

Yellowknife Community Plan To Address Homelessness

Homelessness Coalition,
Yellowknife,
NT

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BACKGROUND

Homelessness is an issue in every region of the globe. The United Nations has addressed the human right to a safe home, but countries have been slow to act in providing for this basic human necessity. Some countries, such as Finland, have legislated the right to housing, but have been unable to determine how to police such a right. Other countries, such as Canada and the United States, have not been able to meet the demand for low-cost housing in the past few decades, resulting in increased numbers of persons without homes and persons at risk of losing their homes. 1987 was declared the 'International Year of Shelter for the Homeless' by the United Nations, and many of the activities that have taken place to combat homelessness at an international level are measured from the improvements made from this point in time. The results have not been impressive so far.

Many low-income people in Canada lack the resources to support even basic housing, despite the relative wealth and international economic standing of the country. While homelessness has always existed in Canada, the last few decades have seen an increase in the breadth of the population affected by homelessness. The number of families, youths and seniors that are homeless has increased. Non-profit organizations such as the Salvation Army and Covenant House have been dealing with issues of homelessness for decades, but the 1980's and 1990's saw increased federal and provincial government focus in this area, including the following federal activities:

The National Housing Research Committee was established in 1986, to identify priority areas for housing-related research or demonstration, encourage greater co-operation, develop partnerships, minimise overlap in research activities, encourage support for housing research and promote dissemination, application and adoption of research results. One initiative of the Research Committee was the Discussion Group on Homelessness which was established in October, 1994. The main focus of the group was to discuss potential research initiatives, identify research priorities and explore potential partnerships.

In March 1999, The Honourable Claudette Bradshaw was appointed the Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness. Throughout the summer of 1999, Minister Bradshaw visited communities across Canada to learn about the nature and extent of homelessness. The National Roundtable on Best Practices Addressing Homelessness, composed of fifty front-line workers and government staff from ten provinces and the Northwest Territories, met for two days in Ottawa in June 1999. Their purpose for coming together was to share their experiences, learn from each other about effective methods of addressing homelessness, and network with each other. In the fall of 1999, the Federal Government prepared a report of the findings of Minister Bradshaw.

In December 1999, the Government of Canada announced the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). SCPI is a community-based partnership initiative intended to help alleviate and prevent absolute homelessness. Up to \$305 million dollars would be provided to

assist communities in addressing homelessness. SCPI was designed to provide flexible funding for the implementation of local strategies supported by community partners.

Other initiatives offered federally as part of the package included enhanced funding of the at-risk component of the Youth Employment Strategy, the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, increased funding under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Shelter Enhancement Initiative. The federal government also committed \$10 million to make surplus federal property available.

HOMELESSNESS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Yellowknife is a community of 18 000, but serves as the major centre and service provider for another 42 000 residents of the Northwest Territories. There are a variety of challenges in addressing the number of individuals living in poverty in the NWT. The NWT is generally not included in national studies of poverty, and the high cost-of-living is not reflected in national estimates. It is known that at least 8% of the population of Yellowknife (over aged 15) and about 24% of the territorial population is living on an income of under \$10 000. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment estimates that as many as 1/3 of all children in the NWT are living in poverty.

Homelessness is created by a diverse number of factors, including abuse in the home, addictions, and lack of employment, all factors that lead northerners into Yellowknife, where they may be unprepared for the high cost of rent, and the change in social supports offered by their neighbours. While the plan addresses homelessness only within the area of Yellowknife, the social issues that exist in the entire territory cannot be ignored as factors that affect and sometimes create Yellowknife homelessness.

The issue has just begun to be addressed at a territorial level. Suitability, adequacy and affordability of housing have been priorities of the NWT Housing Corporation for 30 years, but the need to integrate these priorities with the greater social issues impacting people's ability to obtain, keep and maintain a home is a relatively new concept. Some of the first movements towards creating a continuum of housing and homelessness supports are outlined below:

In 'Towards a Better Tomorrow', the vision and priority statement for the 14th sitting of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, one of the key goals is the provision of adequate, affordable and suitable housing for all Northerners. A key strategy was promoting healthy lifestyle choices, in the following areas:

- supporting and enhancing the role of the family
- improving child protection
- reducing family violence
- raising awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and the risks of unhealthy choices
- emphasising the value of investing in early childhood development, focussing on the needs of mothers & families

- improving accountability across the social safety net, including health, social services, education, housing and justice.

In the 2001 Premier's Address to the People of the NWT, the strategies discussed in the priority area of "self-reliant individuals, families and communities, working with governments, toward improving social well-being", included "harmonization of income support and social housing", and "consulting with non-governmental organizations, communities and aboriginal governments on developing a social agenda."

Unlike other urban centres throughout Canada, where homeless people can live outdoors in parks, cardboard boxes and handmade structures, people in Yellowknife cannot live out of doors except for a few months during the short summer. The extreme cold weather conditions in the north preclude people from actually living on the street, in parks, under bridges or other places not intended for human habitation.

For this reason, this report has adopted the United Nations definition of homelessness which includes individuals living with no permanent physical shelter (absolute homelessness), those living in spaces that do not meet basic health and safety standards, including protection from the elements, access to safe water and sanitation, security of tenure, personal safety and affordability (relative homelessness), and persons living in emergency shelters. Emergency shelters include: shelters, juvenile shelters, abused women's shelters, withdrawal management centres, storage units, under buildings, staying temporarily with friends or relatives, etc.

COMMUNITY PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Prior to the Federal/Territorial Homelessness Initiatives

Yellowknife is a fairly young city and until recently has been known for its transitory population. This turnover of population has impeded our ability to look at long-term planning and community building models. In fact the "lone ranger" mentality was pervasive in many of the social and economic structures in Yellowknife. The 1990's saw a slowdown in population turnover. As a result, we have seen more groups and individuals working together for holistic and long-term solutions to social problems.

Over the years many services for homeless people have been provided in Yellowknife. The YWCA has been here for 35 years, the Salvation Army for 20 years and the Yellowknife Women's Centre for over 10 years. There has been some consistency in service deliverers. However, as a community and as a government there has been no long-term, co-ordinated effort to address the root causes and issues surrounding homelessness. We have had an ad-hoc response to homelessness, at best. There has been no cohesive, long-term community strategy for emergency, transitional, "hard to house", supported, or even subsidized housing, and co-ordinated support services.

Several groups have tried to address homelessness and housing issues. However, due to the lack of a strategy and a lack of co-ordination there have remained many gaps in the services provided and many areas have not been addressed. There have been numerous studies done and reports written surrounding the issues of housing, family violence, addictions, support services, cost of living, disabilities, mental health, residential schools, sexual assault, rental markets, labour markets, education, literacy, health and social issues, child welfare, and economic development. However, because there has been no comprehensive community view to these processes, most initiatives did not reach their full potential, fell by the wayside or ended up in divisions.

Post-Federal/Territorial Homelessness Initiatives

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT was formed in January 2000 in response to the Federal Government's announcement of funds specified for homeless people. The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT was a loosely formed group with representation from the three levels of government – Federal (HRDC, CMHC and INAC), Territorial (Department of Education, Culture and Employment), and Municipal (City of Yellowknife), service providers (Yellowknife Women's Centre, The Salvation Army, Side Door Drop In Centre, Peacemakers Society, YWCA of Yellowknife, Yellowknife Housing Authority and Yellowknife Dene First Nation Housing), and aboriginal groups (Dene Nation).

In July of 2000, Minister Bradshaw visited Yellowknife, as part of her nation-wide tour to examine the problems of homelessness. As a result of that visit, Yellowknife was one of the smaller communities, in addition to the ten major cities, that were requested to create a community plan to address homelessness, that would then be considered for SCPI funding.

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT experienced many growing pains initially. There was no clear mandate. Some of the representatives at the table changed at every meeting. There was a lot of education that needed to be done on what homelessness was and how the group could address the problem. There were a lot of relationships that needed to be built. There were stakeholders missing from the table. There were many groups that did not see this as an area of interest. There was other work that occupied people's time, and though they were interested they did not have the time or energy to participate in another group. The process of formalising this group was time-consuming. A chairperson was selected in January 2001 and our Terms of Reference were finalised in February 2001.

However, during the same year, many things were accomplished. Four of the service providers came together to recommend to the Government of the NWT that a 5 year community plan be developed to respond to emergency, transitional and “hard to house” needs for at-risk individuals and families living in or moving to Yellowknife (Appendix C). This strategy highlighted the need for everyone to work together in order to come out with long-term solutions. Already there have been visible benefits from this process. The service providers are working together and not competing for resources. Resources have been allocated in a co-operative, consultative process. This was the beginning of a working coalition that builds community rather than competing for service delivery dollars.

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT hired a researcher/consultant in January 2001. A literature review was conducted in order to begin to understand the wealth of information already accumulated through many other reports, reviews and other community plans.

The researcher/consultant also interviewed 55 members of the community, including 36 presently or recently homeless individuals, 7 staff and managers of key agencies, and 12 additional members of the community who interacted with, or provided services for the homeless and hard-to-house population. A report was assembled for the coalition members to assist them with the development of the community housing plan. (Appendix D)

In addition to the monthly meetings of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT and weekly meetings of the community plan working group, an all day planning session was held on March 19, 2001 with the coalition members.

On March 27, 2001 the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT held a community consultation to discuss the gaps in service for the homeless and hard to house in the city. The consultation consisted of three parts:

1. An overview of the history and activities to date of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT and discussion on the development of a community plan to address homelessness.
2. An overview of research findings.
3. A facilitated discussion on:
 - The primary housing issues for Yellowknife.
 - How to build a healthy community with respect to homelessness.

The primary housing issues identified by the participants included,

Availability of units

- Shortage of lower cost shelter
- No interest by developers to produce low cost housing
- conversion of rental units to condominiums

Accessibility of information

- Homeless and hard to house individuals need one-stop access to information
- Agencies need to work together to properly refer clientele.

