed</p> <p>Too much red tape.</p> <p>There is no Aboriginal Shelter in the City</p>	<p>Loss of funding for supportive services</p> <p>Increase in service use but admin. costs are same</p> <p>Short-term funding, not multi-year.</p> <p>Reporting process is ongoing and time consuming</p> <p>Agencies having to change their focus due to changes or cutbacks in funding</p> <p>Lack of land in a central area of Edmonton for helping services</p>	<p>Not enough communication or info.</p> <p>Too many referrals (multiple)</p> <p>Interpersonal differences affecting services</p> <p>Self-serving agendas</p> <p>Not enough funding to go around—agencies get protective.</p> <p>Too many agencies doing same thing (duplication of services)—clients don’t know where to turn.</p> <p>People coming to the City bring their problems with them. (Problems migrate here)</p> <p>Provincial economic boom bringing people to the City but there is no housing and a time lag for services. “Homeless for 3 months until assistance kicks in”</p> <p>Natives get sent to inner-city</p> <p>Families scattered by Gov’t Systems</p> <p>Services are designed for non-Aboriginals</p> <p>Need more info. for Aboriginals to access</p> <p>Aboriginals should be in decision-making positions</p> <p>No help with damage deposits</p> <p>Volunteers doing agency jobs</p> <p>Offer non-threatening support</p> <p>Not doing enough inter-agency work</p>	<p>Lack of housing (all levels of support) for persons with disabilities — physical & mental</p> <p>Lack of support for women coming out of prisons</p> <p>Connecting with families</p> <p>Reintegration/life skills</p> <p>Housing with support</p> <p>Gap in culturally appropriate services</p> <p>Need Urban Aboriginal Political Advocacy Group</p> <p>Home care (non-grumpy)</p> <p>Money for home adaptation (door handles/flat floors/ etc.)</p> <p>Emergency Home (immediate access) for woman & families leaving abuse</p> <p>Prevention Programs for family violence</p> <p>Education/life skills/employment training</p> <p>Support for Abuser</p> <p>Outreach & Support for People living in the river valley</p> <p>Aboriginal Youth Shelter (in NE Edmonton)</p> <p>Money for children and youth to have rec. activities</p> <p>Community kitchen and crafts for everyone</p> <p>Raise AISH and SFI rates</p> <p>Supports for accessible education for Métis individuals</p>

Pressures on Homeless Aboriginal Individuals

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<p>Lack of identification Discrimination Budget Red tape Peer Pressure Abuse Mental Health Issues Addictions Transportation barriers Isolation Absence of Belonging Health issues Lack of personal safety Apartheid Lack of Knowledge, RE: Resources Co-Dependency, IE- connections Language/Cultural barriers Lack of personal, financial and social resources Sense of fragmentation helplessness Government Labelling-First Nation Intergenerational patterns of Trauma Culture shock — from reserve to city Lack of motivation Targeted unnecessarily by authorities Tattered social safety net. Residential school experiences Profiling — Criminal, Racial Create crisis motivates the resources Silent cry Economy—Displaces people that are not employment-ready Copy cat pressure Gaps in services</p>	<p>Service Providers Rules Oppression Lack of knowledge Isolation Lack of belongingness Marginalization High Rental rates Privatization of Public Services Landlord discrimination Lack of Identification Government attitudes Lack of personal safety Can't get bank account Low self esteem Not enough skills Youth have unique needs Health issues Mental Health Addictions Prejudice Stigma Culture Shock Violence Sub-standard housing Overcrowding Welfare amounts Insufficient No rent control High utility costs Transportation costs Lack of job security Low vacancy rates Cost of living Fire safety Public Health issues Lack of time Two jobs Low minimum wage</p>	<p>Addictions Barriers to literacy Lack of adequate clothing Stable housing Safety Lack of education Knowledge of system (How it works?) Family violence Lack of motivation Feeling of not being wanted Lack of doctors Discrimination Lack of resources for assessment Anger management Physical Health issues Threat of loss of children Racism Barriers to transportation Lack of peer support Lack of awareness of community resources Criminal record Disabilities Lack of Basic Hygiene</p>	<p>Prejudice Lack of Education Health issues People live in past Fewer Garbage Bins Unemployment Mental Health Addictions Different World Isolation Ignorance of system Lack of control over slumlords Prejudice for lack of knowing Agencies not caring Credit Checks Lack of options Too Many criteria Can't afford a phone Safe Storage Paperwork Requirements Lack of Guidance Cycle of Crap Not enough people to help the unknowing Churches not helping anymore Low Support Levels — Welfare (SfI) Lack of Awareness The "arrogance" of the System One Party systems in Alberta — Leads to Dictatorship and has a trickle affect of PROV employees Lack of Education Homeless people & Public Stats not Accurate Barriers to Travel Lack of Communication Not enough intervention support Lack of resources to meet basic needs</p>	<p>Lack of address Lack of phone Age barriers— too young/too old Lack of family support Lack of education (opportunities) Unemployment Mental Illness (undiagnosed/untreated) Loneliness Financial pressures No ID stigma/contempt from society racism Transportation Pride Barriers to accessing system supports Scared to ask for info. Abuse/trauma Stereotyping/racism based on surname Deficit-based criteria for services All energy is going to survival Ethno-stress (Metis vs. Aboriginal etc) Low self-esteem — set up for failure Barriers to organizations systems Very strict criteria Language barriers Lack of community (physical/geography) Lack of human response/contact (e.g. Automated phone) Cultural shock Bad relationships Threats to personal safety</p>

