

2014-2015

HOMELESS INITIATIVES



Report to the Community



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From the Mayor

The City of Red Deer is pleased to provide information and results on homelessness supports and services for the past year. As the community structure for the implementation of Red Deer's 'EveryOne's Home' plan shifted with the change in role for the Red Deer and District Community Foundation, so too has the focus of this report. The emphasis of this year's annual report is therefore on the provincial and federal government funds administered by The City of Red Deer and the way in which funded programs and services are aligned with our "EveryOne's Home" plan to end homelessness.

Over this past year, we have made considerable strides in supporting youth experiencing homelessness. Through a community-led, co-design process, a youth project was born. This project is consistent with our community plan and the new youth provincial plan.

In October 2014, we conducted our second Point in Time Homeless Count with the support of over 200 community volunteers. Locally, we saw a decrease of 51% between the 2012 and 2014 homeless counts, with a significant number (42%) of people experiencing homelessness for less than one year. While our work isn't finished, we are clearly moving in the right direction.

With the announced closure of Berachah Place last fall, The City of Red Deer stepped forward to work collaboratively with the community and Safe Harbour Society to provide a warming centre and day supports over the cold winter months. While these emergency supports are still a necessary component of our strategy to keep people safe from harm, our focus continues to be to work hard at developing long-term housing options to end homelessness.

We continue to maintain our goal of ending homelessness and we are making considerable progress as highlighted in this report. Among those individuals successfully housed from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 through the OSSI grant in our community, 96% remain housed. The Housing First philosophy puts individuals, their particular needs and challenges, and the relationships and support needed for their success at the center.

This work is challenging, and wouldn't be possible without the tireless efforts of the front-line workers and volunteers in our community, and the agencies and organizations that provide important supports and services. On behalf of the community, I thank you for accepting and embracing this important responsibility and helping to improve the quality of life and well-being of our most vulnerable citizens.



Mayor Tara Veer
City of Red Deer

PIT 2012

PIT
2014

In October 2014, we conducted our second Point in Time Homeless Count with the support of over 200 community volunteers. Locally, we saw a decrease of 51% between the 2012 and 2014 homeless counts.

51%
decrease

2014-2015 Housing Results

Number of people housed from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015:



104 new individuals were housed this year through the Government of Alberta Outreach and Support Services Initiative (OSSI) grant



88 new individuals received housing supports through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) grant from the Government of Canada



467 individuals were housed or received continued support since 2009 in their housing through the OSSI grant



114 individuals receiving housing supports since 2011 through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) grant from the Government of Canada



581 individuals were housed or received continued support from the previous year in their housing through the OSSI grant and the HPS grant

A deeper look at the OSSI numbers

Here's a snapshot look at how the provincial Outreach and Support Services Initiative (OSSI) program grants have helped house Red Deerians since 2009.*

Housing First Placements

Year	Total Housed ¹	Graduates ²	Exits ³
2009-2010	166	1	10
2010-2011	309	49	51
2011-012	346	42	31
2012-2013	412	53	37
2013-2014	475	47	37
2014-2015	467	34	19

¹**Total Housed** – Cumulative number of individuals still housed and receiving services and newly housed

²**Graduates** – individuals who have successfully exited the program

³**Exits** – Individuals who have exited for negative reasons

*OSSI data is being highlighted in this report.

With the new HPS community Plan, there was only six months of data.

OSSI Outcomes

How does Red Deer stack up in two of the four key OSSI provincial grant outcomes?



Outcome 1

Those housed through the program will remain stably housed.

Outcome Indicator:

At any given reporting period, 85% of the people housed will still be permanently housed.

96%

Annual Retention Rate

April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015

79%

Cumulative Retention Rate

April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2015



Outcome 2

Those persons housed in the program will show a reduction in inappropriate use of the public systems.

Outcome Indicator:

Those persons permanently housed will show reduced incarcerations, reduced emergency room visits, and reduced in-patient hospitalizations.

(See chart below for comparisons.)

Interactions with Public Systems, Prior and Post Housing



↓ 60%

since April 2013

Comparison of **interactions with EMS** in 12 months prior to housing and post housing.



