END HOMELESSNESS WINNIPEG

5-Year Plan

2020-2025

October 2019

End Homelessness Winnipeg will collaborate with homeless-serving sectors and all levels of government to advance and measure progress toward the following 7 Targets by 2025:

CREATE



1,340 additional housing units based on identified local housing needs

HOUSE



1,519 people experiencing absolute homelessness or provisionally housed

REDUCE



Indigenous overrepresentation in emergency shelters by **50%**

SHORTEN



lengths of stays in emergency shelters so that **92%** are less than 10 days

ELIMINATE



Entries to homelessness among released inmates and youth who are in CFS care or disengaging from school

EXPAND



Use of HIFIS to **45** homeless-serving organizations and programs as part of a coordinated access system

PREVENT



90% of those served by coordinated access from re-entering homelessness

HOPE
END HOMELESSNESS
WINNIPEG

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1

Progress under the 4 Pillars: 2015-2019 3

Building on momentum: 7 Targets for 2025 4

Background 5

Accomplishments 2015-2020 7

Governance and Relationships 7

Community Entity for Reaching Home 9

Prevention 9

Person-Centred Supports 11

Housing Supply 13

Measurement 14

Opportunities and Challenges 16

The Cost of Homelessness 16

Homelessness in Winnipeg compared to other Western Canadian Cities 18

Is it Possible to End Homelessness? 19

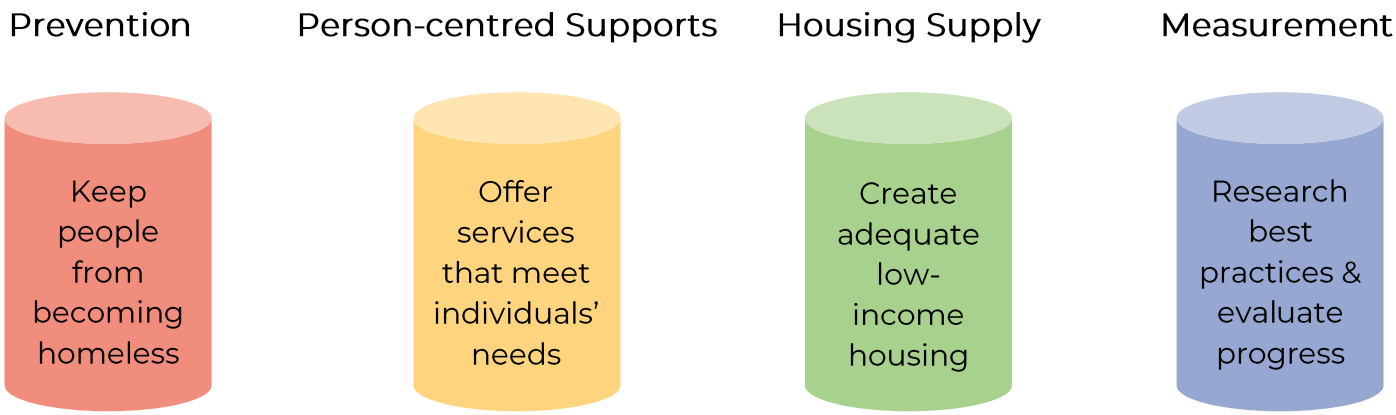
2025 Targets: Actions, Indicators and Baseline Measures 21

Appendix: Coordinated Access 26

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

Executive Summary

End Homelessness Winnipeg was established in 2015 through a community mandate to be the backbone organization leading implementation of Winnipeg's **10-Year Plan to End Homelessness**. Launched in 2014, the 10-Year Plan sets out goals for making a shift from managing homelessness with emergency responses to ending it with long-term solutions. These solutions are identified as the 4 Pillars of the 10-Year Plan:



A summary of progress under these 4 Pillars is outlined on Page 4.

End Homelessness Winnipeg's **Mission** is to create lasting solutions with our community that prevent and end homelessness, toward a **Vision** for a community where everyone has a home and the supports they need to belong.

In working toward this vision, End Homelessness Winnipeg is guided by 7 core **Values**:

- The UN Declaration that Housing is a Human Right
- The UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous Peoples
- Truth and Reconciliation as a path to ending Indigenous Homelessness
- Social inclusion and working to end all forms of discrimination and racism
- The voice of people with lived experience of homelessness
- People, organizations, and sectors working together around a common vision and shared goals
- Integrity, accountability and transparency in all that we do

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

In addition to the 10-Year Plan, its 4 Pillars, and End Homelessness Winnipeg's Mission, Vision and Values, this 5-Year Plan is informed by recent reports including:

- **Reclaiming Power and Place** - The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' final report, 2019
- **A Place Where It Feels Like Home: The Story of Tina Fontaine** - Report by The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, 2019
- **Nii'Kaanaagnaa – Our Hopes and Dreams** - A strategic initiative to address First Nations homelessness in collaboration with End Homelessness Winnipeg and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, 2019

Since April 1, 2019, End Homelessness Winnipeg serves as interim **Community Entity** for the federal government's **Reaching Home** homelessness strategy. This involves allocating over $9 million in federal funding during 2019-2020 for local priorities to reduce and end homelessness. On October 8, 2019, End Homelessness Winnipeg was recommended by the Community Advisory Board to serve as Community Entity for Reaching Home's Designated funding stream until 2025. Activities mandated by Reaching Home align with the 4 Pillars of the 10-year Plan, supporting Prevention, Housing, Measurement, as well as the System Integration and Coordinated Access required to deliver Person-centred Supports.