Pressures on Agencies—that serve homeless Aboriginal individuals

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<p>Time (Not enough) Abuse of Services/systems—revolving door Funding for Buildings No Funds for services, maintenance Lack of one-stop shop concept Accountability (no standardized reporting from funders) Human Resource Poor Volunteers Burnt Out Lack of operational funding Increased Homelessness Decreased resources Funding availability (lack of knowledge) (Proposal Writing) Agency Mandates Funding Criteria (Policy vs. Reality) —Catch 22 cycles Staff is tired No-way to replenish batteries “Hearing the same stories over and over—really affects staff.” No process for staff time staggering Staff Safety Underpaid Lack of staff appreciation Meeting the emotional requirements Not always money Lack of incentives</p>	<p>Shortage of staff Internal and external politics Power struggle — “Clients lost in the shuffle” Time (busy) Crisis Mentality—“Putting out fires” Sandwiched Between project demands & upper management Too little funding Legislative barriers Location of Agency Competition for funding Staff turn-over Project-based funding creates a lack of continuity Lack of Communication between Board and staff “Because we are chasing money, there’s no time to do strategic thinking” Burn-out “Too many responsibilities — not enough authority” Stove-piping Not enough staff recognition Not enough is done to keep up morale Lack of training Some people are adept at networking—“Big Boys get most of the Money” Income pressures on staff The impact of historical injustice — resulting in intergenerational trauma on First Nation and Métis individual, family, community and Nation. Abuse of Prescription drugs Lack of space (inadequate facilities) Not enough focus on capacity-building</p>	<p>Lack of understanding on the part of clients that agency policies are set by government Lack of community support NIMBY — Not in my back yard Lack of corporate support High needs of clients (Number of issues) Reporting requirements—always having to justify position Fund-raising is time consuming Red Tape High demand Lack of funding Client dependence on agencies Long waiting lists for services Politics (Internal/External) No time to learn about available resources Staff burn out Lack of time for follow up Space No appreciation of workers & agencies Staff safety Over-reliance on volunteers Lack of stable housing Lack of adequate clothing Poor basic hygiene (necessary) Mental issues (multiple) Lack of education Disabilities (permanent) Lack of Knowledge of helping services (How it works?) Family violence Lack of nutrition Feeling of not being wanted Lack of doctors</p>	<p>Staff burnout Not enough resources: staff, etc. Problem is not always related to funding Not enough Aboriginal Staff Time (not enough) Repeat clientele Government policies Not enough professional staff Employee retention Budget cuts No extra money for support Not enough staff with knowledge Need time to train Lack of partnerships Total Picture should be available Get together & organize community Information not readily available Should have central information outlet (all levels) Contracting of services Further loss of links Profit-motive affecting service Not allowed to make money Money not getting to the ground level Prejudice Racism Non exposure from top Lack of training—need inner city training centre (Alternative sentencing) Arrogance Chain of command stifles action “Take away their excuses” Not enough cultural presence No true opposition party Advocacy community Lack of understanding Reserve Racism Soft bigotry of low expectations</p>	<p>Diversity of Aboriginal Nations/politics Not enough funds Facilities are inadequate Too many restrictions — funding, organizational policies Lack of staff Lumping of Aboriginal people Lack of culturally trained staff Staff not culturally representative Statistics/accountability requirements Project/capital funding—no long term funding Waiting lists Lack of respect/trash between agencies and the people they serve Lack of money for gas mileage limits people served Lack of flexibility— e.g. Scheduled visits Lack of recognition that a duplication of services is sometimes necessary Services too spread out Overwhelmed with work—people falling through cracks (e.g. youth) Access Barriers to resources Lack of experience with fundraising Lack of coordination between agencies Not able to adapt services High turnover Staff Burn-out—“too much to do!” Agencies are not “people-friendly.” Staff not accountable to people they serve Low wages Placement of agencies not based on accessibility—based on availability High caseloads Burden of planning, balancing and co-ordinating different programs Stigma associated with agency name</p>

