

The logo features a stylized graphic of a building with three vertical bars of increasing height on the left, followed by the word "TORONTO" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. To the right of "TORONTO" is the text "STAFF REPORT" in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the text.

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

June 20, 2006

To: Community Services Committee

From: General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration

Subject: 2006 Street Needs Assessment: Results and Key Findings

Purpose:

This report outlines the results and key findings of the April 19, 2006 Street Needs Assessment, which provide a better understanding of the service needs of individuals who were homeless on that night.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) City Council thank the 750 volunteers, 336 Team Leaders and City staff who participated in the Street Needs Assessment and made it a success;
- (2) City Council thank the Street Outreach Steering Committee for supporting the development and successful implementation of the Street Needs Assessment, and reaffirm the Committee's important role in the Toronto Streets to Homes Initiative;
- (3) the Street Needs Assessment report be immediately forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Federal Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board, the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, and the Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, with a request that federal funding for initiatives to end homelessness continue beyond their current end date of March 31, 2007 together with a request that a decision on the matter be made as soon as possible and no later than August 31, 2006;

- (4) the Street Needs Assessment report be immediately forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Provincial Minister of Finance, the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister of Health and Long-term Care, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing with a request that an ongoing sustainable source of funding be identified to provide the supports necessary to help people who were homeless and have found permanent housing to keep their housing, and that the report also be forwarded for information to the Chairs of the Toronto Local Health Integration Networks;
- (5) the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration consult on the results and findings from the Street Needs Assessment and engage community agencies, shelter providers, the Aboriginal community and federal and provincial departments in the development of improved services and strategies to address the needs identified;
- (6) the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, be requested to submit to Council, through the Community Services Committee, early in the new term of Council, an updated Streets to Homes plan which builds upon the Streets to Homes experience to date and responds to the service needs as identified in the Street Needs Assessment, such plan to include:
 - (i) progress made in addressing homelessness
 - (ii) improved services and strategies resulting from consultations with community agencies and federal and provincial departments as outlined in Recommendation 5
 - (iii) status of funding available from federal and provincial governments to help people who are homeless find and keep permanent housing
 - (iv) a schedule for future Street Needs Assessments including estimates of direct costs and sources of funding;
- (7) as one immediate response to the Street Needs Assessment, the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, review with shelter operators and community agencies the status of all housing applications to ensure that people who are homeless are on an appropriate waiting list for housing;
- (8) the next Street Needs Assessment take place in 2008, subject to funding availability; and
- (9) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

City Council, at its meeting of February 1, 2 and 3, 2005 approved the report "From the Streets into Homes: A Strategy to Assist Homeless Persons Find Permanent Housing". Recommendation 10 of that report reads, "to better focus ongoing outreach activities, the General Manager, Shelter, Housing and Support recommend to Council at its meeting on July 19, 2005, through the Community Services Committee, an appropriate method for determining

the number and service needs of homeless persons living on Toronto's streets and in its public spaces." City Council at its meeting of October 26, 27, 28 and 31, 2005, approved the report "Determining the Number and Service Needs of Homeless Persons Living on Toronto's Streets and in its Public Spaces: Follow-up Report", which outlined the approach that would be taken for the initiative. The approach outlined a series of principles to guide the initiative, and expanded the needs assessment to also include shelters and where possible correctional facilities, hospitals and treatment centres.

This report outlines the results and key findings of the Street Needs Assessment.

Comments:

1. Overview of Key Findings:

The Street Needs Assessment represents a collaboration between a wide range of individuals, community agencies, City Divisions and provincial ministries that has helped provide an up to date and comprehensive picture of homelessness in the City of Toronto. People who were homeless on the night of April 19th took the opportunity to have their voice heard directly and provided insights into their service needs.

It is clear from the Street Needs Assessment that people who are homeless want permanent housing and have indicated the services they need in order to obtain it. Helping people obtain and maintain permanent housing directly is the main thrust of the City's Streets to Homes program where over 700 individuals who are homeless have been housed directly from the street since January 2005. This is a major achievement. Other strategies under the Streets to Homes Initiative are also meeting with success. But the Street Needs Assessment indicates that collectively there are opportunities to do even better.

The following are the key findings of the Street Needs Assessment outlined in detail in the body of this report.

- (a) There were an estimated 5,052 individuals homeless in Toronto on April 19, 2006, comprised of 3,649 (72%) known to be in shelters, 818 (16%) estimated to be on the street, 275 (5%) known to be in health care or treatment facilities, 171 (3%) known to be in Violence Against Women Shelters, and 139 (3%) known to be in correctional facilities. (Note: this is a point-in-time study and excludes hidden homeless individuals, e.g., "couch surfers").
- (b) While the majority of homeless individuals outdoors were in the central core of the city, 30% were outside the central core.
- (c) Aboriginal people constituted 16% of all people surveyed. Amongst the outdoor population, Aboriginal people constituted 26% of the homeless population. Aboriginal people were homeless longer as well - on average 5.3 years compared to 3.1 years of non-Aboriginal people.

- (d) Almost 9 out of every 10 individuals surveyed – 1,691 people - want permanent housing.
- (e) The top five responses to what would help an individual find housing were:
 - (i) Help finding an affordable place
 - (ii) More money
 - (iii) Transportation to see apartments
 - (iv) Help with housing applications
 - (v) Help getting identification
- (f) Only 37% of individuals surveyed reported that they were on a waiting list for housing.
- (g) Individuals who were homeless the longest identified harm reduction programs, detox, alcohol/drug treatment, help with mental health and help addressing health needs as services that would help them find housing.
- (h) While people in corrections were the second highest group to identify a desire to have permanent housing (96%), they were the lowest group proportionally to be on a waiting list for housing (22%). Of all groups surveyed indoors, they were the group most likely to have slept outdoors one or more nights in the six months prior to their incarceration. Moreover, 18% of all individuals surveyed (excluding those surveyed while incarcerated) had had an interaction with corrections in the previous six months.
- (i) Drop-ins are the most frequently used service by homeless individuals.
- (j) There is considerable interaction between homeless individuals and health care systems: 51% had used a health clinic, 50% had used a hospital and 19% had used an ambulance in the last six months.
- (k) With the exception of the age group 61-65, the older an individual is, the longer they have been homeless.

2. Preparation for April 19, 2006:

Extensive research was conducted on approaches used in other jurisdictions in completing exercises similar to the Street Needs Assessment. On May 27, 2005, staff and representatives from the Street Outreach Steering Committee held an all day forum with representatives of New York City, Chicago, Edmonton and Vancouver on their approaches to designing and implementing similar initiatives. Staff also reviewed documents and/or held conversations with representatives from other jurisdictions including Philadelphia, Calgary, Kelowna, Victoria, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Bernardino County (California), Phoenix, Indianapolis, King County (Washington), Metro Nashville, and Atlanta.

