

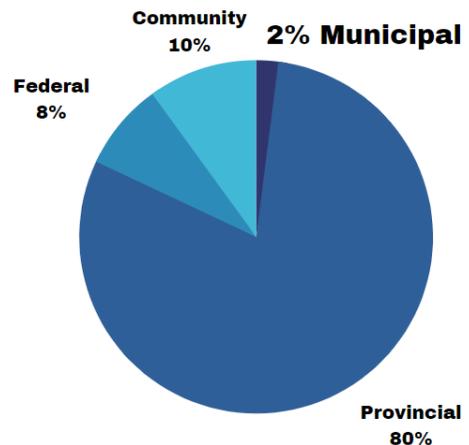
Roles and Responsibilities Relating to Solving Social Issues

Background

Every community across Canada struggles to address the ever-increasing challenges relating to social issues and community safety. In Lethbridge, social issues and community safety have become the leading concern by our citizens. Status quo is not an option.

The vast majority of the social problems/issues experienced by our community are not the mandate of the City of Lethbridge, rather the Government of Alberta (GoA) through various ministries such as Community and Social Services, Alberta Health, Mental Health and Addiction, Children's Services, Community and Social Services, Seniors and Housing amongst others.

Only a small percentage of the funding to address these issues comes from the City of Lethbridge (about 2%). The GoA provides about 80% of all funding, the Government of Canada (GoC) about 8% with other groups providing the rest. (faith groups, business and private contributions, foundations, etc.).



Though funding and responsibility to address social issues falls primarily on the federal and provincial government purview, when navigating the complaints and challenges of these issues when present in the community, it is often the City of Lethbridge that shoulders much of the blame. No one

organization or level of government can solve these problems alone. This is a community problem that requires a collective solution. All levels of government must come together with key community stakeholders, including the police, the education system, the faith community and service providers to identify the key actions required to achieve success. It is necessary to leverage and coordinate all available and relevant resources to generate collective impact.

When City Administration completed the [community social wellbeing needs assessment in 2019](#), extensive community engagement with all key stakeholders was completed and the message was loud and clear - **the City of Lethbridge needs to take a leadership role to facilitate, coordinate and convene** all key stakeholders to promote change within our community. This is our community and we can't expect the GoA or GoC to lead our local community.

Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy (CWSS)

The path forward - After 24 months of extensive data collection and analysis, and consultation with an array of stakeholders, the City of Lethbridge has created a plan–The Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy (CWSS). The foundation of the CWSS is on the coordination and integration of all relevant

resources to achieve community safety and social wellbeing. Bringing together key stakeholders to create collective impact. The **CWSS is rooted in four key concepts:**



- **Individual Wellbeing** – we must move towards a recovery-based system
- **System Planning and Integration** - We need purposeful system-wide planning to leverage, coordinate and integrate all available resources, programs and services
- **Collective Impact** - If we can do the above, we will achieve Collective Impact
- **Community Governance** - One organization alone cannot generate collective impact. You need the key organizations and players at the table. A collective of key decision makers to generate a common vision and agenda

Collective impact requires organizations - including those in government, civil society, and the business sector to come together to create a shared vision and common agenda. Shared outcome design and measurement. Coordinated and mutually reinforcing activities. For collective impact to be successful, it requires a “**Backbone Organization**” to act as the facilitator, convener, and coordinator of the movement.

What Role Does the City of Lethbridge Play in Addressing Social Issues?

Unlike many municipalities, the **City of Lethbridge does not deliver social programs own nor manage social/affordable housing**. Instead we have elected to play that backbone organizational role of convening, facilitating and coordinating for the social service community.

Community Social Development Mandate

CSD is responsible for working with key community stakeholders to act as backbone support for the coordination of diverse efforts to implement the Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy (CWSS) in Lethbridge. CSD acts as a convener, collaborator and catalyst for funding to establishing a streamlined and integrated system of care for the community of Lethbridge.



As the backbone organization it is the responsibility of the **Community Social Development (CSD) department** to perform some of the following duties:

- Convene diverse stakeholders to achieve collective impact
- Coordinate services to streamline access and impact
- Ensure capacity building and training to improve service quality
- Engage in research, development and innovation
- Gather Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) through information systems
- Ensure quality assurances through performance management
- Grant management duties for funding allocated through the City of Lethbridge
- Other duties, such as addressing emergent social issues, requests and complaints from council, administration, the community and service providers



While the GoA is primarily responsible for addressing social issues and its associated funding, there are many stakeholders and moving parts. Addressing complex social issues requires a collective impact approach from many key stakeholders.