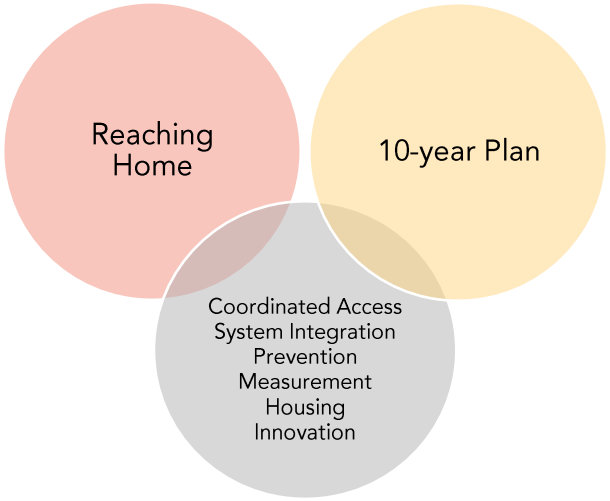




Image: Ending First Nations Homelessness Gathering

End Homelessness Winnipeg transitioned to become **an Indigenous organization** in 2019. The Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle defines an Indigenous organization as one in which 75% of the Board of Directors and 75% of staff are First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Becoming an Indigenous organization reflects End Homelessness Winnipeg's core values while ensuring that the organization responds and is directly accountable to those disproportionately affected by homelessness in Winnipeg.

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

Progress under the 4 Pillars: 2015-2019

PILLAR	GOAL	PROGRESS
Prevention	• Prevent discharges or releases by institutions and service systems (e.g. hospitals, jails, CFS) into homelessness • Prevent those who are precariously housed from becoming homeless	• Cross-sector working groups are addressing practices that have released inmates, patients or youth into homelessness • A Community Loan program model is being developed to prevent a temporary income shortfall from leading to homelessness
Person-Centred Supports	• Ensure emergency accommodation is available when needed • Establish a person-centred system of care for those who experience homelessness	• Extreme Weather Response planning connects shelters and first responders to ensure shelter during extreme weather • Gizhe Waa Ti-Sii-Win Service Expo offers individuals access to dozens of vital, dignity enhancing services under one roof to reduce barriers to access
Housing Supply	• Increase number of affordable housing units available • Maintain and improve existing accommodations accessible to those at risk of homelessness	• Cross sector Housing Supply Action Committee established to identify and respond to opportunities for housing • **Housing Models and Development Framework** and **Rental Market Inventory Report** identify needs and priorities for types of housing required
Measure-ment	• Conduct research to better understand the characteristics of those experiencing homelessness • Develop a comprehensive profile of the homeless population through data systems evaluation, monitoring and improvement	• Participating in Point-in-Time Counts (e.g. **2018 Street Census**) • Leading community-based research (e.g. **2018 Street Health Survey**) • Transitioning oversight of 2 local HIFIS (Homeless Individuals and Families Information System) data-sharing systems to facilitate integration and coordinated access

Building on momentum: 7 Targets for 2025

No organization can end homelessness on its own. End Homelessness Winnipeg engages stakeholders to work together, share resources, and build a common agenda, partnering with more than 130 organizations across sectors. Partners include emergency shelters, housing providers, community services, public service, private sector businesses and all levels of government including Indigenous governments. Building on momentum established and knowledge gathered since 2015, End Homelessness Winnipeg will collaborate with these partners to achieve the following seven goals, measuring progress toward identified targets for 2025:

GOAL	TARGET
Create additional housing units based on identified local housing needs	**1,340** additional housing units created
House people experiencing absolute homelessness or provisionally housed	**1,519** people housed
Reduce overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the emergency shelter system	Reduce numbers of Indigenous people staying in emergency shelters by **50%**
Shorten lengths of stay in emergency shelters	**92%** of emergency shelter stays are less than 10 days long
Eliminate the entry of individuals into homelessness from institutions and systems	**Prevent** entry to homelessness among released inmates and among youth who are in CFS care or disengaged from school
Expand HIFIS and implement a coordinated access system	**45** homeless-serving organizations and programs using HIFIS and the coordinated access system.
Prevent individuals served by the coordinated access system from returning to homelessness	**90%** of those served by coordinated access remain stably housed

Background

In 2012, United Way Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council established a community task force to develop a plan to end homelessness in Winnipeg. The task force included Indigenous leaders and people from multiple sectors, including the Government of Canada, Province of Manitoba, City of Winnipeg, private sector, and community organizations. Over the course of two years, the task force consulted with more than 160 people (including 80 with lived experience of homelessness), 119 local organizations, four organizations addressing homelessness in other Canadian cities, and the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. The task force also conducted research into homelessness and familiarized itself with the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

The result was Winnipeg's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness Launched in 2014, the 10-Year Plan calls on the community to coordinate and align approaches to make the shift from managing homelessness to ending it. The 10-Year Plan also recommended that a new organization be created to provide backbone support for implementing the plan. The task force envisioned that this new organization would use a Collective Impact approach, engaging diverse partners across sectors. Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of cross-sector actors to a common agenda for solving a targeted social problem through alignment and differentiation of effort.[1] This model has five necessary conditions:

- **A Common Agenda** and shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem.
- **Shared Measurement,** collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants to ensure activities remain aligned, decisions are data-driven, and participants hold each other accountable.
- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities** by stakeholders that are identified and coordinated through a plan of action.
- **Continuous Communication** across the many players in order to build trust and assure mutual objectives.
- **A Backbone Organization** to coordinate and manage the day-to-day operations and implementation of work.

