

# Report to the Community: Homelessness & Affordable Housing Initiatives

2008 - 2010



Presented by The City of Red Deer and the Red Deer & District Community Foundation



# What is homelessness?

***It's staying or sleeping in a place not meant for people ...***

*such as in a car*

*or in a park*

*on the sidewalk*

*in an abandoned building*

*or on the street.*

***It's staying in a shelter.***

***It's staying at a friend's house ... sleeping on their couch, but not having your own key.***

***It's moving from the park to a friend's place, then back to the park.***

***It's leaving the hospital in a taxi and being driven to a shelter.***

***It's coming out of jail with no place to stay, and no friends or family to stay with.***

***It's cycling through these or many other potential situations.***

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# Paths into homelessness



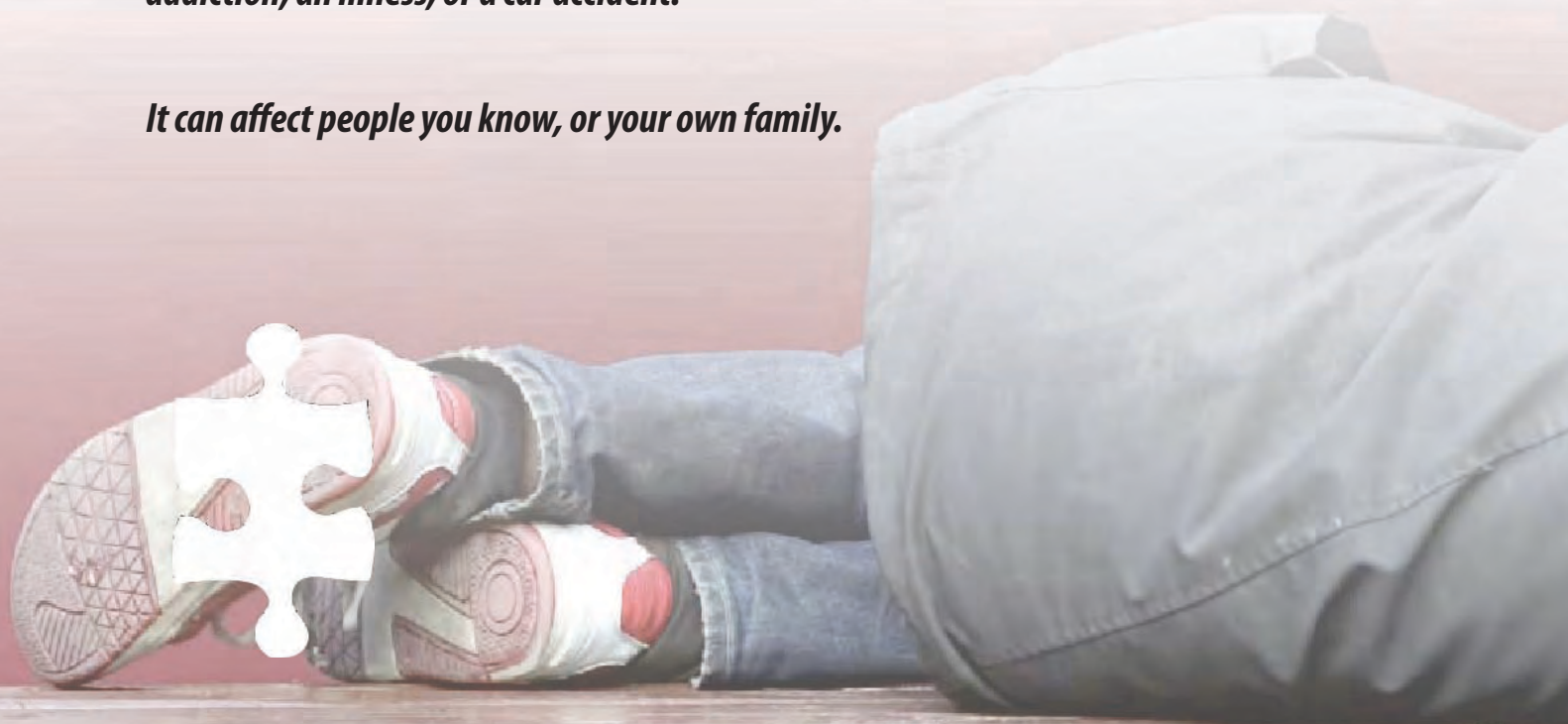
Joe lived on the streets of Red Deer, then Edmonton, and has now returned to Red Deer. He is 17 years old. The department of Child and Family Services has been appointed his temporary guardian because his mother has severe addiction issues and has been in and out of treatment centres.

Joe followed her to Edmonton because she promised him that she would secure housing for them, so they could reside together. Unfortunately, Joe's dream of family housing didn't work out in Edmonton. He returned to Red Deer, along with his mother, where he is still waiting, hoping that she will secure housing for the both of them.

Joe's father is terminally ill and does not have the means or ability to care for him. Joe has been in and out of secure placements and hospitals for suicidal ideations; he continues to struggle with that to this date.

***Homelessness or the fear of homelessness can strike anyone. Sometimes it happens because of economic downturns, marital break-ups, an abusive home life, a drug addiction, an illness, or a car accident.***