- Government of Alberta
- Government of Canada
- City of Lethbridge
- Social Service Providers
- Other funding providers (faith groups, community groups/foundations, business community, etc.)

Conclusion

In order to work towards impactful results when dealing with our community's social challenges, it's easily recognized that there is no silver bullet solution. Having a better understanding of roles and responsibilities of all the parties' involved in our communities' social services will forge the path forward to being able to providing wellbeing for all of Lethbridge's citizens.

Social Issues Management

(ie. Establishing an Emergency Shelter)

Internal

- CSD**
 - Define the problem
 - Social Services Subject Matter Experts
 - Communication Liason
- Opportunity Lethbridge**
 - Land
 - Buildings
- Facilities**
 - Infrastructure (City of Lethbridge owned)
 - Identify renovation and maintenance required

- Legal**
 - Legal Agreements
 - License of occupancy
 - Legal guidance
 - Legal Advice
- Corporate Communications**
 - Communication Support
- City Clerk**
 - Request for Decision
- OPCI**
 - Project Charters

- Planning and Development**
 - Development Permits
 - Zoning
 - Building Permits
- Fire & EMS**
 - Fire Permits
 - Occupancy
 - State of Local Emergency

Council

- Decision Makers
- Provide direction to Administration
- Provides local funding
- Advocates to the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada

External

- Government of Alberta**
 - Service Provider Funder
 - \$215 M available for Emergency Shelters across Alberta
- Service Provider**
 - Alpha House - Emergency Shelter
 - Service Agreement Holder
 - Alpha House; answers to the provincial government
- Public**
 - Social Services Integration Group (SSIG)
 - Community committee that recommends locations and integration strategies for key social services

- Identifying Funding:**
 - Operations
 - Land/Building
 - Maintenance
 - Renovations
- Identifying Locations**
 - Not in My Backyard (NIMBY)
 - Zoning Requirements
 - High system costs when problems are ignored or reactive solutions employed

Opportunities

- Other**
 - Lack of formal internal/external processes connecting all stakeholders
 - Public outcry when community social crisis arise
 - Often employs immediate reactive solutions instead of long term solutions

This infographic is intended to highlight the roles and responsibilities of each party (internal City departments and external stakeholders) pertaining to identification of shelter requirements in the City of Lethbridge. Each role impacts the next, emphasizing the criticality of collaboration and communication throughout the process.

*See below an example of the roles and responsibilities for all parties involved when establishing a temporary shelter.

Example – Establishing a Temporary Emergency Shelter

Lethbridge has identified an immediate need for a temporary emergency shelter. Establishing this service may seem simple, but it is not. Summarized below are the many key players and the roles they play in establishing a temporary emergency shelter.

City of Lethbridge Administration

Community Social Development

- Define the problem - provide social service related knowledge, research, context, expertise, etc.
- Communication Liaison – connect with key stakeholder affected by the issue/need.
- CSD collaborates with the GoA and the shelter service provider (Alpha House) to define.
 - Why the need for additional space (COVID, inclement weather, inadequate current space, etc.)?
 - How much additional space is required?
 - Criteria for optimal type of building or facility.
 - Criteria for optimal location.
 - Specifications of what type of space and what amenities and services are required (showers, kitchen, isolation rooms, office space, medical space, etc.).
- Secure Funding—collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to secure required capital and operational funding

Opportunity Lethbridge

- Identify all building/facility options in the community that fit criteria defined by CSD. If required, Opportunity Lethbridge would connect with Alpha House to tour potential facilities.
- May provide options for bare land where portable buildings may be established (depending on time constraints).
- Generate a list of the top 3-5 facilities/locations for a temporary emergency shelter including details.

Facility Services

- If the facility/location is owned by the City of Lethbridge, Facility Services must assess the facility to define all costs and timeline necessary to get the facility operational. This often requires collaboration with the service provider to define what is a “must have” to operationalize the service.
- If the facility/location is not owned by the City of Lethbridge, a facility cost/timeline assessment must be done externally and is much more complicated.
- Renovation costs, timelines and facility ownership will be key factors in whether the facility can be used.

Planning and Design

- Only one facility in Lethbridge is directly zoned for a shelter - Lethbridge Shelter Resource Centre (LSRC). Any other facility or location in the community would require a Development Permit or be re-zoned.
- More often than not, a Building Permit will be required to complete renovations.
- Planning and Design will define all requirements, processes and timelines relating to development

and building permits, and zoning. Depending on the situation, this may include supporting community consultations and public hearings.