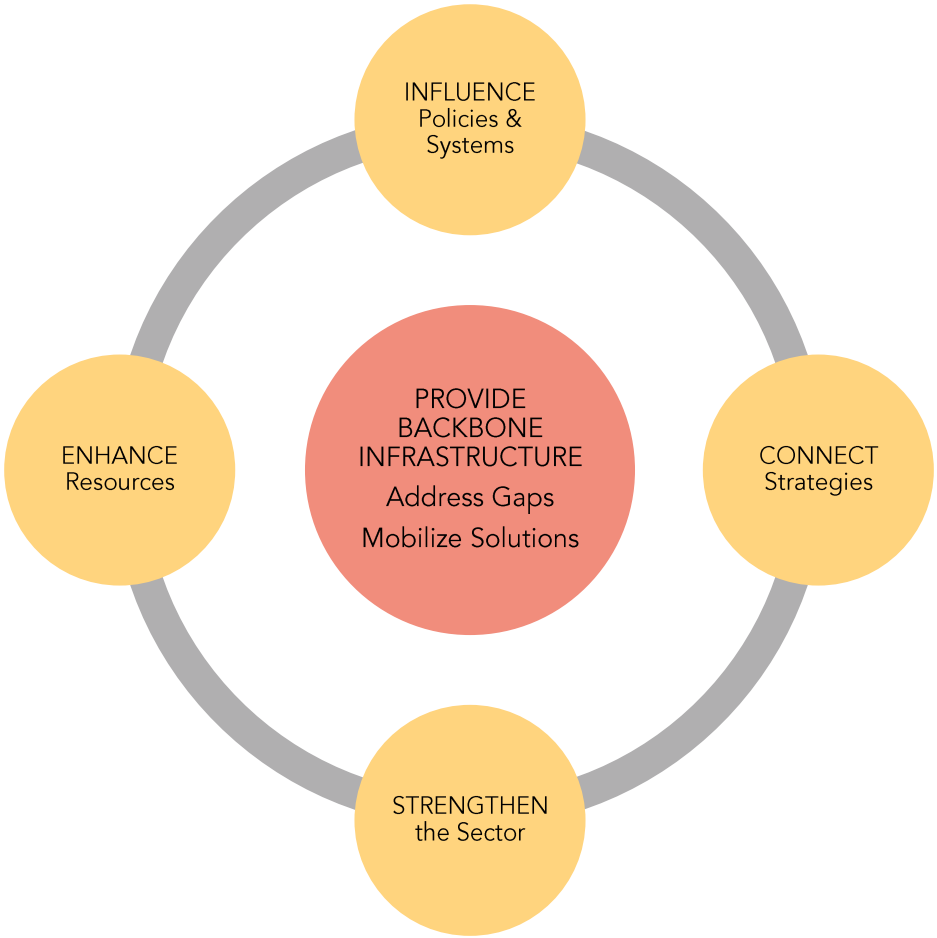
United Way Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council developed a 5-Year Business Plan (2015-2020) to provide core funding for the new organization, securing commitments from four core funders: United Way Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg, the Government of Manitoba, and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Thanks to this work, End Homelessness Winnipeg opened its doors in 2015.

[1] Collective Impact Forum (2013). "Collective Impact Terminology." Retrieved from https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/collective-impact-terminology

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

As the backbone organization leading implementation of the 10-Year Plan, End Homelessness Winnipeg's core functions are to:

- **Provide Backbone Infrastructure:** Convene partners to address gaps and mobilize solutions
- **Influence Systems:** Shape the design and implementation of policies and services to end homelessness
- **Connect Strategies:** Coordinate funding, services and other resources and align plans
- **Strengthen the Sector:** Build professional capacity to address homelessness as a coordinated response
- **Enhance Resources:** Secure and develop funding sources, data, metrics, research, training, tools and frameworks to increase knowledge, build understanding, inform decision making and drive action



Accomplishments 2015-2020

The 10-year Plan set out goals and actions for the development and governance of End Homelessness Winnipeg, including goals for each of the plan's Four Pillars. Significant progress has been made in each of these areas during the first five years of the plan's implementation.

Governance and Relationships



In its first year of operation, End Homelessness Winnipeg developed its bylaws, established a Board of Directors, secured office space, created job descriptions, recruited a staff of six, and established operational policies and procedures. Annual Reports to the Community provide highlights of the start-up phase and document the organization's progress and results. [2]

Working from a Collective Impact approach, End Homelessness Winnipeg actively partners with more than 130 local organizations to identify common goals and coordinate strategies. Partners include emergency shelters, community and social service agencies, housing developers and housing providers, public services, and all levels of government including Indigenous governments.



Reconciliation

End Homelessness Winnipeg's core values include Truth and Reconciliation as a path to end Indigenous homelessness.

The organization hosted the 2017 Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness conference, welcoming more than 300 participants to learn about the Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada that End Homelessness Winnipeg staff helped to develop.[3]

[2] Reports can be retrieved from End Homelessness Winnipeg's website: http://endhomelessnesswinnipeg.ca

[3] Thistle, J. (2017). "Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada." Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Retrieved from https://www.homelesshub.ca

In partnership with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, End Homelessness Winnipeg has engaged the community to develop a strategy for ending First Nations homelessness in Winnipeg and Manitoba. The strategy will guide implementation of culturally appropriate services and programs to support those in transition between urban and rural or remote First Nations communities who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

End Homelessness Winnipeg has signed the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord: "a living document to guide our shared commitment to the Journey of Reconciliation in Winnipeg, rooted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action."[4]

As an Indigenous backbone organization, End Homelessness Winnipeg is able to identify and coordinate culturally appropriate solutions to reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous people among those who experience homelessness.

Centring Lived Experience

In alignment with its core values and as proposed in Manitoba Housing's 2017 Public Consultations,[5] End Homelessness Winnipeg engages individuals with lived and living experience of homelessness in all aspects of its planning processes, to build deeper understanding of issues related to homelessness and to develop effective solutions. Recent examples include:

- Involving people with lived experience to develop and participate in a Community Sector Leadership Council that will identify gaps and priorities for addressing homelessness in Winnipeg.
- Engaging with individuals who panhandle to include their needs and perspectives in recommendations for addressing unsafe panhandling at intersections.
- Obtaining feedback from 250 individuals with lived and living experience of homelessness about how the Community Entity should allocate federal homelessness funding in Winnipeg.

