



Edmonton Joint Planning
Committee on Housing



INTERIM EDMONTON COMMUNITY PLAN

On

HOMELESSNESS

2003 – 2006

Prepared through a community consultation process by:
Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing

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Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing

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INDEX

	Page
CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN	1
GEOGRAPHIC AREA	4
OBJECTIVES	5
COMMUNITY PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	7
ASSETS AND GAPS	
Identifying and Connecting/Information	8
Preventative Services	9
Supportive Services	10
Emergency Housing	12
Transitional Housing	13
Long Term Supportive Housing	14
Community Awareness	15
Administration	16
PRIORITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION	17
SUSTAINABILITY	
Partnerships and Community Capacity Building	20
EVALUATION	22
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	27
COMMUNITY'S CONTRIBUTION	28

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Context of the Plan

Although significant progress has been made toward addressing the gaps identified in the 2000-2003 Community Plan on Homelessness, the recent economic boom has accelerated the homelessness and affordable housing crisis in the city.

The economic climate in Edmonton has changed dramatically since the release of the Edmonton Community Plan on Homelessness in November 2000. Alberta generally and Edmonton in particular, is experiencing an economic boom that has added significant pressure on the homeless. Net in-migration has reached levels of over 10%, there has been a significant increase in cost of living (utilities, rent, food), vacancy rates have dropped dramatically and real estate prices in all market segments have risen significantly. High-end housing projects such as condominiums and lofts in the downtown area have taken most of the available stock, leaving little for conversions to address homelessness and affordable housing. Construction costs have also increased significantly over the past 3 years.

The extreme lack of affordable rental housing (Mayor's Task Force: Immediate need for 5000 units plus 700 units per year to keep pace with the growing need), is creating pressure on the continuum of facilities providing emergency, transitional and long-term supportive housing. As a result, existing emergency and transitional facilities are housing people for increasingly longer periods due to the lack of housing further along the continuum. With shelter space at a premium, it has been indicated that more and more people are resorting to sleeping in abandoned/derelict housing, vehicles, warehouses, garages or wandering the streets at night and sleeping at drop-in centres, malls and parkades during the day.

Continued emphasis must be placed on the continuum of support model; however the solution to complex social issues cannot be solved with any one type of service. Rather the community as a whole must look at the "big picture" and resources allocated accordingly. The continuum of support model encompasses services from the point of entry to affordable housing initiatives. It is only through the continued spirit of cooperation by all those who provide services and funding that Edmonton, as a community, will begin to solve the issue of homelessness.

A number of source documents were used to identify the assets, gaps and priorities in the 2003-2006 updated Plan.

Community Plan Update – February 2002

Study of Homeless Aboriginal People – March 2003

Study of Homeless Youth – March 2003

Study of Aboriginal and Youth Serving Agencies – March 2003

Awareness and Promotion Strategy – December 2002

Additionally, the draft plan was distributed to all members of the Edmonton Joint Planning Committee On Housing (EJPCOH), for their input and endorsement.

It is important to note that EJPCOH, who has responsibility for developing and updating the Community Plan, has released the Interim Edmonton Community Plan on Homelessness to assist with guiding the funding decisions over the short term. EJPCOH is embarking on a major initiative that will see the creation and publication of the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services in the Winter of 2003/2004, that when published will supersede the Interim Plan.

The Interim Plan identifies the needs and priorities from the perspective of the Edmonton community. It does not in any way obligate any order of Government to provide funding for the support services.

During the Fall an extensive survey of homeless people will be conducted. The information from this survey in combination with the results of a broad based consultation will allow the community to refine and substantiate the priorities and needs. Using the figures from the 2000-2003 Community Plan as a benchmark (approximately \$49 Million), the number of units and associated costs were arrived at through the following process:

- Comparison of the gaps identified in the 2000-2003 Community Plan against the number of units constructed and the need yet to be addressed, current usage and turn-aways at existing emergency shelters, and the recently conducted survey of homeless Youth and homeless Aboriginal people that identified new/additional gaps.
- Consideration of the economic climate in Edmonton and the increase in the homeless population (Homeless Count October 2002)
- Calculating the average cost per unit using the 2000-2003 Edmonton Housing Trust Fund project costs indexed against the increased inflationary cost of construction.

KEY THEMES FROM THE COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE 2002 FEEDBACK

- The need to re-evaluate funding assumptions, given that lack of sustainable program and operating funding from Provincial Government departments has prevented capital projects from being approved.
- Affordable housing must be part of the continuum and needs concerted attention now. Homelessness and housing are inseparable.
- A lack of long-term supportive and affordable rental housing is causing the housing continuum to back-up so that emergency and transitional facilities are being used inappropriately as long-term solutions.
- Increased pressure on groups at risk is being caused by the recent economic boom in the community.
- The tight affordable rental market increases the potential for discrimination, use of unsafe/illegal housing, and abuse of tenant rights.
- The forecasted housing and programming gaps identified in the original Community Plan are under-represented in almost all areas but most significantly for mental health, substance abuse and the “unseen” homeless (youth, seniors, Aboriginal students, working poor, migrating workers).
- The amount of funding allocated for Aboriginal housing and service providers is perceived to not be in proportion to the number of homeless people in Edmonton who are Aboriginal.
- The Aboriginal community believes it needs to become more cohesive to effectively address homelessness within the community.

