

**Community Plan for Addressing Homelessness  
Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative  
(SCPI)**

**St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This document outlines the community plan for addressing homelessness through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), for the city of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The national homelessness initiative of the Federal Government, will invest \$753 million federally over three years (2000-2001 to 2002-2003). The SCPI fund, part of the homelessness initiative, will contribute \$305 million nationally over the three year period.

SCPI and the National Homelessness Initiative are predicated on the belief that there is a need for the federal, provincial and municipal governments, in concert with the communities affected, to work together to address homelessness.

This document is prepared in keeping with the outline as recommended by the Federal Government. For ease of review, it is organized in accordance with the nine key elements required by the program guidelines. Therefore there are eleven sections in all, and numerous appendices.

### **1.2 Homelessness Initiative in St. John's**

The funds available to be invested under SCPI and the other funds of the Initiative in this province over the three year period include:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Investment over Three Years</b>
Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative	\$2,134,192
Youth Homelessness	\$1,416,000
Urban Aboriginal Homelessness	\$600,000
Planning	\$ 70,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,220,912</b>

## **FUNDING SOURCES**

Funding Source	Year		
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
SCPI	713,655.00	713,655.00	707,662.00
Youth	472,000.00	472,000.00	472,000.00
Aboriginal	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
Planning	70,000.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,455,655.00</b>	<b>\$1,385,655.00</b>	<b>\$1,379,662.00</b>

In addition to these funds, there are other opportunities to access funds in support of SCPI initiatives. These include:

- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Shelter Enhancement Fund- this fund is specifically made available to enhance shelters and make them accessible;
- Federal Government Buildings- SCPI communities have priority access to federal government buildings which may become available. This component is administered through Public Works and Government Services (PWGS);
- access to regular HRDC program funds to augment proposals where appropriate.
- access to provincial funds, through departments such as Health and Community Services, Human Resources and Employment, and Municipal Affairs (Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation).

In the case of St. John's, there are some particular characteristics of administration and delivery of the Homelessness Initiative, which include:

- **Shared Model Arrangement:** under this arrangement, HRDC administers the Homelessness Initiative in this province, in consultation with the community;
- **Federal Facilitator:** the Regional Executive Head (REH) of HRDC or alternate fills this role in this province. This position assumes overall responsibility for coordinating the activities under this initiative, and reports to Federal Council on the initiative.
- **City Facilitator:** an HRDC employee, assigned full-time to this program. In

some other provinces, an identified community entity has taken the lead in direct administration of SCPI.

- **Pooling of funds:** HRDC and the Community, has determined to use the St. John's Community Plan as the vehicle for determining its investment under SCPI, the Youth Homelessness Program and the Urban Aboriginal Program. The latter two programs have been targeted to invest their resources in the St. John's area for maximum impact.
- **Community Advisory Committee:** this group is made up of some 24 members, representing key community service delivery and advocacy organizations, as well as municipal, provincial, and federal government representatives. This group oversees and directs the development of the Community Plan, reviews progress of the implementation on a regular (quarterly) basis, recommends changes to objectives and priorities, and assists in designing and overseeing the evaluation.
- **Decision-making Sub-Committee:** it was recognized that several groups serving on the Community Advisory Committee would want to apply for funds under the initiative. Therefore, a small group, made up of three community representatives, one provincial government person and HRDC officials has been selected to receive and review all proposals using the Plan's objectives and priorities as a guideline. This group will recommend acceptance or rejection of proposals directly to the Minister. Successful projects are then administered by HRDC.

### **1.3 The Community Plan**

The Community Plan is basically a strategy about how to invest the monies available under SCPI in order to have the maximum positive impact on people over the next three years. At this point, it is a means to assist decisions about where the investments available under the Initiative can be best made. Section 4.0 describes how the plan was constructed, in a two month period. There is a general acknowledgment that the plan needs to be a flexible and "living" document, with means to review and revise the approaches as necessary over the three year time period.