Academic literature sources were also reviewed with a focus on methods, implementation and understanding results, including work conducted by the Government of Canada, and the US Government's Department of Housing and Urban Development. In addition, staff from the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division participated in the last preparations for

and implementation of the Homeless Outdoor Population Estimate in New York City on February 27, 2006, and met with key staff from the Department of Homeless Services and community-agency staff following the event. The Street Needs Assessment method for determining the number of homeless individuals is a replication of methods used in other jurisdictions, including New York City. However, Toronto's approach is more detailed than most other jurisdictions since questions were developed to better understand the service needs of individuals who are homeless.

Approaches to conducting the Street Needs Assessment, as gleaned from literature and the experience of other jurisdictions, was reviewed and improved upon by the Street Outreach Steering Committee (SOSC). The SOSC contains representation from street outreach providers, community-based health providers and researchers, drop-in providers, shelter providers, supportive housing providers, Toronto Community Housing Corporation, hospitals, mental health and addiction service providers, Business Improvement Areas, private sector landlords, and a service provider to offenders during and post-incarceration. The Committee also has representatives from the Toronto Police Service, Emergency Medical Services, Toronto Public Health, the Transportation Division, the Social Services Division, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, and, the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division. The SOSC was instrumental in developing the principles and approach that were approved by City Council in October 2005. The SOSC also helped in implementing the survey, including the development of the survey instrument that was used for the Street Needs Assessment.

The approach and proposed survey were further refined following consultation with the Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons, the Alternative Housing and Services Committee, the Aboriginal Affairs Committee, and discussions with the Ontario Association of Hostels. Through focus groups and pre-testing of the survey with homeless and formerly homeless persons, the survey was finalized.

3. Street Needs Assessment Implementation on April 19, 2006:

The Street Needs Assessment was conducted outdoors, in all homeless shelters, in a sample of Violence Against Women Shelters, in a sample of hospitals and treatment facilities, and in Toronto area correctional facilities. The initiative involved over 1,200 people including 750 volunteers, 336 Team Leaders, 49 individuals posing as decoys, 18 city staff on special teams, 53 city staff in Field Offices and 12 city staff in the Command Centre.

Prior to April 19, 2006, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration received a letter from the Violence Against Women (VAW) sector indicating that VAW shelters would not be participating in the needs assessment. The Shelter, Support and Housing Administration had wanted to find a way to include these shelters to adequately capture this aspect of women's homelessness. A small number of VAW shelters subsequently decided, however, that they wished to conduct the survey. While these shelters were included, the number of surveys completed is unfortunately not large enough to be representative.

Also, two days prior to the Street Needs Assessment, refugee and settlement houses expressed a desire to have the survey conducted with their homeless clients. An attempt was made to survey

these individuals. However, the number of surveys completed is not large enough to be representative.

Outdoor Survey:

For the outdoor survey, the City was divided into 422 possible study areas. A “study area” was a small group of city blocks. No study area was greater than two square kilometres. Based upon estimates of pedestrian traffic and other factors, study areas in the central core, particularly on major thoroughfares were designed to be slightly smaller in size. Of the 422 possible study areas, a total of 261 study areas (62%) were surveyed. These 261 study areas included a complete census in the central core of the city, from approximately the Humber River in the west to Pape Avenue in the east, from approximately Dupont in the north to Lake Ontario to the south for a total of 129 study areas. For areas outside of the central core of the city, and in advance of the Street Needs Assessment, street outreach providers, Transportation and Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff identified areas where homeless individuals were known to be living outdoors. Areas where four or more homeless individuals were known to be living outdoors were automatically included. This accounted for 23 study areas in the Community Council Districts of North York, Etobicoke and Scarborough. An additional 116 study areas were weighted and randomly selected from the area of the Toronto-East York Community Council District not included in the central core census, as well as from North York, Etobicoke and Scarborough. From a land area perspective, the outdoor survey areas covered 49.6% of the surface area of the City.

April 19, 2006 was conducive to surveying outside, with a mean temperature of 13 degrees Celsius and no precipitation.

All 261 outdoor study areas that were pre-selected for the Street Needs Assessment were surveyed during the evening by volunteers and Team Leaders. Team Leaders were individuals who had experience working with homeless and/or marginally housed individuals. When conducting the survey, if an individual appeared to be homeless but was unwilling or incapable of completing the survey, it was the Team Leader, based upon their experience, who made the determination to record the individual as being homeless. Volunteers did not need to have any previous experience and were always under the direction of a Team Leader. Areas that were pre-determined to be of higher risk (uneven terrain, poor lighting, etc.) were completed by teams of specially trained city staff. Areas that were not finished by volunteers and Team Leaders were also completed by special teams of city staff.

Volunteers and Team Leaders received training in one of 17 Field Offices strategically located near their study areas. Training lasted approximately one hour and consisted of a training video so as to ensure consistency across all sites, as well as hands-on training in conducting the survey by specially trained Field Office staff. The volunteers and Team Leaders conducted the outdoor study from approximately 8:30pm until midnight. Special teams finished up all areas by 3:30am on April 20. In addition, Special Teams conducted the survey in the Don Valley beginning at dawn on April 20.

Quality Assurance for the Outdoor Survey:

For quality assurance, there were 49 individuals posing as decoys positioned in various locations throughout the City. Because the outdoor component of the Street Needs Assessment was predicated on stopping everybody, regardless of their appearance, to make a determination of whether or not they were homeless, the use of decoys allowed for a measurement of whether study teams did, indeed, stop everybody as instructed, and also measure whether study teams completed their study areas in the prescribed manner.

Indoor Surveys:

66 shelter sites were surveyed. As with the outdoor surveyors, volunteers and Team Leaders received training at one of seven Field Offices strategically located near the shelters to which they were assigned. Training lasted approximately one hour and consisted of a training video to ensure consistency across all sites, as well as hands-on training in conducting the survey by specially trained Field Office staff. The volunteers and Team Leaders conducted the surveys in shelters from approximately 5:30pm until 9pm. In addition to the surveys conducted in shelters, the total number of people who stayed in shelters on April 19, 2006 was provided by Hostel Services.

The correctional facilities that were included were the Don Jail, Metro East Detention Centre, Metro West Detention Centre, Maplehurst and Vanier Centre for Women. The survey in corrections was not conducted by regular volunteers or Team Leaders. Instead, the survey was conducted by individuals who already had security clearance at the institution. Only incarcerated individuals who were classified as being from a Toronto Court with No Fixed Address on or before April 19, 2006 were provided the opportunity to participate in the survey. The total number of individuals from a Toronto Court with No Fixed Address on or before April 19, 2006 was provided by each institution.

Of hospitals and treatment facilities, all hospitals agreed to provide information on the number of homeless individuals staying in their institution on April 19, 2006 or visiting their emergency room department between 6pm and midnight. A number of hospitals and treatment centres agreed to conduct the survey which passed ethical review at each of these institutions. These were: Mount Sinai, St. Michael's Hospital, University Health Network and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. Salvation Army Homestead also completed the survey in their facility.