Shelters often house high acuity clients with various complex issues. Many of our vulnerable population retain cognitive disabilities including permanent brain damage, other medical issues such as HIV, heart disease, eyesight problems, physical disabilities, mental health issues, addiction and unaddressed criminal charges. As such, it is expected that any temporary shelter would inevitably require Fire/EMS, Lethbridge Police Service, or Regulatory Services support.

Fire and Emergency Services

- Building occupancy and fire code standards must be complied with, therefore Fire and Emergency Services must assess the facility to define these requirements prior to the facility being occupied.
- Fire and Emergency Services is also the lead department relating to calling a State of Local Emergency (SOLE). If Fire and Emergency Services enacts a SOLE, zoning and development permits requirements are temporarily paused while the SOLE is in effect.
- If a temporary emergency shelter is going to be established, inevitably there will be situations where Fire/EMS support will be called upon for a variety of medical emergencies.

Lethbridge Police Service and Regulatory Services

- Lethbridge Police Services and Regulatory Services should be engaged so they may develop strategies and secure any required resources necessary to address any municipal, provincial or federal statute violations.

Solicitor's Office

- Overall legal guidance and advice
- Interpretation of existing legal agreements or creation of any new agreements if required
- Liaison with external legal departments (GoA, service providers, 3rd parties, etc.)
- Support when enacting a SOLE

City Clerk's Office

- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter may require City Council to make key decisions relating to capital and operational funding, zoning and others. The City Clerk's Office plays a key role in processing and scheduling submissions to City Council.

Finance

- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter will require capital and operational funding. This could come from both internal and external sources and budgets.
- Ensuring adequate financial processes are in place is critical, particularly if numerous grants from multiple levels of government are involved.
- Administration and processing of grant funding agreements, reviewing & processing claim eligibility and ensuring all financial reporting requirements are completed and submitted on time requires firm support from various levels of the organization.

Corporate Communications

- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter may create community responses, both positively and negatively. Whether it is through the enactment of a SOLE, or a zoning application there will be some amount of concern within the community. This will require transparent and ongoing communication and engagement to ensure the community understand what, why, where, and who.

Corporate Communications plays a key role in creating and implementing a solid communication plan.

311 / Public Safety Communications Centre

- A temporary emergency shelter will generate more activity for the Police, Fire/EMS and Regulatory Services. This means increased calls for the Public Safety Communication Centre and the City of Lethbridge 311 service. Therefore, both services must be involved when establishing a temporary emergency shelter so they can effectively plan and prepare.

Project Lead

- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter not only has many internal moving parts, but as you read on, you will understand there are many external stakeholders and complexities to address. A project like this requires many internal and external collaborations, thus requires a director to lead the project. The Executive Leadership Team must make this decision, and for this situation, it would most likely be the Director of Community Services. The Project Lead would assign a Project Manager who would create and manage a Project Charter. The Office of Performance and Continuous Improvement is available to assist with creating a solid Project Charter.

External Stakeholders

Projects that require significant involvement from stakeholders external to the City of Lethbridge create many more layers of complexity. In establishing a temporary emergency shelter, external stakeholder engagement is crucial.

Government of Alberta (GoA), Ministry of Community and Social Services (CSS)

- It is the mandate of the Ministry of Community and Social Services (CSS) to fund and deliver homeless shelters. CSS contracts shelter operations to a service provider such as Alpha House in Lethbridge.
- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter requires strong collaboration between CSS, Alpha House and the City of Lethbridge to define:
 - Needs for additional space (COVID, inclement weather, inadequate current space, etc.)
 - Amount of additional space required
 - Criteria for optimal building or facility
 - Criteria for optimal location
 - Specifications of space, amenities and services required (showers, kitchen, isolation rooms, office space, medical space, etc.).
- CSS provides operational funding for shelters but often relies on the local municipalities to contribute to capital or renovation funding.

Social Service Providers

- As defined above, service providers play a key role in establishing a temporary emergency homeless shelter. They are the front line of delivering the services and must be involved in many levels, including selection of the facility and location, defining facility and operational needs, managing client movement, occupancy rates and activity between existing and temporary shelters. When shelter locations are far apart, this increases complexity. In addition, they are critical in defining operational budgets required to deliver the service. They are a key resource for all City of Lethbridge departments as they complete their work.
- When a temporary emergency shelter is required, for logistical reasons, it is often easiest to leverage

the existing shelter service provider to operate the temporary shelter. The existing service provider already has a service agreement with CSS, they know and understand the local homeless population; they have an established presence in the community, and can often expand services readily. Leveraging a different service provider to operate a temporary emergency shelter creates significant logistical complexities.

