

**Reaching Home:**  
**City of Lethbridge Community Plan**  
**2024–2028**

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## Introduction

In completing this template, communities are encouraged to develop comprehensive Community Plans that reflect the contributions of all funding partners, including other orders of governments, not-for-profit organizations, and the for-profit sector. The Community Plan does not preclude adjustments in priorities throughout the funding cycle; communities are still expected and encouraged to regularly review priorities for investment with their Community Advisory Board(s), including sub-project approval.

To support communities in completing their Community Plan, a Reference Guide has been developed. It is strongly recommended that this be reviewed prior to completing this template to ensure understanding of the requirements.

Please note that in communities that receive funding from both the Designated Communities (DC) and Indigenous Homelessness (IH) streams, ongoing and meaningful cross-stream collaboration is expected to support the achievement of community-level outcomes reflecting the needs of the whole community.

The Community Plan for Reaching Home must be approved by the DC or TH Community Advisory Board (CAB) before it is submitted to Infrastructure Canada.

Additionally, if your community has an Indigenous Homelessness (IH) Community Advisory Board (I-CAB), they must affirm that they have been engaged on the Community Plan before it is submitted. If your community is developing a joint plan with the IH stream Community Entity, both CABs must approve the community plan prior to submission.

In addition to the core elements required in this template, communities are welcome to share any other information and/or documents that they feel might provide further insight into their local context as it relates to housing and/or homelessness context.

## 1. Community Engagement

*As part of the community planning exercise, you must engage with community partners with the goal of understanding the needs of the local homelessness sector and identify local homelessness priorities using a coordinated, systems-based and data-driven approach.*

*Please describe the steps taken to engage your community partners in developing this Community Plan to ensure a community-based approach. Your response must include:*

- Which partners were engaged;*
- When and how engagement occurred; and*
- What aspects of the Community Plan were discussed, as well as what aspects of the Plan (i.e., decisions, outcomes, next steps) were influenced by these discussions.*

**Note:** *Meaningful collaboration with Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners and service providers, as well as the IH CE and I-CAB where applicable, is expected in the development of this Community Plan and must be explicitly referenced in this section. The Indigenous Partners in Your Community worksheet created for the Community Homelessness Report (CHR) may be helpful to complete this section. Please see [CHR: Reporting Tools e-course on the Homelessness Learning Hub](#).*

In 2023, under the direction of City Council, Lethbridge undertook various community engagement initiatives to update a comprehensive Needs Assessment which then informed updates to the Lethbridge Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy (CWSS) and Municipal Housing Strategy (MHS). These updated strategies incorporated research, data analysis, best practice reviews, and community and stakeholder engagement.

The CWSS serves as a critical framework, guiding the City of Lethbridge in fostering collaboration among stakeholders to improve community health, safety, and overall wellbeing. Originally adopted in 2019, the strategy has been comprehensively updated to address the current and evolving needs of Lethbridge. The revised strategy, covering the years 2024 to 2029, emphasizes proactive, preventative approaches to social challenges. It recognizes the interconnected nature of social issues and advocates for a holistic approach. The updated strategy is informed by extensive research, data analysis, and community engagement, identifying key directions and implementation tactics that encourage collaboration with community partners. It empowers stakeholders to create upstream solutions, understanding the complexity of challenges and the need for adaptable, community-driven initiatives. The CWSS is aligned with other municipal, provincial, and federal strategies and plans, building on previous efforts and refining strategic directions to meet the current needs of the community. It also considers macro factors such as changes in government leadership, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and global events like the conflict in Ukraine.

Key elements of the updated CWSS include:

- Establishing strategic foundations for effective collaboration between the City and its partners.
- Presenting findings from a comprehensive Needs Assessment to inform strategy development.
- Articulating refreshed strategic directions, goals, and actions to guide the CWSS implementation.
- Identifying measures of success to monitor progress and community impacts.

The strategy's update process included significant stakeholder and public engagement, such as:

- 1 workshop with City of Lethbridge Internal Departments.
- 4 workshops with key stakeholders in housing and wellbeing.
- 5 interviews with City Councillors.
- 6 focus groups with individuals who have lived and living experiences, including youth, seniors, people with developmental disabilities, residents of the Lethbridge Housing Authority, and immigrants/newcomers.

It's important to note that these engagement efforts build on previous outreach initiatives related to various housing and wellbeing projects undertaken by the City in recent years, including the Age Friendly Lethbridge Community Profile (2019), the Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy Annual Report (2020), the Municipal Housing Strategy Engagement Summary Report (2020), the Community Clean and Safe Strategy (2021), and the Point-in-Time (PiT) Count Report (2022).

An additional opportunity for engagement, the City of Lethbridge engaged a strategic advisory firm in November 2023 to help advance their community safety, well-being, and inclusion work in light of receipt of funding through the Government of Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF).

