

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES FOR HOUSELESS PERSONS (T. CARTMELL)

Recommendation

That the April 8, 2024, Community Services report CS01912, be received for information.

Requested Action	Information only		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Healthy City		
City Plan Values	BELONG. LIVE. THRIVE. ACCESS.		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Community safety and well-being
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CS01790 - Providing Social Services Across Edmonton CS01762 - Edmonton's Approach: Supporting Those Experiencing Homelessness 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 31, 2023, CS01732, Corporate Homelessness Plan - Research and Project Update June 19, 2023, CS01453, Multi - Disciplinary and Outreach Ecosystem 		

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the May 2, 2023 Urban Planning Committee meeting, Councillor T. Cartmell made the following inquiry:

Can Administration provide a report to Committee listing all houseless persons-serving social agencies present in the Boyle Street, McCauley and Central McDougall neighbourhoods; the services each agency provides; the number of clients served; and the level of financial support received from the City of Edmonton?

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES FOR HOUSELESS PERSONS (T. CARTMELL)

Executive Summary

- There are 17 organizations in the Boyle Street, McCauley and Central McDougall neighborhoods that provide 135 services across multiple locations, many of which also provide outreach services in other neighbourhoods.
- The City of Edmonton has provided funding to 10 of the 17 homelessness serving organizations in Boyle Street, McCauley and Central McDougall neighborhoods.
- The City of Edmonton provides funding through a variety of grant programs and at the direction of Council.
- Houseless (homeless)¹ persons-serving organizations provide a wide variety of services that range from fulfilling basic needs of shelter, food and hygiene to legal and cultural services.
- Services provided by the organizations included in this report are often not limited to only those experiencing homelessness.
- The data gathered was focused on municipally-funded programs, as generally, this information is only available to the program funder. Many organizations receive financial support from the provincial and federal governments along with private sponsorships and donations.

REPORT

The homeless-serving system of care in Edmonton is diverse and designed to respond to a variety of unique needs and circumstantial barriers people face in trying to access safe, appropriate and affordable housing. This report identifies the range of corresponding services needed to support Edmontonians experiencing homelessness. There are 17 social service organizations that support individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the Boyle Street, McCauley and Central McDougall neighbourhoods, which provide 135 services in the area (Attachment 1).

Homelessness in Edmonton Communities

Social Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

In order to address the unique challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness, there are a broad range of social services required to effectively respond. Some of those services include:

- Outreach services to people in encampments and other unsheltered situations across the Edmonton area who need access to essential health and social services to survive;
- Emergency shelter and drop-in day services to help people meet basic needs, including shelters for people fleeing domestic violence (hygiene, food, shelter);
- Income Support provided by the Government of Alberta or other financial empowerment services;
- Housing programs to connect people with a variety of housing options, offered by a number of organizations funded and coordinated by Homeward Trust Edmonton;

¹ The goal of Administration is to use respectful, dignified, and accurate language when discussing a person or family's housing situation. While homelessness continues to be a standard term nationally, some community members in Edmonton have started to use and advocate for the use of the word houseless. There is a diversity of perspectives on the language and it remains Administration's intention to use person-first language and to characterize houselessness or homelessness as a temporary condition that does not define an individual's identity.

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES FOR HOUSELESS PERSONS (T. CARTMELL)

- Bridge and transitional housing options, which provide ongoing, temporary accommodations for individuals trying to secure permanent housing;
- Employment services, which can include job training, day labour and other connections to employment;
- Health care services, which can include but is not limited to mental health and addictions services, wound care and support to manage chronic illness;
- Child care and family support services;
- Prevention services, including specific homelessness prevention initiatives, which are often tied to promoting family and community well-being and assisting people in dealing with crises as they happen;
- Cultural and social inclusion programs and services, including support for equity-seeking groups; and
- Legal services that may be needed in a variety of circumstances including navigating landlord-tenant disputes.

A person or family at risk of or experiencing homelessness may access one or a combination of the many services listed above, in order to resolve their homelessness and attain permanent housing.

Financial Information

Types of City Funding

The City of Edmonton distributed \$10.6 million of one-time funding in 2022, \$10.2 million of one-time funding in 2023 and \$3.3 million annually from 2023-2025 to homeless-serving organizations across Edmonton. This total of \$22.2 million is provided through a variety of funding streams:

- The Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program is a joint municipal and provincial program that promotes social inclusion and equity by funding preventive programs and services, community development initiatives, and social infrastructure.
 - Poverty reduction and homelessness prevention is one of four key priorities for this program.
- Community Investment Operating Grants (CIOG), provide operating assistance to Edmonton's non-profit organizations who are working towards increasing social inclusion and increasing equitable access to participation.
- Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) grants fund initiatives or projects which address emergent community needs and make Edmonton a more inclusive city and improve community safety and well-being.
- Emerging Immigrant & Refugee Communities (EIRC) Grants provide funding to enhance social inclusion, growth and development of ethnocultural immigrant and refugee community groups.
- Operating Grants for Indigenous-led Organizations provide funding to promote the resurgence of Indigenous Peoples' culture, language, identity and ceremony, in addition to supporting education, training, employment and economic security for Indigenous peoples.

