



ENDING HOMELESSNESS

YEAR FIVE REPORT CARD

2019 - 2020

GRANDE PRAIRIE'S FIVE YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS 2015-2019





Table of Contents

1. 2019-2020 Homeless Initiative Programs
2. Year 5 Homeless Initiative Outcomes
5. Acknowledgements

Grande Prairie's Homeless Initiative is managed by the City of Grande Prairie in partnership with the Community Advisory Board on Housing and Homelessness.

2019-2020 Homeless Initiative Funded Programs

Program	Description	Service Providers
Centralized Intake & Assessment	Matches people with the appropriate Housing First program.	YMCA of Northern Alberta
Housing First	Supports people experiencing homelessness to find, maintain and increase independence in permanent housing.	Centerpoint Facilitation, Canadian Mental Health Association, Northreach Society
Youth Interventions	A Youth Transition House and Youth Navigator support youth experiencing homelessness to access services, find housing and transition to independence.	Sunrise House Youth Emergency Shelter
Housing Loss Prevention	Supports people at risk of housing loss by providing short-term financial assistance and help accessing community supports.	Centerpoint Facilitation
Hybrid Housing-Outreach Team	Supports people in Rotary House to connect with community services and housing.	Rotary House
Street Outreach	Supports people experiencing homelessness in many situations through in-person connection, supplies and resources.	Northreach Society
Winter Services	Winter drop-in program and cot services.	Saint Lawrence Centre; Oasis Ministries
Coordinated Access	A City-led initiative focusing on improving access to local social service programs, including Housing First.	The Systems Planning Collective, a consulting partnership between Turner Strategies, Helpseeker and A Way Home Canada)



2019-2020 Homeless Initiative Outcomes

In recent years Grande Prairie's Homeless Initiative has addressed homelessness through the lens of *Grande Prairie's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness*, *the provincial Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in Ten Years (2009-19)* and *the Federal Reaching Home Strategy*. **The seven outcomes in this report showcase successes seen by the Homeless Initiative during 2019-20.**

Outcome 1: People housed through Housing First programs will remain stably housed	Year 1: 2015-16	Year 2: 2016-17	Year 3: 2017-18	Year 4: 2018-19	Year 5: 2019-20	Since 2009
People Housed: These participants went from homelessness to housing with program support.	210	147	94	126	85	1476
Program Graduates: These participants were able to maintain their housing independently and no longer needed Housing First.	13	42	37	19	30	361
Retention Rate: These participants remained active in the program during the year or left for positive reasons.	93%	92%	90%	82%	86%	77%

During 2019-20, 60% of newly housed participants were leaving a situation of chronic, long term homelessness.



Outcome 2: People housed in Housing First will show a reduction in use of health and justice systems

After **6 months** in housing, we saw average reductions in the following areas, indicating increased quality of life and decreased costs to public systems:

39% reduction in use of Emergency Medical Services

37% reduction in visits to an Emergency Room

34% reduction in interactions with the Police

Outcome 3: People housed in Housing First will demonstrate improved self-sufficiency, via stable income

After six months in housing, **97%** of Housing First participants had income from government or employment sources.

Outcome 4: People housed in Housing First will demonstrate engagement in mainstream services

63% of new participants reported two or more diagnosed, chronic conditions that were contributing to their experience of homelessness. In the first three months of housing, participants were supported to access community services to address their needs (top five listed below):

- 1. Financial Services** including income tax completion, budgeting, credit counseling, debt reduction, bank accounts, etc.
- 2. Counseling** to support people in building healthy relationships and improve mental health.
- 3. Non-Hospital/Non-emergency Health Services**, including family doctors, psychiatrists, eye doctors, dentists, chiropractors, etc.
- 4. Addictions Services** including Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, addiction counseling, treatment, etc.
- 5. None needed** – many participants receive numerous referrals in the first weeks of engagement with a Housing Team, even before they find housing. This will almost always include connections with income.

2019 - 2020 Homeless Initiative Outcomes

Outcome 5: An effective diversion system prevents people from experiencing homelessness

During 2019-20 **124** people were enrolled in the Housing Loss Prevention program which offers support for up to three months for people facing housing instability. **76%** of participants who completed a follow-up three months later reported that they were still in stable housing.

The top services needed to achieve housing stability were:

1. Assistance with rent or mortgage arrears
2. Assistance with security deposit
3. Rent or mortgage subsidy
4. Referrals to other community resources

Outcome 6: Outreach supports mitigate the immediate effects of homelessness

Street Outreach staff played an important role in continuing to connect with the city's most vulnerable people and managing emergent needs during 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The team also became more connected with City bylaw teams to increase the effectiveness of day-to-day interactions with people sleeping rough. **The Saint Lawrence Centre** provided a drop-in program for people experiencing homelessness during the winter and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centre

received an average of **80 visitors per day** during the winter. A hybrid outreach and housing team based in **Rotary House** played a key role in giving shelter clients timely access to housing and other support services on site. Finally, **The Oasis** cot program provided overflow shelter to over **200 individuals** during winter 2019/20 and has continued operation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Outcome 7: Addressing youth and indigenous homelessness is a priority

5 new youth found stability in the Homeless Initiative's youth transition house, an independent living model for youth up to 18.5 years old. **67%** of the youth who moved out of the house during the year left to stable, permanent housing. A Youth Navigator connected with **you else** here in the community as well, providing support for housing search and resource connection.

43% of the people housed through Housing First programs identified as indigenous. A new approach to Housing First access starting in 2020 includes formal prioritization of indigenous persons with other complex needs. The Homeless Initiative participants also benefit from collaborations with Indigenous-led programs.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the homeland of the many diverse First Nations and Metis people whose ancestors have walked this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Treaty 8.

We want to thank our funders, the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta.

The Government of Canada provides funding to the City as part of the Reaching Home strategy through Indigenous and Designated Community funding streams.

The Province of Alberta provides funding to the City through the Outreach Support Services Initiative.

Ongoing Provincial and Federal funding has enabled Grande Prairie to intervene in the cycle of homelessness using a Housing First approach. The City is responsible to manage this funding to achieve the greatest impact locally in partnership with local service providers

*This project is funded by the Government of Canada's
Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.*





HOMELESSNESS IS NOT WHO YOU ARE; IT'S WHERE YOU ARE.