



**KAMLOOPS HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN  
COMMUNITY REPORT**

**2010**

**Together, we are  
ending homelessness.**

# History

"In 2006 the Elizabeth Fry Society began providing coordination to a diverse group of citizens concerned about people living in poverty. This group had roots in the faith community, and as it grew different agencies, organizations, businesses, citizens and non-profits also joined the table. The group was aptly named Changing the Face of Poverty.

Changing the Face of Poverty began to provide understanding of some of the issues related to poverty, and aimed to coordinate outreach services offered by churches. Transportation was identified as an issue for people on fixed or no income and the Emergency Transportation Assistance Program emerged, sponsored by the City of Kamloops and managed by United Way.

In August of 2008 a small committee met to discuss the critical housing situation in Kamloops and the desire for organizations to work together to address community needs. A successful result of this was the first Housing Inventory developed by the Interior Health Authority, a local private

landlord and United Way. The next step was to form a Steering Group to facilitate a community consultation process to develop a plan to end homelessness. In the fall of 2009 over 40 people from all walks of life committed to the process.

We were fortunate to access funds from the Federal Government's Homelessness Partnering Initiative and hire a coordinator for the plan. ASK Wellness Centre, the Elizabeth Fry Society, the Canadian Mental Health Association, the City of Kamloops and United Way have now entered into a formal partnership to continue to support the work in the community.

We are so pleased with the community engagement and desire to develop the action plan. We are excited to have so many people on this journey together combining their skills, knowledge and determination to work collaboratively and make it possible for all people in Kamloops to have a home."

Brenda Aynsley  
Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way

# Successes

The Kamloops Homelessness Action Plan (HAP) has 6 distinct goals that will lead to the end of homelessness in Kamloops by 2015. The plan has been written with measurable outcomes for each goal over the duration of the plan's implementation; each goal will require the combined efforts of several sectors in the community. The goals have been created with a diverse range of individuals and issues in mind. 'Homelessness' includes people who are living on the streets, but also includes people who are at-risk of becoming homeless, and those who are living in inadequate housing.

Many people ask if it is possible to actually 'end' homelessness. It is. If we approach the issues from new perspectives, and if we address the systemic causes that are at the root of the problems we see at street level. We have seen many remarkable successes already.

# Partner Successes

## Community Awareness Programs

Changing the Face of Poverty

Kamloops Housing Inventory

Emergency Transportation Assistance Program

Adult Addictions & Supported Housing

Kamloops Integrated Community Collaboration

Community Plan with

Kamloops Working Group on Homelessness

Partnerships Between Agencies

Partnerships in the Community

Kamloops Housing Board

City of Kamloops Support

Homelessness Prevention

ACCESS Kamloops

HAP Leadership Council

Immunization Programs

Nutrition Training

Life Skills Training

Shelter Numbers Decreasing

# GOAL 1

"Together with the support of the City of Kamloops and the Social Planning Council, the Housing Board is an avenue to discuss recent trends, evaluate supply and demand, establish community priorities in an open forum, and discuss policy reform where necessary. This committee forms a single source of information that will allow all participants to obtain the data and facts needed to develop successful housing projects, systems and policies. The information collected will be available to the board, local agencies, BC Housing, and other interest groups, with the goal of improving the provision of housing and housing resources in Kamloops.

Assess the local housing situation, enhance the stock of acceptable housing, & respond to changes in the housing market.

Some of the goals and priorities that the Kamloops Housing Board will be working towards include the creation and maintenance of a Housing Registry, the development of community based methods to protect and enhance local housing, and the formation of recommendations for changes to legislation and policy.

Made up of 13 members, the Kamloops Housing Board is comprised of a diverse group of people. The membership represents all sectors able to provide intimate knowledge of changes occurring in the social and affordable housing landscape of our community."

