



Encampments as Catalysts

Innovative Partnerships and Accelerated Housing Solutions

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Ending **Homelessness** in Edmonton

Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledges our place here on Treaty 6 Territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of many First Nation, Métis and Inuit people. We acknowledge the diverse Indigenous Peoples of this land which include the Cree, Blackfoot, Dene, Iroquois, Anishinaabe/Saulteaux /Ojibwa, Nakota Sioux, Inuit, Métis and many others whose footsteps have marked this land for time immemorial. Those whose stories, languages and culture continue to thrive today. We acknowledge ourselves as visitors living and working in this Territory.



Overview

- Background
- Partnerships
- Current State in Edmonton
- Solutions in Action

Unsheltered Homelessness: A complex issue

Structural-Systemic factors

- Housing Market and Income Supports
- Service Provision – Acute vs. Preventative Care
- Racism and Discrimination
- Challenges preventing Shelter from being a viable alternative
- Opioid Crisis and Health Emergencies (ex. Shigella Outbreaks)
- Crime and Victimization

Competing Priorities

- Pressures of City Council and Administration
- Role of Edmonton Police Service and Enforcement
- Chinatown Business Association
- Counterproductive narratives from Media
- Misalignment with Mutual Aid and Public Advocacy Groups
- Right to Housing, Housing Policy, and jurisdictional complexity

Shared Impacts

- Unsheltered Individuals
- Business Communities and Neighbors
- Governments and CBO
- Public Services (ex. ETS, Parks)
- Sector Fatigue and Burnout

Encampments Partnerships

Focus Areas

- Leadership and Governance
- Outreach Service Provision and Coordination Tools
- Encampment Resolution Process
- Encampment Prototypes including Safety, Site Assessment, Health Services, Housing and Performance Measures

Partners

- Bissell Centre
- Boyle Street Community Services
- Homeward Trust
- City of Edmonton
- Housing First and Supportive Housing Agencies
- New-Income Support, Creating Hope, Treaty 8

Timeline of Encampments In Edmonton

2007

- Single location Inner City
- Approx. 200 people
- 3 months in duration
- 60 people became housed
- Street Outreach and Homeless on Public Lands implemented
- Followed by implementation of 10 Year Plan and launch of Housing First April 1st, 2009

2019

- Multi -site Inner City
- Approx. 130 people
- 1.5 months in duration
- 50 people became housed through mobile response (ETS bus)
- Launched shared encampments resolution approach and Encampment Response Team (ERT)

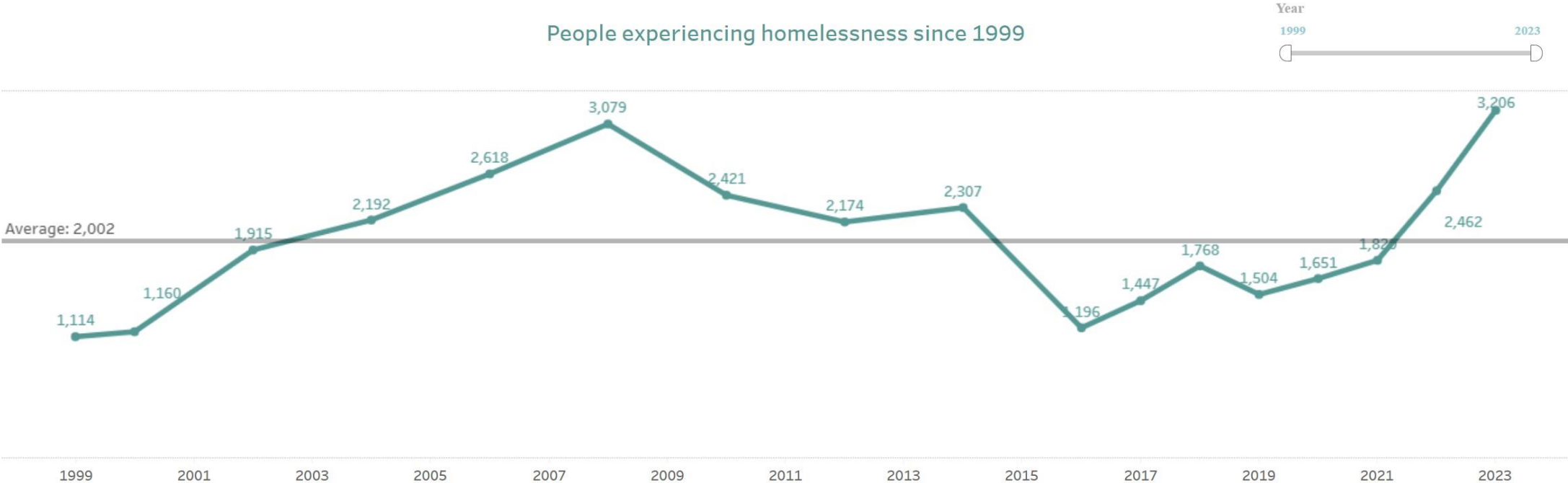
2020

- Multi -site, including Camp Pekiwewin
- Included protest element, onsite facilities, and onsite housing support staff
- Approx. 350 people
- 3 months in duration
- 106 people became housed