Safety Plan:

There was an extensive safety plan developed in partnership with Toronto Police Services, Emergency Medical Services and the Office of Emergency Management for the night of April 19, 2006. There was one call for ambulance assistance by a study team which was appropriately responded to and helped a homeless individual receive needed medical services. There were no other major incidents.

Costs:

\$90,000 was allocated for the direct costs of the Street Needs Assessment. This funding comes from the \$1.5 million Council approved to implement the Streets to Homes strategy from February 2005, and is entirely funded by the federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI). The funding for the Street Needs Assessment covered all project supplies, \$5 gift certificates for individuals who completed the survey, advertisements, honoraria for Team Leaders from community agencies, and other miscellaneous costs. The budget was not intended to cover staff time associated with the project. Like all major initiatives completed at the direction of City Council, City staff resources are required, particularly for initiatives implemented for the first time. Appendix A outlines the project expenditures.

It should be noted that gift certificates for individuals completing the survey, in a value of \$5 for fast food establishments, was implemented after consultation with homeless and formerly homeless individuals and service providers. The use of gift certificates allowed for improved auditing and better controls than utilizing cash. Each of the establishments, Tim Hortons, Country Style, McDonalds and Pizza Pizza have healthy alternatives on their menu.

Feedback from Volunteers and Team Leaders:

The implementation of the Street Needs Assessment would not have been possible without the assistance of the 750 volunteers and 336 Team Leaders who participated. At the end of the evening, volunteers and Team Leaders were provided a feedback form to rate various aspects of the Street Needs Assessment. Of the 750 volunteers, 418 (56%) completed a feedback form. Of the 336 Team Leaders, 249 (74%) completed a feedback form. The figures below provide a summary response.

Figure 1: Overall, How Would You Rate Your Experience

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Volunteers	35.4%	49.6%	13.6%	1.3%	0%
Team Leaders	39.4%	47.7%	12.0%	0.9%	0%

Figure 2: Overall, How Would You Rate the Organization of the Street Needs Assessment

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Volunteers	21.4%	42.4%	27.3%	7.2%	1.6%
Team Leaders	16.4%	41.8%	30.5%	7.3%	4.1%

Figure 3: Would You Participate in an Initiative like the Street Needs Assessment Again

	Yes	No	Maybe
Volunteers	83.9%	1.8%	14.2%
Team Leaders	86.4%	1.8%	11.8%

4. Limitations of the Street Needs Assessment:

There are unavoidable limitations to conducting a Street Needs Assessment of this nature, which must be noted to better understand the results. As noted in the proposed approach outlined in the report “Determining the Number and Service Needs of Homeless Persons Living on Toronto’s Streets and in its Public Spaces: Follow-up Report” approved by City Council at its meeting of October 26, 27, 28 and 31, 2005, the Street Needs Assessment occurred during one evening/night, in public spaces, and did not include “hidden homeless” individuals (e.g., “couch surfers”).

As this was a point-in-time (snap-shot) survey, if a homeless individual was encountered by a study team outdoors at a particular point in time when the study team was going down the street or park, then there was the possibility to be surveyed. However, if the homeless individual was not stationary, or arrived in the study area after the study team had gone through, then they would not be included in the survey.

Point in time also means that the survey captures only those people who were homeless on that night, and is not necessarily representative of the total number of people who may be homeless throughout the year. For example, in the course of a year 26,000 different people or more will use the shelter system; however, on any single night there will be approximately 3,700 different people using a shelter.

This was a survey of homeless individuals in public spaces, or who could be readily observed (e.g., camped out in an ATM vestibule). The Street Needs Assessment did not survey people on private property, such as homeless people in garages, in cars on private lots, or hidden behind private businesses.

The Street Needs Assessment, therefore, did not survey every homeless individual in Toronto on April 19, 2006.

5. Estimated Number of Homeless Individuals in Toronto:

On the night of April 19, 2006 it is estimated that there were a minimum of 5,052 people homeless in Toronto – excluding the hidden homeless (e.g., couch surfers). Figure 4 below demonstrates which percentage of the homeless population was in which location. Clearly, the shelter system plays an important role in accommodating the vast majority of homeless individuals.

Figure 4: Number of Homeless Individuals on the Night of April 19, 2006
Outdoors and By Type of Facility
(all numbers are actual except outdoor which is estimated)

Location	Number of Homeless Individuals	% Distribution
Outdoor	818	16.2
Shelters	3649	72.2
Violence Against Women Shelters	171	3.4
Health and Treatment Facilities	275	5.4
Corrections	139	2.8
TOTAL	5,052	100

(a) Homeless Individuals Outdoors by Community Council District

The table below (Figure 5) outlines the number of homeless individuals encountered in study areas by Community Council District. The Adjustment for Non-Sampled Areas adjusts the figure to address those study areas where the survey was not conducted. The Quality Assurance Adjustment adjusts the figure to address whether or not decoys were found (see Figure 6). The methods and assumptions have been reviewed by third-party experts in other jurisdictions and local survey methodologists, researchers and statisticians who confirmed the validity of the methods used.

Figure 5: Estimates of the Number of Homeless People Outdoors by
Community Council District

Community Council District	Total Number of Study Areas	Number of Study Areas Surveyed	Number of Homeless Individuals Encountered	Adjustment for Non-Sampled Areas	Quality Assurance Adjustment for Decoys not Identified	Final Estimate
Toronto-East York	141	129	489	9	77	575
North York	66	35	4	1	12	17
Etobicoke	128	54	55	53	54	162
Scarborough	87	43	18	19	27	64
All Community Council Districts	422	261	566	82	170	818

Even with the adjustments, there appears to be an anomaly with the estimate from the North York Community Council District. From the results of decoy identification (Figure 6 below), it appears that study teams may not have completed the survey in all areas of their study areas and, if so, did not inform their Field Office or Command Centre staff of this.

Figure 6: Decoy Identification

Community Council District	Total Decoys Deployed	Total Decoys Found	Total decoys not found	Decoy identification rate (%)
Toronto-East York	24	21	3	88
North York	13	7	6	54
Etobicoke	4	4	0	100
Scarborough	8	6	2	75
All Community Council Districts	49	38	11	78

(b) Homeless People Outdoors by Type of Location

Individuals outdoors were asked to describe the place they would be staying that night. Seventy-seven (77) per cent of individuals asked this question responded to the question.

Figure 7: Type of Location Outdoor Homeless Individuals Were Going to be Staying at on April 19, 2006

Type of Location	#	%
Sidewalk/Grate/Doorway	54	24.3
Ravine/Park	52	23.4
Don't Know	29	13.1
Under a Bridge	17	7.7
Other	14	6.3
Coffee Shop	12	5.4
Internet Café	10	4.5
Stairwell	7	3.2
Abandoned Building	7	3.2
Transit Shelter	6	2.7
Work/Office	4	1.8
Parking Garage	4	1.8
Laneway/Alley	3	1.4
Bathhouse	2	0.9
Car/Truck/Van	1	0.5
TOTAL	222	100

The category “Work/Office” was not one of the original choices on the survey, but appeared four times in the “Other” responses.