### **1.4 Nature and Extent of Homelessness in St. John's**

The most common descriptive adjective of homelessness in the consultation has been 'hidden'. It is generally understood that there is not a street population in St. John's in the sense that few if any individuals sleep on the street on a regular basis. There are a variety of scenarios which characterize the homeless situation in the city. Some of these described in the consultation include:

- young men age 16-19 fleeing poor home circumstances, for whom existing responses are generally seen as inadequate to their needs;
- persons with disabilities denied full access to emergency shelters which are not accessible, forced to live in accommodations which are also often inaccessible, and present clear health and safety concerns, and may well be considered as not intended for human habitation;
- aboriginal persons with serious drug and alcohol problems, many women leaving relationships, who are often not taken in by existing shelters;
- persons with mental health and other concerns living in tenuous circumstances because their housing negatively effects their health which leads to a cycle of housing dilemmas and crises;
- young people who attempt to be diagnosed with mental illness to qualify for higher social welfare benefits;
- persons living in substandard accommodations, which may be considered as rendering them uninhabitable given the winter conditions in St. John's;
- women escaping violence at a rate greater than the local shelter can accommodate, and faster than the system can address more permanent housing;
- single, non-senior women, who are forced to live in circumstances which may be injurious to physical well-being and safety;
- women, for whom, mixed shelter options are not appropriate ;
- seniors who are in hospitals for extended periods on acute care units, because there is no place to which for them to be released, or are living in sub-standard housing which will likely be their "home" for upwards of 20 years;
- persons who are deemed to be 'hard to house' (e.g. women and men from mental health and correctional system) and whom until the past few years may have been institutionalized in one form or another, are now living more independently.

There are no existing overall estimates of homelessness in the city of St. John's. There are some indicators, including (Note: there may be some multiple counting involved in the categories below):

- a report on youth homelessness by HCS-St. John's identified 28 young men who were without accommodation in the period of September-December 1998;
- recent consultations among government departments and community groups have identified a group of 50-60 'hard to house' individuals;
- 723 single adults were reported by HRE to be living in bed sitters in 1998, and 781 as of October 2000;
- regular use of the city lock-up and the Waterford hospital in emergency housing situations;
- collateral resources, such as Gathering Place, report a membership of 70 people, mostly men;
- community groups report numerous requests or concerns about housing per year;
- the women's centre has contact with a number of women who have no fixed address and rely on family and friends to house them;
- for families living in boarding homes and sub-standard housing, the key correlated issue described is poverty;
- the circumstances of persons described above are seen by some to be the victims of "planned instability", which arises from systemic policies and procedures about how to address the needs of vulnerable people in our society.

### **1.5 SCPI as a Means to Address Homelessness in St. John's**

There is a great deal of concern that the Homelessness Initiative as it currently exists not be accepted as *the* approach to addressing housing concerns in St. John's. Clearly, SCPI is focussed on absolute homelessness. Community groups are unanimous in their agreement that the fundamental housing need in this city and this country is for safe, affordable social housing and the federal government needs to re-commit to this as a priority. While generally pleased with the intent under the current Initiative, it is seen as an insufficient overall response by the federal government to homelessness as it exists in this city and this country.

## **2.0 GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

The St. John's Metropolitan area is the geographic area to be served by this program. Most of the community agencies serve persons from the city and communities adjacent. Government groups serve mandated areas, in and around the city. The total population



of this region is approximately 170,000 people. The reader should interpret the terms “St. John’s” to mean the metro area in this document unless otherwise stated.

### 3.0 OBJECTIVES

The national long-term objectives of SCPI include:

- to ensure that no individuals are involuntarily on the streets by providing sufficient shelters and adequate support systems;
- to significantly reduce the number of individuals requiring emergency shelter and transition and supportive housing by providing, for example, sufficient health services, low-cost housing, discharge planning, early intervention, and prevention initiatives;
- to help individuals move from homelessness to self-sufficiency;
- to help communities strengthen their capacity to address the needs of their homeless population;
- to improve the social, health and economic well-being of people who are homeless.

SCPI has identified five objectives for the period of 2000-2003, including:

- to alleviate the hardship of those who are absolutely homeless by increasing, for example, the number of beds available in shelters (either indirectly, by providing alternative housing for current long-term shelter residents, or directly, by providing additional shelter space);
- to promote a “continuum of supports” approach to reducing homelessness;
- to strengthen the capacity of communities to serve homeless people and reduce homelessness by bringing community service providers together to develop plans that address all the needs that are common to homeless people;
- to address the issue of homelessness at a community level by promoting the development of collaborative processes and broad-based partnerships among all stakeholders-i.e. private, non-profit and voluntary sectors, labour organizations and all levels of government;
- to develop a base of knowledge, expertise and data about homelessness and share it among all concerned parties and the general public.

