



# **MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION**

**Thursday, December 19, 2013  
4:00 PM**

**Henry Baker Hall, Main Floor, City Hall**



Office of the City Clerk

---

**Public Agenda  
Mayor's Housing Commission  
Thursday, December 19, 2013**

**Approval of Public Agenda**

**Minutes of the meeting held on November 14, 2013.**

**Administration Report**

MHC13-7 Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2014-2019 and the Cold Weather Strategy on Homelessness

**Recommendation**

1. That the Mayor's Housing Commission provide direction and advice to Council on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.
2. That the Mayor's Housing Commission participate in the upcoming consultations in January and February to develop the Community Plan on Homelessness.
3. That the Administration provide an update to the Mayor's Housing Commission in February on the preliminary findings and results of the community consultations established to develop the Community Plan on Homelessness and that the Commission provide direction and advice to Council on the Community Plan on Homelessness.
4. That the Administration provide annual updates to the Mayor's Housing Commission in Q3 on the Cold Weather Strategy.
5. That the Administration provide annual updates to the Mayor's Housing Commission in Q2 on homelessness issues in Regina.

**Resolution for Private Session**

AT REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2013

AT A MEETING OF THE MAYOR'S HOUSING COMMISSION  
HELD IN PUBLIC SESSION

AT 4:00 PM

**These are considered a draft rendering of the official minutes. Official minutes can be obtained through the Office of the City Clerk once approved.**

Present: Mayor Michael Fougere, in the Chair  
Councillor Bryon Burnett  
Councillor Bob Hawkins  
Councillor Barbara Young  
Robert Byers  
Terry Canning  
Blair Forster  
Tim Gross  
Malcolm Neill

Also in Attendance: Committee Assistant, Elaine Gohlke  
Solicitor, Cheryl Willoughby  
Director of Assessment, Taxation & Real Estate, Don Barr  
Director of Planning, Diana Hawryluk  
Manager, Government Relations, Sheila Harmatiuk  
Senior City Planner, Jennifer Barrett  
Senior City Planner, Yves Richard

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Following nomination procedures for the position of Vice-Chairperson, Malcolm Neill was declared Vice-Chairperson of the Mayor's Housing Commission for the years 2013 and 2014.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC AGENDA

**Councillor Young moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the agenda for this meeting be approved, as submitted, and that the delegations be heard in the order they are called by the Chairperson.**

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

**Councillor Hawkins moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on October 24, 2013 be approved, after adding Councillor Bryon Burnett to those members sending regrets**

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

MHC13-4      Comprehensive Housing Strategy Implementation Update

---

**Recommendation**

1. That this report be provided to the Mayor's Housing Commission as a RECEIVE and FILE.
2. That Administration return in the third quarter of 2014 with an annual report on the implementation of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy.

Jennifer Barrett, Senior City Planner, made a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

**Councillor Burnett moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the recommendation contained in the report be concurred in.**

MHC13-5      Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) National Housing Campaign  
- City of Regina - Host Housing Roundtable

---

**Recommendation**

1. That this report be provided to the Mayor's Housing Commission as receive and file.
2. That Administration return to the Mayor's Housing Commission in December 2013 with an update and further details on the City of Regina's Housing Roundtable in support of the Federation of Canadian Municipality's (FCM's) national housing campaign, "Fixing Canada's Housing Crunch".

**Councillor Young moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the recommendation contained in the report be concurred in.**

REGINA PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

MHC13-6      Condominium Conversion Policy Amendment

---

**Recommendation**

This report be received and filed.