***It can affect people you know, or your own family.***



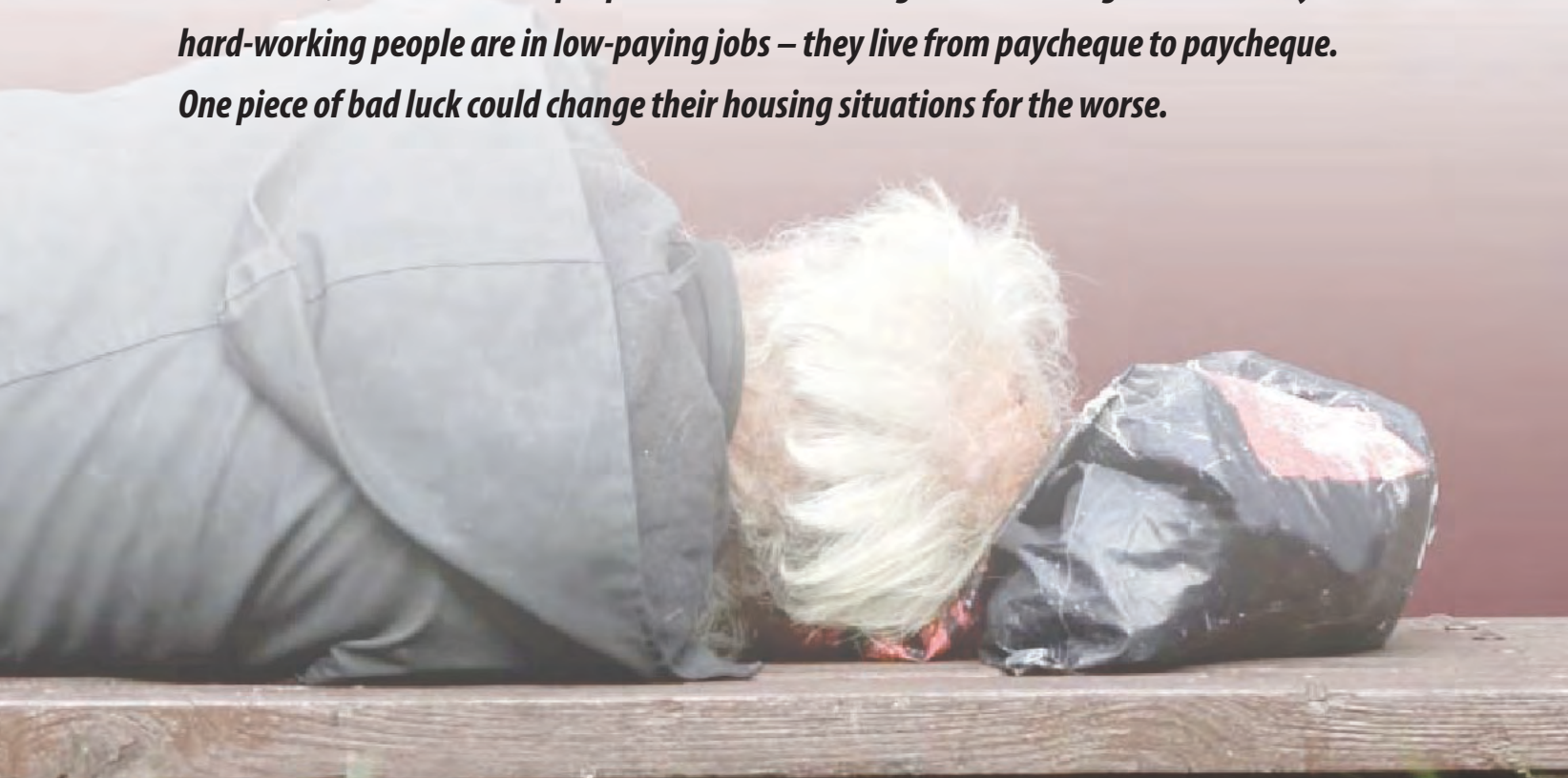
Rob came from a close family. He had a trade – he was a welder. He liked to have a drink here and there, nothing serious. He and his wife moved out to western Canada to take advantage of the work situation.

Then work slowed down. Rob and his wife began to have marital problems, and eventually she left. Rob began to drink a little more, and eventually the drinking started to take over, to control his life.

Rob lost his home. He didn't feel good about himself, so he stopped calling his family. His friends began to get tired of his staying at their homes. Rob became numb. He found himself on the street, using a shelter to sleep in. He still shakes his head, not sure how it all happened.

**“ I come from a good family. I used to look down on those people living in the streets, and now I'm one of them.”**

***In Red Deer, the numbers of people at risk of becoming homeless is significant. Many hard-working people are in low-paying jobs – they live from paycheque to paycheque. One piece of bad luck could change their housing situations for the worse.***





# Message from the Mayor

## Mayor Morris Flewwelling on homelessness



Homelessness is unacceptable. Red Deer has the right approach, the right people working on it, and the best possible thinking behind it – but we can't seem to move the needle fast enough to end homelessness! For even a single Red Deerian to be experiencing or facing the possibility of homelessness means we still have work to do.

For more than five years, Red Deer has been planning and implementing strategies to put an end to homelessness. For many, this has resulted in a place to call home, an opportunity to build networks and supports, and a place to feel safe, secure, and connected. Our community continues to provide as much care and comfort as possible with the resources that are available.

Over the years, I've had an opportunity to meet many of our citizens who were, or have been, homeless. While I've learned many lessons from these citizens, I know a couple of things for sure – these people have names and they don't want to be homeless. Nobody knows this better than the people working in the frontlines of our agencies and volunteer organizations. These caring individuals put themselves out there each and every day to serve our city's most vulnerable citizens.

The City of Red Deer is proud to be part of the community solution to end homelessness – but we are only one player. Throughout this document you will find evidence of the hard work done by citizens and organizations in planning, delivery of programs and services, and accounting for results and resources. We honour the dedication and appreciate the contribution of each and every one involved. Homelessness is, and continues to be, a complex issue facing communities across the country. Red Deer continues to be a leader among Canadian communities for tackling the issue head on.

That said, leadership and best efforts mean little when the mercury drops and one of our citizens is out in the cold. Whether that citizen is young or old, unable to access housing because of race, illness or income, it's one too many. The difference is made by someone who cares. This might be as simple as resisting the temptation to judge, or saying "hello" while passing someone on the street.

I hope this Annual Report will give you insight and understanding into the leadership work being done in Red Deer to end homelessness. It's a large puzzle with many pieces; however, a picture is beginning to emerge. I leave you with the challenge to contemplate your own contribution to the picture.

# Introduction

## Context

The work in Red Deer on homelessness, affordable housing, and other housing issues is decidedly a community effort. In this report, we'll explore the range of projects and solutions being pursued in Red Deer and the players who are doing the work. We'll report on the allocation and use of federal and provincial funds aimed at addressing housing and homelessness needs. But we'd also like to paint you a comprehensive picture of all housing and homelessness work in the community: its history, the players, the planning, and how it all comes together in a community approach. We'll put faces to the individuals and families the work is for, and we'll share stories about some of the paths into and out of homelessness, which is important to understand if we want to prevent homelessness in the future. Then we'll show you the progress Red Deer has made so far, and the next steps. But first, let's meet some of the players.

## Funders and financial stewards

### *The City of Red Deer*

The City is the financial steward for funds provided by the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta to address housing and homelessness in Red Deer. Through the Social Planning department, The City administers funding agreements with these other orders of government, and with community organizations that receive capital and operating funds. Red Deer City Council is responsible for all funding decisions; to support the decision-making process, Council has established an advisory committee known as the Community Housing Advisory Board (CHAB). The CHAB is made up of citizen representatives, including two Aboriginal representatives, appointed by City Council. Social Planning oversees the administration of resources and the evaluation of programs and services, and reports back to funders.