Locally identified objectives include:

- to ensure SCPI is a community-driven initiative, with transparent processes and accountability to the community;
- to address the most serious situations, of persons who rely repeatedly on

temporary shelter as their primary source of housing, and who are described as “hard to house”;

- to increase the shelter / transitional housing capacity, and subsequently housing opportunities overall in the city, in response to need and providing consumer choice;
- development of supportive systems around people at risk of losing their housing or living in situations dangerous to their health and well-being;
- to ensure that all activities under SCPI are inclusive and accessible in their design;
- to use the SCPI project as a catalyst to bring key stakeholders together for long-term planning and development of a housing model for the city;
- to ensure that SCPI in St. John’s addresses needs along the continuum of supports.

#### **4.0 COMMUNITY PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

##### **4.1 Development Process**

A private consultant, the IHRD Group, was hired to facilitate the development of the community plan. IHRD Group worked closely with the City Facilitator and the Community Advisory Committee to design the consultation process and to vet drafts of the draft plan.

The key elements in the design of the plan development process were inclusion and flexibility. Elements of the process include:

- working with the community advisory committee and the City Facilitator;
- a review of studies and reports about homelessness and related issues (a descriptive list is provided in the appendices);
- interviews with 35 key informants, including community service providers, government officials, advocacy groups;
- a survey of 107 St. John’s residents who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness;
- six focus groups with about 50 persons at higher risk of experiencing homelessness and the agencies which serve them;
- case studies describing the particular faces of homelessness in the city;

- a public meeting to provide information about the initiative and receive further community input.

## **4.2 Community Advisory Committee Structure / Role**

The committee members have agreed to serve for the life of SCPI. There are 24 members, representing community groups and levels of government. The committee operates on a co-chaired arrangement (the city facilitator and a community person) and meets at the call of the City Facilitator. There were four formal meetings in the development of the plan.

The Committee has the following roles:

- overseeing, directing, and vetting the work of the consultant in designing the community plan;
- providing ongoing advice and guidance in the implementation of SCPI;
- participating in regular review processes;
- selects and regularly reviews the composition of the decision-making sub-committee;
- providing input into the evaluation process of SCPI;
- using SCPI as a catalyst to the development of a broader community model to address homelessness.

### ***Decision-making Sub-Committee***

- the Decision-making sub-committee, is comprised of three community representatives, one provincial government official and in an ex-officio capacity, representatives of the relevant funds from HRDC (i.e. the City Facilitator, youth coordinator, aboriginal coordinator).
- this committee will operate independently in the review and approval of all proposals, using the criteria, priorities, values and guiding principles of the Plan in their deliberations;
- recommendations are sent to the minister for approval;
- this group may seek guidance from the larger group as required;
- this sub- committee will be accountable to the community through quarterly meetings with the larger committee.

### 4.3 Ongoing Input

Participants in the consultation process indicated an interest in ongoing input as the SCPI program unfolds over the next three years. Some of the suggestions for ensuring on-going input generally were:

- annual or semi- annual meetings, where people would be invited to receive information on the activities and outcomes of the program;
- setting up a web site to allow for ongoing review (there were countering concerns about investing in an approach which is inaccessible to most homeless persons);
- feeding into existing communications networks of community agencies to give and receive information;
- strategies for direct communication with persons living in homeless circumstances;
- the ongoing work of the committee itself.

### 4.4 Representation of Homeless Persons on the Committee

There is an acknowledged need to provide a meaningful role for homeless persons in decisions intended to assist them, and a goal for their inclusion. There are several options which have been explored, including:

*Seats on the Community Advisory Committee / Decision-making Body-* many informants supported the addition of homeless people on the committee itself. Some informants asserted that the committee should state a goal of majority representation by persons who are / have experienced homelessness. Most described feeling conflicted about this issue, both supporting the concept but concerned about effective implementation;

*Separate Advisory Committee-* this approach would allow for input from homeless persons. The concerns expressed about this approach were in terms of segregation and lack of legitimacy of this group.

*Regular Accountability Sessions-* this option suggests that the current structure is sufficient, but that there needs to be a process to invite scrutiny by homeless persons at regular intervals throughout the life of SCPI.

The committee has determined to identify interest of homeless persons to sit on the committee, to discuss with them the options with respect to inclusion, and to endeavour to meet their preferences.

