



---

**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** March 24, 2015  
**From:** Cathryn Volkering Carlile **File:** 08-4055-01/2015  
General Manager, Community Services  
**Re:** **Examining Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Options**

---

### Staff Recommendation

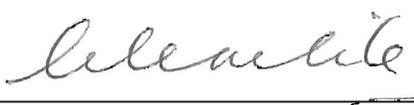
1. That, in accordance with the approach outlined in the report titled, “Examining Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Options,” dated March 24, 2015, from the General Manager of Community Services, staff be directed to advance dialogue with BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Ministry of Social Innovation, Ministry of Children and Family Development and community stakeholders about partnership opportunities to:
  - a) Identify a host agency that would enter into rental agreements on behalf of an individual with private landlords, which would include a commitment by the agency to coordinate and/or delivery wrap-around supports, life skills, housing stabilization transition support, and community support connections;
  - b) Pursue the potential development of a Cooperation Agreement to support a pilot project for low-income, at risk Richmond individuals to access adequate amounts of combined subsidies to cover monthly shelter costs in the private rental market for an extended period of time to support housing stabilization and self-sufficiency (e.g.; up to 3 years);
  - c) That Staff investigate options for securing a property through partnerships with the appropriate zoning to utilize as an interim shelter option, to be staffed and operated by a non-profit housing provider experienced in working with the targeted population and supported through a network of health and community service providers;
  - d) Develop a sustainable operating model and funding rationale for emergency and transitional housing options; and

- e) Explore the joint development of an Expression of Interest to be issued by the City, BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health for the construction of an integrated housing development that includes a continuum of emergency, transitional and supportive housing with programmed community and health service spaces for individuals who are experiencing or who at-risk of homelessness.
2. That the report be sent to the appropriate Ministers, Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Vancouver Coastal Health, BC Housing, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee, and the Richmond Homelessness Coalition.



Cathryn Volkering Carlile  
 General Manager, Community Services  
 (604-276-4068)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 <hr/>
Recreation Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Real Estate Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Law and Community Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b>	INITIALS: 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b>  <hr/>

## Staff Report

### Origin

The purpose of this report is to respond to the referral from the November 25, 2014 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee for staff to examine:

1. City assets that could be allocated to help meet the demand for extreme weather shelters;
2. Types of shelters that could accommodate families and women; and
3. Options to increase capacity for homeless shelters in the city.

This report supports Council's Term Goal #2 Community Social Services:

*To develop and implement an updated social services strategy that clearly articulates and communicates the City's roles, priorities and limitations with respect to social services issues and needs.*

- 2.5. *Development of a clearer definition of affordable housing priorities and subsequent utilization of affordable housing funding.*

This report addresses Social Development Strategy goals:

- 1.4 *Pursuing development of an emergency shelter for women and children, and*
- 1.7 *Using the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund for strategic land acquisitions and other initiatives to facilitate provision of subsidized rental housing.*

The community benefits that this report addresses are:

- Generating a full range of housing options to meet the needs of a diverse population;
- Building local capacity to sustain a coordinated response for vulnerable people; and
- Decreasing impacts to City services by ensuring that appropriate housing and support connections are available for Richmond residents.

### Analysis

The City of Richmond's Affordable Housing Strategy was adopted on May 28, 2007. The Strategy has three priorities: 1) Subsidized rental housing, 2) Low end market rental housing, and 3) Entry level homeownership. This report, and the Council referral, primarily pertain to the first priority: subsidized rental housing (i.e. housing for households with incomes of \$34,000 or less requiring deep subsidies or significant assistance). Tenant populations of subsidized housing include such groups as: individuals experiencing homelessness, addictions, mental challenges, or disabilities; single parents with limited income; seniors on fixed pensions; and other groups in need.

Of the three priorities in the Affordable Housing Strategy, subsidized rental housing requires the most funding to build and manage. The City is committed to managing its resources in partnership with the private sector, local groups, agencies and other levels of government to meet the subsidized housing needs of low income households. The City recognizes that it will not be able to solve the housing affordability and access needs alone, but can assist in the solution. Metro Vancouver estimates that Richmond's low income housing demand for a 30 year period through to 2041 is 2,520 units. Since the adoption of the Strategy, the City has secured and/or negotiated a total of 477 subsidized rental units, which are currently at different stages of development.

The Strategy is guided by the understanding that generating an effective housing system at all points of the continuum requires a multi-level government housing policy and funding commitment.

The following section of this report provides an overview of the following:

1. Current multi-level government housing policy framework and local initiatives;
2. Current conditions in Richmond;
3. Estimated cost of homelessness and potential funding approaches;
4. Examination of City assets that could be allocated to meet the demand for emergency shelters; and
5. Strategic directions and options for Council consideration to address Richmond's current emergency and transitional housing needs.

#### 1. Current Multi-level Government Housing Policy Framework and Local Initiatives

Housing policy is multi-faceted and complex. It is interconnected with economic, health and social policy outcomes involving all levels of government and the community.

The Federal Government has the legislative, regulatory and funding responsibility to help ensure an effective housing system exists for Canadians. Bill C-48 provides for a funding transfer mechanism to provinces on a per capita basis to meet housing needs along all points of the housing continuum from emergency housing to affordable homeownership.

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is the Federal Department responsible for developing, managing, and delivering social programs and services. Service Canada, an ESDC division, administers Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding through a Housing First approach. The Housing First approach focuses on providing people with direct access to permanent housing, services and support connections. It is a philosophy that is grounded in the principle that affordable, stable and permanent housing is a basic human right that is most successful when coupled with community-based services that meet individual needs. Also, the approach acknowledges that:

1. Local communities are best placed to identify and address local issues; and

2. Homelessness is a complex issue that requires collaboration with multiple partners to develop viable solutions.

As of 2014, Service Canada has committed to providing \$600 million in the next five years across Canada by disbursing Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding through regional community entities to local communities to develop and employ housing and service solutions through a Housing First approach to address homelessness.

BC Housing is charged with the Provincial mandate to oversee, administer, and fund affordable housing options in British Columbia. It also administers Homelessness Prevention Plan (HPP) funding to offer people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with portable rent supplements to assist them in accessing private market rental housing. Richmond is one of 32 BC communities receiving HPP funding. The Richmond program began receiving funding in 2014 and is administered by Chimo Community Services Society. The program assists four main groups of people:

1. Youth transitioning out of foster care;
2. Women who have experienced violence or are at risk of violence;
3. People leaving correctional and hospital systems; and
4. Individuals who identify as Aboriginal.

Metro Vancouver is the regional community entity for HPS funding administration and hosts the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH). The RSCH provides regional coordination to local housing planning tables.