6. Results and Key Findings from the Street Needs Assessment:

(a) Survey Response Rate

The large number of surveys completed outdoors, in shelters, in correctional facilities and in health and treatment facilities provides a strong level of confidence in the results. It also demonstrates that homeless individuals wanted to participate in the survey and have a direct voice in identifying their needs.

Figure 8: Response Rate by Population Surveyed

Location	Number of Homeless Individuals Encountered Outdoors or In a Facility on April 19, 2006	Number of Surveys Completed	% of Surveys Completed of Homeless Individuals Encountered Outdoors or in a Facility
Outdoor	566	288	51
Shelters	3649	1476	40
Health and Treatment Facilities	275	128	47
Corrections	139	74	53
TOTAL	4629	1966	43

Information provided by volunteer and Team Leader feedback forms and shelter providers would seem to indicate that the response rate in shelters could have been higher had more time been allocated to conducting the survey in those facilities.

(b) Age and Self-identified Gender

Figure 9 outlines the age ranges of the homeless population on April 19, 2006. (Note, for families only the age of the head of household is represented in the table.)

Figure 9: Age Range of Homeless Population on April 19, 2006

Location	Under 21		21 to 30		31 to 40		41 to 50		51 to 60		61 to 65		Over 65		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	25	9.4	68	25.6	69	25.9	76	28.6	19	7.1	5	1.9	4	1.5	92.3
All Shelters	121	8.8	290	21.0	317	23.0	372	27.0	212	15.4	43	3.1	23	1.7	93.3
Corrections	2	2.8	17	23.9	27	38.0	22	31.0	3	4.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	95.9
Health and Treatment	2	1.8	40	36.0	29	26.1	25	22.5	11	9.9	2	1.8	2	1.8	86.7
All Survey Respondents	150	8.2	415	22.7	442	24.2	495	27.1	245	13.4	50	2.7	29	1.6	92.9

Proportionally, the information on age demonstrates that the outdoor homeless population is primarily 50 years of age or younger, when compared to the distribution of age of all survey respondents.

Figure 10: Average Age of Homeless Individuals on April 19, 2006

Location	Average Age
Outdoor	37
Family Shelters	35
Youth Shelters	20
Mixed Adult Shelters	41
Men's Shelters	44
Women's Shelters	42
All Shelters	39
Corrections	36
Health and Treatment	37
All Survey Respondents	38

The average age of a male surveyed was 39 years old, for a female it was 36 years old.

Figure 11, below, outlines the gender of the homeless population on April 19, 2006. Note that gender is self-identified, and the question on the survey was specifically worded to capture self-identity of gender. As such, there were 12 people who identified as female in men's shelters, and 13 people who identified as male in women's shelters.

Figure 11: Self-identified Gender of Homeless Population on April 19, 2006

Location	Male		Female		Transgender		Transexual		Other		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	231	81.6	50	17.7	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	98.3
All Shelters	1038	70.3	424	28.7	4	0.3	3	0.2	3	0.2	99.7
Corrections	68	93.2	5	6.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	98.6
Health and Treatment	85	66.9	39	30.7	0	0.0	2	1.6	1	0.8	99.2
All Survey Respondents	1422	72.7	518	26.4	6	0.3	5	0.3	4	0.2	99.4

Males comprised 72.7 % of the homeless population. Proportionally, this was higher amongst the outdoor population where 81.6 % of the population identified as male, and in corrections where 93.2% of the population identified as male.

(c) Length of Homelessness

As noted in Figure 12, below, individuals outdoors had been homeless the longest at the time of being surveyed. Across all groups surveyed, 42% had been homeless for 2 or more years.

Figure 12: Length of Homelessness

Location	Average Number of Years Homeless	Question Response Rate (%)
Outdoor	6.0	77.4
Family Shelters	0.6	99.0
Youth Shelters	1.2	95.7
Mixed Adult Shelters	3.8	96.0
Men's Shelters	4.1	97.2
Women's Shelters	2.1	91.2
All Shelters	3.0	96.2
Corrections	4.5	89.2
Health and Treatment	4.2	82.0
All Survey Respondents	3.4	92.2

In addition, an examination of age also presents interesting findings related to homelessness (Figure 13). For example, while an individual under 21 years old had been homeless, on average, 1.2 years, an individual over the age of 65 had been homeless, on average, 12.0 years. With the exception of the age group 61-65, the older an individual is, the longer they have been homeless.

Figure 13: Length of Homelessness and Age

Age Range of Survey Respondent	Average Number of Years Homeless
< 21	1.2
21 to 30	2.4
31 to 40	2.9
41 to 50	4.1
51 to 60	5.0
61 to 65	3.7
>65	12.0

(d) Many People Who Are Homeless Move Between Indoor and Outdoor Environments

The survey results demonstrate that many people who are homeless move between indoor and outdoor environments. Of individuals surveyed outdoors, 53.9% had used an Out of the Cold bed at least once in the past six months and 58.1% had stayed in a shelter at least once in the past six months. As demonstrated in Figure 14 below, a number of people surveyed indoors had stayed outside one or more nights in the last six months. This was particularly true of people in correctional facilities, prior to their incarceration. (Note: People staying in family shelters may be couples without children.)

Figure 14: Individuals Surveyed Indoors Who Had Slept Outside One or More Nights in the Last Six Months

Location	#	%	Question Response Rate
Family Shelter	25	13.2	98.4
Youth Shelter	64	35.0	98.9
Mixed Adult Shelter	91	46.7	98.0
Men's Shelter	288	42.9	98.1
Women's Shelter	50	24.9	93.1
All Shelters	518	36.0	97.6
Corrections	65	87.8	100.0
Health and Treatment	43	35.5	94.5
All Indoor Survey Respondent	626	38.3	97.4

While there is overlap between the sheltered and outdoor population, there are also variations in service use patterns. Proportionally, a larger number of individuals outdoors had used detox, drop-ins, harm reduction programs, Out of the Cold Beds and Out of the Cold Meals than those in shelters. Those in shelters, however, were more likely to have used Employment/Job Training services in the past six months.