Jennifer Barrett, Senior City Planner, made a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office

**Councillor Hawkins moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that this report be received and filed.**

ADJOURNMENT

**Councillor Burnett moved, AND IT WAS RESOLVED, that the meeting adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

---

Chairperson

---

Secretary

December 19, 2013

To: Members  
Mayor's Housing Commission

Re: Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2014-2019 and the Cold Weather Strategy on Homelessness

---

### RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Mayor's Housing Commission provide direction and advice to Council on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.
2. That the Mayor's Housing Commission participate in the upcoming consultations in January and February to develop the Community Plan on Homelessness.
3. That the Administration provide an update to the Mayor's Housing Commission in February on the preliminary findings and results of the community consultations established to develop the Community Plan on Homelessness and that the Commission provide direction and advice to Council on the Community Plan on Homelessness.
4. That the Administration provide annual updates to the Mayor's Housing Commission in Q3 on the Cold Weather Strategy.
5. That the Administration provide annual updates to the Mayor's Housing Commission in Q2 on homelessness issues in Regina.

### CONCLUSION

The Comprehensive Housing Strategy (CHS) was approved by Council on April 29, 2013. A Housing Implementation Plan was approved by Council on June 10, 2013. Since the approval of the CHS and implementation plan, Administration has begun implementation. Several of the strategies address the homelessness population.

*Strategy 28 states that the City continue to play a lead role in the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy by preparing the Community Plan to Address Homelessness.*

The federal government recently renewed the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for five years, from April 2014 to March 31, 2019, with a focus on Housing First. Housing First represents a significant shift in philosophy and practice. Elements of the Housing First approach have been applied in Regina before, such as delivering individualized case management and providing housing to those still using substances; however, Administration and community involvement with Housing First has not been systematic.

This report provides information on the renewed Homelessness Partnering Strategy and especially Housing First. It also provides information on the Cold Weather Strategy.

## BACKGROUND

### **The Homelessness Partnering Strategy**

While many of the federal government's former responsibilities in housing were turned over to provincial governments, the federal government has maintained a role in homelessness. The federal Department of Human Resources and Social Development has responsibility for the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The Homelessness Partnering Strategy is a community-based program aimed at reducing and preventing homelessness. The federal government provides funds and support to 61 designated communities across Canada to address their homelessness issues, including three in Saskatchewan (Regina, Prince Albert and Saskatoon). The program was started in 1999 and recently was renewed for five years from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2019.

Under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, the federal government has set up a structure to ensure that local communities have access to funds to address their homelessness issues. The structure is made-up of a Community Plan, Community Advisory Board and Community Entity.

- To receive federal government funds, a Community Plan on Homelessness must be developed under the direction of a Community Advisory Board. The Community Plan works within the strategic priorities established by the federal government and identifies Regina's needs and priorities on homelessness based on extensive community consultations and input. The federal government approves the Community Plan. Funds are allocated to the community through a call for proposals to support the Community Plan.
- The Community Advisory Board leads the development and implementation of the Community Plan. As well, the Board makes recommendations on applications for funding. The Community Advisory Board is made-up of key government and community stakeholders. The City has had a long-term relationship with the Community Advisory Board and this year accepted the role of Chairperson following a nomination process.
- The Community Entity is contracted to support the work of the Community Advisory Board. The Community Entity administers the Community Plan and works closely with organizations awarded funds to ensure successful project management and project outcomes. They also house the funds and administer the budget. The YMCA is the Community Entity and was awarded the contract following a competitive process.

The City's role with the Community Plan, Community Advisory Board, and Community Entity meets the objectives of the Comprehensive Housing Strategy—*Strategy 28*. The City is playing a key role in the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy and the subsequent development of Regina's Community Plan on Homelessness.

### **Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2011-2014: Accomplishments**

During the previous Homelessness Partnering Strategy period of 2011-2014, the federal government provided Regina with \$1.1 million in each year. All the funds have been allocated. The allocations focused on capital projects and increased the supply of emergency shelters, transitional facilities and supportive housing in Regina. Funds were also used to deliver support services for the homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

Some of the funded projects are:

- Added two transitional housing units for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Provided furnishings for two six-bed supportive residences for males recovering from addictions.
- Completed renovations to add seven additional units for women experiencing violence.
- Supported a commercial laundromat in a supportive housing complex to facilitate labour market readiness for people with mental health disabilities.
- Purchased and renovated a 10-unit apartment to house pregnant addicted women.
- Piloted the use of individualized case management, culturally appropriate counselling and housing placement to assist clients into stable living arrangements.

