

Community Liaison Committee (CLC) Meeting Agenda – Tuesday March 21 2017 at 6:00p.m.

Schedule

CLC Meeting 6:00p.m.-7:30p.m. (Refreshments & Light Dinner provided by LOFT Kitchen)

Present: Samantha Vite, Cam Kilgour, Karen Haberman, Nicole Mirante, Angela Burns, Alison Sproat, Erin Dej

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<p>1. Welcome & Review of February 15, 2017 meeting (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Review: shelter thriving, lots of volunteer requests, low number of incidents.</p> <p>Discussion: Community Update- there should be a push for federally mandated affordable housing.</p> <p>Community Integration- discuss 4 projects to move forward with.</p>
<p>2. Update on shelter and drop-in operations (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Growing numbers, 130 participants/day. Breakfast program funding goes to end of march.</p> <p>Free basic tax return completion on Monday and Tuesday.</p> <p>LOFT kitchen will be relaunching the youth training program. Expanding from 8 participants to 12. Focus on catering and front/back of house skills in the food industry.</p> <p>Looking for youth artists (16-29 y/o) to display works in the LOFT kitchen.</p> <p>Complaints: Individuals smoking outside on the sidewalk. The shelter policy is to encourage people to go for a walk instead of standing in one place.</p> <p>No complaints have been submitted online. Typical submissions are folks outside Toronto asking for space in the shelter.</p> <p>March 10th – House of Commons committee came for strategy recommendations on poverty reduction. They will be uploading their findings to their site soon.</p>

Main recommendation made by the committee: support federal incentives for an affordable housing strategy.

Update from Jan: the shelter is full every night, all 30 beds. People are being turned away because the shelter is at capacity.

At the shelter things are going better than hoped for. The guys are acclimatizing, self policing behaviour, sense of pride in their environment, feeling of belonging, to the building/neighbourhood.

Q: How long can individuals stay in shelter?

A: The average time is 3 months, but it works on a case by case basis. Guys in the shelter must be working on plans, setting and working on their goals/case plan. However, if a case plan can't be developed due to obstacles (addiction, mental health) they will not be held to 3 month time frame.

Regardless, no one will be asked to leave based on a standardized time frame.

Q: With nicer weather on the way there is concern from the community around Irene parkette. How can we make the park seem open to all those who wish to enjoy it?

A: The guys in shelter know that the park is primarily for children, and seem to understand that certain behaviours aren't acceptable. Christie pits has more facilities and more to offer to clients in terms of activities. Programs could be facilitated through the drop in.

Irene Parkette is heavily watched during the day by staff and cameras. Occasionally people have been seen drinking in park and are usually confronted by staff. Staff will offer them to come in and eat or inform them than if they stay someone might phone the police. There is a heightened awareness around the accessibility of the park. Not just from clients but also locals.

	<p>Very few substance issues in the shelter involving hard drugs.</p> <p>Programming during the day needs to provide structure to clients and give them something productive to do with their time.</p>
<p>3. Erin Dej, PhD from The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness discussion (15 minutes)</p>	<p>Research institute on homelessness, intent on finding solutions and ending homelessness. Looking to inform policy and practice from community level to government level and change how we deal with homelessness.</p> <p>One activity/project is publishing the “State of Homelessness in Canada”. This year there was an update on what's happening across the country and what our response is. Includes 10 recommendations given to the federal government.</p> <p>The federal government should be coming out with a national housing strategy later this year.</p> <p>Quick overview: per year 235,000 people are homeless. 50,000 of those are hidden homeless.</p> <p>1.5 million people are precariously housed, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Half of those people are in extreme need, spending over 50% of their income on housing. A large number of people are on the brink of not making rent and becoming homeless.</p> <p>Good news: overall decline in shelter use. 20,000 fewer users from 2005-2014. However, those that are using shelters are staying longer. Seniors and families stay twice as long as youth and adults, becoming stuck</p>

in the system.

Across Canada, in 2014, the national occupancy rate in shelters increased by more than 10%. Fewer people, fewer beds available. In 2016, the occupancy rate was 92%, which points to chronic homelessness.

85% of people who are homeless are homeless for less than 60 days. 15% of the homeless population is using the majority of resources.

How we got here: the current state of modern homelessness began in the 80's, when the federal government disinvested in affordable housing and left all responsibility to provinces. At the same time, welfare and social assistance programs were reduced. Fewer available units, less money to those who needed it.

In 1982, over 20,000 units were built. In 1995, 1000 units were built.

When the federal government was building units they created operating agreements that helped social housing buildings pay their mortgages. Most agreements were for 40 years, with the understanding that when the agreements expired, the rent from the tenants should sustain the mortgage payments. The agreements failed to take into account the cost of maintenance of the buildings, most of which were never renovated. Most buildings are now 40 or 50 years old and in desperate need of repair. The agreements are expiring and not being renewed. Mortgages have not paid off and the rent being collected is not enough to maintain them.