↓ 51%

since April 2013

Comparison of **interactions with police** in 12 months prior to housing and post housing.



↓ 53%

since April 2013

Comparison of **emergency room visits** prior to housing and post housing.



↓ 92.5%

since April 2013

Comparison of **days in jail** in 12 months prior to housing and post housing.



↓ 79.4%

since April 2013

Comparison of **days in hospital** in 12 months prior to housing and post housing.

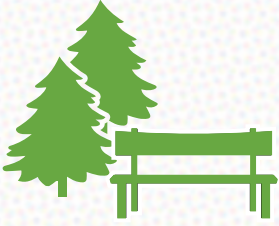


↓ 59%

since April 2013

Comparison of **court appearances** in 12 months prior to housing and post housing.

Point in Time (PIT) Count Results



137

Number of people counted experiencing homelessness on October 16, 2014, the date of the second Point In Time Count conducted in Red Deer.



67%

in emergency shelter



9%

short-term housing facility

Out of the total 137 enumerated, 99 participated in the survey.



42% of respondents have been homeless for **less than one year**



3/4 of homeless people in Red Deer **are male** (gender breakdown for those surveyed was: 25% female and 75% male)



35% of women experiencing homelessness reported **family breakdown, abuse or conflict as a barrier to housing**, a figure that is twice as high as that for men



24% of Red Deer's homeless population **are Aboriginal**, despite constituting only 5.2% of Red Deer's residents as per Statistics Canada Census data



50% of respondents indicated they had a **mental health condition**



15% of respondents were homeless youth **under the age of 25**



About 10% reported being **immigrants to Canada**.

Population Surveyed (n=99)

Overall Gender Breakdown



75%

74 were Male



25%

25 were Female



24%

24 were Aboriginal



10%

10 were Immigrants



44%

44 were Migrants (< 1 year)



18%

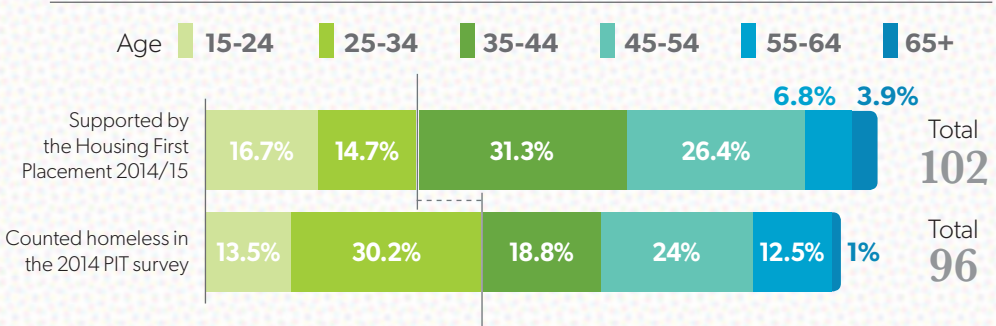
18 were Children & Youth (up to 24 years)*

* Note: This includes 15 youth surveyed and the three children accompanying parents

What else does the data show us?

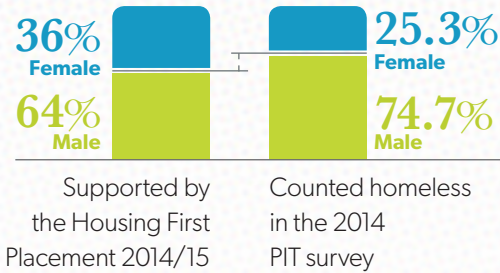
By comparing the 2014 Point in Time Count (PIT) results with the Housing First results from the OSSI projects, we can see how the programs are working or if any changes need to be made.

Age



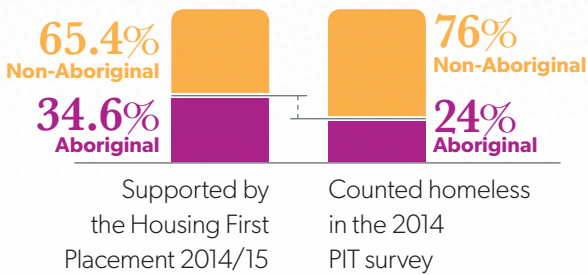
The PIT Count shows a gap between the percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness between the ages of 25-34 and the percentage who are receiving services. With that information we can adjust the services available to reach and better support that age group.