### *The Government of Canada*

The federal government has supported housing and homelessness initiatives in Red Deer since 2001. Through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, the Government of Canada supports community and Aboriginal programs and services.

### *The Province of Alberta*

The Province plays a major role in supporting local affordable housing development and in ending homelessness in Alberta. The Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness prepared the document, *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years*. The Province of Alberta is the first province in Canada to have a ten-year plan to end homelessness. Through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the community has access to resources to support affordable housing initiatives and programs that will end homelessness.

### *Red Deer and District Community Foundation*

As a community leader, the Community Foundation supports community planning, coordination, and implementation regarding Red Deer's vision and framework to end homelessness. The City of Red Deer provides the Community Foundation with municipal funding for the position of Coordinator: Community Leadership Initiatives; the staff member in this position engages citizens, community organizations, and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to ensure that Red Deer continues to focus on ending homelessness.

# The planning path

## Background



Appropriate housing is critical to the well-being of individuals and families. Housing impacts people's health, education, employment, income, and their ability to be included in social networks. The lack of appropriate housing puts people at risk, and, conversely, the presence of appropriate housing protects people from certain risks. The work being done in Red Deer covers the housing spectrum: developing affordable housing for those who may be working but at risk due to low income, marital breakdown, or other factors; and working to find housing for those who are currently homeless with multiple barriers to housing.

The City of Red Deer and community stakeholders have devoted considerable effort to creating plans and strategies that are specific to Red Deer – these plans clarify, and respond to, our community's housing needs and services for those who are homeless. In addition, the federal and provincial governments have been active in outlining plans and strategies for addressing housing issues. Red Deer is fortunate in that our plans to address homelessness and affordable housing issues reflect the voice of the community as well as all levels of government.

The federal and provincial plans provide the overarching principles, and the Red Deer plans reflect local needs and priorities. Together, these collaborative plans create a stable, innovative, sustainable, and responsive housing and services system that is moving the community toward its ultimate goal of ending homelessness by 2018.

*The Journey Home - A Community Housing Plan* was one of the first housing plans in Red Deer. The Red Deer Housing Committee hired consultants to create the plan in 2000, and it was approved by Red Deer City Council on December 5, 2000. 400 community members took part, including those suffering from homelessness as a result of the lack of housing stock. The plan was updated in 2003 in response to an acute housing shortage in the city; it assessed the housing situation through demographic analysis and offered concrete solutions to be implemented over three years. It was instrumental in Red Deer receiving federal and provincial money to encourage development of affordable housing. *The Journey Home* became one of the foundational documents used by the Mayor's Task Force in the development of *EveryOne's Home: Vision and Framework for Ending Homelessness by 2018*.

## *The Journey Home*





## Housing studies

### *Ending Homelessness in Red Deer*

In 2006 the Red Deer Housing Committee commissioned *Ending Homelessness in Red Deer*, a study that outlined the nature and scope of housing and homelessness issues in the community. The study addressed three objectives: routes into homelessness, routes out of homelessness, and an examination of local services and supports for people who are currently or formerly homeless, or at risk of homelessness due to a lack of affordable housing. This research report was developed for the Mayor's Task Force on Ending Homelessness to guide the group in the development of *EveryOne's Home*.

### *Affordable Housing Strategy*

The City of Red Deer commissioned another study in 2006 that was designed to clarify The City's role in the development of affordable housing in the community. Housing issues had not historically been addressed formally by Alberta municipalities, but various City departments had been working closely with the community to encourage the development of affordable housing. The result, the *Affordable Housing Strategy*, defined The City's role in affordable housing development and laid out an integrated corporation-wide set of strategies to help The City encourage and support the development of more affordable housing in the community.

### *Aboriginal Housing Needs and Priorities in Red Deer 2007*

While it is important to understand the issues relating to housing, it is equally important to understand specific populations and their housing needs and priorities. To this end, in 2007 The City of Red Deer commissioned a study to examine the housing needs and priorities of the Aboriginal population in Red Deer. *Aboriginal Housing Needs and Priorities in Red Deer* was developed in part to provide information for that funding year, and to provide the beginning of a roadmap for meeting Aboriginal housing needs in Red Deer into the future. Information was gathered from representatives of Aboriginal agencies, individuals from the Aboriginal community, elders, and a Hobbema-based band housing coordinator.

**“ Our collective, community learning about housing has been transformative over the past 10 to 12 years. The reports and research that preceded the work of our Mayor's Task Force helped to guide our vision and direction. ”**



# *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework for Ending Homelessness by 2018*



The studies cited so far were all undertaken to gain specific information on housing and homelessness issues in Red Deer. Together, they provided vital information for the development of *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework for Ending Homelessness by 2018* and *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan Towards Ending Homelessness*.

The development of *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework* began when the Red Deer Housing Committee (RDHC) approached Red Deer Mayor Morris Flewelling and engaged him to lead the Mayor's Task Force on Ending Homelessness. RDHC is made up of community organizations working with housing and homelessness issues, as well as concerned citizens, and representatives from municipal, provincial, and federal governments. RDHC recognized all the great work that was happening in the city – it was the right opportunity to pull it all together.

*EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework for Ending Homelessness by 2018* was created by the Mayor's Task Force. The *Vision and Framework* adopted a two-pronged approach: ending homelessness and providing strategies to help prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place.

The framework uses an upstream and downstream model; that means it looks at the entire spectrum of homelessness, from the factors that prevent homelessness on one end (healthy relationships, programs, policies, and effective emergency assistance), to community responses to homelessness (services such as shelters, soup kitchens, and mental health services) on the other. The framework contains principles that guide community thinking about homelessness and the individuals who are experiencing it, including a "housing first" approach, respect for the rights of all members of society – in particular our most vulnerable citizens – and the acknowledgement that it takes an entire community to address the complex nature of homelessness.

An advisory committee, under the leadership of the Red Deer & District Community Foundation, then created a supporting document that outlines specific goals and targets for the medium-term implementation of the framework: *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan Towards Ending Homelessness in Red Deer*.





*EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan Towards Ending Homelessness* was created specifically to implement the larger vision that was developed in the broader plan, *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework for Ending Homelessness by 2018*. The *Five Year Plan* identifies four broad goals to guide the work in our community until 2015 as we work towards the ultimate community goal of ending homelessness. The plan maps out 11 strategies, 31 action steps, and 16 targets.