Figure 15: Service Use Patterns of Surveyed Outdoor and Sheltered Populations

Location	Detox		Drop-ins		Employment/ Job Training		Harm Reduction Programs		Out of the Cold Beds		Out of the Cold Meals		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	51	23.5	162	74.7	38	17.5	61	28.1	117	53.9	138	63.6	75.3
All Shelters	216	16.0	791	58.6	364	27.0	226	16.8	347	25.7	486	36.0	91.5
All Survey Respondents	330	19.0	1041	60.0	424	24.4	317	18.3	531	30.6	704	40.6	88.3

There are other differences between the outdoor and sheltered population. Outdoors, males present proportionally higher than in shelters (81.6% male outdoors compared with 70.5% in shelters) and the reverse is true of females (28.9% female in shelters compared with 17.7% outdoors). By way of age, the most obvious difference is amongst individuals 50 years of age and older which proportionally accounts for 21.2% of the sheltered population compared to 12.2% of the outdoor population.

The survey also provided an overview of the outdoor population generally. Seventy (70) per cent of homeless individuals outdoors were alone at the time of the survey; 18.1% were with one other adult, and 11.9% were with more than one other adult. Pets were present outdoors 4.9% of the time.

(e) Overwhelmingly, Homeless People Want to Live in Permanent Housing

Approximately 9 out of every 10 individuals who are homeless wants to live in permanent housing.

Figure 16: Whether an Individual Wants Permanent Housing

Location	Yes		No		Don't Know		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	235	85.8	27	9.9	12	4.4	95.1
Family Shelters	183	96.8	3	1.6	3	1.6	98.4
Youth Shelters	156	86.2	16	8.8	9	5.0	97.8
Mixed Adult Shelters	174	87.9	20	10.1	4	2.0	99.5
Men's Shelters	567	83.9	89	13.2	20	3.0	98.8
Women's Shelters	194	90.7	13	6.1	7	3.3	99.5
All Shelters	1274	86.4	141	9.6	43	2.9	98.8
Corrections	69	95.8	2	2.8	1	1.4	97.3
Health and Treatment	113	90.4	9	7.2	3	2.4	97.7
All Survey Respondents	1691	86.0	179	9.1	59	3.1	98.3

While there are small variations when examining the desire for housing by gender, age, Aboriginal status and length of homelessness, the wish to have permanent housing remains strong. Individuals living outdoors who were 50 years of age or older were the least likely to want permanent housing, but even then, 74% of them wanted housing.

Individuals who indicated they did not want housing or did not know if they wanted housing were asked why. Of the 155 individuals who provided an answer, their reasons were classified into the categories outlined in Figure 17:

Figure 17: Reasons Provided for Why Individuals Did Not Want Housing

Reason Provided for Not Wanting Housing	#	%
Prefers being homeless	26	16.9
If they wanted housing they'd look for it on their own	22	14.3
Wants to move out of Toronto	21	13.6
Doesn't like social housing	12	7.8
Travelling (only in Toronto for a temporary period)	10	6.5
Health problems	10	6.5
Want more money and a job before looking for housing	9	5.8
Not ready for housing	8	5.2
Other barriers (domestic issues, legal issues, age)	8	5.2
Likes to stay outside in good weather	4	2.6
Doesn't like the process of applying for housing	3	2.0
Only wants interim housing (supportive, transitional) but can't get it	3	2.0
The waiting list for housing is too long	2	1.3
Trying to save money by being homeless	2	1.3
Placed in their current location from hospital or police	2	1.3
Believes they are ineligible for housing	1	0.7
Other	12	7.8
Total	155	100

When people were asked what would help them find housing, the answers most frequently provided were: Help Finding Affordable Housing (84.5% of respondents); More Money (84.4%); Help with Transportation to View Apartments (70.3%); Help Completing Housing Applications (62.5%); and Help Obtaining Identification (41.8%).

Figure 18: What Would Help Find Housing

Location	Help Finding Affordable Housing		Help completing housing applications		Help Obtaining Identification		More Money		Transportation to View Apartments		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	187	84.2	120	54.1	101	45.5	189	85.1	161	72.5	77.1
Family Shelters	173	92.0	144	76.6	81	43.1	168	89.4	149	79.3	97.9
Youth Shelters	162	89.0	134	73.6	86	47.3	167	91.8	145	79.7	98.4
Mixed Adult Shelters	160	85.1	111	59.0	87	46.3	167	88.8	137	72.9	94.5
Men's Shelters	572	86.4	417	63.0	278	42.0	583	88.1	470	71.0	96.8
Women's Shelters	176	89.8	120	61.2	70	35.7	176	89.8	141	71.9	91.2
All Shelters	1243	87.8	926	65.4	602	42.5	1261	89.1	1042	73.6	96
Corrections	66	90.4	57	78.1	43	58.9	56	76.7	54	74.0	98.6
Health and Treatment	101	87.8	79	68.7	45	39.1	90	78.3	73	63.5	89.8
All Survey Respondents	1597	84.5	1182	62.5	791	41.8	1596	84.4	1330	70.3	92.9

There are obvious links between these identified needs, with the first two the most likely in tandem – individuals either need to find accommodation they can afford on their current income; more income to afford accommodation that currently exists; or a combination thereof.

The need for transportation to view apartments also cannot be overstated. In the outdoor population, for example, outreach providers must divide their time between bringing people to view apartments and responding to new clients. Even if an individual does want housing, there are limits to the amount of housing they can view in a day. Making transportation more available to homeless people, whether by TTC or van, could expand opportunities to find the right housing faster.

Obtaining help completing applications is likely indicative of two issues. The first is the complicated nature of some housing applications which ask for lots of information, often in sophisticated language. The second pertains to literacy and numeracy, which affects the ability of some individuals to actually complete a form of this nature.

The need for help in getting identification should be looked at in conjunction with service use patterns, as identification clinics were also one of the most frequently used services.

Despite a strong desire to have permanent housing, most individuals surveyed reported that they were not on a waiting list for housing.

Figure 19: Whether the Individual is on a Housing Waiting List

Location	Yes		No		Don't Know		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	83	29.7	191	68.5	5	1.8	96.9
Family Shelters	110	57.3	73	38.0	9	3.2	100.0
Youth Shelters	52	28.3	129	70.1	3	1.6	99.5
Mixed Adult Shelters	83	41.7	114	57.3	2	1.0	100.0
Men's Shelters	227	33.2	443	64.9	13	1.9	99.9
Women's Shelters	100	46.5	106	49.3	9	4.2	100.0
All Shelters	572	38.8	865	58.6	36	2.4	99.9
Corrections	16	21.9	53	72.6	4	5.5	98.6
Health and Treatment	43	34.4	69	55.2	13	10.4	97.7
All Survey Respondents	714	36.6	1178	60.4	58	3.0	99.2

Of those who are on a waiting list, individuals living outdoors had been on the list the longest (on average 2.9 years) and were also the group that was the least likely to be checking on the status of their application (on average every 275 days).

The low rate of being on the waiting list points to a need to reinforce with homeless clients the importance of being on a waiting list and checking the status of the application regularly as a long-term housing solution. This should be built into the regular business practice of all homeless service providers. Homeless individuals are one of the priority groups given access to social housing and many have been housed. A number of individuals are also on waiting lists for alternative housing providers, transitional housing providers, supportive housing providers, and private landlords, which are all waiting lists separate from the centralized waiting list for social housing operated by Housing Connections.