Upstream Sources of Pressures on Individuals and Agencies

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many agencies chasing too few dollars Lack of awareness of funding sources Lack of Funding Bureaucratic system is self-serving Uncertainty of funding Short-term commitments for long-term problems Funding needs to be targeted—don't move the target Lack of clear measures of success—funding outcomes needs to match peoples success Community needs change Criteria don't fit peoples needs <p>Working Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of co-operation between agencies Lack of innovative approaches Lack of a Continuum of responsibility <p>Availability, Appropriateness, Accessibility of Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers to accessibility Lack of centralized source of information on available services and supports. Lack of access to life/personal skills Lack of skills for urban living Lack of appropriate services Short-term versus long-term services Explore the need before extending the wrong kind of help 	<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate agenda & Government priorities "We're not part of the decision-making!" Lack of appropriate consultation Problems with funding "No Fit"—Rigid funding criteria Lack of capacity to draft proposals Disengagement by Government Only so much money in the pot & "We're not organized!" <p>Working Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turfism (people aren't sharing information because of competition for funding) Lack of knowledge on how to access money or what the real needs are Disconnect between FNMI/decision-makers & grassroots Local knowledge (local expertise) not being honoured Lack of buy-in to work together Lack of resources: time, money & staff Tunnel vision: "We're too busy to meet with each other, we're not talking!" <p>Availability, Appropriateness, Accessibility of Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of sensitive staff Language issues Lack of Cultural sensitivity Concentrating services in inner city is problematic for people who want to get out of this environment. Not consulting with people who need services Complexity of system— Too many guidelines, too much paperwork "HOOPS" Lack of information — too much time needed to navigate system. 	<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability (not enough) Government and community attitudes towards social programs or services Politics Jurisdictional disputes RE: First Nations, Métis, Non-Status Decreasing funding—Government structure limits new funding Lack of buy-in from political leaders i.e. Métis, First Nations <p>Working Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government sets structure instead of agencies Decisions are being made by a small group (Directors) that are not front line workers Apathy Cumbersome bureaucracies Passing the buck Competition between agencies Lack of communication Lack of accountability for quality of services <p>Availability, Appropriateness, Accessibility of Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper pushing (work) Lack of communication Policy makers are out of touch No advocacy for agencies 	<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete proposals Lack of skills No resources (manpower, research) Have to speak the lingo Too complicated Have to prove money well-spent Funding based on faulty stats Systemic Mistrust (Different levels) Administration sucks up most of the money Agencies are "making a living off us" History & Oppression Agencies want to help but scared <p>Working Together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of communication Lack of caring — Aboriginal leaders <p>Availability, Appropriateness, Accessibility of Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding competition Not enough Money 80% in Admin Wrong measures Decision-makers have no idea "Who you know, not what." Class system Educational barriers Hiring criteria controlled by non-Aboriginal people History/Colonialism Foreign place for aboriginals Inclusion/Exclusion of Aboriginals FED/Prov. Admin responsibility Treaty, Métis, Off-Reserve & On-Reserve Lack of Aboriginal input into policies 	<p>Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problematic Funding formula Fed. & Prov. Governments Politicians- taxpayer accountability Economic and political changes Jurisdiction—Fed. Prov. Municipalities Downloading of responsibilities Funding going to the reserves but people are in the cities—money bound to reserve budget (not enough money for reserves) Myth of money for all Aboriginal people Lack of funding continuity <p>Working together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding encourages competition (Gov't designed) Jurisdiction—pigeon-holing Building programs to meet funding requirements not needs of client Limits of time—20% client-related/80% paperwork Politics in Alberta Friendships with political people shaping funding Political persons intimidate groups to meet their interests "Punish the poor attitude of society" Capitalist system No stability within political leadership <p>Availability & Availability & Appropriateness of Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some agencies have boundary limitations Duplication of services (funding) Terminology—Funders and the Constitution Three separate Aboriginal Groups Physical Accessibility—you get what you're given: (no input into program design) Evaluation used to justify cuts to funding Criteria not culturally-appropriate. Live & die by statistics but statistics are wrong Gov't has appropriated successfully run Aboriginal agencies