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES FOR HOUSELESS PERSONS (T. CARTMELL)

- Revitalization Grants provide funding to residents, business owners, operators and non-profit organizations to fulfill the goals of the City's Neighbourhood Revitalization Initiative.
- Senior Centre Investment Program (SCIP) grants provide funding for the operation, facility conservation and emergence of seniors centres.
- Service contracts for one-time funding distributed from the City's Social Development branch.

A complete list of annual and one-time funding provided to homelessness serving organizations by the City can be found in Attachment 1.

Community Insight

Recent work to develop the upcoming Community and Public Service Committee reports on May 21, 2024 (CS01853 - Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness) and June 17, 2024 (CS01759 - Corporate Homelessness Plan) included significant research, stakeholder meetings, partnership development and engagement with the homeless serving sector and people with lived and living experience. Findings from the May 31, 2023 Community and Public Services Committee report CS01732 - Corporate Homelessness Plan - Research and Project Update found that 80 per cent of participants felt that more should be done to address homelessness in Edmonton and 73 per cent felt that regardless of the responsibility of other orders of government, the City of Edmonton should do more than it currently does to address homelessness.

Insights from lived and living experience engagements and research from the Enhanced Encampment and Unsheltered Homelessness Response Plan (April 11, 2023 Community and Public Services Committee report CS01637) and Edmonton Affordable Housing Needs Assessment² indicate that:

- Continued provision of social services is deemed significant by people who reside in encampments. Of 86 individuals who participated in the study, 91 per cent noted that they have contact with social services staff at drop-in centers and 81 per cent at shelters. More than half of the participants cited their decision to stay outside was influenced by lack of transportation and an inability to get to services.³
- Involvement of individuals with lived and living experience as active participants and decision makers in their housing journeys is critical to their success; services need to be responsive to individual need, with diverse and appropriate support available.

GBA+

Homeward Trust's By Name List serves as a real-time record of all known individuals currently experiencing homelessness in Edmonton. As of March 1, 2024 there are 2,868 Edmontonians experiencing homelessness, 1,585 of whom are provisionally accommodated, 737 are unsheltered, 455 use shelters and 91 are unknown. The By Names List indicates that 1,322 of the

² Affordable Housing Needs Assessment." City of Edmonton.

<https://www.edmonton.ca/sites/default/files/public-files/CoE-HousingNeedsAssessment2023.pdf?cb=1706745433>

³ "Staying Outside is Not a Preference". [Research Paper]. MAPS Alberta Capital Region.

<https://mapsab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Outside-Not-a-Preference-Final-Report-Feb-2023.pdf>

SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES FOR HOMELESS PERSONS (T. CARTMELL)

2,868 individuals identify as women and 25 identify as gender diverse (transgender, 2 spirit, non-binary and other responses).

The information found in this report highlights services that are designed specifically for, and available to, individuals experiencing homelessness. However, many individuals experiencing homelessness have intersecting identities that result in different service needs and considerations. To account for these differences, many services are issue-specific and are designed to address issues pertinent to supporting:

- People experiencing homelessness
- Low-Income People
- Newcomers/Immigrants
- Indigenous Peoples
- 2SLGBTQ+ People
- Children and Families
- Addiction Services
- People with Disabilities
- Seniors
- Women
- Youth
- Community Development
- Mental Health

Historically, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, youth, seniors, Indigenous People, newcomers and/or people with mental health or addiction issues have accounted for a large percentage of Canadians who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or in core housing need⁴. As of March 1, 2024, there are 1,650 people experiencing homelessness in Edmonton who identify as Indigenous⁵. Of those, 966 are provisionally accommodated, 219 are utilizing shelter spaces, 422 are unsheltered and 43 are in an unknown location. In Edmonton, consistent with national research, Indigenous adults and youth experience a higher rate of unsheltered homelessness, compared to non-Indigenous adults and youth. The total unsheltered indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, 422, is over 50 per cent of the total unsheltered population, 737.

Attachment

1. Social Services for People Experiencing Homelessness in Boyle Street, McCauley and Central McDougall Neighbourhoods

⁴"2SLGBTQIA+ Housing Needs and Challenges." [website]. Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. [cited October 23, 2023].

⁵ https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/homewardtrust/viz/Edmontonhomelessness/EdmontonHomelessness_1