Appendix A provides information on all projects allocated funds in 2011-2014.

McEwen Manor, a supportive living home for people with mental health disabilities, provides an excellent example of the three levels of government working together and aligning their resources. McEwen Manor was constructed and supported with funds from the City, Province and Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The City contributed \$400,000 from the Social Development Reserve.

### **Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2014-2019: Moving Forward on Housing First**

The goal of the renewed Homelessness Partnering Strategy is to reduce the size of the homelessness population. Housing First is expected to drive the shift from managing to reducing homelessness. Housing First is an evidence-based approach capable of producing measurable results. It builds on the Mental Health Commission of Canada's At Home/Chez Soi five-year pilot project and the subsequent work of other Canadian and American communities, which has found that Housing First addresses homelessness more effectively than more traditional approaches. At Home/Chez Soi was piloted in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto and Halifax.

The Housing First approach is based on the assumption that the first and primary need of a homeless individual is to obtain stable, permanent housing. Once stable housing is obtained, other more enduring issues such as addictions or mental health can be appropriately addressed. As an intervention, the Housing First approach involves moving individuals who are chronically and episodically homeless from the streets or emergency shelters directly into permanent housing. Permanent housing is then complemented by providing support services to assist clients to maintain their housing and work toward community stability and inclusion.

The Housing First approach, which has no requirement for readiness to move to permanent housing, deviates substantially from the traditional Treatment First approach. Under the Treatment First approach, individuals must demonstrate readiness for each step in the continuum (e.g. emergency shelter; transitional housing and supportive housing) as they work toward permanent housing.

In sum, the Housing First approach involves moving homeless individuals rapidly from the streets or emergency shelters into stable long-term housing and ensuring supports. It is guided by the principles of offering choices to clients, separating housing provision from treatment, integrating housing across the community (scattered sites) and requiring tenancy responsibilities such as lease agreements.

## DISCUSSION

### **What does the 2014-2019 Homelessness Partnering Strategy Mean for Regina?**

The federal government will provide \$392,000 in designated funds and \$735,000 in Aboriginal funds for a total of approximately \$1.1 million each year for five years. This is the same amount provided in 2011-2014. The funds are expected to be used to reduce the size of the homelessness population in Regina. A minimum of 40% of the funds are expected to be invested in Housing First activities by March 31, 2016. This means that a Housing First approach will be the cornerstone of the new Community Plan to address homelessness. Funds can also be used to invest in other proven approaches that complement and advance Housing First and measurably reduce homelessness.

The target population are individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless i.e. those who have experienced extended periods or repeated bouts of homelessness in the recent past. The federal government defines the chronically homeless as those individuals in shelter for a minimum of 180 days per year. The episodically homeless are those individuals who have had a minimum of three stays per year in shelter.

All Homelessness Partnering Strategy funds must be outcome-based and focused on reducing homelessness in Regina. The federal government will provide reduction targets, which will guide Regina's actions. Further information on the targets and failure to meet the targets are expected from the federal government. Funded projects will need to be evidence-based with ambitious and measurable targets (e.g. number of individuals placed in stable housing, a duration and reduction in the length of shelter stay exceeding 30 days).

Data is critical. Point-in-time counts will be completed in spring 2014 and again at the same time every two years to establish baselines and measure progress. A point-in time count is an unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness. It includes both sheltered (in an emergency shelter) and unsheltered (street counts) populations. This will be Regina's first systematic count. Over the past couple years, service providers have been engaged in improving their data collection using the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS). HIFIS is a comprehensive data management system designed to help service providers with their day-to-day operations and to support data sharing to increase understanding of local homelessness. The point-in-time count street counts and HIFIS data will serve as a solid base to measure change in the number of people considered homeless.