Nicole Beauregard, City of Kamloops

## Strategy - Establish a Local Housing Board

Year 1 Laying the Groundwork  
- examine precedents / models for local housing boards  
- conduct research into housing demand  
- determine membership and duties of the board

Year 2 Formation  
- assembly of the housing board  
- stakeholder consultation and support  
- address local housing issues

Year 3 Operation  
- recommend local changes  
- improve dispute resolution

Year 4 Assessment  
- measure outcomes and assess impact  
- continue protecting and enhancing local housing stock  
- respond to changes in local housing climate

Year 5 Formalization  
- operational Housing Board

## Strategy A

### Promote Housing Support Agreements

#### Year 1 Drafting & Testing

- examine models
- draft standardized agreement
- utilize, test and assess

#### Year 2 Marketing & Expansion

- seek support of the City, landlords & others
- implement marketing / communications strategy to expand usage

#### Year 3 Broad Recognition

- refine the agreement
- achieve legal recognition
- achieve greater tenant stability
- reduce evictions

## GOAL 2

### Provide greater housing stability & reduce evictions



Housing solutions will come in many creative forms. One such innovative idea is the Adult Addictions and Supported Housing (AASH) program which has contributed significantly to a reduction in shelter stays. A portion of this housing is developing through a pilot study between ASK Wellness and the Kelson Group. By forming a relationship with the program participant and the landlord, agencies can help both parties ensure a long-lasting housing agreement. Life-skills workers also provide transportation, assist with financial management, offer crisis management, and support the participants' treatment plans.

## GOAL 3

### Connect people with the help they need



Support services are ineffective if the people who need them do not know how to access them. Outreach workers are often the first point of contact for individuals in need. These outreach workers have real relationships with people who have very few meaningful relationships in their lives. Outreach provides a key inroad to helping people in need; for people who are living on the streets, those living in substandard housing and for those who are housed but have limited physical mobility. The Kamloops Integrated Community Collaboration Group (KICC) brings outreach workers together under a model that has been tested in Kelowna for four years, and the results have been remarkable.

## Strategy A

### Improve Outreach.

#### Year 1 Laying the Foundation

- assess current outreach services
- identify outreach gaps
- identify leadership
- conduct cost analysis

#### Year 2 Implementation

- coordinate outreach and engagement
- monitor need
- reassess services

#### Year 3 Expansion

- ensure round-the-clock service
- secure funding for new outreach positions
- reassess services

## Strategy B - Establish a Resident Support Program

#### Year 1 Assessment of Current Model

- measure outcomes of pilot project between ASK & the Kelson Group
- assess the needs of homeless groups
- assess and refine the program structure

#### Year 2 Establishment

- formalize the program model
- establish programs between different agencies & landlords

#### Year 3 Expansion

- develop communications strategy
- expand the program model for different 'hard-to-house' populations

#### Year 4 Assessment & Refinement

- assess impact
- measure outcomes
- refine program to reflect what has been learned

#### Year 5 Expansion

- expand the program model as needed

## GOAL 4

### Build the basic skills that people need to maintain housing and financial independence

"One of the groups that is often overlooked when discussing homelessness is the working poor. Some people in our community do have the education and experience to find employment but may not have the necessary life skills and resources to stay employed, especially in these times of economic uncertainty. The Kamloops Homelessness Action Plan recognizes that this group faces real and regular risks.

The community is doing important work to address this Goal through existing programs offered by a variety of agencies and organizations. The Canadian Mental Health Association – Kamloops Branch, partnered with Thompson Rivers University

to offer the Career Orientation and Personal Empowerment program. The Kamloops and District Elizabeth Fry Society offers the Women in Leadership Development program and the Women's Housing Support Program that both assist women in obtaining employment. There are also services available through work search, employment skills centers, the Kamloops Y Willow Tree program and other agencies.

In the past year Kamloops Working Group on Homelessness updated its Community Plan with input from the citizens, agencies, and the HAP. This Community Plan helps form a directed agenda which will guide the use of Service Canada funds dedicated to homelessness issues. One of the priorities identified in this February 2011 document is enhancing people's self-reliance through improved life skills, training, and education."

Louise Richards

Kamloops & District Elizabeth Fry Society

## Strategy B - Adopt a Network Approach to Support Services

#### Year 1 Laying the Foundation

- compile a comprehensive resource directory
- identify leadership
- conduct cost analysis
- develop communications strategy

#### Year 2 Creating a Working Model

- negotiate a 'pilot protocol' for the network
- test & evaluate pilot protocol

#### Year 3 Development & Awareness

- negotiate broad protocols throughout the network
- identify service gaps
- raise awareness

#### Year 4 Evaluation & Expansion

- evaluate the effectiveness of the network approach
- fill identified service gaps

#### Year 5 Refinement & Enhancement

- refine & enhance the network
- improve efficiency
- improve client service

# GOAL 5

Improve fairness, accessibility, & responsiveness

**Strategy** - Promote responsiveness in policies, laws, procedures, regulations, & protocols

“Through the process of community consultation for the HAP, working groups continually identified systemic areas that prevent homeless people from remaining housed. Some barriers involve laws, codes, regulations, and policies that guide the use and development of housing, the delivery of social services, and the priorities of governments.