In 2011, Richmond Homelessness Coalition (RHC) was formed as a local multi-stakeholder housing planning table, in which the City is involved. The RHC works with the RSCH, all levels of government, local non-profit housing and service providers, faith communities, businesses, and local residents to address homelessness issues in Richmond through an action-oriented working group model. The RHC identified five priorities through a multi-stakeholder engagement process:

1. Creating a Drop-in Centre as a support connection hub for individuals who are vulnerable, at-risk of homelessness, or experiencing homelessness (Current status: Opened October 2012 at St. Alban's Church);
2. Increasing capacity with local Outreach Workers (Current status: Developing a coordinated outreach response through partnership with Chimo Community Services Society, Ministry of Social Development-Integrated Outreach, RCMP, Vancouver Coastal Health, and City of Richmond- Joint Operations Team);
3. Developing adequate stock of supportive and supported housing options (Current status: Options addressed in this report);
4. Building on existing youth services to meet the needs of vulnerable youth (Current status: Completed a Youth Housing Survey and continuing to work with area agencies to develop appropriate service connections); and

5. Opening a year-round, emergency shelter (Current status: evidence-based research and multi-stakeholder needs assessment has been conducted through the RHC working groups).

The RHC has implemented an “Action Group” model, which includes: small groups of stakeholders to address, plan, and implement solutions to meet the community needs and RHC priorities.

## 2. Current Conditions in Richmond

Based on 2011 Canada Census data, 4,485, or 33 percent, of Richmond renter households are experiencing core need. Core Housing Need is identified as individuals and families, who are unable to access acceptable and suitable housing on the private market without spending 30 percent or more of their income. The data also reveals that there are 5,320 Richmond households (homeowners and renters) in need and spending at least 50 percent of their household income on shelter costs (INALH households); including: 830 senior households and 965 Lone-parent family households. Overall, INALH households face extreme affordability challenges and risk of homelessness.

Currently, the BC Housing Social Housing Registry reflects 680 active applications waiting for housing placement in Richmond. In addition, there are currently 1,131 Richmond households receiving BC Housing rental supplements, including: 529 Rental Assistance Program (RAP) subsidies to families and 602 Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER). Households can utilize subsidies to partially cover rental costs.

The 2014 Metro Vancouver Regional Homelessness Count is considered a “24-hour snapshot” of homelessness trends but is not intended to account for the total local homelessness population. The 2014 Richmond count identified 38 homeless individuals; however, the RCMP, Ministry of Social Development-Outreach and Integration Unit, local outreach workers, and service organizations estimate closer to 200 Richmond individuals reliant on existing shelters, couch-surfing, or who are otherwise unstably housed.

In October 2012, the Richmond Drop-In Centre (RDIC) opened in St. Alban’s Church as a pilot location. Since that time, the Centre has received 3,687 visits (2,950 males and 737 females). The RDIC estimates that they have 20 individuals who regularly visit the Centre on a weekly basis with others who visit periodically. RDIC estimates that 50 percent of their client population is episodically or chronically homeless. In the last year, RDIC staff assisted nine men in getting off the streets and into addiction treatment programs. In addition, RDIC also partnered with CHIMO Community Services Society to move seven men into short-term, temporary housing.

There are 20 short-term emergency beds in Richmond. These include Richmond House Emergency Shelter for men and Nova Transition House for women with or without children, fleeing violence. Between 2010 and 2013, Nova House has served 79 clients, turned away 281 women and 152 children. Both facilities have 10 beds each, and a 30-day stay limit.

There are currently no youth emergency shelter spaces in Richmond. Depending on individual circumstances, Richmond youth service providers share responsibility for accessing appropriate service connections for youth in Richmond and in Metro Vancouver.

In addition, BC Housing funds an Extreme Weather Response Program that is administered by St. Alban's Inn from the Cold with 22 spaces and Richmond House, operated by Salvation Army with six beds. Between November 12, 2014 and February 9, 2015, the St. Albans Extreme Weather Shelter (EWS) reports that they have been open 27 times. The total number of male visits is 249 and female visits are 50. In addition, Richmond House Emergency Shelter for men reports operating at full capacity for its year-round shelter and maintains a waitlist for spaces.

There are currently approximately 96 Richmond individuals over the age of 19 years old, receiving active outreach support in Richmond, who have been identified as being street entrenched homeless or precariously housed. Of this total, 34 individuals have temporarily relocated from Richmond to access services, temporary housing or supports that are not available or difficult to access locally. Of the 62 individuals who are currently residing in Richmond, 52 individuals or 84 percent, have been identified as experiencing mental health and/or addiction challenges and may benefit from appropriate supportive housing, health, and service connections.

According to a Lower Mainland District RCMP Mental Health Related report, Richmond detachment has experienced a 56 percent increase from 2010 to 2014 in mental health related files from 833 files in 2010 to 1,303 files in 2014.

Richmond clients receiving BC Housing Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) subsidies include: 38 females, 14 males, and 1 person identifying as transgendered. Of these individuals, 19 are experiencing absolute homelessness and 34 individuals are at risk of homelessness.

Successful housing stabilization requires wrap-around supports that are specific to the priority population and individual needs. The Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee, Addiction and Mental Health Task Group, prepared a report and proposal for Collaborative Case Management and community based services that contends:

- Richmond has an important gap in services when clients are isolated, disconnected and not adequately housed;
- Clients find it difficult to navigate services and from program to program in Richmond due to restrictive mandates, inadequate service delivery on the front line, and limited active outreach in the community; and
- Clients find mobility and transportation a barrier when moving throughout Richmond and Vancouver, where many mental health programs are offered such as forensic services and early psychosis intervention, which are not offered in Richmond.

The root cause of homelessness can't be generalized nor can the solution. Increasing opportunities for individuals to stabilize and gain self-sufficiency are multi-faceted; but often

includes basic access to: permanent, appropriate housing, sufficient income, consistent health services, and formal and informal community support connections.

**3. Estimated Costs of Homelessness and Potential Funding Approaches**

The 2012 Canadian Homelessness Research Network report titled, “The Real Cost of Homelessness,” cites the average cost of housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness as follows:

<u>Housing type or aid</u>	<u>Monthly cost</u>
Shelter bed	\$1,932
Provincial jail	\$4,333
Hospital bed	\$10,900
Rental supplement	\$701
Social housing	\$199.92

As reflected in the above table, the cost to provide individuals with permanent housing is much less at \$199.92 per month versus \$1,932 per month for a shelter bed. The shelter bed figure doesn’t include emergency response costs related to crisis intervention, which also escalate with vulnerable individuals.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) asserts that while an emergency shelter is a critical form of emergency assistance, it should only be used for crisis. Rather, a focus should be working with individuals to promote long-term housing stability, identify appropriate service connections, and generate flexible mechanisms within mainstream systems to assess risk factors of homelessness, barriers to stable, permanent housing, and required prevention and intervention efforts.