- Requires a new funding agreement with CSS
 - Requires a full suite of staffing to operationalize
 - Rarely have the required “hands on” knowledge of the local homeless population and their tendencies
 - May be a new service provider for the community
 - May requires significant collaboration with current service providers to manage the homeless clients; different policies, procedures, staff, etc.
 - Creates confusion within the homeless population
- Other social service providers also play a role in establishing a temporary emergency shelter. Outreach agencies provide a variety of services to support homeless clients with both basic needs (food, clothing, etc.) and emergency supports, such as overdose prevention. Knowing where and when to locate clients, allows them to more effectively connect and provide services. In addition, services such as the Diversion Outreach Team (DOT) play an important outreach and transportation role in connecting with clients.

Community/Public

- Approval, location and delivery of any social services is a contentious and polarizing issue, not only in Lethbridge, but across North America. It has generated community division and anger, and has resulted in the ultimate loss of essential programs and services for our community, because these services were not successfully located and therefore unable to deliver these vital programs and services. Establishing a temporary emergency shelter is an especially contentious issue. Most agree with and support the need, but when situated nearby, take the “not in my backyard (NIMBY)” stance.
- To address this issue, the City of Lethbridge has established a Social Service Integration Group (SSIG) whose primary mandate is to make recommendations for locating and integrating social services within the Lethbridge. SSIG employs a community-centered systems-view using the collective voice of the community. Each member brings diverse sector perspectives to contribute to the collective wisdom of the group. In doing so, they consider the relationship between specific social services to their immediate and local environments and promote equity, diversity and inclusivity while removing myths and clarifying facts and perceptions around social services and the clients who use these services.
- Establishing a temporary emergency shelter requires SSIG to come together and recommend a facility/location for this service.
- A temporary emergency shelter will generate community tension, regardless of where or how the facility/location is selected. In addition, because of the complexity of the clients, no operation is without problems or issues. Therefore, it is critical that all stakeholders including all departments within the City of Lethbridge, the GoA, and all service providers, work together to create a purposeful strategy to mitigate and address issues. Proactively preparing for potential problems and issues is important, and it requires extensive collaboration. Depending on the situation and location, this strategy could include many tactile actions.
 - Fencing
 - Perimeter cleaning
 - On-site perimeter security
 - Dedicated contacts for receiving and addressing complaints and concerns

- Outdoor bathroom facilities
- Transportation services

City Council

From an operational perspective, City Council is not the decision maker in establishing a temporary emergency shelter as the mandate for delivering homeless shelter services belongs to the GoA, however may have involvement and does have a voice. Homeless shelters of any kind are contentious, and ultimately, as the elected leaders for our community, they need to be aware and involved on many levels.

Zoning and Other Key Decisions

- If the facility/location is already zoned for shelter services, and the service provider has funding and adequate facility space, providing additional shelter capacity will not require a City Council decision. That is not the case in Lethbridge, therefore, key decisions relating to zoning will require City Council approval.
- If the facility is owned by the City of Lethbridge, it may require approval from City Council to allow the facility to be used as a homeless shelter.

Funding

- A temporary emergency shelter will require capital and operational dollars to establish shelter services. This may or may not require City Council approval, as it depends where the funding is coming from, for example the GoA. If funding cannot be secured, it may require a decision from City Council to approve funding.

Advocacy

- City Council plays a key advocacy role for securing funding for services that are the responsibility of other levels of government. If current sheltering services are inadequate and it is negatively affecting our community, our elected officials play a key role in advocating for adequate services. Their advocacy will play a powerful role in securing funding.

Direct City Administration

- City Council provides direction to City Administration. As defined above, establishing a temporary emergency shelter requires significant work, effort and coordination by many city departments. If City Council does not feel a temporary emergency shelter is required, ultimately they can direct City Administration to not allocate any time or resources towards the project. Even if City Administration does not agree, they must respectfully comply with the direction of City Council.

Communication

- Ongoing communication between City Administration and City Council is important. As Council members, they will receive direct calls from other government officials, the public, the business community and many other stakeholders. Current and correct information on all aspects of the process is necessary for all Council members to be equipped to answer the many questions that may be asked by the community. Depending on the situation, they may or may not be the decision maker, but they play a key role in communicating with stakeholders and the public.