Given the importance of this finding, as one immediate response to the Street Needs Assessment, it is recommended that the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, review with shelter operators and community agencies the status of all housing applications to ensure that people who are homeless are on an appropriate waiting list for housing.

Figure 20: Which Housing Waiting List People were On

Location	Housing Connections		Other		Don't Know	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Outdoor	33	40.7	30	37.0	18	22.0
Family Shelters	72	66.1	18	16.5	19	17.4
Youth Shelters	25	49.0	16	31.4	10	19.6
Mixed Adult Shelters	44	53.7	32	39.0	6	7.3
Men's Shelters	102	45.7	72	32.3	49	22.0
Women's Shelters	56	57.1	27	27.6	15	15.3
All Shelters	299	32.8	165	18.1	99	10.9
Corrections	6	42.9	4	28.6	4	28.6
Health and Treatment	20	51.3	7	17.9	12	30.8
All Survey Respondents	358	51.4	206	29.6	133	19.1

(f) Service Usage

A three-part question on the survey asked individuals which services they had used in the past six months, whether any of those services were helping them get housing, and if any of those services were helping them get housing, when they planned to move into housing.

Drop-ins were the most frequently used service (60%), followed by Health Clinics (51.1%), Hospitals (50.9%), Identification Clinics (49.8%) and Out of the Cold Meals (40.6%).

Figure 21: Most Frequently Used Services in the Past Six Months

Location	Drop-ins		Health Clinics		Hospitals		ID Clinics		Out of the Cold Meals		Question Response Rate
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	162	74.7	116	53.5	103	47.5	97	44.7	138	63.6	75.3
Family Shelters	27	16.4	104	63.0	82	49.7	72	43.6	13	7.9	85.9
Youth Shelters	106	60.9	101	58.0	62	35.6	105	60.3	34	19.5	94.1
Mixed Adult Shelters	143	73.7	97	50.0	108	55.7	113	58.2	106	54.6	97.5
Men's Shelters	421	66.4	299	47.2	334	52.7	329	51.9	293	46.2	92.7
Women's Shelters	94	51.6	102	56.0	107	58.8	67	36.8	40	22.0	84.7
All Shelters	791	58.6	703	52.1	693	51.4	686	50.9	486	36.0	91.5
Corrections	47	71.2	28	42.4	24	36.4	32	48.5	45	68.2	89.2
Health and Treatment	41	39.8	40	38.8	63	61.2	50	48.1	35	34.0	80.5
All Survey Respondents	1041	60.0	887	51.1	883	50.9	865	49.8	704	40.6	88.3

The reliance on drop-ins is an important finding, and will be further explored in the current review of the drop-in sector to be conducted by the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division.

The high use of health clinics and hospitals points to the complex health needs of homeless individuals. It also points to the need of improved coordination between Ministry of Health and Long-term Care funded homeless services, and those funded by the City, and to the need for discussions with the Local Health Integration Networks in Toronto about matters related to health needs and use of health services by homeless individuals.

The use of identification clinics ties into other service usage patterns, as identification can be critically important in accessing housing, obtaining benefits, obtaining employment and receiving appropriate health services. Proportionally, the use of these clinics is highest amongst those in youth shelters.

Of the 1,789 survey respondents who indicated they had used one or more services in the past six months, 975 of these respondents (54.5%) indicated that at least one of these services was helping them get housing. On average, each respondent was engaged with at least 5 services to help get housing, with individuals on the street engaged with the most services (at least 6) to help get housing. It should be noted that this is not necessarily an indication of duplication, as many of these services provide a unique service necessary in the housing process. The services that were most frequently helping people get housing were shelters (45%), housing help centres (27.3%), drop-in centres (26.8%), and, street outreach services (13.2%).

In total, 30.7% of individuals surveyed who had a housing plan indicated they were moving into housing in one month or less; however, the majority of people surveyed either did not have a housing plan or else did not know when they expected to move into housing.

(g) The Aboriginal Homeless Population

The survey asked individuals if they identified themselves as Aboriginal. In total, 16.2% of individuals identified themselves as Aboriginal, with 69.1% of these identifying themselves as First Nation, 23% identifying as Metis, 3.6% identifying as Inuit, and 4.3% identifying as Other. While the Aboriginal population accounted for 16.2% of the total population surveyed, the proportion of individuals identifying as Aboriginal was greater in the outdoor population where 26% of individuals identified themselves as Aboriginal.

Figure 22: Individuals Who Identified as Aboriginal

Location	Self-Identified as Aboriginal		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	
Outdoor	72	25.8	96.9
Family Shelters	11	5.9	96.9
Youth Shelters	36	19.5	100.0
Mixed Adult Shelters	37	19.1	97.5
Men's Shelters	107	15.7	99.7
Women's Shelters	30	14.3	97.2
All Shelters	221	15.2	98.7
Corrections	5	7.0	95.9
Health and Treatment	14	13.1	93.8
All Survey Respondents	312	16.2	98.0

Aboriginal people identified as being homeless longer than non-Aboriginal people. The average length of homelessness of an Aboriginal person surveyed was 5.3 years compared to an average of 3.1 years for non-Aboriginal persons. Whereas 39.9% of the non-Aboriginal homeless population identified that they had been homeless for two or more years, 54.4% of Aboriginal people identified that they had been homeless for two years or more. Fourteen (14) % of all Aboriginal people who were homeless had been homeless for more than 10 years, compared to 7% of non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal individuals had used about 6 services per person on average in the last six months, compared to about 5 services per person used on average for non-Aboriginal people. Of all services, drop-ins were the service most frequently used by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. However, while 57% of the non-Aboriginal population had used a drop-in within the past six months, 71% of Aboriginal people had used a drop-in.

Aboriginal people also comprise a large portion of all service users of some services. For example, Aboriginal people accounted for 24% of all users of harm reduction programs, 23% of

all users of Street Helpline, 24% of all users of Out of the Cold meals, 21% of all legal clinic users and 20% of all employment/job training program users.

When asked what would help find housing, the top five responses from Aboriginal people surveyed were the same as non-Aboriginal people surveyed – help finding affordable accommodation, more money, transportation to view apartments, help completing housing applications and help obtaining identification. However, 39.9% of Aboriginal people surveyed noted that cultural supports were needed to help them find housing – this was the sixth highest response from Aboriginal people questioned on what would help find housing. Proportionally, cultural supports were not cited as frequently by the non-Aboriginal people surveyed.

(h) Homelessness and Correctional Facilities

The questionnaire asked all individuals about their interactions with corrections over the past six months. For individuals in correctional facilities, the survey asked about their service usage prior to incarceration.

Of all survey respondents, other than those in a correctional facility, 18% indicated they had had an interaction with corrections. Also, 17% indicated they had had an interaction with probation or parole.