Senior Government is no longer prioritizing capital and operating funding allocation for stand-alone emergency facilities; rather, the emphasis has moved towards supporting co-located emergency, transitional and permanent housing options with access to appropriate supports.

Staff have explored various forms of integrated housing models. This model includes a continuum of housing options from emergency shelter to second stage transition housing and various community and health services in one building [Attachment 2]. This model allows various levels of government, housing and service providers to leverage funds, services, and capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable individuals, while supporting tenants to transition to permanent housing and support connections.

#### 4. Exploring City Assets as Part of the Solution

Currently, there are no City-owned rental properties available for the provision of emergency housing. The City acquired a 6-bedroom home designated for use as a women's and children shelter; however, funding from senior levels of government was not available for the shelter's operation. Presently, the house is being leased to a non-profit society to operate a specialized women's residential program as an interim use.

The *Local Government Act* requirements restrict the ability for municipalities to utilize designated park land for residential use. The City does own and lease caretaker residential units in many of their parks. Given that the caretaker program is targeted for a different use, staff feels that it would be more appropriate to examine a different City asset option.

#### 5. Options for Council Consideration

City staff have consulted with various stakeholders in preparation of this report, including BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, Chimo Community Services Society, St. Alban Anglican Church, the Richmond Homelessness Coalition's Women's Supportive Housing Working Group and Coordinated Outreach Response Working Group.

In addition, staff engaged City Spaces Consultants, to undertake an "Emergency Services and Transitional Housing Review" [Attachment 1]. City Spaces outlined seven Strategic Directions to respond to the needs, gaps, issues, and opportunities relating to the provision of emergency housing options in Richmond, which include:

1. Providing emergency shelter spaces and services for women;
2. Generating emergency services and supports for men and women;
3. Providing second stage housing for women;
4. Focusing on an integrated approach to housing and supports;
5. Supporting community mobilization efforts; and
6. Using Local Government measures and resources to advance strategic directions.

City Spaces indicates a growing trend during the past 10 to 15 years is that municipalities, community-based organizations and faith groups have worked together through partnership and joint ventures to gain support from senior government and private stakeholders to build or access housing to meet local needs.

With these factors in mind, staff present the following interim and long-term recommendations for Council's consideration and direction to staff to work with Senior levels of Government and community stakeholders to address the following:

1. How City assets could be allocated to help meet the demand for extreme weather shelters,

2. Develop innovative housing approaches to accommodate families and women through a Housing First approach; and
3. Explore sustainable options to increase capacity to develop and operate an integrated housing model that includes: emergency shelter beds, transitional housing and health and community supports.

The interim options incorporate and build on elements that already exist in Richmond through the Richmond Homelessness Coalition supported Rental Connect initiative to place individuals in housing first and then work with community partners, and levels of Government to provide wrap around supports and rent supplements to ensure housing stabilization and appropriate services have been allocated. The interim options for consideration are as follows:

#### Interim Options

The interim options incorporate and build on elements that already exist in Richmond through the Richmond Homelessness Coalition supported Rental Connect initiative to place individuals in housing first and then work with community partners, and levels of Government to provide wrap around supports and rent supplements to ensure housing stabilization and appropriate services have been allocated for those in need. The interim options for consideration are as follows:

1. Explore opportunities for the City to liaise with local housing and service providers to act as a host agency to enter into rental agreements on behalf of an individual or family with private landlords, which would include a commitment by the agency to coordinate and/or delivery wrap-around supports, life skills, housing stabilization transition support, and community support connections.
2. Engage in dialogue with BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Ministry of Social Development and Innovation to enter into a Cooperation Agreement with the City and community partners to support a pilot project for low-income, at risk Richmond individuals to access adequate amounts of combined subsidies to cover monthly shelter costs in the private rental market for an extended period of time to support housing stabilization and self sufficiency (e.g. up to 3 years).
3. Secure a property with appropriate zoning to utilize as an interim shelter option, to be staffed and operated by a local non-profit housing provider experienced in working with the targeted population and supported through a network of health and community service providers.
4. Work with Senior levels of Government and community partners in the development of a sustainable operating model and funding rationale for emergency and transitional housing options in Richmond.

### Long-Term Option

The long-term option builds on the measured outcomes of the proposed interim options to meet the critical, emergency housing needs for a diverse population (individuals and families) through a Housing First model. This approach also works to leverage resources, technical capacity, and funding to develop a sustainable capital and operating model to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable individuals. The long-term option for consideration is as follows:

1. Explore the co-development of an Expression of Interest with BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health for the construction of an integrated housing development that includes a continuum of emergency, transitional and supportive housing with programmed community and health service spaces for individuals experiencing or who are at-risk of homelessness.

The interim options incorporate and build on elements that already exist in Richmond; whereas, the long-term option provides opportunity to further dialogue and partnership development to explore an integrated model to provide for short and long-term housing, and wrap around supports.

### **Financial Impact**

The City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund may be utilized to contribute to provide a capital contribution towards a multi-stakeholder project to purchase and acquire, which serves the emergency and transitional housing needs identified in this report.

### **Conclusion**

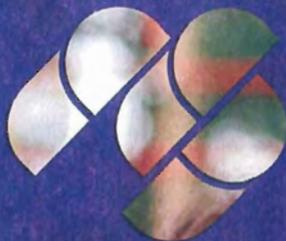
Access to appropriate emergency housing and support options are critical in every community. When support structures and service entry points are made available for the community's most vulnerable residents, collectively, opportunity structures are generated to benefit the broader community along all points of the housing, community care, and socio-economic continuum.



Dena Kae Beno  
Affordable Housing Coordinator  
(604-247-4946)

DKB:dkb

- Att. 1: Emergency Services and Transitional Housing Review  
2: Promising Practices- Emergency and Transition Housing Options



CITY  SPACES

585 - 1111 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver BC V6E 2J3  
604 687 2281

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 844 Courtney Street  
Victoria BC V8W 1C4  
250 383 0304

Suite 208, 811 Manning Road NE  
Calgary AB Canada T2E 7L4  
403 454 2468

[www.cityspaces.ca](http://www.cityspaces.ca)

# Emergency Services & Transitional Housing Review

City of Richmond | March 2015

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>1. FRAMING THE GAPS, ISSUES &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of this Report.....	1
Past & Present.....	2
Today's Context.....	4
The Funding & Development Context.....	6
<b>2. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
Seven Strategic Directions.....	9
<b>3. EXAMPLE PROJECTS &amp; PRACTICES</b>	<b>13</b>
Short-Term Transition Houses.....	13
Short- & Longer Term Supportive Housing.....	14
Supportive & Second Stage Housing.....	15
Unique Practice: Housing with Pets.....	16
<b>4. GLOSSARY</b>	<b>17</b>





# 1. FRAMING THE GAPS, ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

---

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This is one of several background reports that will help the City of Richmond update its *Affordable Housing Strategy*, and arises from a Council referral in November, 2014.