Gender



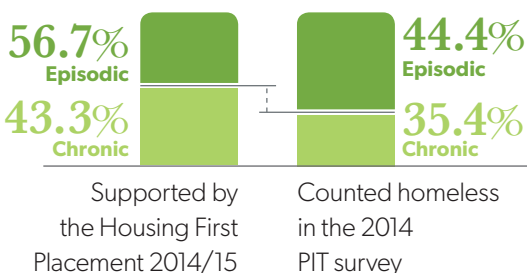
Women experiencing homelessness receive excellent support from Housing First, but as the number of homeless men in the PIT Count has increased, so too must support for the vulnerable men in our community

Ethnicity



Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness are currently being well-supported by Housing First, but the slightly higher representation of Non-Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness means that more support is needed for this demographic.

Pattern of Homelessness



People experiencing episodic homelessness are receiving the right level of support from Housing First, and the 2014 PIT Count shows that progress has been made in better supporting Red Deer's chronically homeless population as well.



EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness

Our Guiding Principles

- Ending homelessness in Red Deer is possible.
- Safe and secure homes for all citizens are critical to end homelessness, no matter what the individual's circumstances and vulnerabilities may be.
- The responsibility for ending homelessness is a community endeavor.
- Through systemic changes in policies, procedures, partnerships, and processes, homelessness can be prevented.
- Supportive individual, family and community relationships are necessary for people trying to obtain safe, secure and appropriate housing.
- Collaboration is the foundation of all our efforts.

Our Purpose

We will be successful in ending homelessness in Red Deer when we have a system of care that can effectively and efficiently:

- Prevent/divert vulnerable individuals from becoming homeless, or
- Ensure those who are homeless have permanent, appropriate housing and the supports they require within 28 days of presenting for services within the system.

Safe and secure homes for all citizens are critical to end homelessness, no matter what the individual's circumstances and vulnerabilities may be.

Community Housing Advisory Board

Guided by EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness (2014-2018) and A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years, the Community Housing Advisory Board (CHAB) is a council-appointed board that ...

- Oversees funding streams
- Reviews Requests for Proposals from service providers
- Monitors project reports
- Makes recommendations to City Council for project funding

The Community Housing Advisory Board is made up of:



2 City Councillors



2 members of the Aboriginal community



6 Six members at large



Susan

Safe Harbour Society

“Susan” came to Harbour House three years ago after battling a long-term opiate addiction. With no family connections aside from her mother, Susan became homeless after relationship problems caused her to lose her home. Once homeless, her drug use intensified, and she became addicted to crack cocaine.

In the three years she’s been living at Harbour House, Susan has overcome many obstacles and experienced many victories, including learning money management skills that allowed her to save up for a laptop and a month-long trip to Victoria.

A generous tenant who always helps out, Susan has created a long-term home for herself at Harbour House. Through her quiet strength and determination, Susan has accomplished real change in her life thanks to the support of the Safe Harbour Society. It is this continued support that will ensure that Susan remains housed.

Financial Reporting

Thanks to funding through the Government of Canada’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) grant and the Province of Alberta’s Outreach and Support Services Initiative (OSSI) grant, a wide variety of projects and initiatives were funded between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.