---

[4] City of Winnipeg (2017). "Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord." Retrieved from http://winnipeg.ca/indigenous/WIA/default.stm

[5] "Engage those with lived experience of homelessness to develop a deeper understanding of homeless issues, to aid the development of effective solutions." Manitoba Housing (2017). "What We Heard from Manitoba Housing's Public Consultations." Retrieved from https://www.gov.mb.ca/housing/pubs/what-we-heard.pdf

Community Entity for Reaching Home

In April 2019, End Homelessness Winnipeg became the interim **Community Entity**, responsible for administering more than $9 million in annual funding from the Government of Canada's **Reaching Home** Homelessness Strategy. The transition to Community Entity required securing new office space, hiring 10 new staff, screening funding applications from 20 local organizations and signing funding agreements supporting 30 projects designed to reduce homelessness in Winnipeg.

As Community Entity, End Homelessness Winnipeg is positioned to align local and federal funding and strategies to achieve tangible outcomes that can prevent and end homelessness. Serving as Community Entity strengthens End Homelessness Winnipeg's ability to strengthen the homeless-serving sector, connecting strategies and services to address gaps and mobilize solutions.

Reaching Home priorities include reducing chronic homelessness by 50% within 10 years and establishing a system of Coordinated Access to connect individuals with housing that meets their needs. These goals are aligned with the goals and targets of this 5-Year Plan.



Image: Reaching Home

Prevention

Reintegration from Corrections

End Homelessness Winnipeg's Reintegration and Homelessness Prevention (RIHP) working group brings together health, welfare, corrections and Indigenous representatives to assess current policies and procedures and research best practices for pre-release planning to reintegrate individuals to the community once they have served their sentences.

RIHP provided support for the 2-year Manitouwabi demonstration project, funded by the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Manitouwabi hired 6 case workers at 4 organizations to support people before and up to one year after release from corrections. As of April 10, 2018, Manitouwabi had received 175 referrals and was working at capacity with 50 individuals. The project brought to light many challenges facing individuals who are reintegrating to the community following incarceration, highlighting the need for housing supports among those exiting the criminal justice system.

Manitouwabi was funded for a third year through the federal Reaching Home Strategy in April 2019.

RIHP's current focus is how to better connect individuals who are discharged from provincial corrections with social and housing assistance. The working group has researched the approach implemented in British Columbia, where social assistance, health and corrections have developed an integrated system to support and prevent homelessness among those reintegrating to the community upon release.

Centralized Intake



End Homelessness Winnipeg funded the development of Doorways, managed by the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre, as a one-stop walk-in access centre for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Doorways connects with emergency shelters and housing agencies to provide centralized intake, assessment, and referrals.

Community Loan Program



More than one-third of respondents in the 2018 Street Census identified eviction, inability to pay rent, or job loss as the reason for their most recent experience of homelessness.[6] End Homelessness Winnipeg has also collaborated with the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre to research best practices in "rent banks," or community loan programs, that can prevent entry to homelessness as a result of a short-term cash flow problem.

Based on this evidence, End Homelessness Winnipeg funded the development of a local model for this style of eviction prevention in partnership with SEED Winnipeg and the Aboriginal Health & Wellness Centre. Administrative and operating manuals have been developed for a demonstration project being conducted in 2019-2020 that will support those at risk of homelessness due to a short-term inability to pay rent, allowing these individuals to sustain secure housing.

[6] Brandon, J. et al (2018). "The Winnipeg Street Census 2018: Final Report."

Gizhe Waa Ti-Sii-Win Service Delivery Expo

The Annual Gizhe Waa Ti-Sii-Win Service Delivery Expo brings together housing, social, financial, public, and health care services under one roof to provide immediate access to identification, housing and assistance applications, income tax filing, and more. Individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness can face barriers to accessing these services due to transportation, time, cost or availability. For those at risk of homelessness, the Expo offers vital connection to services and supports that can prevent loss of housing or entry into homelessness. The first Expo in May 2018 welcomed more than 500 guests to the Neeginaan Centre. The second, held in May 2019 at the Salvation Army Weetamah, welcomed more than 750.

Person-Centred Supports

The Expo also provides **Person-centred Supports,** removing barriers to service access. Guests can combine and tailor services to address their unique needs.

Gizhe Waa Ti-Sii-Win 2019
Service Delivery Expo Highlights:

- **750** guests
- **$170,000** in income tax benefits filed
- **89** birth certificates applied for
- **60** eyeglasses prescriptions filled

The Expo facilitates access to entitlements and personal identification documents, including access to CCP and OAS for seniors, access to Treaty and Status cards for Indigenous peoples; and waiver of payment for identification documents. The Expo also builds positive relationships and mutual awareness among local service providers, enhancing capacity for connecting individuals with other appropriate services throughout the year.

Extreme Weather Response

End Homelessness Winnipeg's Extreme Weather Response Committee employs a person-centred approach to coordinated service deployment, facilitating collaboration and communication during periods of extreme hot and cold weather. The Committee and its Extreme Cold and Heat Homeless-Centred Response Plans help to ensure that those who experience homelessness - and are thus vulnerable to exposure - have access to the resources and services they need to prevent heat and cold related injury or illness.

Strategic Solutions for Local Concerns

End Homelessness Winnipeg funded the Shelter Transition Support demonstration project at Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre to assist people moving from emergency shelters to transitional housing with supports.

End Homelessness Winnipeg has also facilitated collaborations among service providers, individuals with lived experience and City of Winnipeg staff to develop strategies that support public safety in responding to risks associated with activities such as panhandling at busy intersections or sleeping in temporary encampments.

End Homelessness Winnipeg recently conducted research and engagement to assess local priorities and capacity for additional 24/7 Safe Spaces in Winnipeg, as identified through a motion by the City's Executive Policy Committee in response to the Illicit Drug Task Force Report.[7] The results of this research and engagement will support local decision-makers to implement strategic and evidence-based responses to local concerns.