Regardless of the approach, there are some issues to be considered, including:

- there are a number of consumer organizations which are quite interested in this

initiative;

- in our review of other plans (i.e. Toronto, Halifax, Calgary) there is little mention of consumer representation on the community committees, although Calgary states a target of 5 homeless persons on its committee by the end of the three year SCPI period;
- there will be / should be some costs associated with involving the consumer voice effectively, through financial and human resource supports.

## 5.0 ASSETS AND GAPS

### 5.1 Assets

#### RESOURCE ASSETS

The following table includes a sample of resource assets for the St. John's region. This is not a complete listing of all the resources St. John's has to offer. Please refer to Appendix 11.0 for a comprehensive listing of organizations and services that have been included in this report.

<b>EMERGENCY SHELTER</b>	<b>LONGER-TERM TRANSITIONAL SHELTER</b>
Catherine Booth House Iris Kirby House Naomi Centre St. Francis Foundation Wiseman Centre	Emmanuel House Health and Community Services, St. John's Howard House HRE Temporary Accommodations Kirby House (2 <sup>nd</sup> stage) Naomi Centre Pleasant Manor Shalom Inc.
<b>SUPPORTIVE HOUSING</b>	<b>SOCIAL/SUBSIDIZED HOUSING</b>
ACCESS House Carew Lodge Choices For Youth Community Care Program Eastern Residential Support Board Elizabeth House Pleasant Manor St. Francis Foundation	Cabot Habitat for Humanity NLHC Non-Profit Housing Division, City of St. John's
<b>DROP-IN CENTRE</b>	<b>FOOD BANK</b>
Buckmaster's Circle Community Centre Catherine Booth House Emmanuel House Froude Ave. Community Centre Gathering Place Kenmount Park Neighborhood Centre Longside Club MacMorran Community Centre Pottle Centre Rabbittown Community Centre The HUB Triangle Club Virginia Park Community Centre	Community Food Sharing Association Froude Ave. Community Centre Salvation Army Family Services
<b>MEAL PROGRAM</b>	<b>CLOTHING BANK</b>
Buckmaster's Circle Community Centre Catherine Booth House Emmanuel House Froude Ave. Community Centre	Emmanuel House Froude Ave. Community Centre Iris Kirby House Longside Club

Gathering Place Longside Club Naomi Centre Rabbittown Community Centre	Naomi Centre Rabbittown Community Centre Salvation Army Family Services St. John's Native Friendship Centre Virginia Park Community Centre
<b>FURNITURE BANK</b>	<b>ADDICTIONS TREATMENT SERVICES</b>
No formal service set up other than thrift shops and occasional donated items to various organizations who distribute it to their own clients in need (e.g., Catherine Booth House, Iris Kirby House, and the St. John's Native Friendship Centre).	C-STEP, John Howard Harbour Light Mental Health/Addictions Services
<b>EVICITION &amp; LEGAL SERVICES</b>	<b>OUTREACH SERVICES</b>
Newfoundland Legal Aid Commission St. John's Native Friendship Centre	Civic #4, ILRC Emmanuel House St. Francis Foundation
<b>MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</b>	<b>EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING SERVICES</b>
Adolescent Health Counselling Service CHANNAL Catherine Booth House Community Care Program Emmanuel House Family Life Bureau Lemarchant House Meeting Place/Therapeutic Recreation Mental Health Crisis Centre Perlin Pre-Vocational Training Centre Pleasant Manor	Ability Works Brother T. I. Murphy Learning Resource Centre Department of Education Longside Club MacMorran Community Centre Perlin Pre-Vocational Training Centre Skills for Success

<b>EMPLOYMENT SERVICES</b>	<b>LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMS</b>
Ability Works C-STEP, John Howard Civic #4, ILRC Emmanuel House Froude Ave. Community Centre	Brother T. I. Murphy Resource Learning Centre C-STEP, John Howard Rabbittown Community Centre



<p>Kenmount Park Neighbourhood Centre          Longside Club          MacMorran Community Centre          Mill Lane Enterprises          Murphy Centre Employment Services Inc.          Opening Doors          Rabbittown Community Centre          Supported Employment Program, HRE          Skills for Success          The HUB          Virginia Park Community Centre</p>	
<p><b>SERVICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES</b></p>	<p><b>CULTURAL SERVICES</b></p>
<p>Civic #4, ILRC          Coalition for Persons with Disabilities          Longside Club</p>	<p>Association for New Canadians          Multicultural Women's Organization of NF &amp; Lab          St. John's Native Friendship Centre</p>