Total Funding

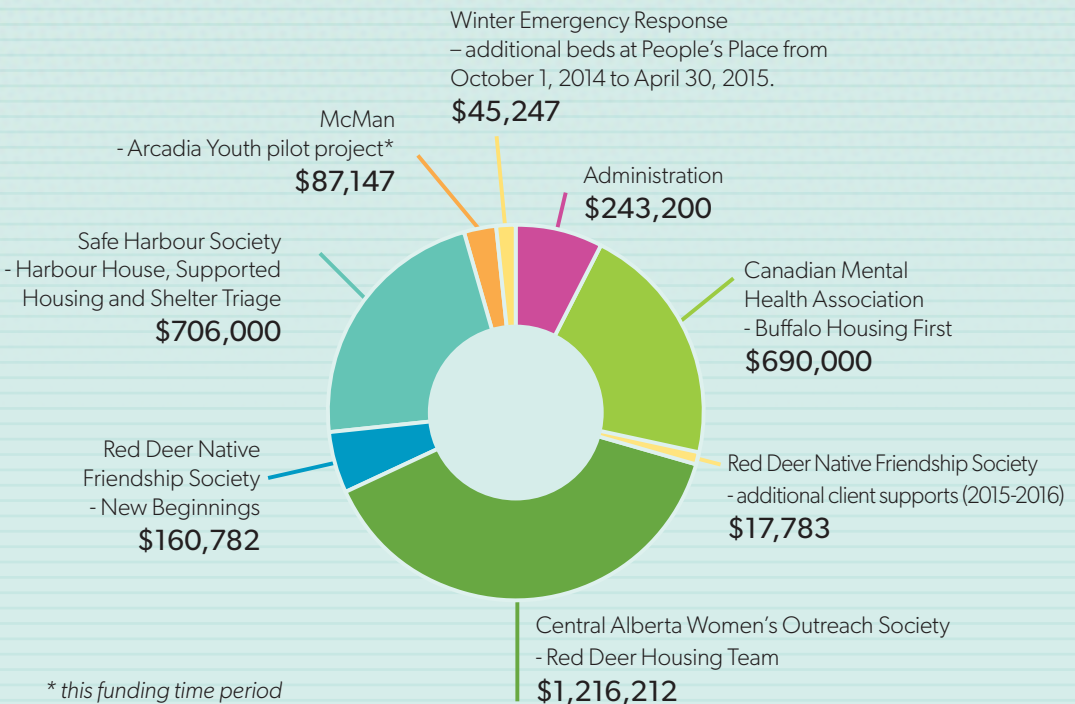


\$3,166,371
Government of Alberta OSSI grant

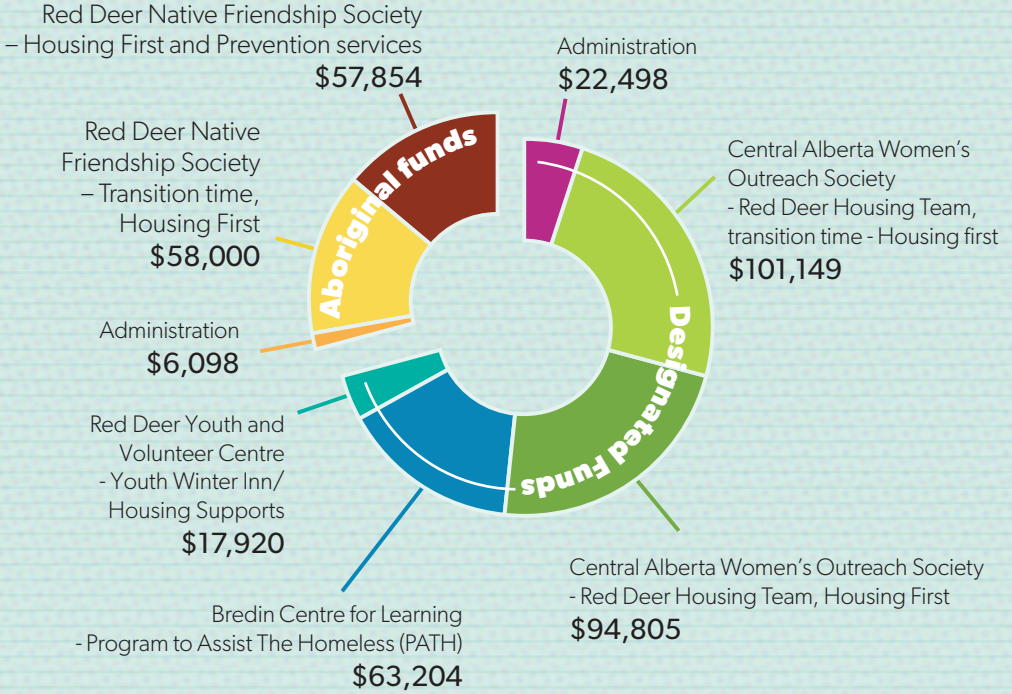


\$421,528
HPS grant from the Government of Canada

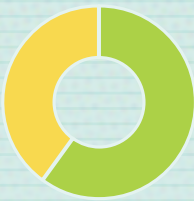
OSSI grant from the Province of Alberta



HPS grant from the Government of Canada



HPS Funding Priorities Breakdown



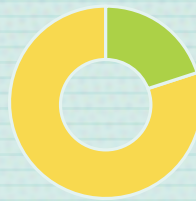
Designated funds:

60% towards Housing First clients
40% towards individualized services or prevention services.

(further definitions are below)



Housing First clients



Aboriginal funds:

20% towards Housing First clients
80% towards individualized services or prevention services.



individualized services or prevention services

Evaluation

This year, a unique evaluation process was completed through IRM Research and Evaluation Inc., a department of Blue Quills First Nation College. In an effort to better understand culture as a key component of improving housing stability for Aboriginal clients, the group evaluated the Aboriginal Outreach Housing project within Red Deer Native Friendship Society.

Wikiwin: Moving from Homelessness to Homefulness used the protocols of Aboriginal ceremony—including circle ceremonies, relational accountability, and aboriginal ideologies around the Medicine Wheel/Natural Law/Seven Teachings—to understand “colonization” and what “home” means to an indigenous individual.

Programs for At-Risk Red Deerians

A key goal of EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness (2014-2018) is to provide supports for people who are at major risk of becoming homeless or who have recently become homeless.

Two current projects support this goal:

**Bredin Centre for Learning
Program to Assist The Homeless (PATH)**

**Red Deer Native Friendship Society
Housing Outreach Program***

These two programs are funded through the Homeless Partnering Strategy (HPS) grant and provide housing loss prevention, housing placement activities, and emergency housing funding for individuals facing imminent risk of homelessness.

All communities that receive Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding are required to complete a Community Plan. The purpose of the plan is to ensure a coordinated response to address the needs of people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and to identify what Housing First looks like in our community. Red Deer's HPS community plan aligns with the EveryOne's Home Plan on Ending Homelessness. The EveryOne's Home document is our community's overarching plan.