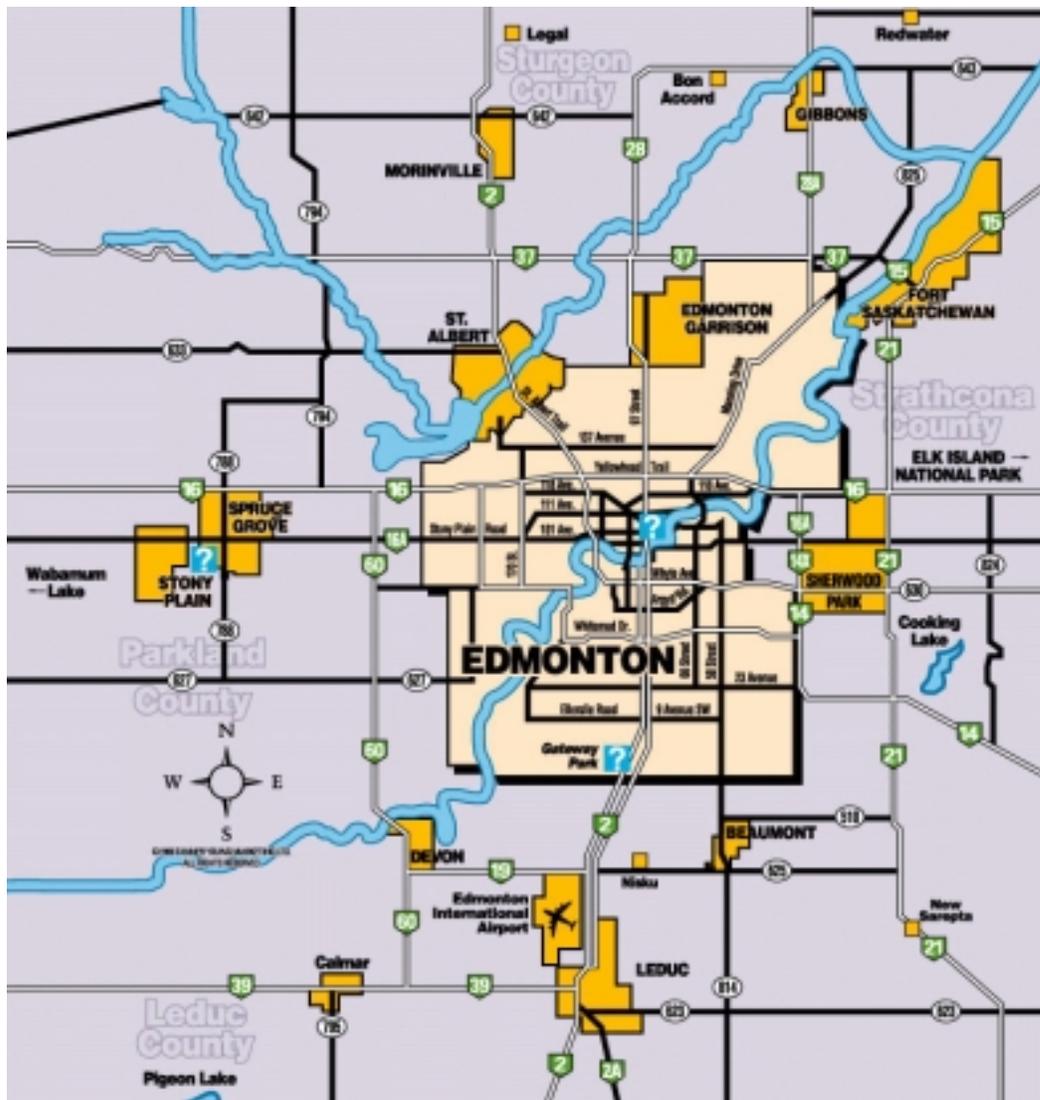
- Shifts in government policy and cutbacks to program funding (health-care, children's services, mental health) have increased the demand for homelessness programs and services.
- The need for clear definitions and consistent use of terms in the Community Plan.
- The need to encourage the private sector to get involved through development of innovative approaches to engage them.

These themes and all input guided the conclusions drawn in this report regarding the focus needed in further implementing the Community Plan, and future advocacy by EJPCOH.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The Community Plan on Homelessness focuses on addressing the housing and support needs of homeless people in the City of Edmonton. It is however recognized that residents of adjacent communities come into the City to access shelters and related services. Therefore, proposals that include activities outside City limits may be considered if they will assist the City in addressing the needs identified in the Plan.

The population for the City of Edmonton is 782,101 based on the 2001 Canada Census information.



OBJECTIVES

The Homelessness Initiative strategic long-term objectives are:

1. Develop a comprehensive continuum of supports to help homeless Canadians move out of the cycle of homelessness and prevent those at-risk from falling in homelessness by providing communities with the tools to develop a range of interventions to stabilize the living arrangements of homeless individuals and families, encouraging self-sufficiency where possible, and prevent those at-risk from falling into homelessness.
2. Ensure sustainable capacity of communities to address homelessness by enhancing community leadership and broadening ownership, by the public, non-profit and private sectors, on the issue of homelessness in Canada.

With these in mind, the 2003-2006 Edmonton Community Plan focuses on the following key activities:

1. To promote coordinated and comprehensive activities and efforts at the community level aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness.
2. To facilitate the movement of the homeless population from the street to stable living environments and toward greater self-sufficiency.
3. To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable partnerships among a wide range of stakeholders to address homelessness at a community level.
4. To encourage and facilitate the development and sharing of information, best practices and lessons learned about homelessness.