There are three components to this report:

1. An overview of existing emergency services and transitional housing in Richmond;
2. A summary of the critical gaps, issues and challenges, with particular reference to women and their children who have been victims of domestic violence; and
3. Strategic directions for further consideration and action by City staff, stakeholder groups, and City Council.

Section 3 presents a number of projects and policies of interest. While research included canvassing projects and approaches elsewhere in Canada and the US, the most relevant and progressive were located in British Columbia communities.



## PAST & PRESENT

In considering how to address today's needs for emergency services and transitional housing in Richmond, it is helpful to reflect on what has happened prior to this report, as well as provide a present-day context for moving forward.

### BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The City of Richmond has been consistently creative and proactive in working to meet local housing needs. Having established the *Affordable Housing Reserve Fund* in the early 1990s, the City undertook negotiations to secure affordable housing through development applications that require rezoning. Both of these measures might be strategically used for transitional and longer term supportive housing in the future.

### HOMELESSNESS NEEDS ASSESSMENT (2002)

Historically, Richmond has had a shortfall of emergency beds and support services to respond to local needs. The *2002 Homelessness Needs Assessment and Strategy* identified that Richmond's emergency shelters were turning away an increasing number of people – 70 men and 195 women and children in 2001. At that time, the Strategy was presented as a series of short, medium and long-term projects under five themes: 1) upgrade and increase emergency shelter capacity, 2) create second stage housing, 3) develop a Community Awareness Strategy, 4) increase support to local services, and 5) build more affordable housing.

Thirteen years later, and only some aspects of the Strategy have been accomplished. However, the needs of 2002 and those of today remain very similar: transitional, second stage and third stage housing for women and children; integration of support services and housing; limited funding from other levels of government; and the critical nature of collaborative partnerships.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY (2007)

The City's *2007 Affordable Housing Strategy's* priorities were directed toward subsidized rental housing for low income households, low end of market rental housing, and affordable entry-level homeownership. The City, together with community partners and other levels of government, has made considerable progress on these priorities, particularly regarding affordable rental housing.

However, since the Strategy was adopted, there has been increasing evidence of homelessness, and a growing number of precariously housed individuals. There has also been a shift away from a "shelter model" to one that recognizes the critical importance of also providing social and health supports. This integrated approach helps stabilize individuals, leading to improved health and well-being outcomes, and, from a societal perspective, reduces the demand on costly interventions by primary care providers and emergency services.



## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (2013)

In 2013, the City of Richmond adopted the *Social Development Strategy*, which sets out goals and strategic directions for further planning and implementation by the City and its community partners. The Strategy includes a number of actions that address homelessness, including:

- Pursuing the development of an emergency shelter for women and children;
- Updating the *2002 Homelessness Strategy*, including an examination of support service needs for those who are homeless, or at-risk of homelessness; and
- Supporting programs and initiatives that address domestic violence, poverty, mental health, and addictions.

## IN RECENT YEARS

With the City of Richmond's support, several community tables have formed, with a focus on providing emergency services and supportive housing in a coordinated manner.

Focused on addressing issues of homelessness, the *Richmond Homelessness Coalition* (RHC) notes the importance of permanent affordable housing options and community supports as the primary components of generating a long-term solution to homelessness. In 2011, a community engagement process identified the following priorities:

- A year-round emergency shelter;
- A drop-in centre;
- Youth services;
- Outreach workers; and
- Supported/supportive housing.

Additionally, *RHC's Women's Supportive Housing Working Group* has researched the need for women's supportive housing options in Richmond. The Group has identified a need for a spectrum of housing and support that includes temporary transition housing, second stage housing, and third stage housing to allow women and children in crisis to stabilize, and attain increasing independence over time.



## TODAY'S CONTEXT

### POVERTY & HOUSING

Poverty is a persistent issue in Richmond. In the context of housing, households who must spend at least 50% of their gross incomes on adequate, suitable shelter are referred to as being in "deep core need", also referred to as INALH (In Need and Spending at Least Half on Housing). **In 2011, 13% of renter households in Richmond were identified as being in "deep core need."**

### 2014 HOMELESS COUNT

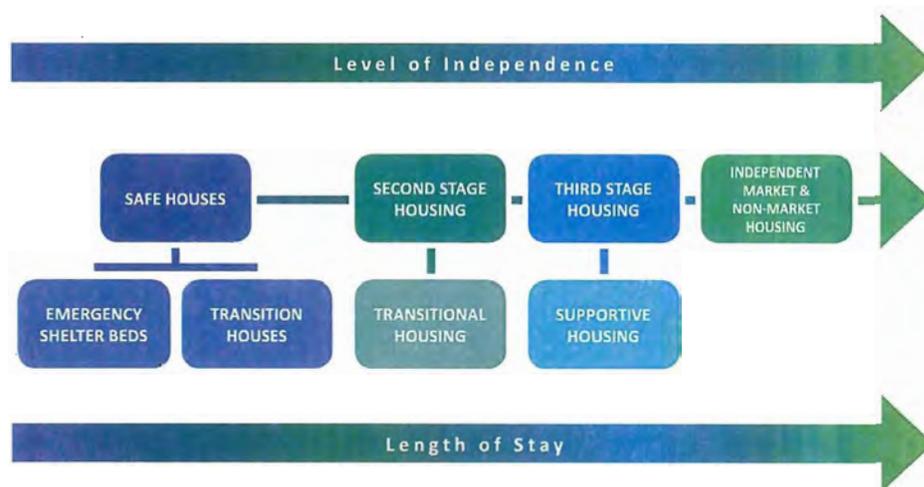
Homelessness, both constant and periodic, continues to be prevalent in many areas of Metro Vancouver. The most recent count was held over a 24-hour period on March 12, 2014. In Richmond, 38 people were identified in the count, of which 16 were sheltered and 22 living without shelter.

- Six Richmond women were identified in the *Homeless Count*. As a proportion of the total (16%), this is less than the regional benchmark of between 25% and 30%. This may suggest there is need for a different research methodology to identify the number of women and children in Richmond.
- Eleven seniors – 33% of the total – were counted. As Richmond's population grows and continues to age, this may be an indicator of future challenges.

Importantly, although the count identified only 38 people, local service providers and the RCMP estimate that **there could be as many as 200 people reliant on existing shelters, couch-surfing, or are otherwise unstably housed.** This includes a number of seniors, and women with children, who are known to be living in situations where they are subject to emotional or physical abuse.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES IN RICHMOND

The following graphic represents the spectrum of emergency shelter and transitional housing. These terms are defined in Section 4: Glossary of this report.



Women are often under-represented in a 24-hour count, and are more likely to be among the hidden homeless.