The complete HPS Community Plan for Red Deer can be found online at www.reddeer.ca.

**Note: This program is offered to clients who wish to engage in a sober lifestyle. The staff provide culturally relevant awareness and education as an integral component of the program.*

Coordinated Access and Placement Process

On May 4, 2015, Housing First Service Providers and Social Planning launched a new Coordinated Access and Placement process to formalize the intake process for Red Deerians experiencing homelessness.

Matching clients with the program that will best fit their needs is a critical first step in overcoming homelessness, and with the new intake process and coordinated access to services, service providers will be better able to support homeless Red Deerians in finding successful long-term solutions.

Programs for chronically or episodically homeless Red Deerians

EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan to End Homelessness (2014-2018) also aims to provide access to housing supports for people who are chronically or episodically homeless.

There are many programs available in the continuum of care; clients will be provided help based on their level of need. The decision to place an individual or family into the Housing First program is made using the SPDAT tool. This evaluation tool helps providers know what level of assistance is appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

Rapid Re-Housing and Intensive Case Management

These programs offer funding for security deposits, rental subsidies, and move-in costs. Rapid Re-Housing aims to successfully exit clients from the program in six to 12 months, while clients entering the Intensive Case Management program generally need a longer period of support (12 months and over) before they successfully exit the program.

- Red Deer Housing Team

The Red Deer Housing Team is made up of four partners: Canadian Mental Health Association, Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter, Central Alberta Women's Outreach Society, and the Safe Harbour Society.

- Red Deer Native Friendship Society
- New Beginnings Aboriginal Housing Project

This program serves clients who wish to live a sober lifestyle within a culturally supportive environment.