Winnipeg Outreach Network

End Homelessness Winnipeg partners with the Winnipeg Outreach Network (WON) to provide backbone support for convening and coordinating outreach services. End Homelessness Winnipeg helps to produce, update and distribute the WON Resource Guide: a comprehensive listing of services and resources to support those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



[7] Illicit Drug Task Force (2019). "Recommendations to reduce the use and effects of illicit drugs within Manitoba's communities." Retrieved from https://www.winnipeg.ca/cao/pdfs/2019-Illicit-Drug-Task-Force-Report.pdf

Housing Supply

End Homelessness Winnipeg has produced a **Private Rental Housing Market Inventory Report** and **Housing Models and Development Framework** to identify local housing inventory and predict demand. [8]

Housing Models Development Framework - Projected Housing Need in Winnipeg by 2025:

- Low estimate (status quo): **1,340** units required
- Medium estimate: **1,930** units required
- High estimate: **3,860** units required

The Report and Framework estimate the types and numbers of new housing units necessary to end homelessness in Winnipeg. As the market and supply change, these numbers are revisited and updated.

Housing Supply Action Committee

End Homelessness Winnipeg's **Housing Supply Action Committee** brings private sector champions, housing service providers and public sector officials together to build relationships and explore potential solutions, including innovative housing models.

The Committee's first project will develop transitional housing for women and children fleeing violence. This project engages local Indigenous and women's organizations to guide development.



Transitional Housing: Building Concept

End Homelessness Winnipeg has also funded research and advised the City of Winnipeg on housing strategy and measures such as inclusionary housing and inclusionary zoning, which can facilitate development of housing units needed to prevent and reduce homelessness.

[8] End Homelessness Winnipeg (2017). "Private Rental Housing Market Inventory Report." Retrieved from https://endhomelessnesswinnipeg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Private-Rental-Market-Housing-Inventory-Report.pdf. End Homelessness Winnipeg (2018). "Housing Models and Development Framework." Retrieved from https://endhomelessnesswinnipeg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Housing-Models-and-Development-Framework-Edition-2.pdf

Measurement

Point-In-Time Counts

A Point-in-Time Count is a strategy to help determine the extent of homelessness in a community at a single point in time. While it is impossible to conduct an exact count of all those experiencing homelessness, a Point-in-Time Count provides a snapshot that can allow us to better understand the nature and extent of homelessness in Winnipeg. End Homelessness Winnipeg supported other local organizations for the 2015 and 2018 Point-in-Time Counts and resulting Street Census Reports and is leading implementation for the 2020 Count.

Built for Zero Canada

End Homelessness Winnipeg is one of 9 new communities recently selected to participate in the **Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C) campaign,** a national collaborative change effort to end chronic homelessness through a data-driven approach. 33 BFZ-C communities across Canada receive training and support from subject matter experts on collecting key data points to measure entries into and exits from homelessness by:

- Establishing a **By-Name-List** of individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Winnipeg
- Implementing **Coordinated Access**: a systems-based, data-driven approach to prioritizing those most in need and matching them with appropriate housing and supports

HIFIS

The By-Name-List will be created from data collected through the **Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)** secure online data sharing platform. HIFIS tracks individuals' journeys out of homelessness, from shelter admissions to housing placements. HIFIS also supports data sharing, which facilitates analysis and research as well as more timely and appropriate care.

As of April 2019, End Homelessness Winnipeg oversees and administers the HIFIS platform used by two local systems: HIPW, used by Winnipeg's emergency shelters; and Doorways, for Housing First programs. In 2019-2020, End Homelessness Winnipeg is integrating these two systems and onboarding 12 more organizations, with plans to add between six and eight new agencies every year for the next four years. HIFIS integration and expansion will help in creating a by-name-list individuals experiencing homelessness. HIFIS will also serve as the data collection and management tool for Coordinated Access (Appendix).



Street Health Survey

In 2018, End Homelessness Winnipeg led implementation and analysis for the **Winnipeg Street Health Survey**, in partnership with 18 local organizations.[9] Surveyors interviewed 406 individuals experiencing homelessness to gather information on their self-reported health, housing and social service needs. The Street Health Survey Final report was launched in February 2019 and widely distributed across sectors and online. A series of Fact Sheets drawn from the survey report are being created to support knowledge translation across communities.

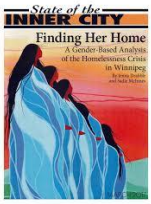


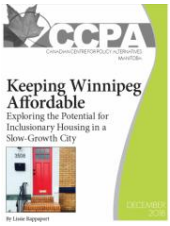
Research and Strategy

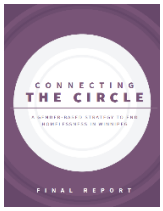
End Homelessness Winnipeg has supported and advised on a range of other recent community-based research studies, strategies and reports, including:

- Here and Now: Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness (2016)
- Finding Her Home: A Gender-Based Analysis of the Homelessness Crisis in Winnipeg (2017)
- Keeping Winnipeg Affordable: Exploring the Potential for Inclusionary Housing in a Slow-Growth City (2018)
- Connecting the Circle: A Gender-Based Strategy to End Homelessness in Winnipeg (2019)[10]









---

[9]Isaak, C. et al (2019). "2018 Winnipeg Street Health Survey: Final Report." End Homelessness Winnipeg. Retrieved from https://endhomelessnesswinnipeg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2018-Winnipeg-Street-Health-Survey-Final-Report.pdf

[10] Retrieved from: http://www.hereandnowwinnipeg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/HereNow-Updated-FIN_WEB.pdf; https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2017/03/Finding_Her_Home_%20low-res.pdf; https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2018/12/Keeping_Winnipeg_Affordable_Inclusionary_Housing.pdf; https://wcwrc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Connecting-the-Circle-Full-Web.pdf