As many as 200 people could be reliant on existing shelters, couch-surfing, or are otherwise unstably housed.

*Richmond Women's Supportive Housing*



Nova House turned away an average of 281 women and 152 children per year between 2010 and 2013.

*Chimo Community Services*

In Richmond, there are 20 short-term emergency beds for persons in need. These include the Richmond House Emergency Shelter for men, and Nova Transition House for women, with or without children, fleeing domestic violence. Both facilities have 10 beds each, and a 30-day stay limit. An additional 22 beds were funded as part of BC Housing's *Extreme Weather Response Program* – 16 at St. Alban's Inn from the Cold, and an additional six in Richmond House, which is operated by the Salvation Army.

### NOVA TRANSITION HOUSE

Nova House, operated by Chimo Community Services, provides temporary accommodation in a safe and secure environment for women, and their children, who are experiencing violence, or are at-risk of violence. Women and children are able to access emotional support and available resources. Under extenuating circumstances, a stay may be longer than 30 days.

Nova House key statistics and client data (2010-2014) highlight the extent to which Richmond is under-served by emergency services and supportive housing:

- The average annual number of unique clients served between 2010 and 2013 was 79. During the same period, the average annual number of turn-aways was 281 women and 152 children;
- 19% of Nova House clients self-identified as Aboriginal, a notable over-representation of the Aboriginal population in Richmond at 1.4%;
- Women with children tended to stay much longer than single women (20 days instead of 12), an indication of the difficulties in finding suitable housing options for those with children; and
- 41% of all clients leaving Nova House moved to better housing options (2013-2014). Of all clients discharged in those years, 34% were women with children.

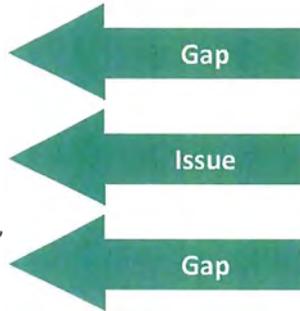
### RICHMOND HOUSE MEN'S SHELTER

The Richmond House had occupancy levels of 95% or more between 2011/12 and 2013/14. The number of unique clients ranged from 129 to 147 annually. These figures call into question the completeness of the *2014 Homeless Count*.



### TRANSITIONAL HOUSING GAPS & ISSUES

- Currently, there are no transitional housing options for men who are homeless, or leaving the shelter in Richmond.
- Nova House cannot accommodate the short-term needs of women, with or without children – an additional transition house is needed.
- There is no second or third stage housing for women and children in crisis, those transitioning out of Nova House, and/or those in need of varying levels of support as they regain stability and independence.
- As part of the anticipated *Storeys* development in Richmond, there are 16 units of second and third stage housing to be operated by Atira Housing.



### THE FUNDING & DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

#### SENIOR GOVERNMENTS' ROLE

Capital spending by senior governments on new-build projects or acquisitions has received very limited support or funding in recent years. That said, BC Housing has been a willing partner by helping non-profit housing providers with low-interest mortgage financing.

The Provincial government has also shifted funding away from emergency shelters to long-term housing combined with supports. This shift could be interpreted as a preference for projects that co-locate with short-term transitional housing (i.e., 30 days), or with longer term supportive housing in the same buildings. Knowing this, **there is likely to be more receptivity to buildings that integrate short and long-term housing with on-site support services**, and providers that accommodate "in-reach" services.



In the area of homelessness prevention, BC Housing has been promoting rental assistance programs (i.e., rent supplements) to support at-risk individuals. There has also been increased funding for outreach workers to help individuals and families find affordable, appropriate housing; provide short-term loans in crisis situations; advise on tenants' rights; and, if needed, assist tenants with applications to the *Residential Tenancy Branch*.

#### LIMITED LAND

Richmond's urban area is rapidly becoming built out, and land values are rising. Finding suitable sites for transitional, second stage and longer term supportive housing is already challenging, and will become more difficult as development continues to take place.





### FUNDRAISING

Non-profit providers are constrained by their need to raise funds to build new, acquire, or renovate proposed projects. In most situations, regardless of how many partners are involved, (e.g., land, cash contributions, low-interest mortgages, or staff time), there is usually a shortfall between what has been committed, and what is realistically needed to cover soft and hard costs.



### ENTERPRISING ORGANIZATIONS

During the past 10 to 15 years, municipalities, community-based organizations, and faith groups have worked together in joint ventures, and partnerships, to build housing that meets local needs. Through these efforts, a great deal has been learned on how to best bring projects to fruition – some societies have merged, and some of the most experienced housing providers are looking to expand their portfolios.





## 2. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

---

### SEVEN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

From the work already undertaken by the City of Richmond, non-profit housing providers, and planning tables, such as the *Richmond Homelessness Coalition*, a set of seven strategic directions has been identified. These directions respond to the needs, gaps, issues, and opportunities discussed in the previous section.

#### 1. Emergency Shelter Spaces & Services for Women

Women in Richmond who are homeless, or at-risk of homelessness, have no options, and must leave the community in order to find emergency shelter spaces or related services. Richmond is home to homeless men, women, and children, and those who are at-risk of homelessness. While there is one 10-bed shelter for men in Richmond, there is no equivalent shelter for women – this is a major gap.

#### 2. Emergency Services & Supports for Men & Women

St. Alban's Church provides limited drop-in services for at-risk women and children, including laundry, shower, community mail program, and other services. These services have been highly subscribed by both men and women. Continuation of this important program, and expansion to seven days a week is recommended.

#### 3. Second Stage Housing for Women

It is difficult for women, with or without children, who are dealing with situations of violence and abuse to manage their crises, find housing, and achieve stability within the 30-day stay limit. Currently in Richmond, there is no second stage housing for women when they leave safe house, so there is also no continued access to staff support, as these women regain stability and independence. Nova House clients are often referred to housing and locations outside of Richmond.



### PROPOSED APPROACH

Early consideration should be given to a new building, or acquisition and renovation of an existing building as second stage housing for women, with or without children, for up to 18 months. The design should accommodate self-contained units, and areas for socializing, support services, and other programming. Up to 50% of the units should be designed for women with children. To advance this action, the City and members of Richmond's *Homelessness Coalition* should investigate locating a suitable site. This project will have additional traction, and possibility of senior government funding, if it is co-located with other uses. Thoughtful consideration of the mix of uses is important, given the sensitivities and unique needs of women transitioning from situations of crisis and instability.

## 4. Expansion of Women's Transition House

There is a strong need for additional short-term safe house spaces for women and children facing domestic violence. These spaces should include accessible, or barrier-free beds for women with physical accessibility issues, and support for those with complex behavioural challenges, or mental health and substance use issues. With hundreds of turnaways each year, Nova House is unable to help households with such special needs. A second transition house would better accommodate the varied needs in Richmond today.