Seniors housing/services

- Need to address the growing seniors population
- Need to better understand needs of senior population

Daytime drop in services

- Need for a supervised place for adults to go to visit, access services, shower and do laundry

“Real” help with addictions and other health issues

Youth housing

Respecting Diversity

Effective and consultative housing design

- Need to consult with clients on facility design

Singles housing

- Need for transitional and affordable permanent housing for single persons

Affordable housing

The ideas expressed by the community on how to build a healthy community with regards to homelessness included:

- Increase public awareness of homelessness
- Build life skills
- Provide support services for staying sober
- Provide unconditional support and care
- Coordinate community support services and to promote cooperation rather than competition
- Improve communication between levels of government and the private and public sectors
- Increase level of community involvement
- Promote early intervention through education and supports for youth

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT is still in the process of growing. However it has established a mandate to lead and coordinate an action plan to address homelessness in the City of Yellowknife. The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT plans to take an active role in the implementation of the community plan. A committee of coalition members will review and evaluate project proposals and recommend approval to the coalition. A hiring committee will also be established to recruit, interview and recommend employment to the coalition.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geographic Area

The community plan covers the area of the city of Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories, including the communities of N'dilo and Dettah.

Community Profile

Yellowknife, with a population of 18 000, is the second smallest capital city in Canada. It is a major centre for service provision to the entire Northwest Territories, with a population of 42,000.

The city of Yellowknife is unlike other cities it's size. The variety of goods and services available to residents of Yellowknife is typical of cities many times larger. This is understandable considering that Yellowknife is the only major centre within 1500 kilometres and acts as a service centre to all other NWT communities. Yellowknife provides many goods and services to residents of other NWT and Nunavut communities. Because of the distance to the nearest large urban centre, Edmonton, it is not practical to access many items at that location. Consequently, the goods and services that are required in the city include a much wider spectrum than would usually be expected in a community of its size.

The economy of Yellowknife has traditionally been based on government and gold mining. In the past decade, the drop in the price of gold followed by the closure of one of the major mines and significant government downsizing resulted in significant economic slowdown. This was quickly followed by the development of several diamond properties and the first diamond mine in Canada, creating significant economic growth for the area.

The current economic boom, coupled with few employment opportunities in some other NWT and Nunavut communities has resulted in a significant increase in migration to the city, exacerbating the housing and homelessness problems. Historically, there has been a pattern of urbanization in the Northwest Territories. Yellowknife's share of the territorial population has increased from 29% in 1976 to 43% in 1999.

The Yellowknife population is majority non-aboriginal, but the aboriginal population as a percentage of the total population has steadily risen. Within the non-aboriginal population, the majority is of Euro-Canadian, Caucasian descent, but there is a small but growing and diverse ethnic minority.

The community of N'Dilo is located on the northern tip of Latham Island, within the city limits of Yellowknife. It is inhabited primarily by Yellowknife Dene. Dettah is situated on east side of Yellowknife Bay, on Great Slave Lake, about six kilometers by water or ice from Yellowknife. It is also accessible from Yellowknife by approximately 27 kilometers of all weather road. Dettah was one of several aboriginal seasonal fishing camps located on Great Slave Lake before Yellowknife was established in the 1930s. It is inhabited primarily by Yellowknife Dene. Housing and housing services in N'Dilo and Dettah are provided by the band through Yellowknife Dene First Nations Housing, a member of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT.

Three quarters of Yellowknife households earn more than \$50,000 annually and the average income in 1996 was \$81,726. However, nearly 10% of Yellowknife households have incomes of less than \$20 000. Offsetting higher incomes are significantly higher prices for consumer goods in NWT. Comparisons with Edmonton, indicate prices are approximately 20% higher in Yellowknife.

VISION, PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT has adopted the following vision statement, principles, goals and objectives:

Vision Statement

The vision of this plan is to provide a seamless continuum of housing and support services for marginalized individuals and families living in or moving to the city of Yellowknife.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for the provision of housing and support services to at-risk individuals and families need to be recognized in implementation plans and future planning processes.

- The dignity, privacy and independence of homeless people accessing housing and support services must be recognized and respected.
- Community people accessing housing and support services must be treated with professionalism, understanding, patience and tolerance.
- Equality of service within the context of cultural diversity and gender differences must be honoured and supported at the service delivery, management and decision-making levels.
- The Aboriginal culture must be respected by ensuring opportunity for Aboriginal people in the community to have discussion and input, and the cultural component must be evident through the decision-making, the management and allocation of funds and through the supports available in the community.
- A “continuum of care” model that individualizes services to meet the specific needs of homeless people must be used to develop and implement programs and services.
- Community members accessing housing and support services must be empowered to participate in the decision-making process at every level.

- Development and implementation of the strategy on housing and support services must build upon current strengths and assets of the community and be streamlined through partnerships.
- Housing and support services must be developed through partnerships of the various community sectors and agents, bringing the assets and strengths of each to an effective and sustainable investment.
- The end result of the strategy to address housing and support services must be the prevention of homelessness. The housing supply must be increased along the continuum and the connection to appropriate social supports is critical.
- Whenever possible the goal should be to provide housing that is permanent with flexible support services as necessary.

Goals

- The end result of the community plan to address housing and support services must be the prevention of homelessness.
- The housing supply must be increased along the continuum and the connection to appropriate social supports is critical.
- To increase community participation and partnerships in developing, implementing and funding strategies to address homelessness and housing.

Objectives

- To maximize community resources, streamline services, increase accountability and prevent duplication.
- To create environments that respect human dignity and individual choice
- To provide adequate support services to meet the special needs of marginalized populations
- To increase individual potential for more independent living by providing personal development and skill-building opportunities.
- To establish housing and support services protocols with Government and Non-Government partners

ANALYSIS OF HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES CONTINUUM

The continuum of housing and support services in Yellowknife reflects its uniqueness, with a wide range of services being offered. However, many gaps remain, some the result of changes in the funding structure of the Northwest Territories after the creation of Nunavut, but most the result of the recession and cutbacks in Territorial spending that occurred in the 1990's. The following section will describe the continuum of housing and support services offered in Yellowknife, broken down by the different segments seeking assistance in the community, including youth, seniors, abused women, families, single men and women, and those with special needs. It should be noted that there are currently no official statistics available on the number of homeless in Yellowknife. An official count has never been taken, and the estimates used below are the result of usage numbers maintained by local shelters, and unofficial counts carried out by shelters and other service providers.

Youth

Population Profile: Youth

In 2000, there were 5771 individuals under the age of 19 living in Yellowknife, making up just under one third of the total population. About a thousand of these individuals were youth between the ages of 16 and 19, with a fairly even split in gender.

There is a significant service gap in the Northwest Territories for youth between the ages of 16 and 19. At aged 16, youth are legally permitted to leave their homes or family, without being apprehended under the Child Welfare Act. However, they are not eligible for Income Support, or for shelter through any of the organizations that exist in Yellowknife, including the Salvation Army and the Yellowknife Women's Centre, until they reach the age of majority, which is 19. This gap creates a variety of housing issues. Youth are unlikely to be receiving a wage that allows them to rent in the marketplace. Even if they have sufficient income, few landlords are willing to rent to young people with a lack of rental history. All of these factors contribute to the incidence of homeless youth.

The number of homeless youth is particularly hard to quantify. There currently is no emergency shelter available to youth below the age of 19. As a result, where other numbers in this section are calculated using shelter or service usage numbers, no corresponding number is available for this category. Youth that are without a home are often not visibly homeless but live as 'couch surfers'. Couch surfers may be homeless for many reasons, often because their parents have become frustrated and kicked them out, or because they do not want to return home. They stay with friends, family or strangers until they are no longer welcome, or in order to hide the fact that they are out of a home, and then move on to another acquaintance's house. This appears to be a very common occurrence, and creates a range of issues, one of which is that it is hard to address their needs when they are unquantifiable and invisible to the organizations that might help them.

In the past decade, we have seen an increased level of community focus on issues affecting youth. Schools have experimented with schedules that allow flexibility to students who work

part-time in order to support themselves, or have other difficulties making it to class during the standard schedule. The city of Yellowknife has provided a number of community grants that focus on youth activity and recreation. Youth-based community groups such as the Youth Volunteer Corps and Students Against Drunk Driving have experimented with youth-based advocacy.

However, little of this activity has been sustained. Spikes in youth-based advocacy and activity tend to surround a few individual youth or parents and drop off once they have left the city for post-secondary education. Funding for youth has focussed on short-term, non-sustained projects.

Currently, there is one organization in Yellowknife whose mandate is specifically focussed on the needs of homeless and at-risk youth. The Side Door Youth Drop-In Centre was started in 1996, initially as an evening drop-in for youth who didn't have anything to do. Over time, the Side Door has begun to focus on the 'couch-surfing' and homeless population of youth that exist in Yellowknife.

Assets and Gaps in Youth Services

Shelter Assets

There are currently no shelter assets for youth in the city of Yellowknife

Non-Shelter Assets

At this time, the Side Door operates out of the basement of the Anglican Church, but through various grants from the federal and territorial governments and the city of Yellowknife, a new location for the Drop-In is being built. While the current location offers services 2 nights a week, once funding has been established for 24-hour supervision, the new Side Door Location will serve as a place to go, at any hour of the day for youth who are cold and out on the street.

Once the new Side Door is completed, it will become a centre for youth service provision in Yellowknife. For a short period of time, a Youth Employment Service was operated through the Side Door, to provide career development assistance focussed on at-risk youth. That program is not currently active, but should be reactivated once the new Side Door has been completed. Shower and laundry services will be available for youth with no where else to go. This new facility will be an important community asset in meeting the gaps that must be filled in service provision for youth.

There are two high schools in Yellowknife, Sir John Franklin High School and St. Patrick's High School. St. Patrick's High School has developed a 'Bridges' counselling position that provides at-risk youth with information about community employers, alternative education including trades, and acts as a liaison with the greater community. Sir John Franklin has taken steps to create a 'Connections' program, intended to bring the entire spectrum of youth-based service providers together for regular meetings. These two programs, once fully established, have great potential for capacity building.

The Tree of Peace Friendship Centre provides outreach to Aboriginal youth in the city, particularly those with addictions problems.

Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum of Supports Approach-Youth

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gaps
Emergency Shelters	None	'Couch-surfing' with friends and family, or strangers	-A community estimate of between 80 and 120 youth are out of a permanent home at any given time -Youth are currently unaccounted for in the community, sometimes ending up in compromising and inappropriate settings, mechanisms of accountability and safety need to be developed -There is a gap in service between the ages of 16 and 19, when new clients are not accepted by Yellowknife Health and Social Services, but individuals do not meet Income Support's mandate
Transitional Housing	None	None	Units required -number uncertain
Supportive Housing	None	None	Units required - number uncertain
Subsidized Housing	None	None	Persons under 19 are not eligible
Access to Housing Services	None	None	-A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	12.5 Hours a week Junior Side Door Ages 8-12 Summer City of Yellowknife At-risk-Youth Programming	12 hours a week Side Door Youth Drop in Centre	Move to 24 hour supervision would allow safe place in from cold during winter months
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month	-Services are not available as often as needed
Meal Programs	None	None	-A Youth meal program should be established in a setting accessible and appropriate for youth
Clothing Depot	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army YWCA Clothing Exchange	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line John Howard Society Victim Services	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army	-Independent child and youth advocate and lawyer should be available
Outreach	Tree of Peace	Church Youth Groups/Youth Pastors	-Continued development of 'Connections' program through Sir John Franklin High School and 'Bridges' program through St. Patrick's High School

Health Services	NWT Public Health STD Clinic Healthy Babies Club School Counsellors Family Counselling Services Help Line	None	-Increase in peer support and counselling training -In service training for employees of social organizations in working with youth -Accessibility to withdrawal management -Accessibility in non-clinical settings to condoms, needle exchange, etc.
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre School Counsellors	None	-Youth Employment Services should be re-established in community
Life Skills Programs	School	None	-Life skills programs should be available to youth not currently in school
Cultural Services	Native Women's Association Youth Council	Tree of Peace Friendship Centre	-Youth have little access to understanding of culture, development of cultural pride
Transportation	Bus passes available to those attending school	None	-Bus hours and service area needs to be increased to meet the needs of youth working part-time jobs
Shower Services	None	None	Will be available at new Side Door location
Laundry Services	None	None	Will be available at new Side Door location
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	None	-Should be made available at new Side Door location
Childcare	None	None	-The facility at St. Patrick's School should be re-opened
School Fees and Accessibility	None	May be negotiated with some schools on an informal basis	-Resources for assisting in fee payments should be available

Seniors

Population Profile: Seniors

Yellowknife has always been a fairly young community, but in the past decade, the number of seniors has increased by over 40% to 700. This number is expected to increase based on the age demographics of the community. About 60% of all Yellowknife Seniors are female.

The age at which individuals are eligible for benefits varies. Seniors with special needs may be able to access some supported or subsidized housing at as young an age as 55. The Income Support program of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will provide heating fuel subsidies for those who have reached age 60 and can demonstrate need. At aged 65, seniors become eligible for a variety of additional benefits, including Canada Pension. The variation in age eligibility between organizations is not a major issue, but does create some confusion for seniors.

There is a long waiting list for seniors in need of subsidized and/or supportive housing. The number of seniors in need has long surpassed the number of units available. This results in seniors living in inappropriate housing, either over-supported in the Extended Care Unit of the Stanton Regional Health Board, or under-supported or living beyond their means, in housing that was appropriate while there was still additional family in the home.

The percentage of the NWT seniors population that are heavy drinkers is much higher than in the rest of the country. Several of Yellowknife's 'street people' are seniors, often with lifelong

addictions. These individuals may enroll in the Salvation Army NWT Resource Centre's Withdrawal Management program. However, once they have completed withdrawal from substances, there is no continued support available for them. They do not fit comfortably into the culture and atmosphere of available senior's supported living. Their past addictions and related health problems often make them unwelcome additions in the homes of their extended families.

An increasing number of seniors appear to be moving to Yellowknife, with their families, from smaller NWT communities. They often have only limited English language skills. These seniors are often inappropriately housed, or need life skills support in order to adjust to Yellowknife living. They may not be aware of the supports that are available to seniors, because of the language barrier.

There is a strong core group of seniors and supporters in Yellowknife, working through organizations including the NWT and Yellowknife Senior's Societies, and Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens for Seniors. These groups are strong advocates for the issues affecting their members.

The facilities that do exist to support seniors are well run, and there are several levels of support available, depending on need.

The Territorial government has made the housing and support of seniors a priority in the coming session, and the associations mentioned above are working with the government to ensure Senior's supports are adequate.

Assets and Gaps in Seniors Services

Shelter Assets

There are no emergency shelter spaces that are available specifically for seniors. Both the Yellowknife Women's Centre and the Salvation Army will shelter seniors on an emergency basis when necessary.

The Extended Care Unit of Stanton Regional Health Board provides long-term care and a home to seniors that need intensive health services. The Yellowknife Aven Manor Senior's Home and the Mary Murphy Senior's Home provide supported living conditions in a group home, and Aven Court, located within the same property as Aven Manor and the Baker Senior's Centre, provides independent living in single-floor row-housing. Subsidized apartments are available through the Yellowknife Housing Authority and the NWT Community Services Association in Northern United Place.

Non-Shelter Assets

The Baker Senior's Centre houses several organizations that provide supports for seniors, as well as operating as a drop-in centre six days a week, and providing a range of life-skills and social activities for seniors including the "Lunch with a Bunch" program.

The Yellowknife and NWT Senior's Societies provide social activities for their members, and advocate for seniors in Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories.

The Yellowknife Association of Concerned Citizens for Seniors has advocated for the development of current services in the community, including the Aven Manor, Aven Court, and the Baker Centre.

Homecare, operated through the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Board, provides health and living assistance to those seniors deemed in need, usually provided in a "home" setting.

Meals on Wheels, a program of Homecare, delivers hot meals to seniors throughout Yellowknife.

Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum of Supports Approach- Seniors/Elders

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	No beds are funded specifically for seniors	Yellowknife Women's Centre, Salvation Army	Not required
Transitional Housing	No beds are funded specifically for seniors	None	Not required
Supportive Housing	Aven Manor, Mary Murphy Seniors Home, Stanton Regional Health Board Extended Care	None	-Waiting list for Aven Court is 16 applications -Waiting list at Aven Manor averages about 5; need is much more urgent so sometimes will be inappropriately, temporarily housed at extended care, or in rare cases, housed in another community*
Subsidized Housing	Aven Court Yellowknife Housing NUP Community Services	None	-Waiting list for Yellowknife Housing is about 30 seniors long (includes waiting list for Mary Murphy)
Access to Housing Services	None	None	-A single point of entry for information about housing is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	Baker Senior Centre 6 days a week	Tree of Peace, Yellowknife Women's Centre, Salvation Army	-The focus must be on making seniors of all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds feel comfortable
Clothing Depots	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre, Salvation Army, YWCA clothing exchange	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depots	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line	Yellowknife Women's Centre, Salvation Army NWT Senior's Society	-An independent Seniors advocate should be available

Outreach Services	Homecare	NWT Senior's Society Churches	-Outreach is currently health and disability based, there need to be increased social outreach functions for this population -Outreach needs to be established for those moving from different cultural settings into the urban, Western culture of Yellowknife.
Health Services	NWT Public Health Homecare, Withdrawal Management	None	-Sustained treatment for those with addictions -Variety of supports for lifelong addicts
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre	None	-Programs or advocate to assist with form writing, dealing with computer-based interactions (ATM, Internet based programs)
Life Skills Programs	Baker Centre	None	None
Cultural Services		Tree of Peace, Native Women's Association	None
Transportation	Handibus- Yellowknife Seniors Society	Yellowknife Senior's Society	Not required
Shower Services	None	None	Not required
Laundry Services	None	None	Not required
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre	None

*Overlap between Yellowknife Housing and Aven Facilities must be presumed, but exact figure is not available

Families

Population Profile: Families

According to the last census, there were 4455 families with children in Yellowknife. Of those families, almost 11% were families led by a single mother, and 3% were families led by a single father. 14% of Yellowknife households were made up of 5 or more individuals, but these are not necessarily from the same family.

The waiting lists for family subsidized rental units are long, and result in families being housed inappropriately for extended periods of time before being able to access appropriate housing. Families may be living beyond their means in commercial rental units or living in a comparable fashion to youth 'couch surfers', moving from one relative or friend's home to the next. Doubling up with friends or relatives creates additional problems for the host family and may put their tenancy at risk due to overcrowding or noise complaints.

The structure of society in Yellowknife is very different from the smaller outlying NWT communities, and many parents express frustration in keeping their children quiet in a small apartment, when they are used to roaming freely outside and to neighbour's homes. Many families from outside of Yellowknife are used to living in social housing where they are unlikely to face eviction for late payment of rent. The rent expectations of market landlords often put their tenancies at risk.

Single parent families tend to have lower incomes, but the same amount of expenses as two parent families. There is a lack of respite care available for low-income single parent families.

The Territorial Government has placed increased emphasis on the health of the family in recent years. A variety of family-based priorities and focuses were set by the 2000 territorial legislature.

Assets and Gaps in Services for Families

Shelter Assets

The YWCA Transitional and Emergency Housing programs are the last resort for families in Yellowknife. Many tenants have past problems in the rental market, and may not access social housing, because of outstanding rent arrears or past problems with tenant damages. Both YWCA programs are transitional and supported. Counselling, food bank, clothing and furniture exchanges are all located within the building.

The purpose of the Yellowknife Housing Authority is to provide affordable housing to families in need. Those in most desperate need are served first. Anyone who has not lived in the NWT for ninety days, is under nineteen years of age, who owes rent to another housing authority or association, who has caused damage or disturbances at their unit or who gives false information on their application will not be accepted. Those applicants who rate as being the most needy will be placed in a unit first.

The North Slave Housing Authority provides housing for families on a prioritized need basis, with an emphasis on eventual home ownership.

Non-Shelter Assets

The YWCA of Yellowknife offers a range of family-based programming that goes beyond the boundaries of the homeless and hard to house. For those of low income that are not living in YWCA Transitional Housing, there is the Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program, which provides a range of services including health care assistance, life skills development, and literacy and upgrading functions through the FOCUS program.

The Yellowknife Women's Centre provides counselling and support as well as assistance in dealing with rental and legal issues. The Women's Centre also provides lunches for families Monday through Friday.

The Yellowknife Food Bank provides staple foodstuffs twice a month on a no-questions-asked, first- come, first-served basis.