Follow-up Session (April 06/2005) Potential Action Items

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<p><u>One-Stop Shop</u> <u>Vision Statement:</u> All indigenous people have a one-stop facility that provides comfort, safety & support through the provision of well coordinated services that will help prepare the foundation for a sustainable, valued urban life.</p> <p><u>Step One:</u> Call for a meeting to establish a steering committee: Identify things we can do? Networking & Communicating More collaboration How many groups meetings? How to connect them Better way to organize Ideas/sharing/share risk/benefits Two groups — collaborations Community mapping — housing / housing services Joint Holistic Hub — One-stop shop — centralized History — Aboriginal pillar — one stop shopping Urban Aboriginal Strategy / Trust Fund Funding one stop shop Winnipeg model — train station — thunderbird house Good leadership community Politics / changes Business plan — 1 stop shop Talk to people — bring people Aboriginal University students to talk to the homeless about the their needs Transitional housing — room / picture wall One person can help make change Stand / quality of life Bring it to the groups of the plan and get commitment</p> <p><u>One-Stop Steering Committee</u> Research/Action team Partners for Kids & Youth — have a multi-disciplinary type of workers to do the work. Team approach to dealing with homelessness Prioritize Steering Committee — start right away (volunteers — key stakeholders) Organization to support Proposal — One Stop Shop</p>	<p><u>Potential Action Items:</u> Forget differences/turfism Lack of communication Sharing information from research etc. (studies) Talk to agencies Outreach worker (1 per agency) Housing Relationship building Referrals Help with homeless count, etc. Having a meeting 1 per month to share information Knowledge of services available Friendship Centre — Centre of referrals Having open communications with / in agencies Canadian Native Friendship Centre looking to put ad in examiner Research is not accurate — based on visibility (look Aboriginal)</p> <p><u>One-Stop Shop (Our New Edmonton Services To People)</u> Friendship Centre — referral Research Centre Each area NW, W — services available in their area Satellite offices & one major downtown Mapping project</p> <p><u>Involving Aboriginal Leaders</u> Accountable for their own people Elders involvement</p> <p><u>Research & Outreach</u> Meeting of agency - April 27th at Native Seniors or Friendship Centre Sharing information Doing referrals Putting a call out — housing / homeless, counsellors, referral workers</p> <p><u>Strengths of Agency & Personal Development</u> Communications building & Recognition to agencies</p> <p><u>Construction:</u> Aboriginal Habitat for Humanity; Co-op Housing; Healing Centre Providing skill development / mentoring Building Involvement in the process Aboriginal apprenticeship program</p>	<p><u>One-Stop Shop:</u> Develop Centres with it all Trained / culturally sensitive</p> <p><u>Involving Aboriginal Leaders:</u> Educate the leaders on addressing issues / create awareness Find solutions What is their role on dealing with issues pertaining Call a assembly to address</p> <p><u>Research & Outreach:</u> Find out needs Develop research projects / drop in</p> <p><u>Strengths of Agencies & Personal Development</u> Gather agency information Invite agencies to partner in accomplishing goal (e.g. life skills, housing, and employment, physical & mental health.) Deal with issues that are directly related to homeless issues Service Director — contact person</p> <p><u>Construction:</u> Build the Tee Pee Intake process Housing complex / apartment Secure income: SFI or AISH Personal Development — life skills, physical, mental — spiritual well being Stabilization Employment or education preparation</p>