Through this project, the City sought to explore how new community-based initiatives could be implemented to prevent youth from participating in gun and gang activity. The City also aimed to examine how existing community safety and wellbeing-related plans could be updated to broaden their geographic reach and ensure they address recent community challenges. A key element of this work was a needs assessment focused on both general community safety and the experience of youth within the community specifically.

To inform the needs assessment, the firm conducted several research activities, including:

- Community Safety Survey (1,704 total responses);
- A Youth Needs Assessment Survey (52 responses);
- 11 interviews with cross-sectoral representatives;
- 1 focus group with community agencies;
- 1 focus group with school division representatives; and
- 2 Community Pop-Ups (i.e., informal in-person engagement opportunities).

A high-level summary of key themes from the stakeholder and community engagement were completed as a part of this project.

The City of Lethbridge in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association – Alberta South Region, held the first ever Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) Service Fair in October 2023 which demonstrated great success and was held again in 2024. The event's purpose is to enhance access to essential services within the community by bringing service providers together in one place, giving service sector organizations the opportunity to share resources, network and learn from one another, with the goal to support the community's most vulnerable populations. The Service Fair allows for ICA Partners to host short presentations on service updates, networking opportunities, and resource tables creating an environment conducive to collaboration. All participating agencies were encouraged to network and learn about each other, with the intention to further coordinate their frontline practices and referrals. Organizations were also encouraged to submit their program Referral Pathways for posting to the ICA website to ensure a live and comprehensive list of ICA partners and programs is

available. The 2024 Service Fair saw an increase in the number of attendees from 2023, maximizing the current venue space and a larger venue is being explored for the 2025 event. This signifies an increase in the number of ICA system partners and the success of the decentralized coordinated access model which was implemented in 2021. The also event supports regular engagement with stakeholders to identify needs and gaps outside of a formal needs assessment and is planned to continue in future years.

## 2. Investment Plan

2.1 In the table below, please identify your community's allocation of Reaching Home funding in the DC or TH and Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) streams from 2024-25 to 2027-28<sup>1</sup>.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total
<b>Reaching Home Annual Allocation</b>	\$1,532,586.00	\$1,532,586.00	\$1,577,731.00	\$1,577,731.00	\$6,220,634.00

2.2 In the table below, please outline your planned division of DC/TH and CCI Reaching Home funding from 2024-25 to 2027-28 by activity area. Please note that it is acceptable that your community's funding priorities change over time. This investment plan is to demonstrate that your community has a vision of moving forward for the allocation of Reaching Home funding.

Activities area	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Housing Services</b>	0%	10%	10%	10%
<b>Prevention and Shelter Diversion</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Client Support Services</b>	30%	50%	50%	50%
<b>Capital Investments</b>	5%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Coordination of Resources and Data Quality Improvement</b>	50%	25%	25%	25%
<b>Administration</b>	15%	15%	15%	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%

2.3 In the text box below, please describe how Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) funding will be used to support coordinated and data-driven service delivery (e.g., supporting

<sup>1</sup> Communities on two-year agreement extensions should report on investment plans for 2024-25 and 2025-26 at this time.

*Coordinated Access, the Outcomes-Based Approach and use of HIFIS or existing, equivalent Homeless Management Information System).*

The City of Lethbridge has been working collaboratively and effectively to build a decentralized Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) system. The work of our Integrated Coordinated Access System is done through consistent training of system navigators and population support navigators, and the development of tools and resources to support the system. The training offered to all system partners are based on service provider feedback and data collected by our system partners.

In March 2024, the City of Lethbridge was approved to implement HIFIS within our community. Since then, much of the focus has been working with our IT department to build and adapt the system to fit our community's needs. Moving forward, we will have a working system once the HIFIS environment is built. A large portion of 2025 will be training service providers to use HIFIS and gather feedback to improve the functionality of the system.

### 3. Cost-Matching Requirement

*3.1 In the table below, please outline all funding for homelessness initiatives expected to be received from other funders from 2024-25 to 2027-28<sup>2</sup>. This includes both financial and in-kind contributions.*

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total
<b>Reaching Home Annual Allocation</b>	\$1,532,586.00	\$1,532,586.00	\$1,577,731.00	\$1,577,731.00	\$6,220,634.00

<b>Projected Funding From Other Funders towards Homelessness Initiatives</b>					
<b>Program Name and Funder</b>	<b>2024-25 (\$)</b>	<b>2025-26 (\$)</b>	<b>2026-27 (\$)</b>	<b>2027-28 (\$)</b>	<b>Total (\$)</b>
<b>Family and Community Support Services</b>	\$3,256,792.35	\$3,256,792.35	TBD	TBD	\$ 6,513,584.70
<b>Building Safer Community Fund Grant</b>	\$665,618.10	\$380,353.20	-	-	\$ 1,045,971.30

<sup>2</sup> Communities on two-year agreement extensions should report on cost-matching for 2024-25 and 2025-26 at this time.