### PROPOSED APPROACH

The preferred approach is to build a second transition house in another location, potentially modeled as low-barrier. This site would provide housing and supports for women ineligible at Nova House. City staff would work in collaboration with a transition house provider to identify a location, and prepare a business case for review by potential lenders. A project advisory group should be established, and a team identified to coordinate and oversee design and construction.



## 5. Focus on Integrated Approaches to Housing & Supports

As part of the exploration of sites or acquisitions, consideration should be given to opportunities that allow an integration of uses – short- and longer term supportive housing; supportive housing and commercial uses; supportive housing and market rental housing.

## 6. Support Community Mobilization Efforts

In the past few years, local community groups have been very active in identifying gaps and opportunities in responding to those most at-risk in the community. The City has also participated in various planning tables addressing these gaps and opportunities.

The City should continue to participate and support the vital work of these organizations and planning tables.

## 7. Use Local Government Measures & Resources

The City should continue to use its zoning powers to negotiate with developers who want bonus floorspace. This measure could be used to acquire longer term transitional units within a new development. In such a situation, support services would be delivered, rather than be located, on site.

The City's *Affordable Housing Reserve Fund* is another way to advance the projects described. This program has been successful, with recent projects in various stages of planning and development, including *Kiwanis Towers*, *The Storeys* project, and *The Cressey* project.





## 3. EXAMPLE PROJECTS & PRACTICES

---

Working with community partners and all levels of government, non-profit organizations have been pioneers in identifying, and responding to, the housing challenges faced by women, with or without children, who are at-risk of homelessness and/or facing situations of violence or abuse. Research beyond BC and Canada reveals few models or approaches not already in practice locally. Selected examples are presented here as a reference.

### SHORT-TERM TRANSITION HOUSES

#### **ROSE HARBOUR, Campbell River**

Opened in 2013, Rose Harbour, a 27-unit, four-storey housing development, provides affordable, supportive housing for women, with or without children. Residents have a number of services available, including one-on-one support, a nurse practitioner clinic once a week, yoga and meditation classes, child support worker access, self-development workshops, and public health nurse and vaccination clinics. Tenancy training is also offered to help residents with moving into independent housing. Rose Harbour is operated by the Campbell River and North Island Transition Society.

#### **SHEENA'S PLACE, Surrey & ELIZABETH GURNEY HOUSE, New Westminster**

Elizabeth Fry Society was the first, and is still one of the only organizations to operate shelter homes for women and their children. Sheena's Place and Elizabeth Gurney House offer safe, supportive environments for families without resources. These shelters provide daily necessities, crisis intervention, addiction and debt counseling, and support with accessing low income housing.



## SHORT- & LONGER TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

### MAXXINE WRIGHT CENTRE, Surrey

The second and final phase of the Maxxine Wright Centre opened in 2011. The first phase, opened in 2010, provides 12 short-term shelter beds, a 59-space child care centre, a community kitchen, and a pre- and post-natal clinic. The partnership involved:

- Provincial government contribution – a \$500,000 grant, \$11.9 million in construction financing, and a \$1.6 million capital grant for the child care centre;
- City of Surrey contribution – \$1.0 million through the *Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund*;
- Atira Women’s Resource Society provided \$1.2 in mortgage financing, and land valued at \$272,651.

### ELSPETH ALLEY HOUSING, Burnaby

This new housing for elder women is a result of an agreement, between the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster and Atira Women’s Resource Society, to operate a 23-apartment women’s residence in the former Abbeyfield House in Burnaby. The apartments are designed for older women who are homeless, or are at-risk of homelessness. Along with the apartments, the building offers a common kitchen and amenity space, including living and activity rooms. Support services include a 24/7 live-in coordinator, life skills education and training, and treatment support.

The Anglican Diocese of New Westminster leases the land to the Society at a nominal rate, while the BC government provides annual operating funding of \$165,000 for the provision of support services.

### EAGLES LANDING, Prince Rupert

Eagles Landing, a 23-unit building funded by the Provincial government, opened in 2013. The facility provides transitional and supportive housing for women and their children fleeing domestic abuse. Eagles Landing was built on the site of the former Moresby Townhouses, an older, underutilized public housing development owned by the BC government.

The Province contributed \$5.4+ million for the development, and provides annual operating funding of \$730,000, along with program funding of \$193,500. The Real Estate Foundation of BC provided a grant of \$275,000, and Northern Health provides annual operating funding of \$54,000.



## SUPPORTIVE & SECOND STAGE HOUSING

### CHRISTINE LAMB RESIDENCE, Abbotsford

The Christine Lamb Residence, a 41-unit supportive housing development for women and children at-risk of homelessness, opened in 2012. The four-storey development is managed and operated by the Women's Resource Society of the Fraser Valley. Residents have access to on-site support services, life skills programming, and social activities.

The Province provided approximately \$8.9 million in funding, and the City of Abbotsford provided the land, valued at over \$1.3 million, as well as waiving property taxes and development cost charges.

### SANTA ROSA PLACE, Mission

Santa Rosa Place, located in Mission, is a 12-unit second stage transitional housing project. The apartments consist of studio, and one and two-bedroom units, all of which are modest in size. There is also an apartment that is used as a community space where residents can cook together, watch TV, use the computer, hold a meeting, or just socialize. All units are self-contained with full bathing facilities.

### ALDER GARDENS, Surrey

In 2012, mothers and children at-risk of homelessness moved into their new home at YWCA Alder Gardens, a new 36-unit supportive housing development. This was the first project under an agreement, between the Provincial government and the City of Surrey, to create 103 new supportive housing units on City-owned sites to reduce homelessness. The building includes a mix of two-, three- and four-bedroom apartments, common amenity space, an outdoor play area, and community meeting spaces. The project was funded by:

- The Federal government with \$461,026 under the *Homelessness Partnering Strategy*.
- The Provincial government provided a grant of almost \$9 million, and provides annual operational funding of \$ 212,311.
- The City of Surrey provided land equity valued at \$1.4 million, as well as a municipal levy reduction of \$1.1 million.
- YWCA Metro Vancouver, and its supporters, provided equity of \$556,974 for the project.

## UNIQUE PRACTICE: HOUSING WITH PETS

The *SafePet Program* is designed for *Ontario Violence Against Women (OVAW)* shelters and shelter staff, in collaboration with the *Ontario Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA)*, to assist women at-risk of abuse in making the decision to leave an abusive situation, and enter a *OVAW* shelter when they have a pet.

The program was first prompted by studies that showed abused women delay their decision to leave abusive situations if it means leaving companion animals behind.

The program is meant to assist women, who have entered a *OVAW* shelter, to find temporary shelter and care for their pets while they are unable to care for them directly. Program volunteers act as pet foster families, and veterinary care and exams are provided by volunteer clinics.



## 4. GLOSSARY

---

### **EMERGENCY SHELTER**

Short-stay accommodation of 30 days or less. Emergency shelters provide single or shared bedrooms, or dorm-style sleeping arrangements, with varying levels of support to individuals.

### **TRANSITION HOUSE**

Commonly known as a *safe house*, a transition house is a safe residence where women (and children) who are fleeing violence, or abuse, are able to stay for up to 30 days.

### **SECOND STAGE HOUSING**

Provides short-term, safe, affordable, and independent housing, and some services similar to those provided in transition houses. Typical stays at a second stage house last for six months to a year.

### **TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

Housing that is time-limited, and provides people with a range of training opportunities, practical help with daily living, and counseling in order to live independently.

### **THIRD STAGE/SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

Subsidized housing that provides ongoing supports, and services to residents who cannot live independently, and who are not expected to become self-sufficient. This form of housing may be located in a purpose-designed building, or scattered site units, and does not have a limited length of stay.

### **PRIVATE MARKET RENTAL HOUSING**

Provides the majority of rental housing that is affordable to households with low to moderate incomes. This can include purpose-built rental housing, as well as housing supplied through the secondary rental market, such as basement suites, rented condominium units, or other investor-owned houses/units.







Suite 585, 1111 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC V6E 2J3 | 604.687.2281

5th Floor, 844 Courtney Street, Victoria BC V8W 1C4 | 250.383.0304

Suite 208, 811 Manning Road NE, Calgary, AB Canada T2E 7L4 | 403.454.2468

[www.cityspaces.ca](http://www.cityspaces.ca)

**CNCL - 116**

**Our Place, Victoria, BC**

- An inner-city community centre serving Greater Victoria's vulnerable individuals, with a mission to provide a sense of hope and belonging
- Our Place is a community hub model – clients have access to meals, housing, showers, clothing, and services (including health, education and life skills) in one centre
- The building is five-storeys, with programming and meals on the first two floors and housing on the top three floors
- There are 45 private rooms offering supportive housing for individuals working towards independent living
  - In 2013, 20 individuals transitioned from Our Place housing to independent living
- Two of the units are dedicated to short-term housing for individuals waiting to access a detoxification or rehabilitation program
- Each resident works with an Our Place support worker, and if necessary, a mental health and addictions clinician – the service providers develop a plan with the client to overcome disabilities and challenges that prevent the resident from living independently
- Health services at Our Place include: access to showers, a full-time mental health/addictions clinician, psychotherapy and grief/loss counselling
  - Acupuncture, acupressure and chiropractic services are offered once per week
  - Spiritual wellness services are available, with multi-faith programming and First Nations programs
  - Dental students provide direct patient care and health advocacy
  - Nursing and medical students provide feet hygiene care
  - Veterinarians come once a month for pet care
- Our Place provides a variety of programming such as computer training, meals, employment skills program, mail and messaging centre, referrals and choir participation
- Our Place worked in partnership with nearby residents (North Park and Downtown Residents Associations), the City of Victoria and the Victoria Police Department to form the Good Neighbour Agreement: this agreement is a commitment to communicate with one another, address concerns, show respect for the street community and follow through on agreed actions
  - The Good Neighbour group meets once a month at Our Place to discuss existing and emerging neighbourhood issues
- Our Place received a \$7.4 million capital grant from the Province, plus annual operating funding

**Pathways Model, New York, NY**

- Founded on the belief that housing is a basic human right for all individuals
- Program provides housing before any other services are offered. Clients are offered immediate access to permanent independent housing
- Priority given to women and older adults as they are at a higher risk of victimization and health problems. Priority is also given to other individuals who have other risk factors (e.g.: hx of incarceration) that impede access to other programs.
- With the assistance of staff, clients locate and select an apartment, execute the lease, find furnishings and move in.
- If a suitable apartment isn't located immediately then the client is offered a room at the local YMCA or a hotel until housing is located.
- Scatter site housing
- Rent subsidies of up to 70% of rent
- ACT team provides mental health, physical health, substance abuse support, vocational support and other services.
- Pathways research conducted between January 1993 and September 1997 found that over a five year period the program resulted in an 88% housing retention rate for study participants (242 individuals).

- “After clients are housed away from the war zone of life on the streets they are much more likely to seek treatment for mental health problems and substance abuse voluntarily” (Tsemberis, Eisenberg, 2000, p. 492).
- More than 65% of study participants were receiving treatment from the program’s psychiatrist
- Primary foci of the program is housing first and client self-determination

#### **At Home/Chez Soi Project, Five Canadian Cities**

- The At Home/Chez Soi (AT/CS) project was closely based on the Pathways model as it was acknowledged it as an empirically supported intervention.
- 500 individuals participated in 5 cities across Canada (Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal AND Moncton.
- Individuals with high needs were supported by ACT teams while individuals with moderate needs were supported by Intensive Case Management teams.
- For the AT/CS study, some participants were given ‘Treatment as Usual’ (TAU).
- In the last six months of the study 62% of housing first participants were housed all of the time, 22% were housed some of the time and 16% were housed none of the time.
- Conversely, in the last six months of the study 31% of the TAU participants were housed all of the time, 23% were housed some of the time and 46% were housed none of the time.
- The study found that every \$10 invested in Housing First Services resulted in an average savings of \$21.72. The main cost offsets were psychiatric hospital stays, general hospital stays, home and office visits with community care providers, jail/prison incarcerations, police contacts, emergency room visits, and stays in crisis housing and SROs with support services.

#### **Island Crisis Care Society (ICCS), Nanaimo, BC**

- ***Five regular programs***
  - Samaritan House – 10 emergency beds. Women may self-refer or be referred by a community agency. Samaritan House provides shelter, food, hygiene and clothing as well as on-site case management and subsequent referrals to other community agencies and programs. Staff work with health authority outreach workers to assist women in recovering from physical, emotional and psychological issues. Samaritan House receives operating funding through BC Housing and donations. They have also received infrastructure grants from Service Canada, BC Housing, Island Health (VIHA) and the City of Nanaimo.
  - Crescent House – 6 Crisis Stabilization Beds. Supported transitional housing and crisis stabilization for adults with serious and persistent mental illness. Located near the Nanaimo Regional Hospital. On-site ICCS support workers provide 24 hour supervision while VIHA teams (Community Support, ACT, Forensic Services and Crisis Response) provide clinical support. Low barrier housing for short and long term stays. Funding for Crescent House is through contracts with VIHA, the Ministry of Social Development and BC Housing as well as donations.
  - Hirst House – 6 Crisis Stabilization Beds. Modelled on the Crescent House model and serving the Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Coombs and Errington communities. Referrals are received from the local VIHA Adult Mental Health and Substance Use Team. Clients tend to stay longer than average stays at Crescent House. Residents have private rooms, have prepared meals and staff support. Housing is secure and drug free. Funding for Hirst House is through contracts with VIHA, the Ministry of Social Development and BC Housing as well as donations.
  - Safe Harbour House – 5 Crisis Stabilization Beds. Short term crisis housing. Case Management and subsequent referrals are provided by VIHA community Crisis Response

and ACT teams. Operating funding is provided by VIHA, the Ministry of Social Development and donations.