## Other Assets

In addition to the services described above, there are a number of additional assets which have been described in the consultation process. These include:

- emergency services for persons with mental health concerns (e.g. Mental health Crisis Centre);
- strong advocacy and service organizations, which are well established and trusted resources to homeless persons (e.g. Women's Centre, Native Friendship Centre, Gathering Place, Stella Burry Corporation, National Anti-Poverty Organization, AIDS Committee, CHANAL, Voices for Social Justice in Housing, Community Alliance for Better Solutions, Family Care Program- Waterford Hospital, Provincial Association Against Family Violence, Single Parents Association);
- expertise and experience of the community in addressing the needs of homeless persons;
- all levels of government are paying increasing attention to homelessness in the past 1-2 years;
- the city of St. John's has initiated numerous housing activities to address homelessness and sub-standard housing in the city for the last several years;
- a current increase in co-operative discussions and some joint initiatives of the community and the provincial government about homelessness;
- there is already a large amount of money being invested in providing shelter to people, although this does not mean it is suitable or acceptable;
- the knowledge and experiences of homeless persons themselves.

## 5.2 Gaps

Informants described the following key gaps in addressing the needs of homeless persons:

- *lack of a coordinated approach* - in focus groups, it was clear that no one provincial government agency or department is directly accountable for providing emergency housing. Up until quite recently, this meant that an ad hoc, crisis-oriented approach dominated. There is an inter-departmental committee of government formed to address complex issues and supportive housing concerns, and this group has had some community input and involvement.

- *lack of available alternatives to existing rooming / boarding homes, which are seen as largely sub-standard to the point of unacceptable physical and health risks-* almost all informants were uneasy about the fact that private landlords, many of them considered slum landlords, were a primary, perhaps the primary, providers of housing services to persons experiencing homelessness in the city. There were numerous accounts of unsafe situations, no heat, inaccessible washrooms, etc as well as a lack of protection of tenants from eviction, withholding of damage deposits, etc. People who are fragile are captive in situations which tend to make them even more fragile and likely to be unstable with no functional choice, as noted by many informants. Perhaps most striking was the point made by several informants that individuals do not complain about their circumstances because they fear they will end up in an even worse housing situation.
- *lack of people supports, especially in crisis -* in focus groups and in the survey, people described the dilemmas associated with such housing -related crises as loss of income, eviction, illness / hospitalization. There may be an ad hoc response by one or more organizations in response to a housing crisis, but often people lose their housing, property and / or money simply due to a lack of responsive, knowledgeable supports. The barriers include some systemic rules which have the effect of making any housing transition extremely stressful for the person moving.
- *lack of accessible shelter spaces for persons with disabilities-* the focus group with persons with disabilities underlined the safety and health concerns, exclusion and humiliation experienced when shelter and transitional housing services are not accessible.
- *lack of any culturally appropriate housing alternatives for aboriginal persons-* the language and cultural barriers faced by aboriginal persons in housing crisis are described as profound. They face all the same barriers as others, but with added issues in terms of communication, diet, and general cultural norms.
- *lack of a clear visionary plan to address homelessness in St. John's-* while there are several initiatives, including SCPI, which have attempted to address components of the homelessness issue, there is no plan which analyses the overall resource base and sets out to reorganize the current approach overall.

## **6.0 PRIORITIES**

The people we spoke to were primarily concerned about the immediate housing needs of the most seriously effected persons. Bolstering and enhancing shelters / supportive housing is seen to be of relatively urgent priority. However, those interviewed also

spoke to the need for a continuum of supports, extending from supporting families to addressing the needs of the person living on the street.

The Committee, in interpreting the findings of the consultation, recommended that 80% of the funding to be invested go to the establishment / operation of emergency shelters and supportive transitional housing. The remaining 20% would be invested in human supports, coordination, research and evaluation. The committee was reluctant to link specific dollar values to activities in that this would not allow for any flexibility or alteration in approach as the project unfolds. This approach allows the decision-making group some direction but is intended to enhance their ability to be creative. The process would be a general call for proposals to the community where information about the priorities of the initiative would be provided and proposals received and reviewed in light of the priorities and available funds.