Housing First will be the main driver of Regina's 2014-2019 Community Plan on Homelessness. Clients' needs will shape the Community Plan. The Community Plan will focus on these key components to achieve desired outcomes:

1. Identifying and Prioritizing Clients
2. Connecting Clients to Housing
3. Providing and Coordinating Support Services
4. Gathering the Data and Measuring the Outcomes

As such, the Community Advisory Board and Community Entity will be building partnerships and linking with key partners to develop the Community Plan. Key partners include emergency shelters, landlords, landlord associations, property owners, developers and community and government service providers. It also includes the municipal and provincial governments.

The Community Advisory Board and Community Entity will be consulting with groups and organizations in January and February 2014 on the Community Plan. Members of the Commission and Council will be invited to participate in the consultations and will receive further information on the consultations as information becomes available.

### **Cold Weather Strategy**

Last winter emergency shelters were full and individuals needing shelter were being turned away. As a response, service providers began meeting to address the problem. As a temporary solution, the United Way provided funds to the Salvation Army to purchase supplies and equipment.

This spring, the Ministry of Social Services convened service providers to Regina's homeless population, including shelters, emergency service agencies, City and representatives of the Ministry of Health to develop a cold weather strategy for the community. A Cold Weather Strategy has been developed. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure service providers work together so everyone has shelter in a safe place on cold nights in Regina. The strategy is designed to work with existing services and frontline service providers to remove barriers.

The Cold Weather Strategy is guided by the following principles established by the Ministry of Social Services and service providers:

- No one should sleep outside on a cold night.
- Individual dignity must be respected even in emergency situations: each person should have a bed or a cot, not just a mat on the floor or a chair.
- Everyone is allowed access to an emergency shelter including intoxicated persons or those previously banned from shelters.
- Family relationships should be respected: families and couples should be able to stay together.
- Warm indoor spaces should be available 24 hours a day.
- Everyone will work together to ensure that homeless people are aware of safe, available sleeping options.

The Cold Weather Strategy will be enacted each year between November 1 and March 31. If weather conditions require, the strategy will be enacted earlier than November and extended past March. Any frontline service provider who comes in contact with an individual in need of shelter is expected to take steps to ensure that the person has safe lodging for the night. The Cold Weather Strategy addresses the specific needs of some of Regina's most vulnerable target populations, including their transportation and communication needs when a shelter is full. Service providers are collecting statistics. The strategy is a living document and changes will be made as the strategy is tested this year and new issues are identified.

The Minister of Social Services has issued a news release informing the public about the Cold Weather Strategy and options for people in need of emergency shelter. As well, the strategy has been communicated to the City's Fire and Protective Services, Regina Police Service and the Regina Downtown Business Improvement District.

## RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS

### Financial Implications

The federal government will provide the Regina community, under the direction of the Community Advisory Board, with approximately \$1.1 million each year for five years from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2019 to address homelessness in Regina. The funds will be housed with the Community Entity (YMCA) and allocated to the community to support the priorities of Regina's Community Plan on Homelessness.

### Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

### Policy and/or Strategic Implications

The City's role and involvement with the Homelessness Partnering Strategy aligns with the Comprehensive Housing Strategy and implementation plan approved by Council. It also aligns with the goals and policies of the draft OCP.

### Other Implications

There are no other implications associated with this report.

### Accessibility Implications

Housing First in other cities suggests that this approach is more effective than the Treatment First approach in providing the homelessness population with stable, long-term housing.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The Comprehensive Housing Strategy went through both stakeholder and community consultation. Regina's Community Plan on Homelessness will be developed based on stakeholder and community consultation and input. Members of the Commission and Council will be invited to participate. The Administration will provide annual updates on homelessness to the Mayor's Housing Commission. The Commission will receive a copy of the Community Plan.

## DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The disposition of this report requires City Council approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Diana Hawryluk, Director  
Planning

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Carlston, Deputy City Manager  
Community Planning and Development

Report prepared by: Janice Solomon, Coordinator of Social Development

## Appendix A

### Homelessness Partnering Strategy 2011-2014 Accomplishments

*Note - During the 2011-2014 funding period, a number of community partners were involved in funded projects; however, this document speaks to the direct recipients of Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding.*

#### **Namerind Housing Corporation**

##### **"Raising Hope, Moving Families Forward" Project - \$1,161,676**

Namerind Housing Corporation purchased a multi-unit facility with 12 suites. This building provides transitional housing with intensive support care for substance-using pregnant and early postpartum Aboriginal women from the ages of 15 to 25 in order to assist them in achieving optimum health. Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has made the services available to 30 women who are not being housed in the facility but who benefit from access to the programming and services of the project.

#### **Namerind Housing Corporation**

##### **"Kids First Families Housing" Project - \$482,000**

Namerind Housing Corporation renovated 6 different 3 bedroom homes in several Regina neighbourhoods. Houses are available to Kids First Regina Aboriginal families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Kids First Program helps stabilize families and work towards independence from social support services.

#### **Oxford House Society of Regina Inc.**

##### **"House 3 Furnishings" Project - \$101,160**

Oxford House Society of Regina (OHSR) purchased furnishings and appliances for a transitional housing facility serving four adult women recovering from addictions who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

#### **Prairie Spirit Connections Inc.**

##### **"Housing Services" Project - \$286,439**

Prairie Spirit Connections Facilitator and Housing Co-ordinator assisted Aboriginal individuals in the city of Regina who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. The facilitator and housing co-ordinator provided client assessment, case management services, facilitated workshops on skill development and provided housing placement/retention services.

#### **Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)**

##### **"Clean Beginnings Laundromat" Project - \$250,946**

Canadian Mental Health Association provided support services and employability skills to individuals with chronic mental illness who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This project assisted clients in overcoming barriers to employment. This was accomplished through the operation of a laundry facility in McEwen Manor, a supportive housing facility for individuals with mental health disabilities.

**YWCA Regina****"My Aunts Place" Project - \$367,975**

My Aunt's Place (MAP) is an emergency shelter for homeless women and children, which provides basic needs and transportation to essential housing-related services. The project piloted the use of individualized case management plans, culturally appropriate counselling, spiritual support, housing placement and retention services to MAP clients in order to assist them into stable living arrangements.

**Regina Transition Women's Society****"Capital Expansion" Project - \$103,000**

Regina Transition Women's Society (Regina Transition House) completed renovations and purchased furnishings and appliances for its emergency shelter located in downtown Regina. This capital project added an additional 7 beds to the shelter, as well as improving the overall facilities.

**Carmichael Outreach****"Carmichael Outreach Initiative" Project - \$61,183**

Carmichael Outreach completed small renovations to its existing building, which is used as a drop in centre in the city of Regina. This improved the quality of the environment for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and assisted in prolonging the life of the building. The organization facilitated a visioning exercise to engage community members, staff and client volunteers to increase community capacity to address homelessness.

**Rainbow Youth Centre****"Youth Express Program III" Project - \$189,219**

Rainbow Youth Centre operated a support service center for youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to assist them in connecting to basic needs such as housing, food security, transportation, education of tenant rights / responsibilities and life skills and develop a plan to sustain the program.

**Regina Youth For Christ****"Uturn 3" Project - \$95,000**

Regina Youth for Christ Inc. partnered with Westridge Developments to develop and furnish the basements of two properties to create two transitional units for youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the city of Regina.

**TOTAL HPS FUNDS DISTRIBUTED TO THE COMMUNITY - 2011-2014 - \$3,098,598**