When examining the population within a correctional facility, it also becomes clear that this is a population that uses a lot of services, stays outside frequently and is not getting sufficient help to find housing.

Figure 23: Whether Individuals Surveyed Indoors Had Spent One or More Nights Sleeping Outside in the Past Six Months

Location	#	%	Question Response Rate (%)
All Shelters	518	36.1	97.6
Corrections	65	87.8	100.0
Health and Treatment	43	35.5	94.5
All Survey Respondents	626	38.5	97.4

Note: Individuals in corrections were asked if they had slept outside one or more nights in the six months prior to their incarceration.

Proportionally, services used by individuals in correctional facilities in the six months preceding their incarceration were much higher than all individuals surveyed, with the greatest variation outlined in Figure 24 below.

Figure 24: Proportional Use of Services, Corrections Compared to All Survey Respondents

	Detox	Drop-ins	Out of the Cold Beds	Out of the Cold Meals	Outreach Vans	Foodbank/Community Kitchen	Question Response Rate (%)
Corrections	31.8	71.2	59.1	68.2	48.5	51.5	89.2
All Survey Respondents	19.0	60.0	30.6	40.6	38.7	40.1	88.3

While people in corrections were proportionally higher in the use of some services, as noted in Figure 24 above, they were lower in other services. Of particular note is employment/job training services. While 24.4% of all survey respondents had engaged with employment/job training services in the past six months, individuals in corrections were the lowest proportionally to have done so, 9.1%.

Of all groups surveyed, individuals in corrections were the second highest group to identify a desire to have permanent housing (95.8% which is second only to family shelters with 96.8%); however, individuals in corrections were the lowest group proportionally to be on a waiting list for housing (21.9%).

(i) Use of Health and Emergency Services

Across all groups surveyed (with the exception of those in corrections) 37.1% had an interaction with police services in the past six months. Proportionally, homeless individuals who were younger were more likely to have had an interaction.

Across all groups surveyed, there was strong evidence of interaction with various health care services, and a strong indication that meeting health care needs is important in order to achieve housing.

Of all survey respondents, 18.5% had an interaction with an ambulance at least once in the past six months. Use of health clinics and hospitals was also high, with 51.1% having used a health clinic and 50.9% having used a hospital in the last six months.

Figure 25 below outlines the proportion of each group that indicated help with a health-based or treatment related service would help them achieve housing.

Figure 25: Health and Treatment Related Services that Would Help Individuals Achieve Housing

Location	Access to drug/ alcohol treatment		Access to detox		Access to harm reduction programs		Help with health needs		Help with mental health		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	50	22.5	45	20.3	50	22.5	86	38.7	61	27.5	77.1
Family Shelters	8	4.3	6	3.2	7	3.7	80	42.6	28	14.9	97.9
Youth Shelters	26	14.3	17	9.3	20	11.0	50	27.5	45	24.7	98.4
Mixed Adult Shelters	37	19.7	29	15.4	35	18.6	74	39.4	47	25.0	94.5
Men's Shelters	166	25.1	113	17.1	103	15.6	243	36.7	171	25.8	96.8
Women's Shelters	30	15.3	18	9.2	29	14.8	98	50.0	65	33.2	91.2
All Shelters	267	18.9	183	12.9	194	13.7	545	38.5	356	25.1	96
Corrections	32	43.8	19	26.0	6	8.2	23	31.5	22	30.1	98.6
Health and Treatment	40	34.8	26	22.6	18	15.7	48	41.7	63	54.8	89.8
All Survey Respondents	389	20.6	273	14.4	268	14.2	702	37.1	502	26.5	92.9

(j) Income

In addition to formal government funded income sources such as Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Ontario Works (OW), Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) and Street Allowance, as noted in Figure 26, three other income sources emerged from the survey as proportionally high. Income from family and/or friends was particularly higher for youth and individuals living outdoors. Panhandling was a source of income for 57.2% of the outdoor population surveyed. Almost a quarter of all homeless individuals surveyed were engaged in formal or informal employment.

Figure 26: Select Income Sources of Survey Respondents

Location	Employment		Family/Friends		ODSP		OW		Pan-handling		PNA		Street Allowance		Question Response Rate (%)
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Outdoor	48	23.1	45	21.6	33	15.9	56	26.9	119	57.2	18	8.7	62	29.8	72.2
Family Shelters	28	15.1	17	9.1	10	5.4	29	15.6	5	2.7	135	72.6	13	7.0	96.9
Youth Shelters	69	38.8	55	30.9	19	10.7	33	18.5	16	9.0	125	70.2	12	6.7	96.2
Mixed Adult Shelters	39	23.2	22	13.1	42	25.0	39	23.2	24	14.3	49	29.2	27	16.1	84.4
Single Men Shelters	177	27.4	119	18.4	160	24.8	141	21.9	82	12.7	268	41.6	56	8.7	94.3
Single Women Shelters	23	11.9	20	10.4	57	29.5	21	10.9	19	9.8	92	47.7	2	1.0	89.4
All Shelters	336	24.5	233	17.0	288	21.0	263	19.2	146	10.7	669	48.8	110	8.0	92.8
Corrections	11	16.2	11	16.2	5	7.4	32	47.1	25	36.8	16	23.5	16	23.5	91.9
Health	15	12.7	17	14.4	57	48.3	26	22.0	17	14.4	17	14.4	3	2.5	92.2
All Survey Respondents	410	23.2	306	17.3	383	21.7	377	21.4	307	17.4	720	40.8	191	10.8	89.7

(k) Length of Homelessness Impacts Service Usage and Desire to Find Housing

The results of the survey indicate that the longer an individual has been homeless, the less likely they are to be interested in permanent housing. The average length of homelessness of a person who wants permanent housing is 3.2 years. The average length of homelessness of a person who does not want housing is 5.5 years.

There are also findings related to the average length of homelessness and the types of services used and types of services needed to help find housing. People who are homeless longer rely more on services that assist with addictions, health and mental health, as well as Out of the Cold programs.

Figure 27: Length of Homelessness and Service Usage

Services Used in Last Six Months	Average Number of Years Homeless of Service User
Shelters	5.2
Harm Reduction Program	5.0
Out of the Cold Beds	5.0
Detox	4.7
Out of the Cold Meals	4.7
Street Outreach Vans	4.2
Drop-ins	4.1
Street Helpline	4.1
ID Clinic	3.7
Hospital	3.6
Foodbank	3.6
Legal Clinics	3.5
Health Clinics	3.4
Housing Help Centres	3.0
Other	2.8
Employment/Job Training	2.7

Figure 28: Length of Homelessness and What Would Help Find Housing

Services Needed to Help Find Housing	Average Number of Years Homeless
Access to harm reduction programs	4.5
Access to detox	4.3
Access to alcohol/drug treatment	4.1
Help with mental health	3.7
Help with health needs	3.6
Identification	3.4
Help completing housing applications	3.2
More Money	3.1
Transportation to apartments	3.1
Finding Affordable Housing	3.1
Cultural supports	3.1
Other	3.0
Help with legal issues	2.7
Services in languages other than English	2.4
Help with immigration issues	2.2

7. Strengthening Partnerships and Next Steps:

The Street Needs Assessment represents a collaboration between a wide range of individuals, community agencies, City Divisions and provincial ministries that has helped provide an up to date and comprehensive picture of homelessness in the City of Toronto. People who were homeless on the night of April 19th took the opportunity to have their voice heard directly and provided insights into their service needs.