Using the figures from the 2000-2003 Community Plan as a benchmark (Approximately \$49 Million), it is anticipated that the 2003-2006 Community Plan budget be allocated as follows:

Component	Percentage	Budget
Plan Development and Implementation (Admin)	6.5%	\$3.19 Million
Emergency Housing	7.5%	\$3.68 Million
Transitional Housing	33%	\$16 Million
Long Term/Supportive Housing	40%	\$19.6 Million
Prevention	5%	\$2.45 Million
Communication	1%	\$490,000
Support (Non Capital)	7%	\$3.43 Million

Following is a summary of the Community Plan 2003-2006 anticipated funding for the development of Emergency, Transitional and Long-Term Supportive housing (using an average cost per unit):

Cost of New Construction* - Based on Community Plan Budget - 2003-2006		
Emergency	Average cost per unit: \$18,000	204 units
Transitional	Average cost per unit: \$61,000	262 units
Long-Term Supportive	Average cost per unit: \$72,000	272 units

***Average cost per unit using 2000-2003 EHTF project costs indexed against increased inflationary costs of construction**

COMMUNITY PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In April 2002, EJPCOH released the *Review and Update* of the Edmonton Community Plan on Homelessness 2000-2003. The *Review and Update* met EJPCOH's commitment to consult with the community to review achievements and changing trends and to validate or adjust the original housing and support service gaps identified in the 2000-2003 Community Plan. A community-wide consultation as well as an Aboriginal Gathering on Homelessness took place to provide input into this process, both involving more than 150 participants. The input detailed needs, pressures, trends and achievements and the results were consolidated and reflected in the *Review and Update*.

In addition to these consultations, EJPCOH and EHTF receive ongoing input to the implementation of the Community Plan through regular meetings with organizations and individuals involved in homelessness and housing issues. Through the Edmonton Aboriginal Committee on Homelessness (EACH), Aboriginal issues relating to homelessness are regularly raised with EJPCOH. In addition, the EHTF conducted a survey to gauge the level of understanding of their application process in the community. Organizational capacity was identified as a barrier in the survey, resulting in a consultant being hired to assist proponents with the development of their proposals.

In March 2003, information was collected from the Study of Aboriginal Homeless, the Study of Homeless Youth and the organizations that serve them. The results of these three surveys (Aboriginal, Youth and Service Providing Organizations) further informed the committee of these at risk populations.

A major study of Edmonton's homeless population will be conducted over the next 6 months. This will provide substantive data to inform the consultative process, assist in assessing needs/gaps, and in identifying solutions. As we learn more about our homeless population, emphasis will gradually shift to prevention programs and early interventions that will reduce the number of individuals and families living on our streets.

EJPCOH is embarking on a major initiative that will see the creation and publication of the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services in the Winter 2003/2004. This Plan will reflect the continuum of housing needs that include housing and other services for the homeless, supportive housing, social housing and affordable housing. An inclusive consultative process will be used to ensure that the plan accurately reflects the needs of all.

This Community Plan will continue to be administered by the two-pronged "community entity" made up of the Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing (EJPCOH) and the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund (EHTF). This unique approach to addressing homelessness and housing issues has worked very well in implementing the priorities of the Edmonton Community Plan on Homelessness 2000-2003 and will therefore be continued. It is the intention of both EJPCOH and EHTF to implement measures to enhance the existing relationship between the two entities.

ASSETS AND GAPS

Significant progress has been made toward implementing the recommendations of the 2000-2003 Community Plan. Together, the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative, the Provincial Government, the City of Edmonton, front-line agencies, foundations and private donors have contributed more than 47.5 million towards homelessness, thereby meeting more than 80% of targeted units and activities. The economic boom has accelerated the homelessness and affordable housing crisis in Edmonton in the following ways:

- Lack of affordable rental housing creates pressures on the continuum of facilities providing emergency, transitional and long-term supportive housing.
- Existing emergency and transitional facilities are housing people for increasingly longer periods.
- More and more people are resorting to sleeping in abandoned/derelict housing, vehicles, warehouses, garages or wandering the streets at night and sleeping at drop-in centres, malls and parkades during the day.

The lack of long-term funding for support programs and services is also preventing proposed projects from proceeding because they are not sustainable. Continued emphasis must be placed on the continuum of support model; however the solution to complex social issues cannot be solved with any one type of service. Rather the community as a whole must look at the "big picture" and resources allocated accordingly. The continuum of support model encompasses services from the point of entry to affordable housing initiatives. It is only through the continued spirit of co-operation by all those who provide services and funding that Edmonton, as a community, will begin to solve the issue of homelessness.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Continuum Component 1: Identifying and Connecting/Information

Accurate and comprehensive information will ensure the community targets resources effectively.

In addition to dealing effectively with homeless people who approach service providers, there is also the requirement for capacity to reach out to persons who may be reluctant to approach the providers, or who may not know that the services are available. A significant number of Aboriginal people come from a rural background and face the challenge of adapting to an urban style of life. They also may face stereotyping and discrimination when seeking housing options. Attention paid to those services which will assist Aboriginal people to understand and adjust to urbanized life play a major role in identifying the techniques needed to adjust. Ultimately, these services need to be available to Aboriginal people where they live prior to coming to Edmonton, as well as in Edmonton, and ensuring that the direction of long term prevention strategies to prevent Aboriginal homelessness are initiated by the Aboriginal Community.

The various counts conducted in the City of Edmonton, the current usage at existing shelters, as well as information from organizations and agencies servicing those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless all indicate that the magnitude of homelessness continues to grow. While we have some idea of the number of homeless people, we know little about those who are homeless. EJPCOH has contracted a research consulting firm to perform a comprehensive study of Edmonton's Homeless population between June and November 2003. The information gathered from this study will provide a profile of the

characteristics of homeless people in Edmonton, identify the gaps within the system, and provide substantive data to inform the consultative process and identify solutions. As we learn more about our homeless population, emphasis will gradually shift to prevention programs and early interventions that will reduce the number of individuals and families living on our streets.

Expanded use of tools such as the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) by homeless shelters, service providers and other housing providers will ensure the Community has current reliable data to guide decision making. The result of this data collection, along with bi-annual street counts of homeless people, will significantly improve our knowledge of what services are being accessed, how frequently and, in aggregation, provide an indication of demands and trends within Edmonton's homeless population. The Community Entity will continue to encourage agencies, housing providers, and service providers to use the Support Network of Edmonton – Directory of Services (including the housing support services component for front line workers). Having one centralized source of current information on Edmonton's programs and services is seen as essential to effective way-finding while at the same time reducing the risk of overlap and duplication.