Opportunities and Challenges

The Cost of Homelessness

As of 2013, homelessness cost the Canadian economy $7.05 billion per year.[11] These costs include interactions that people experiencing homelessness have with emergency shelters, community support services, first responders, health care providers, and the criminal justice system. A 2012 analysis reviewed previous Canadian studies to determine the average monthly costs for sheltering individuals in different settings, demonstrating the cost effectiveness of social housing:[12]



$200	$701	$1932	$4333	$10900
Social Housing	Rent Supplement	Shelter Bed	Provincial Jail	Hospital Bed

In Winnipeg, the At Home/Chez Soi Project found that Housing First (HF) interventions cost less than half the annual costs of homelessness, even when factoring for the costs of salaries of front-line staff and supervisors, program expenses such as travel, rent, utilities, etc. and monthly rent supplements:[13]

At Home/Chez Soi annual cost analysis:

- **$45,500** To remain in homelessness
- **$18,840** Housing First for individuals with high need
- **$12,552** Housing First for individuals with moderate need

[11] Gaetz, S. et al (2013): "The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013." Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Retrieved from https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/SOHC2103.pdf

[12] Gaetz, S (2012): "The Real Cost of Homelessness: Can We Save Money by Doing the Right Thing?" Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Retrieved from https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/costofhomelessness_paper21092012.pdf

[13] Distasio, J. et al (2014): "At Home/Chez Soi Project: Winnipeg Site Final Report." Mental Health Commission of Canada. Retrieved from: http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca.

Other Winnipeg-based research has found that providing permanent supportive housing to individuals who were chronically homeless resulted in an 82% reduction in contact hours with Winnipeg Police Services and a 53% decline in emergency department use.[14] Evaluating the effectiveness of a local supportive housing complex, annual costs were identified as approximately $9,485/person ($7,404 with food deducted). Comparing this investment with national data, it was found for every $10 invested in congregate housing, there is a potential cost savings of between $70-126.[15]

More recently, Regina's HF program, HOMES, has demonstrated significant reduction in public systems interaction for 49 clients served.[16] The yearly cost of serving individuals in this cohort was estimated at $31,000 per year before entering the program and dropped 60% to an estimated $13,000 after participants entered the program.

While further cost analysis research could sharpen our understanding of the price of homelessness in Winnipeg, local, comparative and national data build a strong case for the cost-effectiveness of HF, social housing and supportive housing as long-term solutions for individuals who experience homelessness, particularly when compared to the costs of emergency responses such as shelters, emergency rooms and police interactions.

REGINA HOMES	
SYSTEM INTERACTION	COST REDUCTION
Detox Visits	-93%
Arrests	-89%
Police Calls	-81%
ER Visits	-75%
EMS	-66%
Days in Hospital	-40%

[14] Charette, C. et al (2016). "The Bell Hotel Supportive Housing Project" in *Exploring Effective Systems Responses to Homelessness* (Eds. Nichols, N., Doberstein, C.). Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Retrieved from https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/Systems_Book_-_Web.pdf

[15] Smirl, E (2016). "Summary Evaluation of The Madison Congregate Housing." CCPA. Retrieved from https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba%20Office/2016/09/Madison%20Summary.pdf

[16] Everyone is Home: A 5-Year Strategy to End Chronic/Episodic Homelessness in Regina (2019). Retrieved from http://endhomelessnessregina.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/P2EH-Full-Final-0610.pdf

Homelessness in Winnipeg compared to other Western Canadian Cities

Winnipeg's most recent Street Census encountered 1,519 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night in April 2018. The authors of the Street Census 2018 Final Report estimate that at least another 3,000 people in the city are experiencing "hidden homelessness:" couch surfing or staying in hotels or places not intended for habitation and thus out of reach of the surveyors.[17]

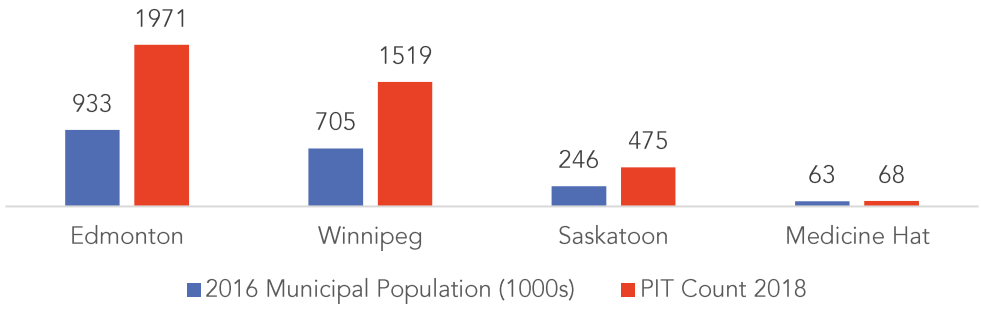
April 2018 Winnipeg Street Census:

- **204** individuals unsheltered/sleeping rough
- **392** in emergency shelters
- **895** provisionally accommodated: transitional housing, health/justice institutions, friends/family
- **3000** estimated "hidden" homeless

Two-thirds of those surveyed in the 2018 Street Census were Indigenous. Two-thirds were male, and two-thirds were over 30 years of age. It is estimated that women, Two Spirit and non-binary individuals were under-represented in the survey, as they are more likely to experience hidden homelessness.

In recent years communities across Canada have conducted point-in-time counts using similar though not identical methods. This makes it possible to compare the proportion of residents experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg with the proportion in other cities.

The chart below shows the 2016 populations of Winnipeg and three municipalities in Western Canada (Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Medicine Hat) along with the number of people identified during the 2018 point-in-time counts in each of these cities.



Data sources: Statistics Canada Population and Dwelling Count Highlights Table, 2016 Census; 2018 Point-in-Time Counts

Of the four cities, Winnipeg's number of counted homeless individuals is highest compared to its overall population, while Medicine Hat's is the lowest.

[17] Brandon, J. et al (2018). The Winnipeg Street Census 2018: Final Report, p.9.

While each of these four cities has developed a unique, local approach for ending homelessness, they all have a non-profit organization with a distinct mandate to end homelessness. In 2016, three of these organizations (Edmonton, Saskatoon and Medicine Hat) also served as community entities for federal homelessness funding. Two (Edmonton and Medicine Hat) operate housing. The chart at the right compares the organizations' total revenues for 2016 (the most recent year for which complete and comparative data was available). Edmonton's Homeward Trust had the highest revenue –$43.13M – of which $32M was provided by the province, $9M by the federal government, and $1.3M by the municipal government.



In 2019-20, End Homelessness Winnipeg is administering $9 million in federal Reaching Home funding and operating with core funding of $850,000.

Is it Possible to End Homelessness?

Homelessness is a complex social issue reflecting a wide range of circumstances and experiences. Certainly it may not be possible to prevent every individual from experiencing a life-changing emergency or trauma that results in the loss of their home. However, it is certainly possible to end chronic homelessness.[18]

Reaching Home definition of chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who have experienced either:

- At least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year
- Recurrent homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)

[18] Government of Canada (2019). "Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives." Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/directives.html

In 2015, Medicine Hat announced that they had ended chronic homelessness. Two years later, CBC quoted Medicine Hat Community Housing Society's manager saying, "We absolutely have people in our community still experience homelessness…Years ago we'd have people living in the shelter for years, now it's measured in days and weeks."[19]

The key elements of Medicine Hat's success in reducing chronic homelessness were coordinated access, a by-name list, centralized intake, and systems planning.[20] These same strategies are being replicated in communities across Canada, including in Winnipeg, where End Homelessness Winnipeg is leading the change through expansion of HIFIS and participation in Built for Zero Canada.

The 5-Year Plan's 7 Targets for 2025 will move Winnipeg closer to ending chronic homelessness. But perhaps the biggest challenge facing End Homelessness Winnipeg is the expectation that, by March 2025, the work of ending homelessness will be complete or be self-sustaining. While communities have demonstrated promising strategies to reduce the numbers of people entering homelessness or experiencing chronic homelessness, there will always be a need to support those who lose their homes in finding and maintaining stable housing.

End Homelessness's work leading the homeless-serving sector and involving stakeholders from all sectors may not end in five years. However, the work will change as Winnipeg makes the shift from managing homelessness through emergency responses to preventing and reducing it through long-term, sustainable and measurable solutions. Together we can end homelessness in Winnipeg.

---

[19] Lawrynuik, S. "Medicine Hat maintaining homeless-free status 2-years on," (2017). CBC News. Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/medicine-hat-homeless-free-update-1.3949030,

[20] Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (2019). "Bright Spot: Medicine Hat is proving functional zero is achievable." Retrieved from caeh.ca/bright-spot-medicine-hat/

2025 Targets: Actions, Indicators and Baseline Measures

TARGET	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	BASELINE MEASURES
CREATE  **1,340** additional housing units based on identified local housing needs	• Build fund development capacity • Establish a financing model for new housing • Revise the **Housing Models & Development Framework** to reflect current data on housing need • Develop a master plan to create 1,340 units • Leverage partnerships with developers/ funders/service providers to build housing units • Engage with governments to ensure funding criteria & policies for new housing meet needs of those experiencing homelessness • Collaborate with the City of Winnipeg to inform its new poverty reduction strategy	• # of currently available housing units • # of additional housing units projected to be required	• Transitional housing: **573** • Rooming houses & SROs: **1,424** • Permanent supportive housing: **127** • Social housing: **13,808** • Private market rental: **61,999** • Transitional housing: **220** • Permanent supportive housing: **200** • Social housing: **470** • Private market rental: **450**
HOUSE  **1,519** people experiencing absolute homelessness or provisionally housed	• Leverage partnerships with major providers of rent-geared-to-income housing • Develop a comprehensive, reliable inventory of available housing units • Develop and implement a coordinated access system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports	• # of people experiencing homelessness • # of people chronically homeless & accessing shelters • # individuals housed in Housing First Programs	• **1,519** (2018 Street Census) • **203** (Sept 2018-Sept 2019 HIFIS data) • **408** (June 2019 CE; Sept 2019 Housing Plus data)

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

TARGET	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	BASELINE MEASURES
REDUCE  Indigenous overrepresentation in emergency shelters by **50%**	• Support/facilitate creation of 24/7 Safe Spaces • Facilitate development of transitional housing for women and children fleeing violence in partnership with Wahbung Abinoonjiag Inc. and 8 other Indigenous and women's organizations • Partner with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and others to implement the Strategy for Ending First Nations Homelessness • Collaborate with federal and provincial partners to identify and address jurisdictional gaps impacting Indigenous homelessness • Partner with Indigenous organizations to create a collaborative network that provides wraparound supports to address housing affordability, access, innovative housing and funding models • Partner with Indigenous organizations to build culturally appropriate approaches, systems, and supports for people experiencing homelessness • Partner with Indigenous organizations to build housing and increase access to housing	• # of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness • % of individuals experiencing homelessness who stayed in shelters & were Indigenous • % of Indigenous individuals accessing emergency shelters	• **1,003** (2018 Street Census) • **45.40%** (2018 Street Census) • **41%** (Sept 2019 HIFIS4 data)

TARGET	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	BASELINE MEASURES
SHORTEN  lengths of stays in emergency shelters so that **92%** are less than 10 days	• Understand demographics of those staying in shelters for more than 10 days to inform development of population-specific responses • Support a continuum of housing types and services: supportive, culturally-based, transitional, community, etc. • Work with emergency shelters to become more housing focussed • Transfer provincial homelessness programs and subsidies serving Winnipeg to End Homelessness Winnipeg • Create a by-name-list of individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness to facilitate coordinated access • Educate the public on issues related to homelessness, to reduce stigma and mobilize community support for inclusion and integration of people who experience homelessness	• Average length of shelter stays over previous 12 months	• **82%** of shelter stays were <10 consecutive days (Sept 2019 HIFIS data)

