

A Systematic Approach to Ending Homelessness

**Interim Report of the Community
Solutions Team on Homelessness**

Greater City of Sudbury Council Resolution

- Community Solutions Team (CST) on Homelessness Initiatives was reactivated June 2006
- Terms of Reference (Appendix A):
 - to develop a realigned community plan for outreach services for emergency shelters and homelessness initiatives
 - To advocate/lobby federal and provincial governments

List of Committee Members

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Janet Gasparini | (Co-chair) Councillor Ward 11 |
| Vicki Smith | (Co-chair) Business |
| Nancy Dubé | Chair of the community Advisory Committee for Homelessness Initiatives |
| Penny Earley | Professor, Social Services |
| Terry Fortin | Community Economist |
| Margaret Borley | Member of the Community Advisory Committee for Homelessness, United Way/Centraide Board of Directors |

Support to the Community Solution is being provided by staff of the Social Planning Council, the United Way/Centraide and the City of Greater Sudbury

Root Causes of Homelessness

- **Poverty**
- **Lack of Income; No home, no phone, no job**
- **Lack of appropriate, affordable, quality housing**
- **Lack of supportive housing**

CST Research Review

- First step - extensive literature and “best practices” review to identify “best practices” (see references)
- “Housing First” strategy (Canada, U.S. and U.K) is the most successful approach to assisting those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Components of the Housing First System

A system that works towards ending homelessness focuses on:

- Finding housing
- Securing Income
- Providing appropriate support services

Client Centered Values

- People need to be housed
- People need to have choice, have a say, be empowered, treated with dignity and respect and given hope
- People need to be employed

Values that Drive the System

- Need to believe in recovery
- Make any door the right door to end homelessness
- Use Mainstream resources to serve people who are homeless
- Be flexible/offer low demand services
- Develop culturally appropriate services
- Offer long-term follow up support
- Involve individuals impacted by homelessness

Steps to Ending Homelessness

(please refer to Appendix B)

- Plan for Outcomes
- Prevention
- Housing First
- Build the Infrastructure

Planning for Outcomes Recommendation #5

- Determine benchmarks & desired outcomes (recommendation #6)
- Create an easy to read report card
- Initiate a communications strategy and a media campaign
- Create an Alliance

Prevention

- Coordinated housing plans as part of treatment strategies (hospitals, jail, addiction services)
- Ongoing support must be available to persons as they are housed
- Resources must be available for emergency use to prevent eviction
- Information must be available on where/what resources are available
- Linkages to permanent housing options must be made available
- Mobile assessment must be available

Housing 1st Strategy

- Vulnerable and at-risk person are more responsive to intervention and social support after they are housed
- Move persons into affordable housing as quickly as possible
- Provide transitional support in their home to ensure that they stay housed

Housing 1st Strategy

Requires:

- Crisis intervention – short term stabilization
- Screening/intake/needs assessment
- Housing
- Benefits Screening
- Case Management

Build the Infrastructure

In order to build the infrastructure we must focus on:

- Expanding the availability – more affordable housing and other options
- Increase accessibility – street outreach (including agencies) must have access to housing

Next Steps

- Implement the roadmap for change
- Secure adequate resources
- Build a coalition of key stakeholders
- Begin the transition
- Monitor and evaluate

Recommendations

To initiate this change, the Community Solutions Team on Homelessness Initiatives makes the following recommendations:

1. Recommended that the term of the Community Solutions Team on Homelessness Initiatives be extended to December 31, 2007 to enable the Team to finalize details of the strategy and to advocate as noted in their Terms of Reference.
2. Recommended that the funding to all homelessness initiatives (outreach and support program) currently funded by the City of Greater Sudbury be extended to March 31, 2007.

Recommended that the funding in the approximate amount of \$110,000 be allocated from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve to fund the program until March 31, 2007.

Recommendations (cont'd)

3. Recommended that a Request for Proposal(RFP) be issued immediately to select (a) service provider(s) to provide coordinated outreach services effective April 1, 2007.

The Housing First System requires centralized administration of outreach support services including eviction prevention funding, available housing listings, and extreme cold weather alerts. Coordination by one service provider will maximize funding, reduce duplication of services, and increase accessibility while ensuring that the mandate of the Housing First methodology is implemented.

This RFP will require that homeless or former homeless individuals are included in decision-making to ensure that relevant and effective services are in place.

Recommendations (cont'd)

4. Recommended that between January 1, 2007 to March 31, 2007 there be a coordinated lobbying strategy targeting key Provincial and Federal governments to address the local funding challenges.
5. Recommended that come April 1, 2007, program design as identified through the RFP response for outreach and support programs will clarify any potential funding challenges for the period April 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007.
6. Recommended that Council endorse the Housing First Strategy.

Recommendations (cont'd)

7. Recommended that the Community Solutions Team on Homelessness Initiatives develop the Alliance which will oversee the co-ordination of community outreach services and advocate for gaps in the social safety net to be addressed.

The Alliance should include staff representing various ministries both within the provincial and federal governments, municipal staff, community builders and consumers. The Alliance needs to link with the builders, funders and planners to ensure that affordable housing options are developed.

The Alliance will also review specific measurable outcomes which will be reported on annually to ensure that progress toward ending homelessness continues.

8. Recommended that the City of Greater Sudbury develop a charter to guide the development of the framework for the delivery of essential services to vulnerable individuals.