The big fear is that landlords will have to increase market rent units, losing more affordable housing. Most agreements will be expired by 2020, and all will be expired by 2025.

Optimistically, there has been increased interest in homelessness and affordable housing. The 2016 budget gave short term money to keep social housing operating and money for affordable housing and women's shelters. The money was given short term under assumption that a national strategy would provide long term solutions.

In November 2016 the federal government released documents detailing information from community consultations. They showed that those in greatest need deserve the most attention.

There has been a call to help Indigenous people on and off reserves to end homelessness and to make housing a human right.

There are 10 recommendations in the Homeless Hub document, 4 of which are directed at affordable housing.

Examples: Low income housing benefit, dependent on geographical region and other factors.

Create affordable housing tax credit, encourage private investors to get involved. Expand affordable housing to Indigenous people.

All 10 recommendations are about preventing/ending homelessness and would require \$123 per Canadian. That's \$50 more than is currently being spent.

Currently working on move towards homelessness prevention. Access to housing is key to prevention.

Typically, the bulk of money is put into emergency response measures, which manages the problem but doesn't solve it. In the last decade there has been a move towards housing first, the idea that people get housing and then work on other issues (substance, addiction, mental health).

	<p>This has proven to be effective.</p> <p>When looking at prevention, there is a need to address factors that lead people to become homeless. Emergency response measures should only be used to help people in crisis.</p> <p>There is a prevention framework being developed, but school, hospitals, communities, and government all must be involved.</p> <p>When focusing on homelessness it is easy to point to individual issues. The majority of causes are structural and unseen and must also be addressed. Placing an emphasis on prevention and support can allow emergency response to be used for emergencies. More info at homelesshub.ca</p> <p>Q: Does the city have its own housing strategy? A: The constant struggle is between providing resources and requiring input from other levels. It is difficult to find funding and create facilities to accommodate those in need.</p> <p>The federal government needs to be in a leadership role in their commitment to ending homelessness. They can then provide funds to communities and provinces to solve issues as needed.</p> <p>Example of an organisation focusing on accommodating people who have no place to go is Sistering. They operate a 24 hour drop in program for women, providing places for people to sleep in a low barrier environment.</p>
<p>4. Committee Member Forum for questions or concerns relating to shelter operations (5 minutes)</p>	

<p>5. Scheduling of April Meeting (5 minutes)</p>	
<p>6. Review of workplan and delegation of tasks (15 minutes)</p>	<p>Library trips- 1st is this Saturday, translations for Chinese, French, and Spanish were provided. A poster will be displayed in the drop in, open to all community members and drop in users</p> <p>Laneway murals - grant writing in ongoing, working with artists, due April 3rd. The proposal is for 2 murals facing Irene Parkette. Murals facing parks are typically given priority. The grant covers 70% of the project up to \$50,000. Final budget from the artists is coming this week.</p> <p>Opening party – a few options, Have a party similar to the open house of the shelter in December. If happening at the same time at the street festival there is a higher chance of people coming in.</p> <p>Could have tours of the kitchen and the drop in space. Mirror the drop in hours.</p> <p>Activities going on, music. When booking acts could ask for donations of their time. Could have performers inside and outside, ask Long and Mcquade for donations of equipment, speakers, PA, etc,</p> <p>Spoken word, include people from the shelter, work with Jan to find who might be interested.</p> <p>Provide food, ask for donations, pay what you can. Food should be ongoing throughout when date is confirmed.</p> <p>Add art to the walls, Erica from LOFT kitchen working with local artists. Sam will pitch ideas to different managers.</p> <p>Need: dates, what festivals are happening that could coincide with opening event?</p>

	<p>Timing and schedule of activities.</p> <p>Involve the Nook, host events in the parkette for children like face painting, a magician, etc. promotion from the BIA for event. Will help reintroduce CONC to the neighbourhood and residents.</p> <p>Dovercourt house have dancing lessons everyday, someone could ask if they could provide free lessons in front of the drop in, or could use space inside. Can invite drop in participants to participate.</p> <p>The drop in is between 10-4, think of scheduling and how to divide work.</p> <p>Music and spoken word could be scheduled, plan for a 'show' at a certain time, sit down audience during poetry/spoken word performances.</p> <p>BIA needs to know there will be live music to prevent conflicting musical performances at the same time.</p> <p>Starter kits- ongoing, could have an example of one during the opening. Think of ways of raising money on a sustained basis instead of one offs. Have companies sponsor monthly kits. If 3 people move out/month on average, need 3 kit donations.</p> <p>Event could act as launch of these programs.</p>
<p>7. Closing Remarks</p>	<p>The drop in is looking for someone to help prepare food on Saturday between 9 and 4. A call out will be put on social media. It doesn't need to be every Saturday, just looking for extra help during the days to address understaffing issues.</p> <p>Next meeting will be last week of april, thurs 27th.</p>