Follow-up Session (April 06/2005) Potential Action Items

Group 4	Group 4 (Continued)	Group 5
<p><u>One-Stop Shop:</u> Canadian Native Friendship Centre Resources & Outreach Medical (dental, doctors, pharmacy, counselling); Food banks / clothing bank; Emergency shelter — vehicle to pick over flow Elders provided (spiritual guidance — counselling); Detox room Should be wreck proof</p> <p><u>Involving Aboriginal Leaders:</u> Need a spokesperson for Urban Aboriginals groups, agencies, people Who are they? Where are the Aboriginal people from? (need to do research on urban Aboriginal people) Invite the leaders in to discuss: urban Aboriginal issues present plan How do they want to be involved? Feed them and they will come Timeframe — to meet to discuss providing housing for urban Aboriginal — constructive advice we can work on No more political rhetoric Invited by their own people</p> <p><u>Sharing Research:</u> Sharing - high priority / reinventing the wheel — low Internet website — one site Requirement that when giving funding that research be made available to the public Link to universities and colleges Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal research Aboriginal information guest site Make it more accessible instead of rewriting the research or reinventing the wheel Do not over amount on research</p> <p><u>Outreach worker Network</u> Identify the homeless Reverse the direction of information ↑ instead of ↓ Each agency should have an outreach worker — and they should be networking with other outreach workers They should be located where the homeless are.</p>	<p><u>Strengths of Agencies / Personal Development:</u> Resource guide Create an award for agencies that do work in the city Develop an internet site for all organizations — maintained every year — (hard & soft copy available) Research other urban centres — what are they doing successes sharing best practices share challenges & failures</p> <p>Friendship Centre should do this Central Agency Accredited training Education for agency, leaders / staff City wide recognition to agency staff</p> <p><u>Construction:</u> Rotating chair for meetings — to develop leadership Get the idea from TV — “Extreme Makeovers — Home Edition” Partner with City businesses to provide safe, affordable, adequate housing for homeless people. Design of building conducive to social interaction, reduce isolation Facility / residence should have services available to them on-site e.g.: child care, recreation, etc Sense of city Large family units Student units Transitional units Students / universities can do design of building (4th year architectural students)</p>	<p><u>One-Stop (One Step):</u> Single entry into the system (virtual one stop) All information at every location (web based)</p> <p><u>Involving Aboriginal Leaders:</u> Get on their agenda (Annual Assemblies) Strategy on who might contribute Meet them on their turf</p> <p><u>Research & Outreach</u> Political research — focus on how-to Outcome based — best practices Clearing house — data in one location</p> <p><u>Strengths of Agencies & Personal Development</u> Strengths inventory (personal) to serve as resources on a cross — agency basis Risk free transfer of clients — not to lose funding Functioning network</p> <p><u>Construction:</u> Who is interested Get together Locate skill development resources</p>