The *Five Year Plan* is the accumulation of a lot of work over many years. All of the previous plans and studies have contributed to it. This community plan is the template that The City of Red Deer and the Community Housing Advisory Board will use to guide future funding allocations. To see how the housing and homelessness projects that were funded in 2008, 2009, and 2010 fit within the goals and strategies of the *Five Year Plan*, please view the funded program descriptions beginning on page 17.

*EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan* is large and bold, and not all of the strategies contained within the document can be moved forward with the current sources of funding. The community has answered that challenge by being creative and by working together. For descriptions of the great work that the community has done to date, in accordance with the strategies of the *Five Year Plan*, please see the community programs descriptions on page 15.

The *Five Year Plan* goes beyond the scope and breadth of the current funding sources; innovative thinking and community partnerships will be essential to its successful implementation.

## *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan Towards Ending Homelessness*



## Municipal Development Plan

Strategies from *EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Vision & Framework for Ending Homelessness* are also acknowledged in The City's 2008 Municipal Development Plan (MDP). The MDP lays out the guiding systems, policy frameworks, and local regulatory frameworks that are used to promote appropriate housing in Red Deer. Strategies within the MDP are largely driven by the issue of affordability, which represents a significant challenge, especially with the increasing cost of shelter.

At the provincial level, the overarching document that addresses housing and homeless is *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 Years (2009-2019)*. This plan sets out a series of actions aimed at shifting the efforts of homeless-serving agencies, communities, and the provincial government away from simply managing homelessness and toward ending homelessness. The Province has set a goal for the development of 11,000 new housing units in Alberta by 2012.

The federal government plan flows through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Proposals for federal funding through the HPS must identify long-term solutions to address homelessness and demonstrate how the community intends to continue these activities. The City of Red Deer acts as the financial steward for these funds. The current operating plan, which runs from 2007 to 2011, will be updated in 2010/ 2011. This federal funding has been vital in supporting diverse programs for homeless individuals, regardless of their age.

## Provincial & Federal Government Initiatives



# Ending homelessness in Red Deer

## Progress of the five year plan



*EveryOne's Home: Red Deer's Five Year Plan Towards Ending Homelessness* identifies four broad goals, 11 strategies, 31 action steps, and 16 targets. The plan has provided our community with a strategic focus to create real change. Eight months in, we are doing well as a community and are well on the way to meeting our targets.

### **Goal #1**

Red Deer has sufficient housing options to meet the diverse and changing needs of our community members.

### **Progress to date:**

- Additional housing units were created:
  - An 8-unit apartment building opened up for individuals with cognitive disabilities
  - Construction began on a 71-unit apartment building
  - Construction began on a 10-unit building for individuals fleeing domestic violence
- Red Deer Housing Authority currently administers 714 rent subsidies and additional subsidies will also be administered in 2010 through alternative funding.
- City Council approved changes to the Land Use Bylaw to allow secondary suites, and the new regulations around secondary suites have been extensively promoted on the City's website and through the print media.
- A rapid re-housing program has received funding and will begin operations; the program works with landlords and property managers to increase available housing options.
- The Youth Winter Inn operated throughout the winter of 2009/2010 and will operate again throughout 2010/2011, ensuring homeless youth have a safe place to go throughout the winter.
- Ongoing consultation with community stakeholders continues, as does work to determine the more specific housing needs in our community based on many factors, including economic and social indicators.





## **Goal #2**

Individuals and families in Red Deer have access to support services whose primary focus is on maintaining housing or finding permanent housing.

### **Progress to date:**

- A coordinated plan is being developed to ensure collaboration between institutional and community support services, so that stable housing options are available for all individuals who are discharged from the correctional system, the child welfare system, and health systems.
- Individuals who are staying in shelters are now quickly provided with housing that is appropriate for their circumstances, due to the work of the newly formed Red Deer Housing Team.

## **Goal #3**

Through awareness, healthy relationships, increased capacity and good communication, Red Deer will end homelessness.

### **Progress to date:**

- Starting in August, 2010, a “made in Red Deer” social marketing campaign will be launched to increase awareness about homelessness and addictions.
- Tune Ups, quarterly events for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness occurred.
- *On the Edge*, a street-level newsletter, has been produced five times and has received community funding to continue production.
- The Red Deer & District Community Foundation released the *Vital Signs* report in September, 2009, and the First Community Report on Housing and Homelessness in November, 2009.
- This document, *Report to the Community: Homelessness and Affordable Housing Initiatives 2008 – 2010*, presents a snapshot of all housing and homelessness work in the community, rather than limiting its reporting to programs that received federal or provincial funds administered by The City.
- Efforts are underway to develop alternative sources for funding the work required to end homelessness.

## **Goal #4**

Red Deer has effective and reliable data system for knowledge development on homelessness to support evidence-base decision making.

### **Progress to date:**

- Work has commenced on building a common database system that will be utilized by agencies that work with the homeless populations.

# The comfort we take for granted



When Daniel first moved to Central Alberta and took a position as a case manager for homeless individuals, his new job came as a surprise to many of his friends and family – they were shocked to learn there were homeless people in Red Deer. It was a stretch for them to imagine people in their community might wander the streets at night just to stay warm, or seek refuge in places not fit for a human.

Sitting face-to-face with Red Deer’s homeless was often a humbling experience for Daniel. Hearing the stories and learning about what they faced on a daily basis made it seem insurmountable to assist them to overcome the major challenges they faced – addictions, poor mental health, abuse, disgrace. The thought of housing – permanent housing – seemed impossible to consider. But housing would always emerge as the necessary first step to take in the sorting out of these chaotic lives.

When the opportunity did arrive for a homeless person to move into housing, Daniel saw how the new tenant would often accept this living arrangement with trepidation. The thought of having a private space, a key to their own apartment, and the opportunity to sleep in their own bed was overwhelming for some people who had been living on the streets. That realization led Daniel to reflect on his own material arrangement – a comfort he had often taken for granted.

Seeing clients move into homes are times of celebration. Daniel is reminded of the importance of the housing first approach when he sees his clients a couple of days later, after they’ve had a few nights sleep and a few meals; the problems and pain in their lives haven’t disappeared, but they know things are starting to change.

**“ The work of finding housing is difficult – the place, the finances, the furnishings, the ongoing support – but it’s never insurmountable. Not when you know that the desire of your client is to get off the street. ”**



# Home at last

Moe moved into his new home just before Christmas. For many people, a move such as this is a relatively common part of life. For Moe, however, finding permanent housing was a challenge because he has an addiction to crack cocaine and struggles with depression. The housing he found was an option for him because it employs a “housing first” strategy, which means Moe did not have to stop using in order to live in his new home.