The Salvation Army provides emergency food hampers a maximum of once a month, for families who are in dire need. The Salvation Army also co-ordinates the yearly Christmas hamper and Adopt-a-family program, which tried to ensure all Yellowknife families have a fulfilling Christmas.

Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum of Supports Approach-Families

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	YWCA Emergency Housing-5 units	None	Average Waiting list-7 families -3 Emergency Housing Units lose funding March 31, 2001
Transitional Housing	YWCA Transitional Housing-27 units	None	Average waiting list-10 families -funding for transitional housing based on rent collection, not reliable source
Supportive Housing	As above	None	As above
Subsidized Housing	Yellowknife Housing - 285 units North Slave Housing - 75 units	None	-Average waiting list 120 families for Yellowknife Housing and 30 for North Slave Housing -Functions need to be developed to move high-end wage earners into the commercial housing market
Access to Housing Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-Family housing advocate needed to inform and educate the public -A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre Tree of Peace Military Family Resource Centre	-No family resource centre available to entire community
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month Community Garden (plots available) YWCA Food Bank (tenant priority) Salvation Army Emergency Food Hamper (once a month max) Salvation Army Christmas Hamper Program Yellowknife Women's Centre	-Services are not available as often as needed -Need to develop communication and co-ordination between service providers -Need to advocate that income support develop more realistic ideas of average food expenses -Need to adjust for Income Supports move to include basic sanitary (shampoo, soap, etc) supplies as part of food expenses -Co-ordinated approach to food security issues
Meal Programs	School Lunch Programs	Salvation Army Soup Line (lunch and supper daily) Women's Centre Lunch Program(lunch Monday to Friday)	None
Clothing Depot	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army YWCA Clothing Exchange	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system

Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line Working Through Separation And Divorce Group	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army YWCA Outreach Program	-Independent Family advocate required -Address the 'community case planning committee' currently legislated, but not in effect
Outreach Services	YWCA Women's Centre	Salvation Army Schools	-Need to have access to family mediation
Health Services	NWT Public Health Women and Children Healing and Recovery Withdrawal Management	None	-Whole family treatment should be made available
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Life Skills Programs	Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Family Support Services Program	None	None
Cultural Services	None	Tree of Peace Native Women's Association	None
Respite /Childcare	None	None	Program required
After-school Programming/Other Children's Resources	-12.5 Hours a week Junior Side Door Ages 8-12 -Catholic School Board Toy Lending Library and 4+ Group -City of Yellowknife's summer At Risk Youth program	Big Buddies	None
Transportation	None	None	Not required
Shower Services	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Laundry Services	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre	None

Abused Women

Population Profile: Abused Women

As with most statistical information for Canada, the Northwest Territories is not included in the Statistical Profile of Family Abuse, published by Statistics Canada. However, the following numbers are used by the Status of Women Council of the NWT to provide an idea of the range and effects of spousal abuse in the territory:

- In Ontario, 8 in 10 aboriginal women have been abused or assaulted or can expect to be abused or assaulted.

- Shelter workers feel that at least 1 in 4 NWT women has been abused by her partner.
- In Canada, women are assaulted an average of 35 times before the police are called to assist.
- In 1995-96, 1091 women and their 1194 children used the NWT shelters.
- 115 women were turned away because of lack of space. There are 5 shelters in the NWT. Of the 9 family violence counselling programs, only 5 are able to offer longer-term counselling. 1 has a second-stage housing program and 1 has a follow-up/outreach program.
- In 1996 in the NWT 685 cases of spousal assault by a male spouse were reported to the RCMP.

Of the women interviewed in identifying the priorities of this plan, more than half identified an abusive relationship as the main reason why they first became homeless. As mentioned above, there are few shelters available, and many abused women from the communities come to Yellowknife to escape the abuse. Because of the small population of most communities outside Yellowknife (most are under 1000 in population), there is no way of avoiding the abuser at home.

In addition to the pain and suffering created through the process of abuse, abused women often have to deal with the effects of the abusive relationship upon their rental record. In leaving their homes, they are often allowing the abuser to take possession, or to abandon the rental contract. Rental debts and damages to the rental unit incurred by violence are often in the name of the fleeing partner. Additionally, noise complaints during the period of abuse may destroy any remaining possibility of a good reference.

Assets and Gaps in Services for Abused Women

Shelter Assets

YWCA's Alison McAteer House has 12 beds, dedicated to providing emergency shelter for women and their children fleeing abusive relationships. Women and children can stay at the shelter for up to six weeks and receive counselling, group sessions, support on legal and housing issues, advocacy and referrals to other community services.

Non-Shelter Assets

The Yellowknife Women's Centre also provides counselling and assistance for women in abusive relationships, from providing taxi vouchers for those women who are escaping an incidence of abuse, to support in the process of moving back into a healthier living pattern.

While they do not provide support on an individual basis, The Status of Women Council of the NWT has a mandate of working towards the equality of women through a variety of mechanisms

including advocating on behalf of women. The organization takes a key role in activities including Family Violence Awareness Week.

***Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum
of Supports Approach-Abused Women***

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	YWCA Alison McAteer House 12 beds	None	-An average of 10 women are turned away each month because the shelter is full
Transitional Housing	YWCA Transitional Housing (for those women who are accompanied by families)	None	-No transitional housing available for single women -Funding for transitional housing based on rent collection, not reliable source
Supportive Housing	YWCA Transitional Housing (for those women who are accompanied by families)	None	-There is no second-stage housing available for abused women without children
Subsidized Housing	Yellowknife Housing (families only) North Slave Housing (Families only, priority groups)	None	-There is a waiting list of 120 families -Outstanding debts/bad rental reputation due to family violence prevent accessibility to these providers
Access to Housing Services	None	None	-A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA Alison McAteer House	
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army Emergency Food Hampers (max one a month) Salvation Army Christmas Hamper Program	-Services are not available as often as needed -Need to develop communication and co-ordination between service providers
Meal Programs	YWCA Alison McAteer House provides 3 meals a day to current residents	Salvation Army Soup Line Yellowknife (lunch and supper daily) Women's Centre Lunch Program(lunch Monday-Friday)	None
Clothing Depot	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army YWCA Clothing Exchange	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line Victim Services	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army Alison McAteer House	-Strengthening Victim Services -On site lawyers available at shelters to provide assistance with peace bonds, custody orders
Outreach Services	YWCA Alison McAteer House (losing funding March 31, 2001)	None	-Need to find permanent funding for service provision

Health Services	NWT Public Health Helpline Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program Withdrawal Management	None	–Need for Sexual Assault centre and development of sexual assault teams including doctors, police, lawyers, trained specifically in the area
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Life Skills Programs	Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program Native Women's Association	None	None
Cultural Services	None	YWCA Culture Camp	None
Transportation	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA Alison McAteer House will provide cab vouchers for fleeing an abusive situation	None
Shower Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Laundry Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	None

Singles

Population Profile: Singles

About one-third of the Yellowknife population is made up of individuals aged 15 or older, who may have spouses or partners, but without children or extended family. Recent statistics do not reflect what portion of that population is female, but in 1991, about 47% of single people in Yellowknife were female.

There are few services and programs aimed specifically at single people in Yellowknife. It is very expensive to be single, with low-end bachelor apartments starting at over \$500/ month. The income support available to a single person for rent does not meet market rents for appropriate housing. Additionally, among the single population, there are many individuals making a reasonable wage who refuse to pay higher prices, and live below their means in the cheaper market units. Low-income singles have difficulty competing for these spaces when they are often supplied based on the ability of the renter to pay their rent. In addition, the demand for bachelor and one-bedroom apartments currently exceeds the supply.

Assets and Gaps in Services for Single Women

Shelter Assets-Single Women

The Yellowknife Women's Centre provides up to 14 emergency beds for single women. Five of those beds are mats for women who are intoxicated. The Women's Centre also provides a diverse range of supports for women, ranging from counselling to assisting with rental applications, and providing food and clothing banks. Many of these functions are currently taking place without funding. Prior to 2001, the Women's Centre was operating out of two separate buildings located a few blocks apart. The shelter beds were located in a basement with little privacy. In January 2001, the Women's Centre moved into a new location on Franklin Avenue that had previously served as a treatment centre. In the new location, women have increased privacy, and more humane living conditions. Additionally, there is an increase in the number of beds, and as a result, there has been an increase in usage. In order to retain the new location, rent or mortgage funding must be leveraged.

There are no transitional, supported or subsidized housing units available to single women.

Non-Shelter Assets-Single Women

The Yellowknife Women's Centre also provides the majority of services aimed specifically at single women in the city of Yellowknife.

The Status of Women Council of the NWT and the Native Women's Association advocate for the rights and needs of women as a general population.

***Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum
of Supports Approach-Single Women***

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	Yellowknife Women's Centre-7 beds	Yellowknife Women's Centre-7 beds	-Secure funding for new location, to ensure additional beds are maintained
Transitional Housing	3 bachelor units in YWCA transitional housing.	None	-Currently, emergency housing shelters are acting inappropriately as transitional housing for singles, and filling beds that should be available on an emergency basis -Transitional housing for single women needs to be established
Supportive Housing	None	None	
Subsidized Housing	None	None	
Access to Housing Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	-A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is

			needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Meal Programs	None	Salvation Army Soup Line Yellowknife (lunch and supper daily) Women's Centre Lunch Program(lunch Monday to Friday)	None
Clothing Depot	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army YWCA Clothing Exchange	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Women's Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line Victim Services	Yellowknife Women's Centre Salvation Army	-Legal consultation available -Assistance with peace bonds, custody
Outreach Services	YWCA	Salvation Army	
Health Services	NWT Public Health Withdrawal Management Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program		-Need for Sexual Assault centre
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Life Skills Programs	Women and Children's Healing and Recovery Program Tree of Peace Native Women's Association	None	None
Cultural Services	Native Women's Association	None	None
Transportation	None	None	None
Shower Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Laundry Services	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Yellowknife Women's Centre	None

Assets and Gaps in Services for Single Men

Shelter Assets

The Salvation Army NWT Resource Centre provides up to 32 emergency beds for men in the city of Yellowknife. 9 are mats for men who are intoxicated.

There are no transitional, supported or subsidized housing units available to single men.

Non-Shelter Assets

The Salvation Army NWT Resource Centre provides a range of supports that are available to men, including a soup line, which provides hot meals two times a day, counselling and drop-in services, and a withdrawal management program that is open to men and women.