- Red Deer Native Friendship Society
- HPS Housing First Program

This program offers funding for utility deposits, security deposits, rental subsidies, and move-in costs. Funding is time limited depending on client circumstances.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Staff work in the housing to provide support 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Buffalo "Housing First"
- Safe Harbour Society
- Harbour House

Permanent Supported Housing

Staff provide support and come in to the housing unit on a regular basis but are not on site 24/7

- Safe Harbour Society
- Supported Housing*

**Note: Through this program, tenants have to agree to the goal of living a sober lifestyle. Support continues with the client for up to one year after they move into the community from the Society's housing units.*

Youth Programs

Programs that support individuals between the ages of 16 to 24


- Red Deer Youth and Volunteer Centre
- Youth Winter Inn/Housing Supports
- McMan Central
- Arcadia



Sharon Red Deer Native Friendship Centre

“Sharon” is a single 44 year old mother of two teens, one that is special needs. Sharon is a skilled artisan seamstress from Saddle Lake Cree Nation. She moved with her family to Red Deer from Edmonton to find a safe community for her children to thrive in. She receives income support and supplements her income by selling her regalia that she crafts.

Sharon frequently attended numerous cultural supports provided by the Friendship Center. She attended many Craft Circles, Women’s Wellness, Friendship Night, Elder Support, Women Sweats and potlucks. She also volunteered to teach women to make Feast and Ceremony skirts. She is also one of our local artisans that sells her crafts at the Friendship Center. Through our Housing Support Program, she was successfully housed and became a graduate of the Housing Program.

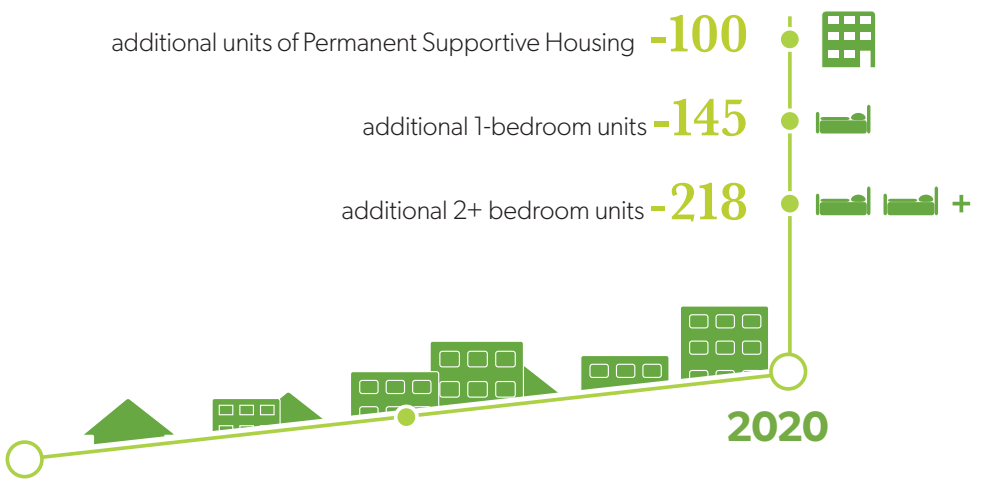


Red Deer Housing Options Framework

In May 2014, the Red Deer & District Community Foundation released the Red Deer Housing Options Framework, a report prepared by OrgCode Consulting Inc. that recommended current available housing options be expanded to reach a series of minimum targets.

To view the entire report and its recommendations, please visit www.reddeer.ca and search 'Housing Options Framework.'

2020 Minimum Targets



Red Deer's Warming Centre

The closure of the long-running Berachah Place last September left vulnerable individuals without a place to spend their days during the months of winter. In November, The City of Red Deer provided funds to operate a Warming Centre from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week, as well as additional hours for the Day Support program, between November 24, 2014 to April 30, 2015.

During the first year of that program, a significant number of Red Deerians used one or both of these services.



455

unique individuals accessed the Warming Centre

279

accessed the centre for 15 days or less



262

unique individuals accessed the Day Support program

John & Jane Bredin Centre for Learning

"John", his wife "Jane," and their three young children became homeless in November 2014, when inconsistent access to child care caused John to lose his job and, subsequently, the family's rental home.