The Community Plan identifies and dedicates resources to appropriate long-term housing solutions for persons with physical or mental health ailments. As housing is created, Alberta Health and Wellness and the Regional Health Authority will be encouraged to look at the costs associated with ongoing support needs of these projects, such as home care for people who have difficulty living on their own outside of health care institutions.

Continuum Component 2a: Prevention Services

The development of new, or enhanced (improved) existing services for homelessness people (or those at risk of becoming homeless) include assistance finding housing, eviction prevention, materials (clothes or food) or transportation, information/referral/follow-up, psycho-social services, health services, education/life skills programs, training/employment programs, legal/financial services, assistance with identification documents, etc. Prevention programs also assist the individual/family avoid recurrence of their existing need or the onset of others.

Within the community, youth and adults living with a disability are not always “visible”. Statistics indicate that many people living with learning and behavioral problems associated with FAS/FAE, ultimately end up homeless. Over the long term, it will become increasingly important to expand programming that informs about prevention, diagnosis and the supports that are available.

Little is known about the number of recent refugees that come to Canada, and become homeless for various reasons. Language barriers, cultural background and racial discrimination impact the person's ability to find both housing or employment. Longitudinal research studies will assist in identify the barriers, and developing preventative programs needed to support this issue.

A large portion of male and female offenders fall into homeless, as these individuals reach the point of reintegration into society in Edmonton. A recent program being piloted in the community is geared toward homeless prevention and is aimed at high risk individuals who are and have been in conflict with the law. This program has been designed to provide personal development, employment skills, supports and referral advocacy and outreach to assist with the transition toward self-sufficiency and productivity. Success of the program will be evaluated shortly and used as a model to fund future projects.

Continuum Component 2b: Support Services

Services provided to homeless people need to be appropriate to their needs and sensitive to their cultural background. Service providers need to involve representatives of the Aboriginal community in particular, and perhaps of other cultures, in designing and implementing their service plans.

A primary supportive service is home care for persons with either physical or mental health ailments. Current health care delivery practice relies heavily on care outside an institution. This assumes that the patient will have access to health care services and a home in which the services can be delivered. For many homeless persons, neither assumption is correct. Assuming that the housing strategic initiatives will address having a home, both Alberta Health and Wellness and the Capital Health Authority need to review the allocation of resources to home care for people who have difficulty living on their own outside of health care institutions. Examples are physically and mentally ill persons and others, suffering various forms of dementia and developmental disabilities.

While many other supportive services are currently available, the challenge ahead will be the sustainability of these support services, particularly those that involve on-site staffing requirements (outreach workers), coordination of transportation services, identifying and accessing living skills support services, and supports for young people to acquire specific skills.

EJPCOH continues to view preventative and support services for the homeless as an essential component of the continuum of support model. Projects that provide these services have been hindered by the lack of sustainable program dollars. EJPCOH will continue to advocate for increased provincial government funding commitments and to seek innovative approaches for increasing availability of funding for supportive and preventative programs. Both the Aboriginal Gathering on Homelessness and community-wide consultations indicate the urgent need for EJPCOH and EHTF to concentrate their efforts on addressing the increased lack of affordable housing funding, which has increased the pressure on homeless shelters and transitional housing. There continues to be a need for funding for programming and operating to ensure projects are sustained.

The Interim Community Plan identifies and dedicates resources to appropriate transitional and long-term housing solutions for persons with physical, emotional and mental health ailments. As housing is created, Alberta Health and Wellness and the Regional Health Authority will be encouraged to support the service costs associated with these projects.

Continuum Component 1: Identifying and Connecting/Information			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
HIFIS/evaluation/trends identification*	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Promotion of Support Network/ongoing updates	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Bi-annual homeless street counts		\$25,000**	
Analysis of Homeless study results/performance	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Longitudinal research projects identified		✓	✓

* **Funded through National Homeless Initiative**

** **Does not include in-kind services of count committee or count volunteers**

Continuum Component 2a: Prevention Activities			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Programs customized toward addressing homeless prevention i.e. (tenancy training, loan programs, advocacy, youth at risk, life skills programming/supports)	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Evaluation of pilot (Homeless Prevention) project. Identification of permanent funding source (CSG, Alta Justice)	\$200,000	\$30,000 (evaluation)	

Continuum Component 2b: Support Services Activities			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Identify sustainable funding for on-site staff requirements(i.e. outreach workers, living skills supports services, youth support program)	✓	✓	✓
EJPCOH advocacy for increased provincial government funding commitments and innovative approaches for increasing availability of funding for supportive and preventative programming	✓	✓	✓

HOUSING

The various counts conducted in the City of Edmonton, the current usage and turn-aways at existing emergency shelters, as well as information from organizations and agencies serving those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless all indicate that homelessness continues to grow within the City of Edmonton. While we have some idea of the number of homeless people, we know little about those who are homeless. A major study of Edmonton's homeless population will be conducted over the next 6 months. The objectives of this study are:

- To provide a better profile on the characteristics of homeless people in Edmonton
- Map the current homeless system and identify how individuals and families move through the system, and identify gaps in the system
- Identify intervention strategies, policies and programs that will remediate the problems of homelessness
- Develop a profile of the population at risk of becoming homeless, by identifying the factors that may precipitate homelessness
- Identify prevention strategies, policies and programs that will assist those at risk of becoming homeless

As we move further along into the homeless study, the findings and recommendations will be reflected in the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services.