This particular “housing first” program also offered 24/7 staff to support the residents. Moe settled into the home quickly; he connected well with staff and was very helpful around the house.

Moe often talked about how much he missed his children. He hadn’t had contact with any of his family for over 10 years. During his time living on the streets, his health had become poor; health issues often left him struggling to breathe and sleep. Even in his new home, Moe’s health continued to worsen.

Staff took Moe to the hospital where he was immediately put in Intensive Care and placed on a respirator. His organs were shutting down. The doctors didn’t think he would make it. Staff from the “housing first” program were at Moe’s side every day, and the condition of the man they had come to know and care about slowly improved.

While he was in hospital, staff were able to connect with Moe’s family, and his daughter came regularly to visit at the hospital.

Moe is back home again and is on a strict diabetic diet. He takes walks almost every day, and his daughter comes by to visit. His mother now calls him once a month to see how he is doing. He still chooses to use crack, but his usage has decreased greatly. Moe has a hope for his future and a place to call home.

**“ ... there is nothing more important than having a home. A home is more than just a place to sleep, it is a place to be with family and friends, to live in peace and safety. ”**

# Community programs & activities

## ***Community reports***

The Red Deer & District Community Foundation released a community report in November, 2009, resulting in increased awareness and media surrounding community agencies and their unique strengths and needs. *Vital Signs*, another community report by the Red Deer & District Community Foundation, is released annually in October and also has a focus on housing. Members of the Red Deer media do excellent work in bringing forward the issues and successes seen in the community.

## ***Convening and connecting***

Nurturing relationships and facilitating new partnerships has resulted in new projects being developed and ongoing improvements to the community's service delivery systems. For example, Rivercity Developments wanted to assist the community by building affordable housing. They connected with the Red Deer & District Community Foundation and, from there, were connected with partners and supported in making funding applications, resulting in the development of Eleanor's Place and Julietta's Place.

## ***Learning and networking opportunities***

- Tours of local support and housing programs have been made available, allowing various community leaders to see first-hand what the needs are in Red Deer and how the community is responding. These tours have had a profound impact on many of the participants and have resulted in real action being taken.
- The Red Deer Housing Committee continues to meet and share information.
- Local agency staff have been given assistance to attend conferences and courses to increase their skills and knowledge.

## ***"On the Edge" paper***

*On The Edge* is a street-based newspaper that receives administrative support from the Red Deer Native Friendship Society and the Central Alberta AIDS Network Society. The content is submitted by various agencies that want to share information on services or changes to services, or families who may be looking for a lost loved one. It also contains stories, poetry, and drawings that have been submitted by homeless and formerly homeless individuals.

## ***Plan development***

The community has worked to develop meaningful plans that can be translated into action, as seen in the plans cited at the beginning of this report. The following checklists show community actions, and the funding reports show community programs and successes that were designed for Red Deer, based on Red Deer information and feedback from local agencies, as well as local individuals who are or have been homeless.

## ***Secondary suites***

The City of Red Deer convened a working group consisting of numerous City departments and agencies to examine existing bylaws and regulations for secondary suites. Western Management Consultants were engaged to conduct a consultation process, review local, provincial, and national practices, and make recommendations for The City. In December, 2009, City Council gave third reading to the Land Use Bylaw relative to secondary suites.

## ***Social marketing campaign***

In 2009, a social marketing campaign was undertaken in Red Deer. The "We Care" campaign uses research that was conducted in downtown Red Deer and engages a variety of community agencies. The marketing will begin in the summer of 2010; its goal is to increase awareness around the issue of homelessness and to teach people ways they can show that they care.



# Community programs & activities *continued*

## ***“Tune-ups”***

Tune Ups are quarterly events hosted by the Central Alberta AIDS Network Society and planned by a committee of volunteers. These events provide four days per year where individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless can access a variety of services and supports in one location. Staff and volunteers from various agencies and government departments are on hand to answer questions and make referrals and connections. Other volunteers provide identification, hair cuts, clothing, and a variety of other items and services to assist and honour individuals and families in need.

## Goals of community programs & activities

Achieving goals from the five year plan

<b>Community programs &amp; activities</b>	<b>Goal #1</b> Red Deer has sufficient housing options to meet diverse and changing needs of our community members	<b>Goal #2</b> Individuals and families in Red Deer have access to support services whose primary focus is on maintaining housing or finding permanent housing	<b>Goal #3</b> Through awareness, healthy relationships, increased capacity and good communication, Red Deer will end homelessness	<b>Goal #4</b> Red Deer has effective and reliable data system for knowledge development on homelessness to support evidence-based decision making
Community reports			X	
Convening & connecting	X	X	X	
Learning & networking opportunities		X	X	
“On the Edge” paper			X	
Plan development	X	X	X	X
Secondary suites	X			
Social marketing campaign			X	
“Tune-ups”		X	X	

# Funded project descriptions

## ***Canadian Mental Health Association***

### **\*Outreach Workers Training – Concurrent Disorder Training**

**Results:** 12 participants from local agencies received the “Train the Trainer” program in concurrent disorders. “Concurrent disorder” describes individuals who experience both a mental illness and a substance abuse issue. The training covered assessment/treatment planning and intervention strategies.

**\*Buffalo “Housing First” Program:** A “housing first” project where sobriety is not a condition to accessing housing. The program is located in a 40-unit apartment complex in downtown Red Deer. The tenants are individuals who have lived on the streets and may have an addiction, mental illness, or other disability; they have had trouble finding and maintaining housing in the past. Tenants have access to staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Results (October 2007- March 31, 2010):** 20 individuals have maintained housing in the Buffalo for 28 months.

## ***Central Alberta Aids Network Society***

**\*Street Nurse Support:** To assist the Primary Care Network Nurse in engaging the street population with follow-ups, form completion, transportation to specialist appointments, and other supports to the nurse as needed. Harm reduction materials.

**Results:** The Street Nurse, which is funded through the Primary Care Network, was established as a legitimate source of support and help amongst the street population.

## ***Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing***

**\*Transitional/Supportive Housing:** Safe Harbour owns four houses. A housing staff member works closely with each tenant to build a personal case plan, and a housing facilitator lives in each housing unit to provide extra support to the tenants and to liaise with the housing staff.

**Results (April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2010):** 76 individuals who were from the street, the shelter, or “hidden homeless” retained their housing for at least three months.