Volunteers from across the city and Team Leaders from over 120 different community agencies came together to help implement the survey. It is recommended that City Council thank the 750 volunteers, 336 Team Leaders and city staff who participated in the Street Needs Assessment and made it a success.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services worked hard to ensure that people who are homeless and in correctional facilities were included in the survey in a manner that enabled comparison with people who are homeless in shelters and outdoors.

Major hospitals and treatment facilities including St. Michael's Hospital, University Health Network, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Mount Sinai and Salvation Army Homestead participated to ensure that the service needs of people who were homeless and in their facilities on the night of the survey were included.

The Street Outreach Steering Committee, comprised of a broad range of community agencies and City Divisions, met numerous times in the 12 months prior to the survey to ensure that the Street Needs Assessment was executed in a way that reflected the five principles approved by City Council for the survey.

The Aboriginal Affairs Committee of the City of Toronto supported the Street Needs Assessment and recommended a question on Aboriginal status be included.

The Ministry of Health and Long-term Care was supportive of the initiative. The Ontario Association of Hostels also supported the initiative.

The Toronto Police Service, Emergency Medical Services and the Office of Emergency Management provided much needed support in preparing a safety plan for the Street Needs Assessment and helping to ensure the safety of everyone on the night of the survey.

The development and implementation of the Street Needs Assessment represents a "coming together" of a wide range of individuals and groups to ensure its success and there is much to build on.

In terms of next steps, there is opportunity to build on the broad partnerships developed as part of the Street Needs Assessment. As part of this, the Street Outreach Steering Committee has recommended the need for dialogue and discussion of the results and key findings of the Street Needs Assessment in order to identify service improvements and challenges. Accordingly, it is recommended that the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration consult

on the results and key findings from the Street Needs Assessment and engage community agencies, shelter providers, the Aboriginal community and federal and provincial departments in the development of improved services and strategies to address the needs identified.

It is clear from the Street Needs Assessment that people who are homeless want permanent housing and have indicated the services they need in order to obtain it. Helping people obtain and maintain permanent housing directly is the main thrust of the City's Streets to Homes program where over 700 individuals who are homeless have been housed directly from the street since January 2005. This is a major achievement. Other strategies under the Streets to Homes Initiative are also meeting with success. But the Street Needs Assessment indicates that collectively there are opportunities to do even better.

For example, only 37% of homeless people surveyed indicated they are on a waiting list for housing. Forty-two (42) % of all homeless people surveyed had been homeless for two or more years. Youth under the age of 21 have already been homeless for more than one year. Aboriginal people are disproportionately represented amongst the homeless population both outdoors and in shelters. There are, therefore, opportunities to build on the work of the Streets to Homes Initiative to date. Accordingly, it is recommended that the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration be requested to submit to Council, through the Community Services Committee, early in the new term of Council, an updated Streets to Homes plan which builds upon the Streets to Homes experience to date and responds to the service needs as identified in the Street Needs Assessment. As an immediate response to the Street Needs Assessment, it is recommended that the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration immediately review the status of all housing applications with shelter operators and community agencies to ensure that people who are homeless are on an appropriate waiting list for housing.

Given the success of the Street Needs Assessment, the Street Outreach Steering Committee is recommending that it be done again, but not annually, and staff support this recommendation. Accordingly, it is recommended that the next Street Needs Assessment take place in 2008, subject to funding availability and that the General Manager, as part of the updated Streets to Homes plan, include a schedule for future Street Needs Assessments including estimates of direct costs and source of funding.

Funding:

People who are homeless want permanent housing. They also require services in order for them to obtain it. Once housed, many will need supports in order to remain housed. This is borne out of the experience of the Streets to Homes Initiative. With the exception of supportive and some alternative housing, there is currently no sustainable source of funding for supports to people once they are housed. This is a critical gap in funding which, if not addressed, will limit the ability to help people stay housed. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Street Needs Assessment be immediately forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Provincial Minister of Finance, the Minister of Health and Long-term Care, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister of Community and Social Services and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, with a request that an ongoing sustainable source of funding be identified to provide the supports

necessary to help people who are homeless and have found permanent housing to keep their housing.

Toronto's Streets to Homes program is currently funded primarily by the federal government through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative. Related initiatives are also funded by the same program including pre-employment, training and help with identification. The program is scheduled to end by March 31, 2007 and the federal government has not yet indicated its intentions with respect to this program. It is therefore recommended that the Street Needs Assessment report be immediately forwarded to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Federal Minister of Finance, the President of the Treasury Board, the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and the Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, with a request that federal funding for initiatives to end homelessness continue beyond their current end date of March 31, 2007 together with a request that a decision on the matter be made as soon as possible and no later than August 31, 2006.

Conclusions:

The Street Needs Assessment was implemented on April 19, 2006. The results and key findings will assist in developing improved programs and services to work towards ending street homelessness. Building upon the partnerships developed in the course of the needs assessment, and working with other orders of government, a plan will be presented to the new term of Council responding to the service needs identified in the Street Needs Assessment.

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List of Attachments:

Appendix A: Street Needs Assessment Expenditures

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Street Needs Assessment Expenditures	
Project Supplies (e.g., clipboards, name tags, flashlights, first aid kits, pens, etc.)	\$ 2,797.18
Honoraria for Team Leaders and Decoys	\$ 35,400.00
Advertising and Recruitment	\$ 4,535.51
Field Office Space Rental	\$ 552.50
Meeting Expenses	\$ 781.15
Gift Certificates	\$ 30,000.00
Outreach Services	\$ 1,937.68
Printing	\$ 7,281.04
TTC	\$ 3,720.00
TOTAL	\$ 87,005.06
Street Needs Assessment Donations	
Global Hospitality - Project Hope	\$ 1,000.00
Chartwell Inc.	\$ 500.00
35 St. Dennis Apartments	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,500.00
Expenses less Donations	\$ 84,505.06

Unused gift certificates and TTC tickets purchased for the Street Needs Assessment will be reallocated to other programs.

In addition to the direct costs noted above, \$4,366.63 was spent on the travel of four City staff to New York City to participate in the last stages of preparation and implementation of the Homeless Outdoor Population Estimate on February 27, 2006, for an average cost of \$1,091.66 per person.

Both the Street Needs Assessment expenditures and the staff travel to New York City were funded by the federal Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative.