

Edmonton Homeless Commission

Introduction

The **mission** of the Homeless Commission is to end chronic homelessness in Edmonton by 2018.

The Homeless Commission, a Committee of Council, is the champion of *A Place to Call Home* – Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Plan.

The **mandate** of the Commission is to:

- Promote the development of permanent housing options for all individuals experiencing homelessness;
- Promote the development of appropriate emergency and transitional/interim housing options;
- Promote programs that endeavor to prevent homelessness;
- Facilitate collaboration on homelessness between all orders of government, the community and non-profit organizations;
- Facilitate collaboration between community and non-profit groups providing outreach assistance to individuals experiencing homelessness;
- Support organizations that provide ancillary and necessary support for permanent housing;
- Promote a respectful, client-centered approach to ending homelessness; and
- Identify the systemic issues/barriers underlying homelessness and propose solutions to end homelessness.



Quick Facts

In the first two years of the Plan:

- 956 permanent homes have been secured for 1,352 people who had been homeless.
- 83% of people who have been housed have kept their housing.
- Housing First clients live in 400 different buildings run by 160 different landlords.
- The October 2010 Homeless Count found 2,421 homeless Edmontonians, 21% fewer than counted two year earlier. This is the first reduction in the number of homeless since the counts began in 1999.
- In the past two years, the number of Edmontonians staying in homeless shelters has dropped by 23% from an average of 1,244 per night in October 2008 to 939 per night in October 2010.



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Summary and Highlights of 2012 Budget

The proposed 2012 budget for the Edmonton Homeless Commission is the same as 2011, plus inflation. The programs and deliverables will also be similar to 2011. They include:

- Phase II of the Social Marketing Strategy - The 'no longer with us' campaign was launched in 2011. The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness about homelessness and our efforts to end chronic homelessness.
- Launch of Welcome Home - Welcome Home is a partnership with the United Way and the Faith Community. It will match volunteers with the recently housed to provide companionship and thereby improve housing retention and build inclusive communities.
- Community Engagement - Over 800 people were consulted in the preparation of the 10 Year Plan. In 2012, we will build on the Capital Region Interfaith Housing Initiative that saw over 20 faith groups pledge their support to the 10 Year Plan.
- An update and report to the community - 2012 will mark the third year of our 10 Year Plan. A thorough evaluation of work done to date and needed changes in direction will be completed.
- Addressing systemic barriers - An ID bank was launched in 2011 and will continue in 2012. In conjunction with the Panhandling Advisory Committee and as part of the Violence Reduction Strategy, the Commission will be modeling relentless, assertive outreach to the homeless.

Opportunities and Challenges

Sustainability of the program and individuals housed will be the major challenge in 2012 and beyond. On a program basis there is the risk that we may be victims of our own success. To date, we are well ahead of the ambitious targets outlined in *A Place to Call Home*. As a result the public and government funders may assume the job is done. However, we must remember that the most recent count of homeless persons still found 2,421 people without a home. Unless Provincial funding is increased, the ability of the housing first programs to accept new clients will be constrained. People already housed through the program may require rental subsidies and supports beyond the forecasted period.

Prevention is a key pillar of *A Place to Call Home*. While there are some promising initiatives (e.g Divercity), we are not doing enough to "close the door" into homelessness. There is also the potential that with an economic downturn, we may witness an increase of people experiencing homelessness due to economic circumstances.

The **housing first philosophy** is still valid for the sub-set of the homeless with intensive, complex needs. However, our **practice** of placing them in independent, scattered apartments with supports is not suitable for this clientele. Permanent Supportive Housing, including tolerant housing will be required. To date there have been inadequate capital, operating and support dollars to enable the construction and operation of this housing. As a result they remain homeless and make extensive and costly use of our criminal justice and health care systems.

Community inclusion remains a challenge and an opportunity. The Welcome Home program will be operational in 2012. In essence, it will match volunteers from the faith community with people recently housed to provide companionship and counteract loneliness. Hopefully this program will also help build inclusive, welcoming communities. However, the location of Permanent Supportive Housing will likely be a challenge.



I was tired of being alone. I lived in a field by the airport. Slept in the middle of the field. It was a bad place because it was really windy there and I got buried by the snow.

Kelly Ridsdale

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Approved 2012 Budget (\$000)

	2010 Actual	2011 Budget	\$ Change '11-'12	2012 Budget	% Change '11-'12
Revenue & Transfers					
User Fees, Fines, Permits, etc.	\$ 123	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-
Total Revenue & Transfers	<u>123</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Expenditure & Transfers					
Personnel	-	218	37	255	17.0
Materials, Goods & Supplies	3	-	-	-	-
External Services	109	345	(26)	319	(7.5)
Travel, Training & Other Charges	11	15	-	15	-
Subtotal	123	578	11	589	1.9
Intra-municipal Recoveries	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure & Transfers	<u>123</u>	<u>578</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>589</u>	<u>1.9</u>
Net Operating Requirement	\$ -	\$ 578	\$ 11	\$ 589	1.9
Full-time Equivalents	-	2.0	-	2.0	

Budget Changes for 2012 (\$000)

Expenditures & Transfers - Changes

Personnel \$37

Movement within salary ranges, changes in benefits, and the last year of a 3-year LAPP contribution increase account for increase of \$37.

External Services (\$26)

A reduction in General Professional Services by (\$36) partially offset by inflationary increases that account for an additional \$10.

Where the Budget will be spent