The Tree of Peace Friendship Centre provides support services on an as-requested basis including assistance in filling out forms, literacy and upgrading, and acts as a drop-in centre.

***Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum
of Supports Approach-Single Men***

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	Salvation Army-14 beds per night	Salvation Army-18 beds (9 are mats for intoxicated men)	None
Transitional Housing	None	None	-Currently, emergency housing shelters are acting inappropriately as transitional housing for singles, and filling beds that should be available on an emergency basis -Transitional housing for single men needs to be established
Supportive Housing	None	None	Number of units required is unknown
Subsidized Housing	None	None	Number of units required is unknown
Access to Housing Services	None	None	-A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	None	Salvation Army Tree of Peace	None
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month	None
Meal Programs	None	Salvation Army Soup Line Yellowknife (lunch and supper daily)	None
Clothing Depot	None	Salvation Army	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line Victim Services	Salvation Army	None
Outreach Services	Salvation Army Connections	None	None
Health Services	NWT Public Health Withdrawal Management	Men's Treatment Program	-Currently there is a lack of supports for men who have survived sexual abuse (non-residential school related)
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre	Salvation Army	None
Life Skills	Salvation Army	None	None

Programs/Literacy	Connections NWT Literacy Council		
Cultural Services		Tree of Peace	None
Transportation	None	None	None
Shower Services	None	Salvation Army	None
Laundry Services	None	Salvation Army	None
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Salvation Army	None

Disabilities

Population Profile: Disabilities

The breadth of special needs that need to be accommodated in Yellowknife service provision encompasses a wide variety of mental and physical disabilities and illnesses. Disabilities range from slight to severe, and may be impacted by life circumstances. Thus, an individual without home or proper supports may be much more severely impacted by his disability than an individual with the same disability and a secure, healthy home and job.

Among the shelter residents interviewed in appendix D, at least two were living with the effects of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). The Salvation Army and Chartrand Homes have both occasionally housed disabled populations, because there was no where else for the individuals to be housed.

For those individuals with mental disabilities or illness, there are barriers to housing that are very separate from cost. Mentally ill Yellowknifers face the additional challenge of self-monitoring appropriate medication levels when living alone. They may be blacklisted from certain rental properties as the result of past flare-ups of illness. Disabled individuals may be provided with a range of support services, but there are a limited number of low-cost housing units equipped to accommodate them.

Assets and Gaps in Services for People with Disabilities

Shelter Assets

The Salvation Army, Yellowknife Women's Centre, and YWCA Alison McAteer House are all equipped with the very basic provisions to house those in wheelchairs, or with other mobility issues. However, staff have no special training in the needs of this population.

Individuals with mental illness may be funded for supported living through Chartrand Homes, a private Yellowknife organization.

Non-shelter Assets

The NWT Council for Disabled Persons advocates for people with disabilities throughout the NWT, including Yellowknife.

The Yellowknife Association for Community Living provides a range of services for Yellowknifers with mental disabilities. Services include the Abe Miller Centre, which acts as a drop-in centre, life skills programs, assistance with employment opportunities, and advocacy functions.

The YWCA of Yellowknife provides in-home support for people with disabilities living in shared apartment units and adults with intellectual challenges who are living in their own homes and apartments. Support includes life skills teaching, emotional support, assistance with problem solving, advocacy with government entitlements and referrals to other agencies.

***Summary Table of Assets and Gaps for a Continuum
of Supports Approach- Special Needs***

Shelter/Service/Support	Funded	In-Kind	Gap
Emergency Shelters	YWCA Alison McAteer House has an accessible suite for abused women	Salvation Army- (single men) Yellowknife Womens' Centre (single women) both wheelchair accessible	-There are no emergency shelters available to families who require wheelchair/other special accessibility) -At the emergency level, there are no special needs supports available to those with FAS or other special needs. -Individuals with special needs are inappropriately housed at the Stanton Regional Hospital Psychiatric Unit as emergency shelter.
Transitional Housing	Those individuals who have families may be able to access the YWCA Transitional Housing Program	None	-Number of units required is unknown
Supportive Housing	Chartrand Homes (psychiatric) YACL YWCA in home support services.	None	-Individuals are assured funding based on SLAC recommendation
Subsidized Housing	Yellowknife Housing Authority (limited) North Slave Housing (priority given to special needs)	None	-There are few units with appropriate access features

Access to Information Services	-NWT Council for Disabled Persons provides information and referrals as well as assistance in self advocacy	NWT Council for Disabled Persons lobbies for improved housing.	-A single point of entry for information about housing and other programs is needed in the city of Yellowknife
Drop-in Centres	Independent Clubhouse (privately owned, members only)	None	None
Food Banks	None	Yellowknife Food Bank open twice a month Salvation Army emergency food hampers Yellowknife Womens' Centre YWCA (not wheelchair accessible)	-Not all facilities are wheelchair accessible
Meal Programs	None	Salvation Army Soup Line Yellowknife (lunch and supper daily)	None
Clothing Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Womens' Centre YWCA	-Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele -Development of a voucher system
Furniture Depot	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Womens' Centre YWCA	-A waiting list exists for major pieces of furniture -An adequate facility for holding furniture does not exist -Co-ordination and avoidance of duplicate services while retaining the same level of availability to all clientele
Paralegal Services	Law Line Victim Services	None	None
Outreach Services	YWCA Community Support Services NWT Council for Disabled Persons YACL CNIB CHAA Learning Disabilities Association	None	None
Health Services	NWT Public Health Withdrawal Management Helpline Homecare	None	None
Employment Services	Canada/NWT Service Centre Chartrand Homes (residents only) YACL Yellowknife Disabled Persons Work Strategy	Salvation Army	None
Life Skills Programs/Literacy	Chartrand Homes (residents only) YWCA Community Supports	None	None

	Yellowknife Association for Community Living NWT Literacy Council		
Cultural Services	None	Tree of Peace Native Womens' Association	None
Transportation	None	NWT Council for Disabled Persons provides cab vouchers for medical appointments when the bus is not an option	None
Shower Services	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Womens' Centre	None
Laundry Services	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Womens' Centre	None
Communication Services/fixed mailing address	None	Salvation Army Yellowknife Womens' Centre	None
Child Care/respice	Early Childhood Intervention Program for children who need one- on- one attention because of severe disabilities	None	No respice care available for families with disabled children.

COMMUNITY HOUSING PRIORITIES

The Homelessness Coalition Yellowknife, NT has reviewed the gaps in the continuum of supports available to Yellowknife citizens and identified a number of priority areas where additional research, facilities or services are required. Potential projects have been identified and costs estimated. It should be noted that this is a plan and although the coalition has identified both potential federal funding and potential funding from other sources, these ***do not reflect funding commitments at this time***. These priorities can be categorized in three main areas.

Community Planning, Capacity Building, and Research

Initiatives which assist in the building of experience, expertise, new ideas, and connections in the community.

- Efforts to secure stakeholders, identify leadership and obtain political will to implement, review and update the community plan on an on-going basis.
- The development and maintenance of a data base of services and users.
- Develop housing policies, programs and services which will provide access to adequate, affordable and suitable shelter.
- Develop homelessness prevention and early intervention strategies.
- Determine how best to finance the emergency shelter for women facility (former detox facility).
- Promote the best use of subsidized housing resources.
- Prevent further loss of rental stock
- Develop housing options for special needs and the hard to house.

The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT considers planning, data collection and research to be the highest priority activity in the initial stages of the plan. Coordinated work on homelessness issues was practically non-existent prior to the formation of the coalition and there is much work to be done in both research and coordination of the many agencies who play a role in the delivery of housing and services.

To this end, the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT plans to hire a community housing coordinator. Ideally, the coordinator will work from city hall and the City of Yellowknife will provide administrative support and office space. Key activities of the coordinator will be the establishment of a housing registry and information system, managing public relations and coordinating the activities of the various agencies in relation to the objectives of this plan. Funding will be made available to agencies to participate in key research and information system activities.

Community Planning, Capacity Building, and Research

Project	Federal Contribution 2001/2002	Federal Contribution 2002/2003	Community/ GNWT Contribution	Target Area
Community Coordinator for Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$25,000/yr - administrative support	All
Provide funding to agencies to establish information systems, undertake needs assessments and research housing solutions.	145000	140000	\$25,000/yr administrative support	All
Develop and implement a public relations strategy	20000	20000		All
Proposal development funding-lease/purchase of Women's Centre property	10000			Abused women, single women
TOTALS	250000	235000	100000	

Programs and Services for the Homeless

Programs and services targeted to the homeless or high risk groups.

- Establish a housing registry to coordinate services, document problems and assist in improving accessibility to housing and services.
- Establish an outreach and support program to homeless people not accessing shelters.
- Provide improved training to agency staff.
- Strengthen crisis intervention and primary care services.
- Establish housing options and support services for those who are intoxicated or high on drugs.
- Increase the options available for supportive housing for psychiatric clients, the intellectually challenged and people with sensory or mobility impairment.
- Provide respite care for those with special needs.
- Plan and implement a public awareness program on the issues surrounding homelessness.

The extension of service coverage at key agencies to enable them to provide 24hour/day services is a primary goal. The provision of funding to key agencies to provide additional staff training is also a key objective. The provision of respite care for persons with special needs and services for psychiatric clients, the intellectually challenged and those with sensory or mobility impairment are priorities which are best funded through the Department of Health and Social Services as they require on-going operational funding.

Programs and Services for the Homeless

Project	Federal Contribution 2001/2002	Federal Contribution 2002/2003	Community/ GNWT Contribution	Target Area
Extend service coverage at YWCA, Salvation Army YK Women's Centre and Side Door including outreach services and aftercare.			\$480,000 GNWT Health & Social Services, ECE or NWTHC (unconfirmed)	Single women, Single men, Abused women, Youth
Establish emergency fund to assist access to housing. (Security deposits/bad debts, etc.)			Salvation Army - funding level currently unknown	All
Establish household goods and furniture moving service		30000	Building lease donor - \$35,000 O&M - Salvation	All

			Army - \$18,000	
Develop interagency protocols	10000			All
Establish on-site addiction counseling services and access to medical consultation (Salvation Army and YK Women's Centre)			GNWT Health and Social Services - funding requirement currently unknown.	Single men, single women, abused women
Provide funding to agencies for staff training and the development/delivery of training courses.	\$20,000	\$20,000		All
Development of housing registry	50000	30000		
Development and maintenance of respite care program.			GNWT Health and Social Services - funding requirement currently unknown	Special needs
Support services for psychiatric clients, the intellectually challenged and people with sensory or mobility impairment			GNWT Health and Social Services \$500,000/year	Special needs
TOTALS	80000	80000	Total unknown	

Housing Capital Projects

Capital projects designed to preserve or create affordable housing. Includes all new development of emergency, transitional, supportive or permanent housing and capital renovations and improvements to existing affordable housing units.