One example is the provision of vision care. Glasses for low income individuals are covered by Income Assistance, but the eye test is not. This \$75 fee for the eye test effectively prevents homeless people from reading housing rental ads or employment listings, and from living safely on the streets. Another example is the fact that Income Assistance pays \$375 monthly for housing costs, but the average bachelor apartment ranges from \$600 to \$800 per

month. Issues in the administration of Financial Assistance cannot be changed locally, and local government has been given limited authority to interpret several other regulations. Many systemic issues will need to be dealt with by all levels of government and sectors simultaneously.

This year the HAP formed a Leadership Council made up of senior elected officials from all levels of government, the aboriginal community, the housing sector, non-profit groups, businesses and youth groups. All of these influential people are now working together to find ways to remove systemic barriers. This will make it possible to influence changes in the Legislature, in Parliament, at cabinet tables, in committees, and in the public mindset where there are barriers to maintaining successful housing.”

Doug Sage  
Canadian Mental Health Association

## The HAP Leadership Council

**Patsy Bourassa**, Canadian Home Builders' Association

**Steve Earl**, Kamloops Chamber of Commerce

**Kelly Fawcett**, The Kelson Group

**Chief Shane Gottfriedson**, Tk'emlúps Indian Band

**Viktor Gundel**, Spiritual Care Department Royal Inland Hospital

**Representatives** from the Homeless Community

**Ray Jolicoeur**, Kamloops This Week

**Kevin Krueger**, Kamloops South MLA

**Terry Lake**, Kamloops North MLA

**Nathan Lane**, TRU Students Union

**Cathy McLeod**, Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo MP

**Mayor Peter Milobar**, City of Kamloops

**Christopher Phillips**, Indian Friendship Society

**Carol Spicer**, Kamloops District Labour Council



# GOAL 6

Help People Find & Maintain Employment

**Strategy** – Improve Workplace Supports

### Year 1 Laying the Foundation

- examine existing employer support models
- draft employer-employee agreement
- cultivate interest among employers and agencies
- conduct pilot project with chosen employer

### Year 2 Development and Implementation

- develop and implement marketing strategy
- implement program with different employers
- publicize success stories

### Year 3 Assessment and Refinement

- assess impact
- measure outcomes
- refine programs according to assessments

Many people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness are dealing with circumstances or issues that make getting hired and keeping a job difficult. Employers often have little incentive to hire these individuals, and therefore need supports and incentives in order to improve opportunities for them. The employees also need to be supported through the learning phase of a new employment situation so that they can become secure in their jobs and in their lives.

### Year 4 Refinement & Expansion

- refine agreements and programs
- expand programs
- build greater capacity

Employer and workplace supports will include:

- support agreements between employers, employees & supporting non-profit agencies that can help smooth transitions and resolve difficulties
- wage subsidies for residential job coaching and mentoring

Implementing employer and workplace supports will require the involvement of employment agencies, support service organizations, business improvement associations, the Chamber of Commerce, and a number of diverse employers.

### Year 5 Strengthening

- solidify successful employment relationships between agencies, employers, employees, and the community

# Next Steps

In the coming years all 6 of the goals will develop simultaneously. If we leave out any piece of the puzzle, people will continue to fall through the cracks. We must have new ideas in housing, supply the adequate supports for these housing solutions, ensure that people have all of the skills they require to live, ensure diverse employment is available, and work towards long-term policy solutions with all levels of government.

While the average number of people in some shelters has been decreasing, there are several aspects to the issue that have yet to be addressed. More work remains to ensure that those individuals living on the streets get the housing and supports they require. The working poor, people at risk of becoming homeless, and people living in inadequate housing are less visible and sometimes more difficult to quantify and assist. The entire continuum of housing must be addressed.

Join us and be part of the solution.  
Together, we are ending homelessness.



photo credit: Kent Wong photography

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



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COMMUNITY SAFETY