With few other options, the family moved into a motel, which was funded entirely by Jane's income. Because of the stress of the situation, Jane was soon forced to take medical leave from her job, reducing the family's income even further.

But by the end of December, the PATH program at the Bredin Centre of Learning in Red Deer had connected the family to community resources and funding for housing. With support from the PATH program, John's family was able to secure housing in a rental home, where they have lived since February.

Jane has since returned to work, while John has been put on extended medical leave due to a health condition. Though the family has suffered from homelessness and now manages on only one income, they have maintained a positive attitude and a stable routine for their three children. These Red Deerians are proof that people can excel even while homeless, with help from community programs like PATH.

Coordinated Response

Ending homelessness in Red Deer is a collective effort. Our homelessness serving systems are doing their part by working collaboratively with the various other systems and agencies to provide support. This coordinated approach will have the greatest impact on the lives of our most vulnerable citizens.

The Alberta Interagency Council on Homelessness is responsible for the successful implementation of the provincial plan, A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years, through sending policy recommendations to the Minister of Human Services. These recommendations are also sent to a joint committee made up of Deputy Ministers from Human Services, Justice, Health and Seniors to inform positive systemic changes in the supports available to vulnerable Albertans.

The Alberta Interagency council is made up of 28 individuals representing shelters, community agencies, rental companies, housing authorities, FCSS, AUMA and government ministries. 7 Cities—a group of seven major municipalities across Alberta—has four seats at this table, one of which has been filled by The City of Red Deer.



Red Deer's Two New Service Providers



Bredin Centre for Learning – Program to Assist The Homeless (PATH)

In 2014, Bredin Centre for Learning began offering the PATH program: an individualized support service program to improve the self-sufficiency of those individuals and families who are recently homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.

The combination of a full-time support worker and part-time career counsellor has so far proven to be effective: 20 individuals have been successfully housed and supported between October 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.

McMan Youth, Family and Community Services Association – Arcadia

Last year, McMan Central leased a residence in Red Deer and introduced Arcadia, a project for chronically homeless youth between the ages of 16 and 24. The home offers two youth a stable but flexible residence, as well as support from a housing coordinator and live-in mentor, until they feel ready to transition to independent living.

So far, the program has housed and supported three youth through life-skills support and secure transitional housing.

Looking Ahead

Red Deer has made great progress toward ending homelessness over the past year, but it doesn't stop there. 2015-2016 will see the addition of another program to support the youth in our community, through McMan Central's Youth Outreach and Family Reunification project, which launches on July 1, 2016.

By intervening as quickly as possible with youth (ages 16 to 24) who are street involved or at risk of homelessness, the program will divert young people from homelessness. The program will offer a single point of entry to find the correct system of supports, in three main focus areas:

1. Case management services geared toward family reunification.

"Family" will be defined by the youth and might not be the family of origin for the youth.

2. Connection to community support and government supports.

3. Connection to housing options and supports.

When family reunification is not a viable option, the program will assist the youth in connecting with programs that provide housing options and supports.

The Community Housing Advisory Board has also approved The City of Red Deer's Social Planning department to move forward with a process to:

- Review the current state of housing and homelessness in Red Deer.
- Review the continuum of housing and supports systems currently in place and the current community needs and priorities through conversation with front-line staff, clients, and stakeholders. The goals and strategies outlined within EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan to Homelessness (2014-2018) will be the guide for this work.
- Create a "straw dog model" of a coordinated system of supports and housing, which will be shared with the community for feedback.

Based on the coordinated system of supports and housing developed through this process, the department will issue Requests for Proposals in early 2016.

This annual report has focused on the provincial and federal government funds administered by the City of Red Deer and the way in which funded programs and services are aligned within our EveryOne's Home plan to end homelessness.