**\*Harbour House:** A “housing first” project where sobriety is not a condition to accessing housing is located in a residential area. The clients have lived on the street for a period of time and, because of mental illness, addiction, or other disabilities, they are challenged to successful living in mainstream and/or independent community housing. Tenants of the eight units have access to staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Results:** Three of the original tenants have remained successfully housed for 24 months or longer. Due to the nature of the addictions, several tenants received “hospice” type service at the end of their lives.

## ***Central Alberta Women’s Outreach Society***

**\*I.D. Clinics:** Assist individuals who are homeless to access essential identification.

**Results:** 79 individuals received new government approved identification.

## ***Coordinated Community Outreach Team***

**\*Partnership between Central Alberta Women’s Outreach Society, Canadian Mental Health Association, Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society, and the Red Deer Native Friendship Society.** These four agencies work with individuals and families living on the streets and in shelters. Through case management, individuals are housed.

**Results (April 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009):** 152 individuals (including 29 Aboriginal persons) who were living on the street, a shelter, or “hidden homeless,” and who were assisted by the project into an appropriate form of housing, retained their housing for at least three months. Additionally, 151 people (including 38 Aboriginal people) who were at risk of homelessness retained their housing for at least three months.

## ***Family Services of Central Alberta***

**The Road Home:** This program began in January, 2010 and was enhanced by grant funding in May, 2010. The Road Home supports parents who are expecting and/or have children under the age of six and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

## ***Heritage Family Services Ltd.***

**Transitional housing - Meadowview road:** Temporary housing project that supported individuals new to Red Deer who were seeking employment.

**Results:** Completed January, 2009.

## ***Potter's Hands Ministries***

**\*Manager: Provision of Meals.** A manager was hired to coordinate the food donations and volunteers, and to plan and organize the meal services.

**Results (April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010):** 4,914 different individuals accessed meals through this program.

## ***Red Deer Housing Team***

A new program started on June 1, 2010 that modified the original Coordinated Community Outreach Team. The Red Deer Housing Team is made up of Central Alberta AIDS Network Society, Canadian Mental Health Association, Red Deer Native Friendship Society, Safe Harbour, and Women's Outreach. The program consists of five components: Assertive Housing Outreach Team, housing location services, intensive follow-up services, direct support to individuals/families, and service coordination.

## ***Red Deer Youth & Volunteer Centre***

**\*Youth Winter Inn:** A barrier-free night shelter program running from November 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010 for youth under the age of 18. Data was collected on the youth who accessed the program.

**Results (November 1, 2009 - April 30, 2010):** 49 different youth accessed the shelter.

## ***Schizophrenia Society of Alberta – Red Deer chapter***

**\*Community Support Worker:** Support of seven tenants in the Lovella Building, with affordability and access to 24-hour supports to maintain their housing.

**Results (April 1, 2008 - March 31, 2009):** All seven tenants remained stably housed

## ***Shining Mountains Living Community Services***

**\*Tawow:** Night and crises support workers for Aboriginal women within a residential home program. Provides housing stability for women coming from situations of violence or addictions.

**Results:** 39 Aboriginal women received support through in-house and outreach services with the Tawow program.

**\*Wicohkamawew:** Grants contributed partial funding to the Women's Residential Support Team. The program consisted of three components: cultural training, mentoring, and life skills.

**Results (September 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010):** 12 different Aboriginal women accessed the program.

## ***The City of Red Deer / The Province of Alberta***

**Efforts to Outcomes:** As of May 10, 2010, and in coordination with the Province of Alberta, a web-based database called Efforts to Outcomes is being implemented in the community with those agencies who are working with the homeless population.

**\* Would you like to learn more about these projects?**

**Visit [www.reddeer.ca/social\\_planning](http://www.reddeer.ca/social_planning) and view the detailed evaluation summaries.**

# Goals of funded projects

## Achieving goals from the five year plan

Funded projects	<i>Goal #1</i> Red Deer has sufficient housing options to meet diverse and changing needs of our community members	<i>Goal #2</i> Individuals and families in Red Deer have access to support services whose primary focus is on maintaining housing or finding permanent housing
Canadian Mental Health Association - Concurrent Disorder Facilitator Training		X
Canadian Mental Health Association - Buffalo "Housing First" Project	X	
Central Alberta Aids Network Society - Support for Street Nurse		
Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing - Harbour House	X	
Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing - Transitional Housing	X	X
Central Alberta Women's Outreach Society - I.D. Clinics		X
Coordinated Community Outreach Team		X
Family Services of Central Alberta - "The Road Home"		X
Heritage Family Services Ltd. - Transitional Housing 202, Meadowview Road	X	
Potter's Hands Ministries - Manager Provision of Meals		
Red Deer Housing Team		X
Red Deer Youth & Volunteer Centre - Youth Winter Inn		X
Schizophrenia Society of Alberta Community Support Worker		X
Shining Mountains Living Community Services - Wicohkamawew		X
The City is overseeing implementation of a database called Efforts to Outcomes (ETO)		



<b>Goal #3</b> Through awareness, healthy relationships, increased capacity and good communication, Red Deer will end homelessness	<b>Goal #4</b> Red Deer has effective and reliable data system for knowledge development on homelessness to support evidence-based decision making	<b>Start/end date</b>	<b>Amount of funding</b>
		2008-09	\$10,658
		2008-09 2009-10 2010-11	\$57,120 \$584,750 \$585,000
X		2008-09	\$70,000
		2008-09 2009-10 2010-11	\$320,930 \$342,402 \$434,418
		2008-09 2009-10 2010-11	\$120,000 \$145,000 \$153,340
		2008-09	\$9,150
		2008-09 2009-10 2010-11	\$242,444 \$242,444 \$242,924
		2010-11	\$41,216
		2008-09	\$113,010
X		2008-09 2009-10 2010-11	\$19,500 \$20,905 \$24,000
		2010-11	\$370,000
X		2009-10 2010-11	\$125,235 \$154,557
		2008-09	\$25,440
		2009-10 2010-11	\$96,510 \$44,642
	X	2010-11	\$13,252

# Capital project descriptions

## **Canadian Mental Health Association**

**Renovations to the Buffalo in 2009:** Entry way and staff office were modified. Purchase of commercial washers and dryers. Refrigerators and microwaves were purchased and installed in each unit.

## **Catholic Social Services**

**Eleanor’s Place:** An eight unit apartment building that offers an affordable housing option to individuals who have a disability and require some assistance in meeting their daily living needs. Opened in 2009.