City of Lethbridge (Encampment)	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,00		\$ 1,500,000
City of Lethbridge (Outreach)	\$260,000	\$260,000	\$260,000	TBD	\$ 780,000
City of Lethbridge (Clean Sweep Program)	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	TBD	\$ 1,050,000
City of Lethbridge (Diversion Outreach Team)	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	TBD	\$ 1,200,000
City of Lethbridge (Downtown Safety Ed)	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000		\$ 48,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,444,410.45</b>	<b>\$5,049,083.20</b>	<b>\$1,522,000.00</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>\$12,137,556.60</b>

3.2 If your anticipated community contributions are not projected to match funding from Reaching Home for each year, please explain the circumstances below and include a description of the steps you will take to meet the requirement.

N/A

#### 4. Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)

4.1 Using your 2023-24 CHR as a guide<sup>3</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>4</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

<sup>3</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your Community Homelessness Report, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>4</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 4 at this time.



Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?	Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?
HIFIS MR 1	N/A	HIFIS MR 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIFIS MR 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	HIFIS MR 4	X

4.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 4.1), complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Please note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

<b>Minimum Requirement not yet met: HIFIS MR 2, HIFIS MR 3</b>	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion
Set up and implementation of HIFIS	April 2025

## 5. Coordinated Access

5.1 Using your 2023-24 CHR as a guide<sup>5</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>6</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?	Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?
CA MR 1	N/A	CA MR 10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 2	N/A	CA MR 11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 14	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 16	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 17	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CA MR 9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CA MR 18	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 5.1), complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

<b>Minimum requirement not yet met: CA MR 3</b>
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<sup>5</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your CHR, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>6</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 5 at this time.

What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion
Implementation of HIFIS	April 2025

*5.3 Describe how ongoing, meaningful collaboration on Coordinated Access between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners has or will take place as your community works to implement, maintain and improve a Coordinated Access system.*

It is evident that connection to the Blackfoot culture through the various subprojects promote the holistic wellbeing of participants, thereby enhancing their capacity to access other supports and acquire essential skills. Both the Blackfoot Resource Hub (BRH) and Priority Support Navigator (PSN) programs offer participants the opportunity to enhance their ability to navigate the complex system of care through cultural connection and access to culturally relevant resources. Through coordinated access, Indigenous-serving agencies also have the opportunity to engage and collaborate with other agencies. These programs offered by subproject holders enhance the lives of Canadians by providing the opportunity to learn about the Blackfoot culture and enhance organizational cultural competency, diffusing this knowledge into the broader community.

As stated by the Blackfoot Resource Hub: "We are making the Blackfoot Culture easily accessible, this creates understanding for community members (breaking negative stereo-types) and most importantly to the workers working with Indigenous people. The only way we help Indigenous people move towards living a healthy life in the city of Lethbridge is by educating the workers working with them and the community members living along side them. Indigenous clients have a safe space to attend, learn, build confidence and relationships."

BTDH - Shelter PSN: The PSN reports that participation at the Coordinated Access Round Table (CART) has been helpful in "shooting ideas off of other partners with the Navigator feels they have used all resources available" ... expressing "appreciation of our partners in the community who have been working diligently to support this population." Continued partnerships with ICA system partners coming to the Shelter to lead activities/presentations for guests has been positive. Additionally, the Navigator reported building new relationships with Home Care and Addictions & Mental Health ministries.

Another aspect that the DC and IH streams work together is with the Unique Identifier List Coordinator: A working group meets monthly to discuss the successes, challenges, and any data collection enhancements that the UIL Coordinator may consider. Collaborative efforts with other agencies are being made to increase the UIL's

comprehensiveness and rectify data sharing limitations. The partnerships developed through this Working Group are anticipated to be helpful in ensuring that HIFIS implementation - including the maintenance of a UIL moving forward - will be collaborative and successful.

**Blackfoot Resource Hub:** The BRH offers a Blackfoot Language Class, which they centered on this quarter. This is a partnership with the Galt Museum and Friendship Centre, Family Centre, and Alberta Health Services. This is an important partnership that offers knowledge of the Blackfoot language and culture to the community at large.

## 6. Outcomes-Based Approach

6.1 Using your 2023-24 Community Homelessness Report as a guide<sup>7</sup>, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024<sup>8</sup>. Any status updates since March 31, 2024, must also be reflected:

Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?	Minimum Requirement	Has the MR been met?
OBA MR 1	N/A	OBA MR 6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 2	N/A	OBA MR 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	OBA MR 8	<input type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	OBA MR 9	<input type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

6.2 For each minimum requirement that has not yet been met (as identified in 6.1), including those modified and new as of 2024-25, complete a table below to describe how you will meet it by March 31, 2026. Please note that confirmation that communities are on track to do this will be required by October 31, 2025.