- Provide stable funding for emergency and transitional housing for women.
- Develop a permanent facility for youth services and programs.
- Provide improvements to existing facilities.

The expansion of the Side Door Youth Centre and the possible purchase of the Yellowknife Womens' Centre building are potential projects in the capital area. As well funding may be made available to agencies to undertake capital improvements or modernization to facilitate additional services, capacity or reduce operating costs.

Housing Capital Projects

Project	Federal Contribution 2001/2002	Federal Contribution 2002/2003	Community/ GNWT Contribution	Target Area
Addition to Side Door Youth Centre	\$150,000		\$252,000 - City of Yellowknife \$60,000 - Diavik \$400,000 - GNWT	Youth
Renovation of existing facilities (Salvation Army, YWCA, YK Women's Centre, Side Door, NSHC, YKHA, YK Dene Housing)		295000		Single Men, Single Women, Abused Women, Youth, Families
Develop or purchase facilities for emergency, transitional or supportive housing		286000		Single Women, Abused Women
TOTALS	150000	581000		

The total funding required for the full implementation of the plan is expected to exceed \$4 Million. Of that funding, \$1.545 Million is expected through the federal homelessness initiative, composed of funding through SCPI, UAS and the Youth Initiative. Funding through the homelessness initiative which was not utilized in 2000/2001 is expected to be spent in 2001/2002.

Approximately 10% of the available federal funding will be set aside for the administration of the activities funded with federal money. In addition, \$15,000 will be set aside from the available federal funding to provide for the evaluation of the projects funded with federal money.

**Available Federal Funding
Federal Homelessness Initiative, Yellowknife**

	2001/02	2002/03	TOTAL
SCPI	480000	240000	720000
UAS	400000	200000	600000
Youth Initiative	150000	75000	225000
TOTAL	1030000	515000	1545000

Projected Allocation of Federal Funding

	2001/02	2002/03	TOTAL
Planning, Capacity Building and Research	250000	235000	485000
Programs and Services	80000	80000	160000
Capital Projects	150000	581000	731000
Administration	77250	77250	154500
Evaluation	5000	10000	15000
TOTAL	562250	983250	1545500

SUSTAINABILITY

Much of the Yellowknife plan is concentrated on building capacity among the agencies and coordinating their efforts toward mutual objectives. The work of the coordinator and the funding provided to agencies for research and information systems is expected to be required in the short term only. The Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT expects that considerable progress will have been achieved by 2003 in terms of capacity building and coordination and the work of the coordinator will no longer be essential.

On-going services established through the plan will be primarily funded by the GNWT or by agencies. Any service proposal will have to demonstrate on-going sustainability in terms of funding in order to be considered.

The priority capital projects already have designated operational funding or are designed to reduce operating requirements to levels which will be sustainable by the agency (e.g. reduce mortgage payments, eliminate lease payments, reduce operating costs).

EVALUATION

One of the difficulties agencies and the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT have encountered is the lack of quality information on the dimensions of homelessness. One of the prime objectives of this plan is to improve the quality of information available to ensure effective planning and the evaluation of projects.

Establishing and monitoring performance measures for projects will help ensure objectives of the housing strategy are being met. Realistic and specific measurements will be predetermined and form the basis for program or project evaluations. Project sponsors will be required to provide evaluation criteria as a part of the project proposal and carry out an evaluation of the project.

In an effort to evaluate the impact of the overall plan, statistics from emergency and transitional shelters and community outreach services for each of the two years will be analysed for changes. Residents of housing units resulting from the homelessness strategy will be asked to participate in an interview to assess their satisfaction with support services and housing options. Data collection, analysis and compilation will take place throughout the life of the homelessness strategy. Statistics will include civic census data, counts of the homeless, shelter reports, outreach reports, landlord/tenant surveys, rental admissions, evictions.

An annual report will include the current status on the implementation of the Community Plan. Each year the community will review priorities for the next year and determine whether or not they are still priorities or whether other dynamics or developments in the community suggest changes. A compilation of annual amounts and sources of funding and investment contribution to the implementation of the housing strategy will be assessed and included in the report.

At the end of three years an independent evaluation of the homelessness strategy will be undertaken to ensure intended outcomes are met.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The community plan will be circulated broadly and copies made available to the public free of charge. It is hoped that information on the plan, SCPI funding and the activities of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT can be provided through the City of Yellowknife web

page. Information on the activities of the coalition may also be distributed through the regular city newsletter which is mailed to all residents.

Public information is a priority of the plan and the development of a comprehensive strategy will be an early initiative undertaken by the coalition. Each project sponsor will be expected to include methods by which the results of their project will be communicated to the public.

Proposal calls will be publicly advertised and press releases will be prepared and distributed announcing the commencement of projects and the successful proponents/sponsors.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

A requirement of SCPI is that the funding be matched by organizations other than the federal government. The Government of the NWT through the NWT Housing Corporation is expected to contribute over \$1.4 Million through their programs to provide new subsidized housing, make capital improvement to the existing social housing portfolio, provide grants to seniors for housing repairs and improvements and shelter enhancement. The expected contributions are based on actual expenditure in these areas in the fiscal year 2000/2001. It is expected that the value of projects undertaken in these areas for the years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 will be similar.

The GNWT expenditures does not include contributions to the Yellowknife Housing Authority which amount to over \$2.7 Million/year. As well the GNWT expenditures do not include other housing expenditures which are not specifically targeted to low income households.

The Salvation Army also makes a significant contribution through their programs in Yellowknife. Their contributions are based on combined budgets for the three years 2000-2003.

The Side Door Youth Project is currently underway and is receiving contributions and contributions in kind as shown. The GNWT contribution represents the value of the building which was sold to the city for the project for \$1. Diavik Diamond Mines has also provided services in kind with a value of \$60,000.

SCPI Matching funds 3 Year totals (thousands)

Funding	Canada	Total Matching	GNWT	City of Yellowknife	Agencies	Business
SCPI	720					

Side Door Youth Project		712	400	252		60
Emergency Shelter		537			537	
New subsidized housing		234	234			
Improvements to existing social housing		672	672			
Seniors home repair		74	74			
TOTAL	720	2175	1326	252	537	60

Appendix A - Membership of Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT

The Salvation Army, Karen Hoeft, Chairperson

Education Culture and Employment, GNWT, North Slave Career Development, Jo-Ann Simpson Wilson

Yellowknives Dene First Nation—Housing Division, Gerry Cheezie

Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation, Sandra Turner

Yellowknife Health & Social Services, Phyllis Sartor

NWT Housing Corporation, Frank McKay

North Slave Housing Corporation, Bobbi Bulmer

YWCA of Yellowknife, Lyda Fuller/Catherine Wilson

Yellowknife Women's Centre, Arlene Hache

Life Works Counselling & Self Representing, Terry Garchinski

City of Yellowknife, Mayor Gordon Van Tighem

Side Door Youth Centre, Kevin Laframboise

NWT Literacy Council, Cate Sills

NWT Council for Disabled Persons, Aggie Brockman

Department of Health and Social Services, GNWT, Ialeen Jones

MLA for Frame Lake, Charles Dent

Yellowknife Housing Authority, Nancy Galway

Ex-officio Members:

Human Resources Development Canada, Ann Kall

NWT Housing Corporation, Frank McKay

A-1

Appendix B

Homelessness Coalition Yellowknife, NT Terms of Reference

VISION

To **provide** a seamless continuum of housing and support services for marginalised individuals and families.

MISSION

To develop, establish and implement a 5-year community plan to respond to emergency, transitional and "hard to house" needs for at-risk individuals and families living in or moving to Yellowknife.

PURPOSE

To bring together like-minded people from all sectors of community – non-profit, for profit, government (all levels), individuals – to develop, establish and implement, with collective wisdom, a community plan to address homelessness.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING RELATIONSHIP

This coalition will be accountable to the community as a whole and our respective agencies and funders.

TERM

This coalition will work together until March 31, 2003. At that time we will renegotiate the term of this coalition.

MEMBERSHIP

This coalition will consist of any and all like-minded people who will commit to meeting together monthly for the term as stated above. Registered members of the coalition will have voting privileges.

DECISION-MAKING

This coalition will work towards consensus on community plan, recognizing that if consensus is impossible then any dissenting voices to the plan will be in written form and attached to the community plan. This coalition will also be responsible for decisions related to the implementation of that plan. Decisions are to be ratified by 50% + 1 of registered members.

ROLE OF COALITION

- ❑ To work together to develop a community plan and determine priorities for implementation of that plan.
 - ❑ To bring to the table ideas, viewpoints, issues, areas of expertise, and resources.
- To engage your “community of influence” to support and enhance the community plan.

B-1

PHILOSOPHY

- ❑ To establish housing and support services protocols with Government and non-Government partners.
- ❑ To maximize resources, streamline services, increase accountability and prevent duplication.
- ❑ To create environments that respect human dignity and individual choice.
- ❑ To provide adequate support services to meet the special needs of marginalised populations.
- ❑ To increase individual potential for more independent living, by providing personal development and skill-building opportunities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- ❑ Attend monthly meetings.
- ❑ Appoint consistent representation.
- ❑ Be prepared to discuss and vote on agenda items.
- ❑ Inform substitute member of relevant details.

- ❑ Complete community plan.
- ❑ Complete assigned tasks between meetings.
- ❑ Appoint working group to give direction in research phase of community plan.
- ❑ Appoint a chairperson.

MEETINGS

We will hold monthly meetings with at least 9 per calendar year. We will also hold two or three planning sessions per year. These will be half-day or full-day sessions depending on the extent of planning needed.