Continuum Component 3: Immediate (Emergency) housing as a safe, healthy alternative to the streets

Emergency housing is intended to provide safe, healthy, overnight shelter for individuals who have nowhere else to go.

Although progress has been made toward implementing the 2000-2003 plan, the next phase will identify through a formal evaluation process, the capacity that these units will generate over time. Since the publication of the 2000-2003 Community Plan, 163 additional beds have been brought on stream (does not include 184 temporary extreme winter measures funded in 2002-2003), against the original gap of 247 units identified in the 2000-2003 plan. This represents 66% of the original gap identified. However EJPCOH recognizes that the need continues to be high to ensure that sufficient shelter beds are available to meet the demand for emergency housing. Projects addressing the emergency needs of youth (ages 15-30), families, women, individuals, some with mental health and substance abuse issues, and women and children fleeing violence are needed. EJPCOH continues to advocate the emergency needs of abused seniors so projects that address the specific needs of this group can be encouraged.

The 2003-2006 Interim Community Plan proposes the addition of 204 Emergency units. The community recognizes that there will continue to be extreme peak periods that will exceed the planned number of units; therefore it is imperative that a sustainable funded emergency solution be put in place.

Continuum Component: Immediate (Emergency) housing activities			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
204 proposed emergency units/beds to address the needs of youth (ages 15-30), women, families, women & children fleeing violence, people with addictions, abused seniors	\$1,750,000	\$965,000	\$965,000
Research/Evaluation of additional emergency needs for youth, seniors, women, aboriginal etc.	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Establish & Implement sustainable solutions for extreme weather emerg	\$175,000	\$175,000	\$175,000

Continuum Component 4: Transitional Housing

Transitional housing provides a secure, healthy living environment where the person or family can receive assistance, counseling and/or treatment and practice life skills, which have the potential to lead to independent living. There is greater potential for success if the person/s has stable living arrangements while counseling/treatment is undertaken.

A total of 204 transitional units have been constructed and opened over the duration of the 2000-2003 community plan against an identified gap of 335 units. This total represents 61% of the original gap identified. However the challenge within the next phase (2003-2006) will be the identification of solid, sustainable funding sources to assist with ongoing operations, and the provision of needed supports for the residents of these facilities. Without this, these residents that are now struggling to cover the costs of their day to day needs (room and board, food, rent, medication, etc.), become extremely vulnerable and may easily end up back on the streets as their only alternative. The need for advocacy for increased programming and operating funding commitments from provincial government departments and seeking innovative approaches for securing more dollars to ensure the sustainability of projects remains a high priority.

It is understood that the economic climate in Edmonton has changed significantly since the development of the 2000-2003 community plan. Although additional spaces over all sectors are required, the 2003-2006 Interim Community Plan will concentrate on the construction of 262 additional transitional housing units with emphasis placed on meeting the needs of families, people with addictions, single women, and immigrant/refugee populations.

In order to encourage the development of transitional housing, it may be appropriate to consider limiting the extent of debt financing, if in doing so would place the agency in a position to cover their operating costs and ensure the long term sustainability and success of the project.

Continuum Component 4: Transitional Housing			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Proposed construction of 262 additional units. Projects will be committed to facilities that will house families, persons with addictions, single women and immigrant/refugee populations.	\$6,142,600	\$4,928,700	\$4,928,700
Longitudinal Research into support programs (assist to independence)		\$20,000	\$20,000
Identify effective mechanism to attract resources (funder's table)	✓	✓	✓

Continuum Component 5: Long-term supportive housing arrangements

Long-term supportive housing typically provided permanent accommodation with a support component that enables residents to live as independently as possible. In some instances, resident needs can be adequately met if the housing facility adopts a supportive management model. Essentially this means that the live-in building manager establishes a relationship with tenants such that external support services can be contacted when a resident appears to be encountering difficulty. At the other end of the spectrum, some people require a facility with on site support 24-7.

Long-term supportive housing continues to be an area of need. To date 308 units have been constructed and opened during Phase I of the 2000-2003 Community Plan, against an identified gap of 415. This represents 74% of the units approved against the original gap. The 2003-2006 Interim Community Plan will concentrate on the construction of units for singles/persons with addictions, families, including large Aboriginal families, and persons with developmental disabilities. Although progress has been made in adding additional units to the inventory, the lack of sufficient accommodation in this area has caused the housing continuum to back up, resulting in emergency and transitional facilities being used as longer term solutions. The lack of sustainable program dollars to provide the supports required by residents of these types of facilities is a major factor contributing to this gap.

EJPCOH will continue to advocate for increased provincial government funding and ensure the approval and sustainability of long-term supportive projects. EJPCOH strongly encourages proposals to address the gaps in this area. If more gaps in this area are addressed, then pressure will be relieved at the emergency and transitional levels.

EJPCOH is committed to undertake more research to determine the long-term supportive needs of seniors so projects can be encouraged that address the specific needs of this group.

As identified in the Mayors Task Force on housing: The immediate need for 5000 units of affordable housing plus 700 units per year to keep pace with the growing need is considered a high priority by the

Community. A planned portion of the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services will be dedicated to acknowledging the requirement for affordable housing funds accessed through the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program. Under the auspices of the Canada-Alberta Affordable Housing Program, the Affordable Housing Partnerships Initiative provides capital grants to assist in the construction of new affordable housing projects, major renovations to convert existing non-housing projects into housing, or to undertake major renovations to vacant housing projects to retain them in the housing system, to accommodate low and moderate-income working households. Where support requirements are minimal, it may be most cost effective to operate a facility that has some supportive units, some affordable housing units and the balance at market.