Minimum Requirement not yet met: OBA 3, OBA 4, OBA 8, OBA 9	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion
A documented and formalized policy/protocol will be established in tandem with implementation of HIFIS.	May 1, 2025

<sup>7</sup> For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your Community Homelessness Report, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

<sup>8</sup> Communities with two-year agreement extensions are not required to complete section 6 at this time.

6.3 Please describe how ongoing and meaningful collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners has or will take place as your community works to meet the OBA minimum requirements. In communities where the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness streams co-exist, collaboration with the IH-CE and I-CAB (where applicable) is expected.

In our community, the Designated Communities and Indigenous Homelessness stream is hosted by the same CE. The CE has created an Advisory Board that has both community-at-large and Indigenous representation. All funding allocations are vetted and recommended by the Advisory Board. As stated in our CAB Terms of Reference:

- (a) A quorum of the CWAB shall consist simple majority of membership
- (b) **Any decisions/recommendations related to Reaching Home funding must also include at minimum two (2) Indigenous community representatives.**

Another aspect that the DC and IH streams work together is with the Unique Identifier List Coordinator: A working group meets monthly to discuss the successes, challenges, and any data collection enhancements that the UIL Coordinator may consider. Collaborative efforts with other agencies are being made to increase the UIL's comprehensiveness and rectify data sharing limitations. The partnerships developed through this Working Group are anticipated to be helpful in ensuring that HIFIS implementation - including the maintenance of a UIL moving forward - will be collaborative and successful.

## 7. Official Language Minority Communities

*The Government of Canada has a responsibility under the Official Languages Act to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). Please describe the steps that you will take to ensure that the services funded under Reaching Home take the needs of the OLMCs into consideration, where applicable.*

Recent data indicates that only approximately 0.5% of our population speak French as their primary language. Although this is not a significant percentage, the City of Lethbridge is committed to ensuring that we address the needs of homeless persons in both official languages.

It is our practice to contract an interpreter from Lethbridge Family Services for a French speaking individual and/or Blackfoot Resource Hub for translators when needed. We also have access to over 70 languages via the Language Bank at Immigrant Services Calgary.

We continue to monitor the demand for services in the official minority language on an ongoing basis to ensure the proper and adequate resources are in place to support the OLMCs.

## 8. Community Advisory Board—Designated Communities/Territorial Homelessness

**Note:** You may list more than one name/organization for each sector, and you may list a name/organization in more than one sector, as applicable.

Sector	CAB Members
Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)	Joseph Palasthy
Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)	Andrew Malcolm
Provincial/Territorial government (Ex-Officio Member)	TBD
Community-based organization representative (Ex-Officio Member)	Kayla Podaskry
Indigenous community representation	Elaine Creighton Fox
Indigenous community representation	Kelly Smith
Indigenous community representation	Robin Ryan Walker
Indigenous community representation	Melissa Shouting
Community at-large representation	Dr. Sharon Yanicki
Community at-large representation	Heather Oxman
Community at-large representation	Cheryl Patterson
Community at-large representation	Dr. Seth Adema
Community at-large representation	Anastassia Pavlova

**CAB Chairs or Co-Chairs (if applicable):**

I affirm that the above members of the CAB have reviewed the attached Community Plan, and that a majority of CAB members approve of its content.

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Name

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Signature

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Date (YYYY-MM-DD)



## 9. Community Advisory Board—Indigenous Homelessness

**Note:** You may list more than one name/organization for each sector, and you may list a name/organization in more than one sector, as applicable.

Sector	CAB Members
Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)	Joseph Palasthy
Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)	Andrew Malcolm
Provincial/Territorial government	
Local/Municipal government	
Indigenous community representation	Elaine Creighton Fox
Indigenous community representation	Kelly Smith
Indigenous community representation	Robin Ryan Walker
Indigenous community representation	Melissa Shouting
Community at-large representation	Dr. Sharon Yanicki
Community at-large representation	Heather Oxman
Community at-large representation	Cheryl Patterson
Community at-large representation	Dr. Seth Adema
Community at-large representation	Anastassia Pavlova

**Indigenous CAB Chairs or Co-Chairs (if applicable):**

☐ (If Community Plan is not a joint plan): I affirm that the above members of the Community Advisory Board have been engaged on the Coordinated Access and Outcomes-Based Approach sections of the attached Community Plan.

**OR**

☒ (If Community Plan is a joint plan): I affirm that the above members of the CAB have reviewed the attached Community Plan, and that a majority of CAB members approve of its content.

HEATHER OXMAN		2025-01-30
_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
ANDREW MALCOLM		2025-01-30
_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
_____ Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date (YYYY-MM-DD)