We offer the following list of key priorities, in no particular order, as identified by the informants in the study.

**A. Increased shelter space overall and alternative options, in particular for persons in the following categories:**

Young men, ages 16-21 - A study conducted by the local health board in the fall of 1998, showed that there were some 28 young males in need of emergency shelter. Their situation is said to be triggered by one or more of family problems, economic concerns, alcohol / drug issues, and a lack of affordable housing. While some may stay at the Wiseman Centre or at Catherine Booth House, funded by HRE, all informants in that study (as well as our own inquiries) suggest these are not suitable alternatives.

Action: *the establishment of a separate shelter for young men, with a physical facility, human resources, and operating expenses.*

Aboriginal persons - The population of aboriginal persons living in St. John's is approximately 800-900 according to a 1996 census. It is estimated that within this population 8-10 per month experience housing crises. The people experiencing homelessness are disproportionately women, many of whom are in St. John's due to marital breakups. Existing options present barriers in terms of language, food and other cultural issues.

Action: *the establishment of a shelter in St. John's to provide housing for urban aboriginal people experiencing homelessness, with accompanying human resources and operating expenses.*

Women and their children escaping violence- according to Iris Kirby House, while they have a shelter for women and children, they experience a waiting list on a regular basis, serving as they have, women from other parts of the province. The lack of second stage alternatives result in longer stays in the shelter or women returning to unsafe situations.

Action: An increase in shelter and second stage capacity for women and their children escaping violence, through space, operating expenses and human resources.

Other adults with alcohol and drug dependency / criminal justice / mental health issues- the Wiseman Centre and Catherine Booth are both primarily utilized for this population, in collaboration with other centres (i.e. Recovery Centre, Harbour Light).

Action: enhance and appropriately resource existing adult shelter space, including upgrading of facilities, recruitment and hiring / training of staff, and operating expenses.

**B. Supportive Transitional Housing for those 'hard to house' persons with complex problems-** these individuals are significant consumers of both government and community resources. There is consensus that the existing options do not work and when they do not work, create crises which are both significant and predictable. This population includes: persons with long-term mental health / addiction concerns, youth leaving shelters, and single women in need of safe shelter.

Action: Enhancement of existing supportive housing alternatives, and support for related initiatives, creating additional spaces and support resources, and covering operating expenses.

**C. Human resources, in terms of information and support, to persons experiencing housing crises-** in the focus groups and survey, those who have experienced homelessness described in poignant detail the lack of information and support they experienced. Those that provide such support tend to do so on an ad hoc, reactive basis.

Action: Creation of a coordinated direct service response to assist persons in homeless circumstances with information and support / advocacy. (It should be noted that there was some opposition to this approach being offered by an individual, in that it may actually reduce the level of overall support available to homeless persons as other groups pull back from their existing role and refer to this person).

Action: Establishment of an aggressive case management approach as outlined in Stella Burry's 1999 Report for Correctional Services, to assist persons with significant barriers through a variety of inter-related supports.

Action: Enhancing collateral agencies which provide services to persons experiencing homelessness, i.e. food banks, soup kitchens, community kitchens, food buying clubs, day programs in their work with individual support / advocacy.

**D. Community development / coordination resources, for the agencies that serve homeless people, and more research, planning and collaborative approaches among all service providers-** the community agencies involved described being overloaded in their day to day responsibilities and unable, and to some degree unwilling, to assume the added responsibility to address larger issues of coordination

and community development within their existing resources. At another level, there has been little macro-level planning activity in understanding and addressing homelessness issues in St. John's.

*Action: Creation of a community development position to serve as a community catalyst in promoting collaboration and assisting with research / proposals. (N.B. This person may assume responsibility for the activities outlined in the action item below)*

*Action: A process whereby the key stakeholders involved in SCPI can work together to envision a model for effectively addressing homelessness and housing concerns in St. John's. This could include:*

- the organization of a conference / workshop on homelessness, bringing together the key stakeholders and highlighting emerging approaches and concepts in effectively addressing these issues;
- collaborative planning of all partners, at the governmental and community level;
- study ways and means to create a better match between existing services and demonstrated needs, (example, mental health offenders and the Wiseman Centre;
- the development of a comprehensive model for addressing homelessness in the city of St. John's in the longer-term, using this document and others as a reference point.