B-2

Appendix D

The following report was prepared by the researcher and provided to the members of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT. The original report also included a literature review and a review of several other community plans which have not been included in this appendix.

Report to the Member of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, NT

The purpose of this project was to research the needs of homeless and hard-to-house residents living in and accessing services in Yellowknife given the population, appropriate housing availability, number of residents seeking current services, and gaps in the continuum of support available. The research included interviews with past and present shelter residents, management and staff of agencies involved in the provision of shelter services or referrals. It included a review

of the files of partner agencies that pertain to usage numbers and a literature review of projects and community plans from other parts of Canada, particularly those with similar socio-economic settings to Yellowknife.

Methodology

Statistical information and a literature review of the health, social and economic conditions of Yellowknifers were gathered from NWT Bureau of Statistics and Statistics Canada publications, and the files of the partner agencies of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife. This information was carried out over a two-week period during the month of January, 2001.

Historical and evaluation information available from agencies and governments across Canada were reviewed for the purposes of comparison and for identifying successful models that might be adapted locally. This information was carried out during a 3-week period in the month of February 2001.

By far the largest activity of this research was the development of three qualitative interviews, one for each of the interview groups including clients, front-line support staff, and peripheral agencies. In the case of the clientele, the questionnaire was modelled after the Calgary 'Street Speaks' model that was designed by and for homeless living on the streets, with particular focus on asking open-ended questions that would allow clientele to vision and explore their situation creatively. In the case of these individuals, interviewers sensitive to the issues of these specific interviewees were hired, in order to maintain a comfortable and open interview atmosphere. The questionnaire for front-line support staff and for peripheral agencies was designed to gain information that corresponded to that requested of clientele, and that also developed a visioning and open interview atmosphere, that sought out the expertise and problem-solving capabilities of these staff. The interviews were designed in close collaboration with the project steering committee, and were carried out during the months of February and March 2001.

D-1

The information gathered using the above methodology was used to create the following report. The information from this report will then be considered by community stakeholders and members of the Homelessness Coalition Yellowknife, in developing the five –year plan to address homelessness in Yellowknife.

Interviews

A separate interview design was developed and used in questioning each of the three information providers. The three groups with knowledge and expertise in the area were evaluated to be:

1. Organization Clientele

These are the homeless or hard-to-house individuals that the five-year-plan should effect. They have key knowledge about which programs work, will continue to work, and must be added to the spectrum of care in Yellowknife.

2. Front-line staff and managers of key organizations

These are the staff that work with the homeless on a day-to-day basis. They can help us understand where key gaps currently exist in program provision, how the population is best served, and through their constant effort to meet the needs of the homeless population, hold a potential wealth of new ideas about care in Yellowknife.

3. Peripheral Organizations

There are only a few organizations in Yellowknife that shelter or house those in need. However, there are a variety of organizations serving additional needs, from food and clothing, to counselling, that make the difference between ‘housing’ provision, and ‘home’. This final grouping was made up of interviews with these organizations, as well as businesses and government agencies, that might not directly serve the needs of the homeless and hard-to-house, but are in contact with this population, and have a stake in this plans success.

Organization Clientele

Thirty-six interviews were carried out, by interviewers with sensitivity to the issues of the homeless and hard-to-house. Questions were asked of interviewees relating to their personal background, their current and historical housing situations, and their hopes and aspirations for the future. The questionnaire was designed to be open-ended and qualitative in order to allow the population the opportunity to voice their concerns and ideas about servicing the homeless and hard-to-house population. Individuals were chosen for interview on a random basis.

Of the individuals interviewed, 21 were female, and 15 were male. About half of the females interviewed had children living with them, and the majority of those that did not have children living with them, were mothers, but had their children removed, or the children were living with other family. Even the few males with children rarely had them in their custody. 2 of the individuals with children were still in a healthy relationship with the other parent of their children, while the vast majority were separated.

D-2

14 individuals identified themselves as Dene. Of these individuals, 3 more specifically identified themselves as Slavey, 2 as Chipewyan, 2 as Cree, 2 as Gwich'in and 1 as Dogrib. 12 were Inuit, 3 Metis, 4 Caucasian, and 2 as Inuvialuit. 1 individual did not identify their ethnicity.

The vast majority of these individuals was not from Yellowknife originally, and came here via Inuvik, Iqaluit or Fort Smith from a smaller regional community such as Tuktoyaktuk, Fort Good Hope, Fort Simpson or Gjoa Haven. A few arrived to Yellowknife from a smaller Territorial community via a major Canadian centre such as Edmonton or Ottawa. A very small minority came directly from their original home community.

Individuals were surprisingly unspecific about why they came to Yellowknife. Many ignored the question, but answers included for school or work, to escape abusive spouses, because they were incarcerated, or for medical services. Women often had originally followed their spouses to the community. One individual could not return to her home community because she had rental arrears with the community housing association and transitional housing was not available in the community.

Almost all of the individuals interviewed had difficulty finding a place to live in Yellowknife. Often individuals started out staying with friends or family, then moved into shelters or out on the street when family became frustrated with them. Every individual mentioned the high cost of rent as a major factor in their lack of permanent residence. The other major factor was the long waiting lists for getting in to any form of housing, commercial or subsidized. Many of the individuals had bad credit or rental records, often as a result of alcohol or drug abuse. Even those who had abandoned this behavior were continuing to have difficulty renting, often because of old debts. Many of the interviewees complained that their relatives and former spouses were often responsible for noise complaints, showing up late at night drunk, or having parties while the apartment owner was away. All of the 6 mothers with children living with them interviewed, commented on the problems of keeping children quiet in small apartments where there is nowhere to play. Those who were not living with their children commented that finding a permanent place to stay was of pivotal importance in getting their children back. Youth commented on the difficulty in finding a place to stay without having to give up their privacy or without being expected to return to parents immediately.

Of those interviewed, individuals were living in the following places: the Salvation Army, the YWCA Transitional Housing, the Yellowknife Women's Centre, with friends, with family, and out in a cabin on a highway. A very small minority had recently made the move into commercial or Yellowknife housing. Those in Transitional Housing had a one-year limit on their residence, and most were planning to move into Yellowknife Housing or North Slave Housing following this term.

D-3

Of those living in the Salvation Army NWT Resource Centre shelter, many expressed fear at the question of where they would go if they were no longer allowed to stay there. One individual suggested that in such a case, he 'might as well be dead'.

Every single individual interviewed had worked at some point, but most were no longer working. Many had lost their jobs due to alcoholism, or had been unable to support their children by working part-time. The majority of female respondents were receiving income support, and

almost all male respondents claimed no financial support at all, or a minimal amount coming from street-cleaning.

Respondents were asked visioning questions about their hopes and dreams for the future, their idea of a stable home, as well as the programs that might assist them in reaching their goals. Not a single respondent wished to continue to be homeless or dependent upon others. All respondents wished for a career in an area that interested them. The older the respondent, the less positive they tended to be about their future opportunities for income. All respondents had dreams of further education and a stable home. They described a stable home as being filled by family, free of abuse and with a stable income. The most common response to the question of what would help them achieve their goals was more low-cost housing, especially for single people. Other responses included transitional housing for men, a place where resumes could be posted for businesses to peruse, and more choice in the type of low-cost housing available (not just apartments).

Individuals were most likely to use the Salvation Army, Women's Centre, YWCA, Tree of Peace and Food Bank for a variety of services. These organizations were far more often mentioned than family or friends, or other local services. Other organizations mentioned were NWT Public Health (once) and churches (three times). One youth mentioned the Side Door Youth Drop in Centre. There were many positive comments about the services provided by these organizations. One of the few negative comments occasionally made was that it was hard to stay in emergency housing 'surrounded by drunks'.

The final questions asked of respondents were what they would like other Yellowknifers to know about themselves and other homeless people, and if they had any additional comments. 24 of 25 respondents wanted other Yellowknifers to be more open to the problems and situations of homeless people, and to assist them in restoring their dignity. Often it was commented that alcohol and drug abuse created the greatest obstacle in being respected and valued as a person. Many respondents were frustrated that alcohol abuse was wrongly assumed. Women surviving abusive situations were frustrated that they were expected to deal with the debts and messes that their spouses had left behind. One response was that "Others don't realize the struggle, hardship, the wanting and especially the needing for a home."

D-4

Additional comments were offered by over half of the respondents. They ranged from praises for organizations such as the YWCA transitional housing program, that already do exist, to requests for respect and second chances from Yellowknifers and Yellowknife businesses, to criticism of the city of Yellowknife in spending so much money on upgrading the downtown without paying attention to the people forced to live in it. Transportation was a recurring theme, with the

limitations of bus services creating problems for those employed, looking for work, or attending other appointments. One request was for a single point of access to find all the available services.

Front-line Staff and Managers

The researcher conducted front-line staff and manager interviews of partner organizations, including the YWCA, Yellowknife Women's Centre, Salvation Army and Side Door Youth Drop-in Centre, during the months of February and March. Individuals were asked about their interaction with homeless and hard-to-house Yellowknifers, and the level of support and training they received in their jobs. They were asked how effective they felt their program was, and what additional programs were or should be offered in Yellowknife in order to assist their clientele.

Even those individuals in management positions in the partner organizations had direct contact and interaction with the homeless and hard-to-house. Often, while their job was officially to assist individuals in one specific aspect such as applying for accommodation, they acted as unofficial counselors, providing a patient ear for the concerns of individuals, and passing them on to other programs in the city. Every individual interviewed suggested that they needed more staff in their organization, and that, while they received good support from their supervisors, they often did not have enough time in their jobs to deal with non-crisis tasks. Managing staff commented on the problem of enticing appropriate, trained staff to work in low-paying non-profit positions when comparable government positions were paid much more highly. Additionally, individuals who were trained on the job were likely to move on to better-paid government positions.

Front-line staff felt comfortable with the level of training they had currently received. However, they would like training in cultural understanding of the groups they serve. One individual even suggested a work exchange opportunity in one of the smaller northern communities would go a long way in assisting her to understand the background of her clientele. Other training desires were for a better understanding of the way income support worked and a better understanding of communication and advocacy.