- The Bridge – 6 Supportive Recovery Beds. ICCS purchased and renovated a house adjacent to Safe Harbour House in 2010. Longer stays are provided to ACT team clients. Capital Funding for this project was provided by Service Canada with Operation Funding provided by Service Canada, VIHA, Ministry of Social Development and donations.
- **Three Pilot Projects**
  - Martha's Place – 8 Supportive Housing Beds in Samaritan House. Residents receive a private room, an evening meal, 24 hour supervision, groups and access to Support and Outreach workers. Low barrier housing for residents who cannot live independently and who are not expected to become fully self sufficient. No limit on length of stay.
  - Mary's Place – 5 transitional housing beds in a residential home. Second-stage, high barrier housing. Five women share the living space and four bathrooms. The house has 2 sets of washers and dryers. Residents are provided with a bus pass. Outreach workers visit the house on a daily basis. The objective of the program is to help women (including women fleeing abuse) move toward independence and self-sufficiency. Length of stay ranges from 30 days to 2 – 3 years.
  - Rent Subsidies – 5 in Market Rental Housing. Available to women who have taken the STAR Renter's Program and who agree to meet with an Outreach Worker on a weekly basis. Participants can secure rental market units, rooms, studio or apartments.

### **Waterloo Region, Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy (2012)**

After finding success with their 2007 – 2010 homelessness strategy (90% of 92 recommended actions were completed or in progress), the Waterloo Region updated the strategy in 2012. The primary goal of the strategy is to end homelessness in the region. To accomplish this, the region created both a policy framework and an action framework. Guiding the policy and actions is the belief that “housing stability for everyone...helps to restore dignity, reduce human suffering and create the conditions necessary to ensure [the] region is resilient.”

### **Successes of the Strategy**

- The STEP (Support to End Persistent Homelessness) Program was established in partnership with 12 community programs and with funding from the Government of Canada, the Ontario Provincial Government, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Region of Waterloo. In 2012, the Regional Council endorsed an updated target of 500 people housed through the STEP program. Between 2008 and 2013 this goal was surpassed as the STEP program assisted 521 people who were experiencing persistent homelessness to move into permanent housing.
- The Region commissioned a Social Return on Investment analysis and found that for every dollar invested in the STEP program there was an average return of more than \$9 in social value created.
- Between 2012 and 2013, demand for emergency shelter decreased with a decrease in 13% of the number of families sheltered and a decrease of 15% in the number of children sheltered. The length of stay for these families increased from 42 days to 45 days. These gains were largely accomplished through the Family Homelessness Diversion program which was piloted in 2013 which provides families with immediate and intensive support to identify and remove barriers to housing stability. It was found that the average cost to support a family through the diversion program costs \$1,200 and takes approximately 2 weeks while the cost for a family to stay in an emergency shelter for the average 42 day stay costs \$4,150.

## Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS), Calgary, AB

In the 1980's, representatives from several downtown Calgary churches met together to develop a project whereby they could provide referral services and basic medical care to those who came to them for help. In 1989, The Canadian Bible Society building in the downtown area was leased to the group and CUPS was officially founded. Now, over 25 years later, CUPS is a multi-service agency providing support to thousands of Calgarian residents living in poverty. CUPS provides assistance through housing, health and educational support.

### Housing

Since 2008, CUPS has housed over 3,600 homeless adults and children and helped others maintain their housing. This has largely been accomplished through the following programs:

- **Key Case Management** – assists adults who have experienced chronic homelessness to access and maintain low-barrier housing. Once housing is secured, case managers work with individuals to help them adapt to being housed and to develop self-sufficiency. From 2013-2014 80 Key Case Management participants were housed and 95% of that group remained housed.
- **Community Development** – Provides a rental subsidy and program staff and volunteers work closely with participants to increase their social interaction through involvement in community events and programs. 144 individuals are currently enrolled with room for 56 more participants.
- **Client in Transition** – A one-time financial help of up to \$400 to assist in stabilizing housing. The \$400 may be used for a damage deposit, first month's rent, avoiding utility disconnection or eviction. The funds may not be used for unpaid or overdue rent.
- **Supports** – CUPS also assists with obtaining basic identification, crisis management assistance, referrals and preparing taxes.

CUPS provides **health and dental services** including:

- General health care
- Blood tests, immunizations, EKGs
- Pre and post natal care (in the Women's Clinic)
- Paediatric Care
- Mental health care
- Dental Clinic and Extractions Clinic
- Visiting Specialists (e.g.: psychiatry, gynaecology, optometry, infectious disease)
- Hep C testing, treatment, support
- Diabetes group education
- Outreach medical care provided at local shelters
- Addictions specialist once per week

Between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014, CUPS provided medical care for 5,183 patients. This number included pre-natal care for 214 women, paediatric care for 659 children and mental health care for 530 adults.

### Education Services

### **Pre-Natal to Three Child Development Centre**

Parents attend the 16 session Nurturing Parent Program which is focused on early intervention and provides support, education and training related to parenting and child development. Participants also have opportunities to practice the skills they learn at the centre. Also available: play and attachment therapy, psychological counselling, early literacy programs and recreational opportunities.

### **One World Child Development Centre**

An early intervention preschool and kindergarten program for children ages 3 to 6 years old that have educational challenges due to trauma based environments. Parents have a family support worker assigned to them, attend the Nurturing Parent Program, attend community kitchen events and recreational outings and receive support through CUPS health and housing programs.

### **Family Development Centre**

The Family Development Centre provides education to pregnant women, families and children who are impacted by poverty. The Centre offers intensive parent education, goal setting with clients, group classes, home visits, psychological support and recreational opportunities. The centre has also implemented the Supporting Fathers Initiative which highlights the importance of fathers in families and works to strengthen family relationships.

### **Lorraine Melchior Bursary Fund**

Financial support for individuals pursuing education. The bursary is designed to assist applicants with expenses such as rent, childcare, food and transportation while they are in school so that these things do not become barriers to acquiring education. Recipients have used the bursary as they have worked toward their GED, academic upgrades, trades certificates, ESL, immigrant skills transfer and university degrees.

Between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014:

- 87 students enrolled in the Prenatal to three and One World Child Development Centre
- 224 parents attended the Nurturing Parent Program
- 207 parents attended other CUPS parenting programs
- 628 families in crisis were supported
- 69 adults received the Lorraine Melchior Bursary Fund