Continuum Component 5: Long-Term Supportive Housing Activities			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Proposed construction of 272 additional units. Housing projects targeted toward large aboriginal families and families, persons with developmental disabilities), singles/persons with addictions.	\$7,340,444	\$6,129,777	6,129,777
Research/Evaluation of long term needs and supports for aboriginal families, people with mental health issues, etc.	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

AWARENESS

Continuum Component 6: Community Awareness

A variety of community awareness initiatives have taken place, and will continue in 2003-2006, to promote the Community Plan and to educate the general public on the extent of homeless in Edmonton, the symptoms of the various human conditions and the systemic issues giving rise to homelessness, and ways in which the community can participate. Increased general understanding is required in order to raise community support, and consequently support by decision makers, for programs addressing homelessness. These programs assist the community in understanding the challenges facing people who are experiencing mental illness, developmental disabilities, addiction, elder abuse, family violence, poverty and other issues, which contribute to their homelessness.

EJPCOH is set to launch their three-year Communication Plan, late fall 2003, that will increase public awareness, address homelessness issues, affordable housing and issues around NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard).

Continuum Component 6: Community Awareness Activities			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Ongoing awareness and solution support campaign	\$190,000	\$150,000	\$150,000

Administration

EJPCOH is structured to reflect broad-based representation of the community and has become the primary organization in Edmonton for needs analysis, planning and priority setting, and coordinating initiatives addressing homelessness and affordable housing issues.

These costs reflect the finance and administration budgetary requirements associated with the effective operation of the EJPCOH and EHTF entities.

Administration			
Description	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Administration of EJPCOH/EHTF/operational costs/Research/Studies/Plan Development	\$967,000	\$967,000	\$967,000
Release of the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services 2004-2008 & release of Interim Community Plan	\$45,000		
Annual plan evaluation & update	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
3 Year Plan Review			\$50,000
Annual Aboriginal Gathering	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000

Total Funding Requirements

Continuum of Supports Programs and Services– Identify & Connect/Prevention and Support Services	\$5,880,000
Emergency Housing	\$3,680,000
Transitional Housing	\$16,000,000
Long Term Supportive Housing	\$19,600,000
Community Awareness	\$490,000
Administration (EJPCOH & EHTF)	\$3,190,000
TOTAL	\$48,840,000

PRIORITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The 2003-2006 Interim Community Plan gaps analysis has assisted with identification of the priorities that will be used as a guide to meet the short and long term needs of homeless people and those at risk in the community, partnership development, community capacity building, and public awareness activities that will foster sustainability and respond to the changing community circumstances.

The study of homeless people scheduled to take place Fall 2003 will assist in identifying who are our homeless, along with the lack of community awareness of the broader issues of homelessness. This information will serve as the catalyst needed to implement an awareness strategy to address the gaps, connect agencies and supports to the individuals that need them and initiate advocacy for concessions by government toward fundamental needs, i.e. utility tax breaks.

In order to inform, all components of the 2003-2006 Interim Community Plan require complete, good quality of data in order to determine priority identification.

Continuum Component 1: Identifying and Connecting/Information	
Factor	Description
Accurate and comprehensive information will ensure the community targets resources effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support Network -Promote agencies to update and input information on a timely basis toward master directory of services. - HIFIS - Provision of critical data to service providers - Increase of community capacity by using longitudinal data to track characteristics, and service and demand trends of the homeless population accessing shelters and services. - Conduct Bi-annual Street Count – Tentatively scheduled to take place late May/June 2004. - Analysis of Homeless study results/performance – Longitudinal research projects identified.

Continuum Component 2a: Prevention Activities	
Factor	Description
Programs customized toward homeless prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life Skills programming tailored toward at risk youth. - Tenancy training programs (access to housing and eviction prevention – expanded to organizations.) - Coordination between support providers. - Ongoing funding requirement for damage deposit and moving programs. - Client advocate to assist tenants with landlord concerns/mediation, medical accessibility and treatment, post transitional assistance for those released from correctional institutions, Mental Health Facilities, etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program development (loan) for those on verge of homelessness (i.e. temporary income loss). - Early intervention assistance prior to mass evictions from condemned buildings. - Aboriginal cultural sensitivity training. - Access to transportation for work, appointments, etc.
Evaluation of pilot projects	Identification of permanent funding source/Homeless Prevention Program (CSG, Alberta Justice, AHR&E).

Continuum Component 2b: Support Services Activities	
Factor	Description
Services appropriate to the needs of individuals and sensitive to their cultural background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of sustainable funding for on-site staff requirements (outreach workers, living skills support services, youth support programs). - Cultural sensitivity in service delivery guidelines and staff training.

Continuum Component 3: Immediate (Emergency) Housing as a safe alternative to the streets	
Factor	Description
Hard to House, family emergency for women and children fleeing violence, youth emergency, seniors, persons with addictions, mental health, prostitutes and trans-gendered housing needs	Identify source funding for the required operating costs and support services required for current and future demand.
Construct 204 additional units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research/evaluation of additional demand for shelters housing youth, seniors, women, aboriginal, people with addictions. - More people being served on an emergency basis through the creation of new permanent units and through temporary measures by collaboration between government, community agencies and EHTF.
Winter emergency plan	Establish and implement sustainable solutions for extreme weather emergencies.

Continuum Component 4: Transitional Housing	
Factor	Description
Construct 262 additional transitional housing units	Identify and research need for additional units (persons with addictions, single women and refugees/immigrants).
Support programs to assist people to independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Longitudinal research into support programs. - Identify effective mechanisms to attract resources (funder's table).

Continuum Component 5: Long-term supportive housing arrangements	
Factor	Description
Construct 272 additional units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify/research additional need (people with Mental Health issues, aboriginal families, and large families, persons with developmental disabilities, singles and persons with addictions). - Delay in capital projects due to NIMBY “ism”, lack of ongoing operating funds and zoning challenges.
Outreach worker for homeless families/networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing funding identification for family support workers. - Agencies to develop team approach to services.