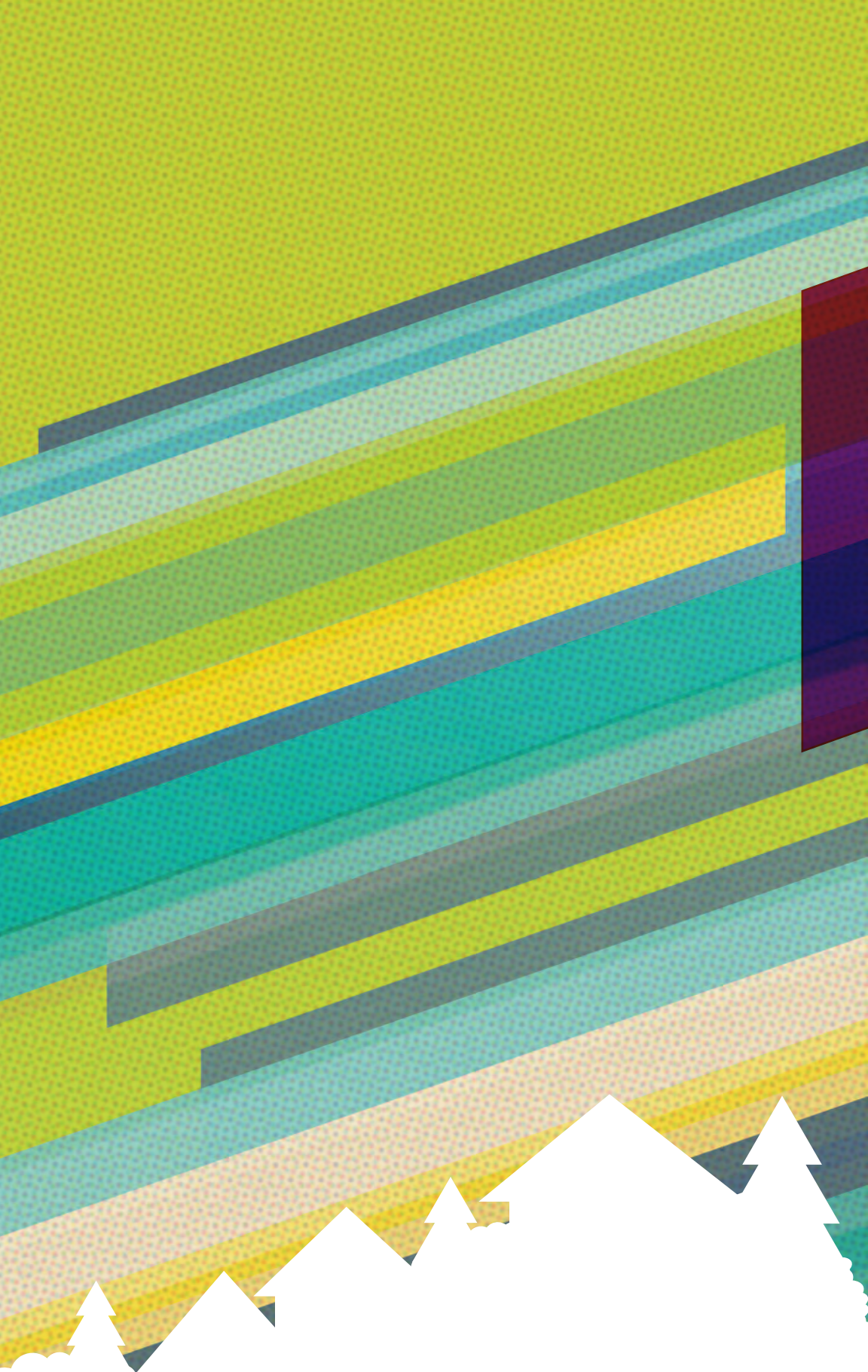
The City of Red Deer will continue to support and assist where appropriate the other goals contained with the EveryOne's Home plan to end homelessness such as governance, capital development and early intervention.

Together with the federal and provincial governments, community stakeholders, and dedicated Red Deerians, The City of Red Deer will continue to collaborate and work toward creating a community where "Everyone's Home."

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For more information on The City of Red Deer housing and homelessness initiatives, visit www.reddeer.ca/socialplanning.

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