

Permanent Supportive Housing - Comparative Approaches

The experiences of other western Canadian cities illustrate what can be done at the municipal level to address homelessness. For example, the City of Vancouver and the City of Calgary have taken action to increase the supply of permanent supportive housing, summaries of their approaches are discussed below.

Vancouver

On June 6, 2007, Vancouver City Council approved a Supportive Housing Strategy for Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health and Addictions Supported Housing Framework, which called for a substantial increase in the supply of permanent supportive housing in that city. The Supportive Housing Strategy provided the foundation for Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2012 - 2021) and the Housing Vancouver Strategy, which were approved subsequently and continued to emphasize the need to increase the supply of diverse supportive housing options.

To expedite the building of these units, the City of Vancouver has entered into an innovative partnership with the Government of British Columbia. Under the terms of the partnership, the City provides land and the province funds construction and ongoing operations of affordable supportive housing. Completed buildings are leased at nominal rents to non-profit operators for the next 60 years.

Since 2011, Vancouver has opened 14 new supportive housing complexes on City-owned sites, totalling over 1,400 units.

In addition to these efforts, the Government of British Columbia announced in late 2017 a funding commitment of \$66 million towards 600 units of temporary modular housing in Vancouver. This is part of a \$291 million commitment to construct 2,000 modular units over two years throughout British Columbia for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The first 1,000 units were expected to be operational by early 2018. In this model, individuals are placed directly into housing with supportive services for up to six months or until they can transition to longer-term housing solutions. In Vancouver, the modular units are being built on vacant or underutilized sites as a rapid response to homelessness.

Calgary

The Calgary Homeless Foundation the HomeSpace Society (formerly the Calgary Community Land Trust Society) formed in 2016 by consolidating and

transferring the Homeless Foundation's capital assets into an arms-length, independent charity, HomeSpace. HomeSpace was created to serve as a developer, owner and manager (of scale), focused on permanent supportive housing and other forms of specialized affordable housing in Calgary. Like Homeward Trust in Edmonton, HomeSpace works in partnerships with other agencies who provide supports to HomeSpace's tenants through service agreements. HomeSpace currently manages 500 units located across 22 communities throughout Calgary.

To support the efforts of its affordable housing sector, the City of Calgary has made parcels of land available to affordable housing developers at book cost. Six parcels of land have been provided under this program to date. Of these, three were provided to HomeSpace for the purpose of building specialized affordable housing. To expedite the development of these City-owned parcels, the City of Calgary has also teamed up with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to direct seed funding and an expedited permitting and approvals process to the successful proponents.

Finally, Calgary's efforts to increase their supply of affordable housing was aided by an integrated, community-wide philanthropic campaign, called the Resolve campaign, which was launched in 2012 to help raise nearly \$70 million of in-kind and cash contributions to support nearly two dozen affordable housing developments, including several permanent supportive housing projects. According to campaign leaders, this funding was used to leverage \$148 million in additional funding invested in these projects by the Government of Alberta.

Over the last decade close to 600 units of permanent supportive housing have been developed in Calgary.