Continuum Component 6: Community Awareness Programs	
Factor	Description
Community Awareness programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch of EJPCOH 3 year Communications Plan-September 2003. -Ongoing awareness and solution support campaign (2003-2006).

Administration	
Factor	Description
Administration/operational costs of the EJPCOH and EHTF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgetary costs associated with the effective operation of the EJPCOH/EHTF entities. - Release of the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services. - Release of Interim Community Plan. - Annual Community Plan evaluation and update. - 3 year plan review. - Increased public awareness of EJPCOH & EHTF. - Commitment to annual Aboriginal consultations.

SUSTAINABILITY

While the 2003-2006 Community Plan focuses on identifying, planning and aligning services to create a community based model for reducing homelessness, success is dependant upon a series of sustainability factors that will affect the long term outcomes:

Project sustainability – before final approval of a project, the proponents must demonstrate they have a plan in place that should ensure continuation of the operation/activities/support services;

Community Initiative sustainability - efforts to build capacity within the community entity, to increase community awareness and learning, and to expand the depth and breadth of engagement from all sectors is essential to maintaining long-term momentum;

Partnership sustainability – the community entity model, adopted by the Edmonton Community, involves representatives from: all levels of government, aboriginal authorities, private sector, front-line agencies, philanthropic organizations, health authorities, aboriginal community-at-large and the Edmonton community-at-large. Efforts to maintain and enhance this representation and to attract and expand the funding base are essential to the ongoing progress of this initiative.

We will effectively mobilize the community around homelessness using a comprehensive and inclusive approach. Engaging the diverse sectors of our community that can contribute to successes and building relationships among these partners remains a priority over the next planning phase. We will work to ensure that all potential funders, including all government departments and agencies with related mandated responsibilities, are invited to participate in the full process as we develop and implement the Edmonton Comprehensive Community Plan on Housing and Support Services 2004 – 2008. This should allow potential funders to consider the priorities identified by the community and to take these into account when developing their future business plans and making funding allocation decisions.

Emphasis in Phase II, 2003-2006, will focus on initiatives that will strengthen some services, expand others and introduce new approaches to address the needs of homeless individuals and families in Edmonton. These initiatives will include:

Private Sector

- Sharing of Best Practices of private/public partnerships that have worked successfully
- Ensure that Aboriginal businesses are aware of the Homelessness Initiative through participation in the Aboriginal Gathering and consultation held in June 2003

Unions

- Provide information sessions to expand the understanding of the Homelessness Initiative and how Unions may choose to engage – share examples

Media

- Meet with editorial boards of mainstream newspapers to identify opportunities to raise public awareness, the issues, barriers, myths and solutions

Funders

- Identify a “formal” venue for project proponents to approach potential funders, paying particular attention to attracting non-government funders and government departments not already actively engaged in the initiative

While representatives from all sectors were involved in the development of the Community Plan on Homelessness 2000-2003, expanding the breadth of representation will be the focus over the next period. The Interim Community Plan 2003-2006 will focus on:

- Strengthening corporate sector involvement by requesting consideration of flexibility with respect to arrears in utility payments and/or in evaluating credit reports, lower interest rates for borrowers building below market housing and support of education programs for home ownership.
- Private Sector will be encouraged to provide advice and expertise as well as assets and financial donations, and builder consideration of some low income/affordable units in market projects.
- Discussions with Unions to become key contributors through expertise and/or materials, provide unemployed shelter residents with work, potentially leading to apprenticeship opportunities and/or full time employment, as well as providing low interest loans/mortgages for high need projects using pension fund dollars.
- Philanthropic groups/individuals will be encouraged to consider the priority gaps identified in the community plan when initiating fund raising campaigns, reviewing proposals for funding and developing investment plans.
- Supporting agencies will be encouraged to continue to develop the necessary skills and tools to manage projects, assist agencies to develop networks to undertake joint activities and coordinate their services by encouraging collaboration between agencies serving similar clientele.
- Actively working to expand the range of funders and potential contributors by raising community awareness, increasing the profile of the Edmonton Community entities, increasing acceptance of the validity of the priorities identified in the Community Plan, and broadening the engagement of potential funders throughout the process.

The Edmonton Housing Trust Fund (EHTF) is responsible for reviewing, assessing and funding proposals that meet the priorities as identified in the Community Plan on Homelessness. To ensure project sustainability, effort will be made to keep debt financing to a minimum in projects housing clientele with limited or no income. Additionally, operating costs may also be funded for a specified period to give a funder time to include the costs in future budgets, to serve as bridge funding until revenues can be fully realized, to respond to crisis situations (unexpected budget/program cuts, extreme weather, major economic shifts) and to allow time for the proponent to actively seek alternate sources of ongoing funding.

EVALUATION

During Phase I of the Homeless Initiative, EJPCOH invested in the development of an evaluation tool that could be used to continually measure the progress being made on each of the key objectives in the Edmonton Community Plan on Homelessness. Using this tool, an evaluation strategy is being implemented to support the four key objectives identified in the 2003-2006 Plan. These four objectives are seen as critical in ensuring the Community is successful in a) developing a comprehensive continuum of supports to help homeless individuals and families move out of the cycle of homelessness and to prevent those at risk from falling into homelessness and b) strengthening the capacity of the Community to address homelessness by increasing public awareness and learning, expanding the depth and breadth of engagement from all sectors and providing a focal point and leadership to the issue.

For each of the four objectives, the strategy has identified three or four indicators of success. At this point, some of the known activities that will be undertaken (others will be identified as we implement the plan) are information collection on the number and kind of cooperation agreements in place, consistent client information including demographics, information collection on the number and kind of programs that exist such as income support, job training, child care, etc., unit availability for emergency, transitional and long-term supportive housing, and client satisfaction information. The outcomes will be the actual results of the activities. The tools used would be such things as surveys, data collected from the EHTF and Shelter agencies, as well as any other methodologies found to be useful.