*Action: The undertaking of research to foster a better understanding of homelessness in the city, and ways and means to address it. Some specific research suggested includes: analyses of homelessness with respect to factors such as gender and disability; a specific study of the conditions and overall approach in the provision of boarding homes in the city; a population count of homeless persons in the city and of utilization of shelter spaces.*

Budget			2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	
<b>80%</b>	<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	a. aboriginal shelter(minimums)	a.	a.400k *	a.200k*	a.600k*
		b. shelter for young men	b.	b.	b.	b.
		c. women's shelter enhancement	c.	c.	c.	c.
		d. adult shelter enhancement	d.	d.	d.	d.
	<b>Supportive Transitional Housing</b>	a. Carew Lodge	a.304 k*	a.108*	a.121*	a.534k*
<b>20%</b>	<b>Human Supports</b>	a. support advocacy person	a.	a.	a.	a.
		b. aggressive case management	b.	b.	b.	b.
		c. enhance collateral community agencies	c.	c.	c.	c.
		a. community development person	a.	a.	a.	a.

**FUNDING SOURCES**

Funding Source	Year			TOTAL
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	
SCPI	713,665.00	713,665.00	707,662.00	\$ 2,134,972.00
Youth	472,000.00	472,000.00	472,000.00	\$ 1,416,000.00
Aboriginal	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	\$ 600,000.00
Planning	70,000.00			\$ 70,000.00

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,455,665.00</b>	<b>\$1,385,665.00</b>	<b>\$1,379,662.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,220,912.00</b>
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## 7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The role of the provincial government is seen by informants as key to the sustainability of initiatives invested in under SCPI. HRE and HCS currently provide assistance for most if not all of the persons targeted for services. While the representatives of the provincial government make no guarantees of ongoing funding, they do point out their significant current expenditure and support for the development of alternatives that better serve the people involved.

**The following organizations participated in providing us with financial information during interviews with key personnel and/or by providing annual reports. (This information provides only a fraction of the resources actually available)**

- Stella Burry Corporation
- St. John's Native Friendship Centre Assoc.
- Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
- Iris Kirby House
- Brother T I Murphy Learning Resource Centre

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projected Funding Amount 1999/2000</b>
Federal Government contribution	657,697.00 *
Provincial Government contribution	2,120,717.00
Private Sector contribution	32,000.00
In Kind contribution	50,000.00
Religious Affiliate contribution	186,121.00
Internally Generated Revenue contribution	78,000.00
Other contribution	235,017.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,701,855.00*</b>
	* Federal Contribution not Included in Total

Most of the initiatives arising from this community plan are designed to be largely self-sustaining, after the SCPI funding discontinues in 2003. These include:

- *an aboriginal shelter*- the preliminary ideas of the sole eligible proponent group will link the shelter development to other initiatives in a manner which will allow

the organization to sustain the shelter with no ongoing government funding, on a user-fee basis.

- *the Carew Lodge*- this proposal, which received approval under the urgent needs provision of SCPI, will essentially operate on revenues from residents once the building is renovated.
- *any enhancements made to Iris Kirby House*- could be sustained through client use.
- *the establishment of a shelter for male youth*- once created, this shelter can operate on the basis of utilization. (Human Resources and Employment will be a primary funding source i.e., rental income)
- *human supports / case management services*- according to informants, there is a significant current expense incurred in addressing homelessness, by several government and community agencies. Most anticipate that the use of personnel to provide early intervention and prevention in dealing with housing crises and individuals who are 'hard to house' will provide not only effective but efficient service.

The provincial government, through HRE and HCS, currently pays for what are considered generally to be often sub-standard and inappropriate housing options. In order to provide adequate housing options as proposed in this plan, these expenditures need to be reviewed in light of the priorities identified in this plan and in ensuring the provision of adequate housing generally.

Each individual proposal presented for funding under the plan is expected to have a viable sustainability plan.

## **7.1 Nature of Evaluation**

Evaluation of the SCPI Initiative, according to program guidelines, needs to include annual reports, as well as formative and summative evaluation processes. In terms of annual reports, a progress report on the community plan will be presented in March-April of each year (2001-2003). This process will include annual public meetings and strategies to reach out to homeless persons to give and receive information. In terms of the timing of evaluation components, a mid-way interim evaluation, focussing on process elements, will occur at the mid-point of the program(fall 2001). A final evaluation, more focussed on outcomes, would take place in the winter-spring of 2003.