Most individuals were comfortable with the amount of time that clients were allowed to stay with their organization. Several individuals expressed frustration in moving their clientele to the next step in transition from dependency to commercial housing. It was suggested that waiting lists were too long, and the currently booming rental market was allowing landlords to pass over individuals who had a poorer housing record.

D-5

This group of individuals tended to feel that the major issue in Yellowknife is not creating new organizations or services, but an increase in the support and funding of the organizations that already exist. Additional beds, functions within the existing organizations to facilitate transition into the commercial environment, and additional staff were all suggestions raised. The one new facility suggested often was more transitional housing for singles.

All of the staff interviewed expressed frustration with the dependency atmosphere in the Northwest Territories. It was suggested that until there was real work to do in Northern communities, there would be nothing to keep people from moving to Yellowknife where there was so much more going on.

All individuals felt that their organizations were doing a good job in serving the needs of their clientele. Other organizations they found helpful were the Food Bank, the YWCA, Income Support, the Salvation Army Resource Centre, NWT, the Yellowknife Women's Centre, and the Tree of Peace.

Peripheral Organizations

The researcher conducted interviews with a variety of organizations and individuals that had peripheral contact with homeless and hard-to-house individuals. A list of potential interviewees was compiled by the Steering Committee, but the completion of these interviews was impacted by the time constraints on the project, and the availability of certain individuals. Those that were reached for interviewing included Yellowknife Housing, North Slave Housing, the Tree of Peace, Lifeworks Consulting, a High School Guidance Counselor, the RCMP, two local property managers, The Yellowknife Correctional Centre, Chartrand Homes, Income Support (ECE) and the Yellowknife Seniors Society.

Organizations were asked how they are effected by homelessness, how they directly interact with the homeless and hard to house, and what would make their jobs easier in dealing with the homeless. They were asked if they referred individuals to other services, and if they felt additional services should be offered. Organizations were also asked specific information about the gaps in the types of services they offered, and the climate that is creating homelessness issues in Yellowknife.

Unlike the other interview groups, the individuals interviewed from periphery organizations had a diverse understanding of the programs and services available to the homeless and the hard-to-house. Most organizations expressed some confusion at exactly what services were offered, and how they might be accessed. Schools and the RCMP in particular felt inadequately aware of the services available and the process for obtaining those services.

D-6

The interaction with the homeless and hard-to-house ranged widely among this group of interviewees, from businesses and the RCMP concerned about people sleeping in public areas, to agencies that work to address the non-housing needs that assist in creating a home. Housing organizations expressed the issue of both under-housing and over-housing in Yellowknife, with a

need for both more single-dwelling accommodation and large-family accommodation. The issues of single people in Yellowknife were considered to be of significance in the current rental climate, with few dwellings affordable to those on income support or in lower paid salaries. Frustration was expressed at the lack of understanding of market-based ways of living and 'respecting' neighbors. Moving from a small community, where children are allowed to run freely, to a urban setting, and the people who live next door are strangers, who don't want to hear or see anything of you at all, is a difficulty raised by many organizations, without any potential solutions.

There is a need for additional housing in Yellowknife that allows seniors the opportunity for supported, independent living at reduced cost. Currently, many seniors may be dealing with social or housing concerns without proper support because of cultural differences. There is some concern that many seniors in the city are missing out on the supports that are offered, because of language or cultural barriers.

In the past 3-4 years, there has been a change in the supports offered to inmates in the NWT. Previously they were offered information about obtaining housing and supports in the community, while they were still finishing their sentencing. Currently, other than information about the Salvation Army, and community expectations that are known by Correctional Centre staff, there are few housing supports for this group while they are incarcerated. It was suggested that educating inmates before they are out on the street would be a useful and relevant project to consider in the five-year plan.

Youth are of particular concern in Yellowknife. There is no way to currently measure the number of homeless or occasionally homeless youth because there is nowhere for them to go. Most youth interviewed above live with family or friends or camp during summer months, and do not access any services, which make them difficult to tabulate. Schools express concern about the correlation in numbers of these youth, and the high school dropout rate. Income support, the Salvation Army, YWCA of Yellowknife, support for the mentally ill, the majority of housing services used by the homeless begin eligibility at aged 18.

The mentally ill face additional housing challenges. They are hard-to-house, especially in periods such as the current one in Yellowknife, when the rental market is booming, and landlords are able pick and choose their tenants. They are stigmatized for their illness, and are thought 'undesirable' neighbors. Additionally, the transition for this group includes the additional concern of keeping track of medications, and requires caring and educated supports.

D-7

Landlords expressed the inability to change the price of accommodation when the cost of heat is steadily rising and the property taxes upon rental units make more expensively priced condominiums or houses more inviting investments. It was suggested that the trend in the city

towards the conversion of lower-cost apartments into condominiums and hotels will continue, while the rental market booms, and trends in property tax rates continue.

It is worth noting that with very few exceptions, the organizations interviewed were excited about the activities of the Homelessness Coalition, Yellowknife, and were interested in becoming involved.

Statistical Information

Given the limited time frame of this project, the statistics were limited to those available from the Government of the Northwest Territories, the NWT Housing Corporation, and those that had previously been gathered by the partner organizations. It was not feasible to do a further census of homeless or the hard to house within the context of this research project. Statistics in the Northwest Territories should always be considered with some caution, as a result of the small population size, and the limited information that is currently gathered.

A special note should be made regarding the application of statistics to the homeless and hard-to-house. It has only been very recently that any efforts have been made to include the homeless in census and statistics gathering. There are a variety of issues surrounding the counting of the homeless, from potential ethics violations in identifying non-legal places of residence, to the very question of how such a count or questioning of this population might be done.

Demographics

There has been a pattern of urbanization in the NWT. Yellowknife's share of the population has increased from 29% in 1976, to 43% in 1999 (these figures use only the populations of communities that are still a part of the NWT and have been adjusted to acknowledge the population changes cause by the creation of Nunavut). While in the 1980's, this number reflected a positive net migration from outside of the NWT, with most non-territorial migrants coming to Yellowknife, in the past decade, the trend has been towards migration from the rest of the territory towards Yellowknife.

The NWT still has a relatively young population relative to the rest of Canada, but the fastest growing segment of the territorial population is of individuals over 50.

The birth rate among women under 24 remains more than twice that of the rest of the country. After the age of 24, it remains very close to the national average.

The majority of housing information is gathered by the NWT Housing Corporation Housing Needs Survey. This survey provides information about the core housing needs in NWT communities. However, information is not gathered for those with no permanent address or home, so there is no information regarding the homeless. As with other statistical aspects of this research, these numbers should be used carefully.

The core housing need in Yellowknife increased between 1996 and 2000, while it declined in the rest of the Northwest Territories. These housing problems are much more likely to be affordability in Yellowknife, rather than suitability or adequacy, which are more common in other parts of the NWT.

The percentage of owned dwellings rose in Yellowknife in the 1990's, but has dropped slightly in 2000 since the remove of the ownership incentive.

Related Statistics

For both Canada and the Northwest Territories, the percentage of lone parent families has been steadily increasing for the past 15 years. The percentage is slightly higher in the NWT than in Canada as a whole.

The average income in Yellowknife has remained stable over the past decade, and continues to be considerable higher than that of the smaller communities (almost \$20000 a year higher).

While the population receiving income support in regional centres steadily declined in the 1990's it rose slightly in Yellowknife.

A price difference of about 20% remains in the cost of living between Yellowknife and Edmonton.

Crime rates remain slightly higher in the NWT, with property crimes decreasing, but violent crimes remaining the same.

Although rates of heavy drinking are similar to the rest of Canada for youth, adults and seniors are up to three times more likely to be heavy drinkers (drink more than five drinks at a time)

Non-Aboriginal Yellowknifers are much more likely to be employed than Aboriginal Yellowknifers, though the number of Aboriginal employees is increasing.

The higher the level of education obtained, the more likely an individual is to be employed in the NWT.

Organizational Statistics

The issue of gathering appropriate organizational statistics created an additional challenge in Yellowknife. The statistics available are detailed and informative, but in most cases, did not include information about turn-aways, that have been used in larger urban settings to provide quantified gaps in the inventory of services provided to the homeless and hard-to-house population. However, the following numbers and breakdown in services provided have been gathered:

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army provides 32 emergency shelter beds a night, 14 of which are funded. The average number of beds filled for the year 2000 is 16. However, the average does not reflect the seasonal variances. During the winter months, there may be several days or even weeks in which there must be turn-aways, while during the summer, there may be beds left unfilled.

The Soup Line of the Salvation Army provides an average of 40 meals a day.

Other services provided by the Salvation Army include drop-in functions, counseling and follow-up, and Christmas assistance. Clothing, furniture, and emergency food provisions are also provided to members of the community on a regular basis

Yellowknife Women's Centre

The Yellowknife Women's Centre has recently made the move to more adequate facilities. As a result, the statistics available do not fully reflect what is currently available. In the year 2000, the Yellowknife Women's Centre provided an average of 16 women with emergency shelter beds each month, with an average of 8 beds filled each night.

The lunch program also provides an average of 535 meals for adults and 122 meals for children each month.

The Women's Centre provides counseling, outreach services, open use of showers, laundry and clothing depot facilities, and advocacy in areas of emergency shelter, landlords and tenancy, rental hearings, child welfare, Income support, job applications, banking, income tax, Child tax benefits, and letter-writing.

YWCA of Yellowknife

The YWCA of Yellowknife Alison McAteer House Shelter had a capacity of 12 beds per night in 2000. On average, the facility was filled to 76% of occupancy, but there were months when there was as much as 124% occupancy, and as little as 33% occupancy. On average, children occupied 65% of beds. Alison McAteer House is the only facility where the number of turn-aways are measured, and in 2000, 114 women were refused due to the shelter being full, and 50 more for other reasons. In some months as many as 46 women were turned away because the shelter was full.

During the fiscal year 1999-2000, 65 tenants with 77 children occupied 31 units of Transitional Housing, 100% occupancy. During the same fiscal year, 2 Emergency housing units were available, serving a total of 26 individuals and co-habitants with 27 children. Emergency housing residents are assisted with housing issues, supported and counseled, and referred to other community services.

The YWCA also offered In-Home Community Support services, and Outreach. The Focus program for single moms includes academic upgrading, personal development, life-skills coaching, computer training, and work readiness and experience.