**EDMONTON COMMUNITY PLAN ON HOMELESSNESS 2003-2008
EVALUATION STRATEGY**

OBJECTIVE	INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES	TOOLS
1. To encourage coordinated and comprehensive activities and efforts at the community level aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness in the general population, Aboriginal people and youth.	A. Community awareness activities focusing on homelessness are carried out on a regular basis.			
	B. Preventative and supportive services are in place in agencies through cooperative agreements.	Information is collected on the number and kind of cooperation agreements in place.		Agency/service provider survey
	C. Homelessness counts report a reduction in absolute homelessness.			Homelessness count results.
2. To facilitate the movement of homeless individuals, families, Aboriginal people and youth from the street to more stable living environments toward greater self-sufficiency.	A. Needs of homeless persons, families, Aboriginal people and youth are identified and connections are made to facilities and services best suited to meet these needs.	Consistent client information including demographics is collected and communicated to other agencies.		Agency/service provider survey
		Staff and service providers are given the opportunity to increase their knowledge and sensitivity to client's aboriginal or other cultural background, age, etc.		Agency/service provider survey

		Information is collected on the number and kind of cooperation agreements in place, persons and/or families successfully referred or turned away.		Agency/service provider survey
	B. Supportive services exist to assist homeless persons, families, Aboriginal people and youth to move towards a more stable lifestyle.	Information is collected on the number and kind of programs that exist such as: income support, job training & placements, child care, medical & mental health, substance abuse, support for persons discharged from hospitals or the criminal justice system and the numbers of persons and/or families being successfully served and/or turned away.		Agency/service provider survey
	C. A variety of housing options are in place and accessible to individuals, families, Aboriginal people and youth.	Information is collected and communicated on emergency housing; transitional housing and long term housing such as unit's available, persons and/or families successfully served or turned away, waiting lists, changes in supply/demand.		Agency/service provider survey Shelter specialist data EHTF Data

	D. An increase in client satisfaction is demonstrated through regular survey results.	Service providers collect client satisfaction information in a consistent manner.		Agency/service provider survey
3. To promote and facilitate the development of sustainable partnerships among a wide range of stakeholders to address homelessness at a community level.	A. Partnerships between a wide range of stakeholders exist to provide facilities and services to homeless persons, families, Aboriginal people and youth.			
	B. Partnerships between agencies demonstrate adequate, appropriate and comprehensive service provision to homeless persons, families, Aboriginal people and youth.			
	C. An increase in client satisfaction is demonstrated through regular survey results.			Agency/service provider survey
4. To encourage and facilitate the development and sharing of information, best practices and lessons learned about	A. A methodology is devised to develop best practice standards and lessons learned for the care of homeless in Edmonton.			

homelessness.	B. Information on best practices and lessons learned about homelessness in Edmonton is collected in a timely manner.			
	C. A process is in place to communicate information on best practices and lessons learned about homelessness in Edmonton.			

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The EJPCOH is committed to ensuring that individuals and community agencies have the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of the Community Planning process from development, through implementation to evaluation.

The Community Plan will be posted on the Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing website located at the Affordable Housing home page at <http://www.moresafehomes.net> and the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund at www.ehtf.ca. Copies of the comprehensive plan will be distributed to all EJPCOH members and EHTF Trustees. Copies of the plan will also be distributed to libraries throughout Edmonton, and to all participants in the consultation process.

Homeless counts, annual reviews of achievements and trends and survey results will be posted on the EJPCOH, EHTF and City of Edmonton websites, as well as released through newspaper, television and mail outs.

The Edmonton Housing Trust Fund has an established process for accepting proposals which is posted on their website. Information sessions will be held to educate prospective proponents on the application process and to make it clear that proposals must demonstrate how they relate to the priorities identified within the Community Plan. Each proposal is assessed in detail and then forwarded to the Trustees for a funding decision.

The EHTF issues a press/media release once a project is approved. They routinely update their web site to ensure current information on approved projects is readily available.

The EJPCOH and the EHTF will create opportunities for Edmonton service providers and stakeholders to connect with counterparts in other communities to share experiences and best practices.

Due to the low levels of awareness in Edmonton on homelessness issues, coupled with the negative reaction that current stereotypical images of homelessness generate with the target audience, a two-phased strategy will take place. The first phase will draw the primary target audience to first become aware of the issue, and to understand the basic scale, scope and impact of the shortage of affordable housing in Edmonton.

The second phase will focus on securing support for solutions at the right costs with a perceived long-term benefit to the community.

The EJPCOH is set to launch a communication and marketing strategy that is intended to foster greater community support for the process, increase partnerships and public awareness and address NIMBY issues through education and information.

COMMUNITY'S CONTRIBUTION

CATEGORIES	SOURCE	INKIND or DOLLARS (total April 2003- March 2006)	AMOUNT/ VALUE (total April 2003-March 2006)
PROVINCIAL	AB Homelessness Strategy AB Seniors – Shelter Program	\$13,800,492	\$3,000,000
MUNICIPAL	Donation to EHTF LIHCAP		\$3,600,000 \$1,080,000
FOR PROFIT			
NON PROFIT			
FOUNDATION	Carrington Foundation		\$1,000,000
INDIVIDUAL			
SCPI Allocation			\$17,100,000
TOTAL			\$39,580,049

In order for the community to receive the full allocation of SCPI funding, there must be a minimum matching of funds from other sources as illustrated above.

Based on Edmonton's experience in Phase I of the Community Plan, it is anticipated that the planned \$49 Million will become more evident as we move further along into the plan.