## **Central Alberta Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing**

**Mortgage Payout:** A grant paid the remaining mortgage amount for a transitional housing unit. Completed in 2009.

**Harbour House:** Renovation to an existing washroom by converting it into a fully accessible washroom. New fixtures were also installed.

**Supported Housing:** Renovations on a current property – changing it to a multi-unit family dwelling.

## **Central Alberta Women’s Outreach Society**

**Julietta’s Place:** A 10-unit apartment building for women fleeing domestic violence situations. Affordable housing for approximately 18 months, which will enable the families to begin to heal and to secure resources for income and more permanent housing. This project is currently under construction.

***Affordable housing projects are eligible for grants if their rent or monthly payments are 10% or more below market value. In Red Deer, most affordable housing units are renting for at least 20% below market value.***

Core Need Income Thresholds (CNITs) help determine which households require affordable housing. Households with annual incomes equal to or less than CNIT are said to have insufficient income to afford suitable and adequate rental units in their area. CNITs are calculated annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs.

2010 Core Need Income Thresholds for Red Deer:

Bachelor suite	\$25,000
1 bedroom	\$30,500
2 bedroom	\$36,000
3 bedroom	\$47,000
4 bedroom	\$50,000
5+ bedroom	\$53,000

## ***Habitat for Humanity***

**Two homes:** A grant assisted with the costs in the building of two homes. Home owners contributed sweat equity. Habitat has first buyback option on the homes. Completed in 2009.

**Land purchase:** A grant is assisting Habitat for Humanity in purchasing lots for five new family dwellings. Still in process.

## ***Heritage Family Services Ltd.***

**Detached row houses:** 16 unit project in partnership with the Native Friendship Society; currently in the planning stage.

## ***Lovella Centre Society***

**Lovella:** Mortgage payment and renovations to Lovella, an 8 unit apartment building providing supported affordable housing for individuals with schizophrenia and other related mental illnesses. Project completed in 2009. Lovella Centre Society operates as a social enterprise supporting the Red Deer Chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Alberta.

## ***Potter's Hands Developments Ltd.***

**Offset Tax Grant:** Through a grant to offset the municipal taxes, 184 units of affordable housing were maintained with rents 25% or more below the current market rent market. Grant for 2009 year.

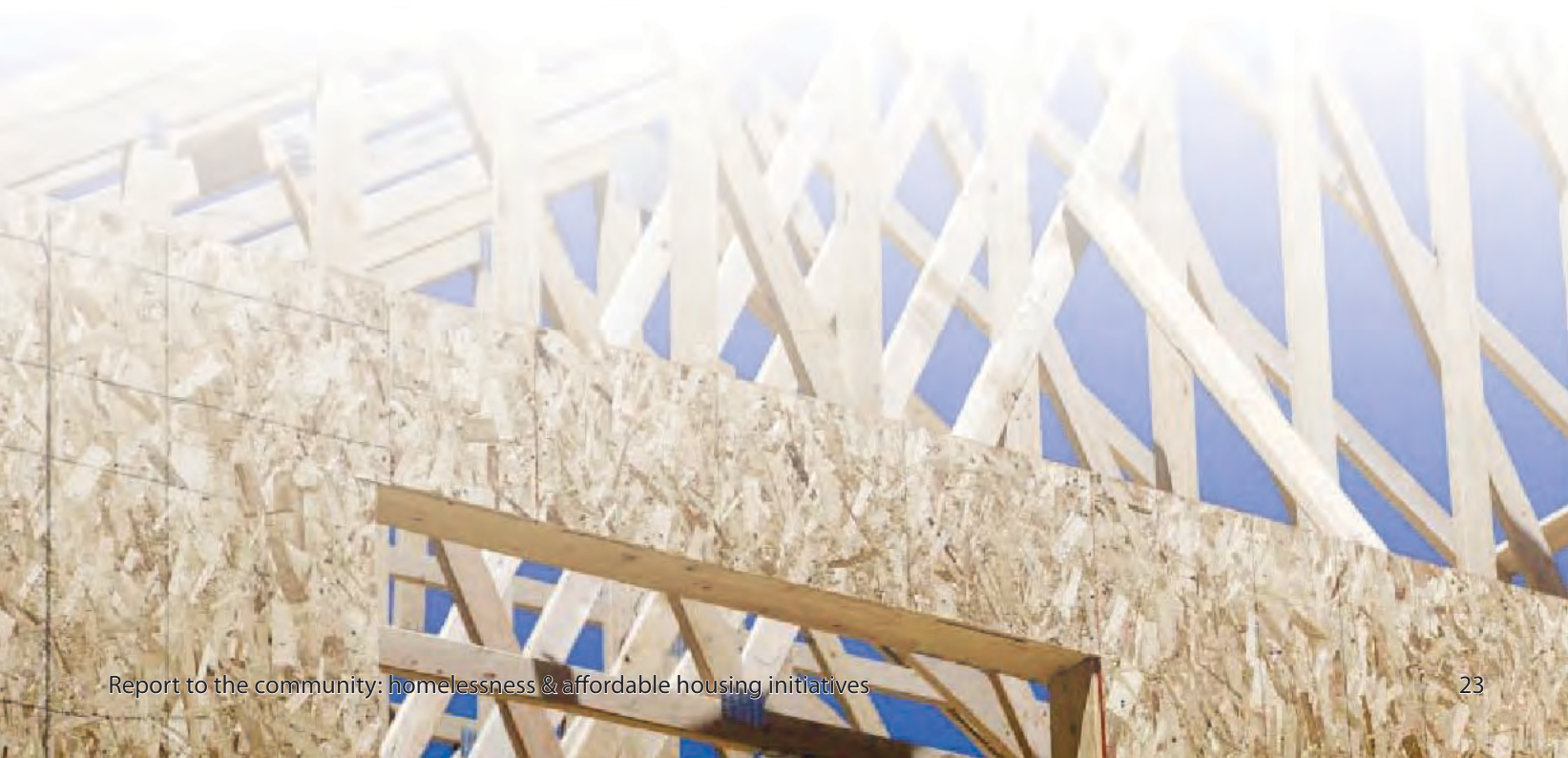
**The River Valley:** Renovations to an existing building in downtown Red Deer and the addition of a new wing to the same building have resulted in 71 new affordable housing units. Opening is scheduled for December 2010.