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

TARGET	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	BASELINE MEASURES
ELIMINATE  Entries to homelessness among released inmates and youth who are in CFS care or disengaging from school	• Finalize long-term plan to prevent discharge from provincial corrections into homelessness • Work with Winnipeg School Division and youth on strategies to prevent homelessness among students disengaging from school • Determine numbers and demographics of those being discharged from institutional settings into absolute homelessness • Identify gaps and develop a plan with partners and stakeholders to stop inflow into homelessness	• # of people with no fixed address discharged from hospital • # of unique clients whose shelter stays are due to release from justice, health, CFS • # of HF participants exiting corrections, health, CFS or education systems into housing	• **96** (Apr 2017-Mar 2018 MB Health Discharge Abstracts) • HIFIS data TBC • HIFIS data TBC
EXPAND  Use of HIFIS to **45** homeless-serving organizations and programs as part of a coordinated access system	• Identify gaps through System Mapping • Integrate shelter and Housing First HIFIS systems • Add 45 community organizations and programs to HIFIS, based on priorities identified through System Mapping and research • Develop a plan & budget for coordinated access system • Implement coordinated access processes using standardized intake and assessment tools and procedures.	• # of emergency shelters and community agencies using HIFIS and participating in coordinated access annually	• **4** service providers (3 emergency shelters; 1 transitional housing agency) as of Sept 2019

5-YEAR PLAN: 2020-2025

TARGET	ACTIONS	INDICATORS	BASELINE MEASURES
PREVENT  **90%** of those served by coordinated access from re-entering homelessness	• Participate in Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C) • Create a by-name list of people experiencing homelessness in HIFIS • Evaluate current practices and policies that contribute to people returning to homelessness • Enhance community of practice, learning and care for direct service workers • Establish community loan program to prevent people from being evicted due to one-time financial shortfall	• # of individuals previously housed, then returned to homelessness / accessing emergency shelters	• HIFIS data TBC

Appendix: Coordinated Access

The Government of Canada's Reaching Home Strategy requires all communities receiving designated funding to have a coordinated access system by March 2022.

As the Community Entity for Reaching Home, End Homelessness Winnipeg is leading development of the coordinated access system in the city over the next three years.

Reaching Home's website provides the following description of coordinated access:[21]

A coordinated access system is the process by which individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness are directed to community-level access points where trained workers use a common assessment tool to evaluate the individual or family's depth of need, prioritize them for housing support services and then help to match them to available housing focused interventions. Quality coordinated access systems share several features, including a centralized database that collects and displays real-time data on clients and available housing and supports; clear access points of entry; common assessment; standardized protocols; and resources (for example, staff) focused on ensuring that people can connect with appropriate housing and housing supports in an efficient manner.

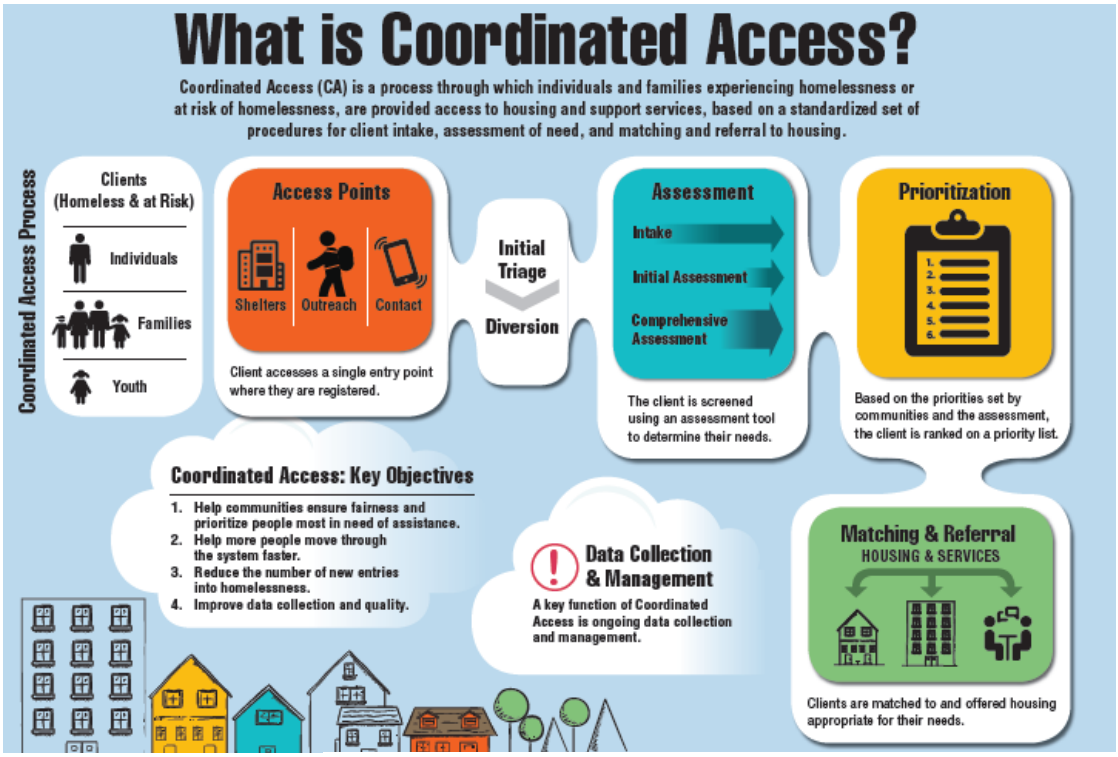


Image: Reaching Home

[21] Government of Canada (2019). "Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives." Retrieved from https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/directives.html