There is limited interest in a traditional formal program evaluation of the SCPI implementation in St. John's. Several informants indicated that any expenditure on evaluation should be focussed on "evaluation with a heart- not just numbers".

A specific suggestion was made to track the individual progress of persons directly served by this initiative. The notion was one where persons would be paid a stipend to keep their own journals related to their housing situation over the SCPI period, and would receive support and training in keeping these journals. (N.B. Some persons have suggested this could be a role for a community development worker hired under the initiative).

Several informants noted that if the program emphasizes capital investments, then much of the resources under the initiative will go to designing and building / renovating physical resources. In terms of evaluating effectiveness of these resources, it may be that service delivery will occur only near the conclusion of the three years, and may restrict the ability to examine the benefits of these resources.

Most informants favoured a largely qualitative approach, emphasizing opinion and satisfaction levels as opposed to quantitative measures. The reluctance to use a more quantitative approach is that there is a concern not to equate increased capacity and use of shelters and emergency services as progress in dealing with homelessness.

## **7.2 Success Indicators**

The key success indicators identified for use in the study include:

a. *perceptions of key informants* as to improvements in areas such as:

- access to emergency shelters;
- availability of supports (human, information) to assist when they are in crisis;
- increased cooperation between service delivery agencies;
- increased options for persons in need of transitional housing;
- increased collaborative activity among the service delivery groups;
- providing effective supports in preventing / intervening early in housing crises;
- visioning a community strategy to address homelessness and the provision of stable, safe, and affordable housing

b. *Quantitative data such as:*

- increased numbers of spaces for shelters;
- overall persons served by shelters;
- analysis of expenditures;
- demonstrated success in achieving objectives;
- placement breakdown rates.

The Committee recognizes the need to dovetail any efforts in evaluation with the overall evaluation of the initiative at the national level. The local evaluation will emphasize the local priorities identified in the Plan.

The committee committed to 1% of its funds to complete evaluation work over the three year period. This would translate into about \$40,000.00- \$50,000.00 in total.

## **8.0 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The following elements of the communications strategy arose from the consultation.

The community plan will be a public document- copies of the plan will be available to all relevant public and community organizations. A copy will be placed on the HRDC and Homeless Secretariat web sites.

Publications, Materials, and Announcements will be sent out- HRDC will lead the formal information strategy in terms of announcements, etc.

There will be a public call for proposals, outlining clear terms of reference.- this is expected to occur in the winter of 2001, and would include the usual means of soliciting proposals, i.e. ads in newspapers, direct mail-outs to organizations expected to be interested.

There will be annual public meetings bringing together key stakeholders to report on the progress of SCPI.

Information will be available under alternate format and means will be undertaken to ensure accessibility.

## 9.0 COMMUNITY'S CONTRIBUTION

Preliminary consultation from informants suggests the community contribution is many times in excess of the matching requirement under SCPI. An overview as provided by the following community agencies is outlined below.

- Stella Burry Corporation
- St. John's Native Friendship Centre Assoc.
- Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
- Iris Kirby House
- Brother T I Murphy Learning Resource Centre

<i><b>Funding Source</b></i>	<i><b>Projected Funding Amount 1999/2000</b></i>
Federal Government contribution	657,697.00 *
Provincial Government contribution	2,120,717.00
Private Sector contribution	32,000.00
In Kind contribution	50,000.00
Religious Affiliate contribution	186,121.00
Internally Generated Revenue contribution	78,000.00
Other contribution	235,017.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,701,855.00*</b>

\* Federal Contribution not Included in Total

## 10.0 SUMMARY

This document outlines the plan emanating from consultations with the community, as to how to invest the SCPI funds with the maximum positive impact. The promise of this plan is to enhance the existing emergency and transitional services available to persons experiencing homelessness, and to create a catalyst for longer-term macro-level collaboration and planning on the part of government and the community.

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Lloyd Pope

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Kim Dreddy

Debbie Sue Martin

Mary Ennis

Jane Robinson (Alternate)

**Sub-Committee Members re: Values , Guiding Principles:**

Joe Connors

Mary Ennis

Debbie Sue Martin

Kim Dreddy

**Sub-Committee Members re: Homelessness Committee Membership:**

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Mary Ennis

Jane Robinson