# Goals of capital projects

## Achieving goals from the five year plan

<b>Capital projects</b>	<b>Goal #1</b> Red Deer has sufficient housing options to meet diverse and changing needs of our community members	<b>Goal #2</b> Individuals and families in Red Deer have access to support services whose primary focus is on maintaining housing or finding permanent housing
Canadian Mental Health Association - Renovations to the Buffalo Housing Project	X	
Catholic Social Services - 8-plex	X	
Central Alberta's Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing - mortgage payout	X	
Central Alberta's Safe Harbour Society for Health & Housing - renovations	X	
Central Alberta Women's Outreach Society - 10-unit building	X	
Habitat for Humanity - 2 affordable homes	X	
Habitat for Humanity - land purchase	X	
Heritage Family Services Ltd. - detached row houses	X	
Lovella Centre Society - mortgage/renovations	X	
Potter's Hands Developments Ltd. - Offset Tax Grant	X	
Potter's Hands Developments Ltd. - The River Valley	X	





<b>Goal #3</b> Through awareness, healthy relationships, increased capacity and good communication, Red Deer will end homelessness	<b>Goal #4</b> Red Deer has effective and reliable data system for knowledge development on homelessness to support evidence-based decision making	<b>Start/end date</b>	<b>Amount of funding</b>
		2008-09	\$47,795
		2008-09	\$714,792
		2008-09	\$71,500
		2008-09 2009-10	\$10,000 \$60,000
		2009-10	\$1,050,997
		2008-09	\$231,000
		2008-10	\$500,000
		2008-10	\$2,007,305
		2008-09	\$246,706
		2008-09	\$84,800
		2007-10	\$5,202,750





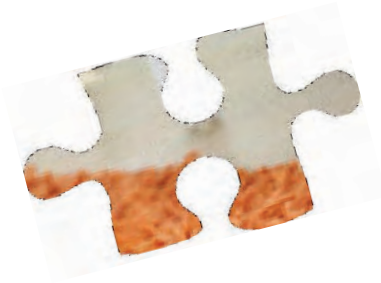
# More than just a roof

It was only a year ago that Nadine was living on the streets. Despite having a loving family and parents who wanted to help her, Nadine's path had spiralled downward as she began dealing drugs, using drugs, and, eventually, prostituting herself.

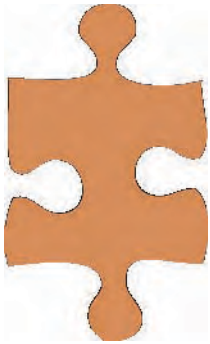
When she learned that she was pregnant with twins, Nadine knew her life had to change. Contact with local agencies led to the possibility of an apartment in an affordable housing complex. But Nadine was not considered an ideal tenant. Her situation, her lifestyle, and her friends prevented that.

Thankfully, the landlord gave Nadine a chance and, five months ago, she moved into a one-bedroom apartment. Once in her new home, she chose to make a fresh start – abiding by the rules, stopping her drug use, and making new friends in the building.

Now the mother of two healthy sons, Nadine has reconnected with her family and she's living in a two-bedroom unit in the same apartment block. Her lives and the lives of her sons have been dramatically changed. Now, they don't just have a random roof over their heads, they have an affordable, comfortable home where they can continue to grow as a family.



# Just starting out



John is a young musician who grew up in Central Alberta. After completing high school, John set out to find independence – he got his own place, found a job, and dedicated his free time to practicing and performing his music. Because he worked in the retail sector, John knew he would need to have a roommate in order to make ends meet. As with many roommate situations, things don't always work out; from time to time, John was left to scramble to find a new roommate, or scramble even more to pay the rent on his own.

Through his employer, John was able to get into an apartment located close to his work that had been designated as an affordable housing unit. In this new place, John was able to afford the rent on his own, commute to work without having to buy or maintain a vehicle, and dedicate more of his time to his passion...music. The affordable housing ensured that John was able to afford his payments, food, and utilities, and maintain his employment here in Red Deer.

**“ If you have to work two jobs to make ends meet, there’s no time left for friends, family or music – and those are the things that make life, and your low-paying job, worthwhile. ”**



## A bit of shine, a bit of dignity

Carl was using the shelter, or living on the streets when the shelter was full or the weather was warm enough. He met an outreach worker named Kevin, and was surprised when the guy sat and listened to him, seemed to understand Carl's story. What surprised Carl the most, though, was that the outreach worker took Carl as he was right then, his problems with drugs, his health issues, everything.

Kevin focused on finding Carl a place to live. He helped Carl talk to landlords, and even defended him when landlords didn't want a homeless man to move into their apartment. With the outreach worker's help, Carl filled out forms, got some ID, and got signed up for some income support. Then they found Carl a place to live and Kevin helped him get the money together for the first month's rent and damage deposit.

The place Carl was moving into wasn't furnished. He had nothing. Kevin helped him get a few pieces of furniture from an agency in town – nothing fancy, just a bed, a table, a couple of chairs. On moving day, the apartment was a mess. Kevin rolled up his sleeves and got down to work with Carl. He said they needed to give the place a bit of shine for Carl, a bit of dignity.

**“ It's sometimes hard for me to do those things by myself.  
It sure feels good to have a place to call my home again. ”**

***Building and sustaining healthy relationships is just one of the protective factors, or positive influences, that may help to prevent homelessness. Other protective factors include good interpersonal skills, being the primary tenant, and average cognitive skills. Access to health care, education, and financial support are also key to preventing homelessness.***

# Looking to the future

## Staying the course

The community of Red Deer will continue to address homelessness and to develop affordable housing units.

### ***A few of the 2010-2011 initiatives:***

- Heritage Family Services Ltd. will start construction on a 32-unit affordable housing project.
- Relationships with local landlords will be established, and the objective is to ensure that additional housing units will be available through the open market.
- The Red Deer Housing Team will evolve with its additional staff, who will focus their attention on connecting with the individuals who live on the streets and those individuals/families who need assistance moving from a shelter to a permanent home.
- An overall inventory of services related to the homeless population will be completed.
- A review of the outreach services will be completed.
- Youth will be sheltered through the Youth Winter Inn.
- The Road Home program will provide early intervention services to those families at risk of homelessness.
- Quarterly “tune-up” events will continue to take place.
- *On the Edge* will be published a minimum of four times each year.
- All funded housing and support programs will be using an integrated data management system.

**“ There is no situation that is not transformable. There is no person who is hopeless. There is no set of circumstances that cannot be turned about by human beings and their natural capacity for love of the deepest sort. ”**

*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

# Additional reading

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For more information on The City of Red Deer housing and homelessness initiatives, visit [www.reddeer.ab.ca/socialplanning](http://www.reddeer.ab.ca/socialplanning).