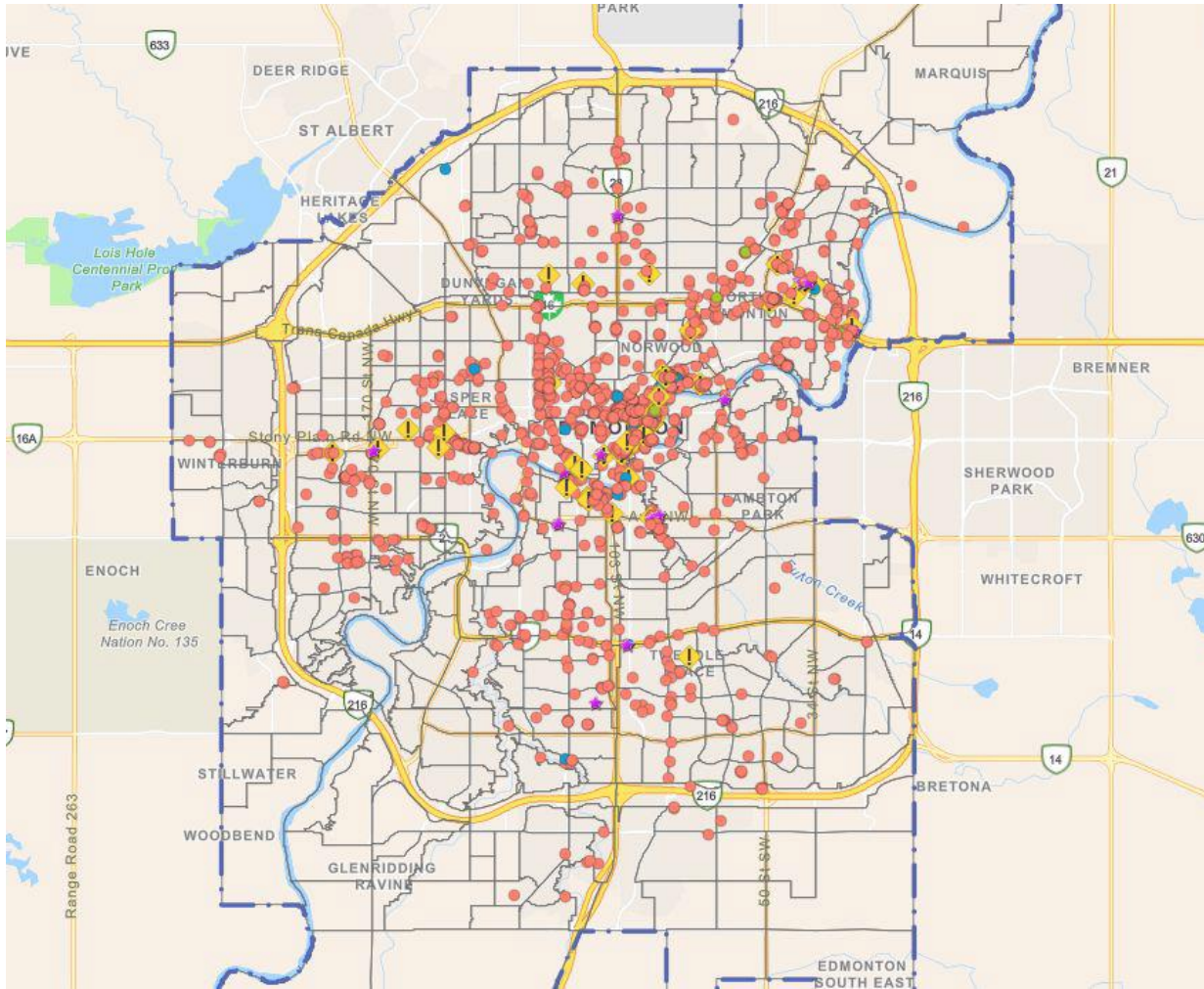
Current State of Unsheltered Homelessness

The By Name List is collected through coordinated efforts of over 60 access points in Edmonton. Unsheltered people comprise 22% of people identified for housing supports.

→ As of October 2023 there were **718 unsheltered individuals** on Edmonton's By Name List



Engagement and Outreach



- Edmonton population > 1 million, Canada's 5th largest city
- River Valley System is Canada's largest urban park, with over 50 kms in the metro region
- With encampments concentrated in downtown core and the river valley, geographic spread is a factor in site assessment and individual engagement

Engagement and Outreach

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
311 Encampment Related Inquiries	3,697	4,098	6,204	8,574	13,683*
Encampment clean-ups	1,740	1,477	1,666	1,611	1,954**
Street Outreach Unique Participants	286	321	192	233	199***
Mobile Outreach Unique Participants (6 Month Seasonal Program)****	649	1,108	1,448	1,848	

* YTD October 23rd, 2023

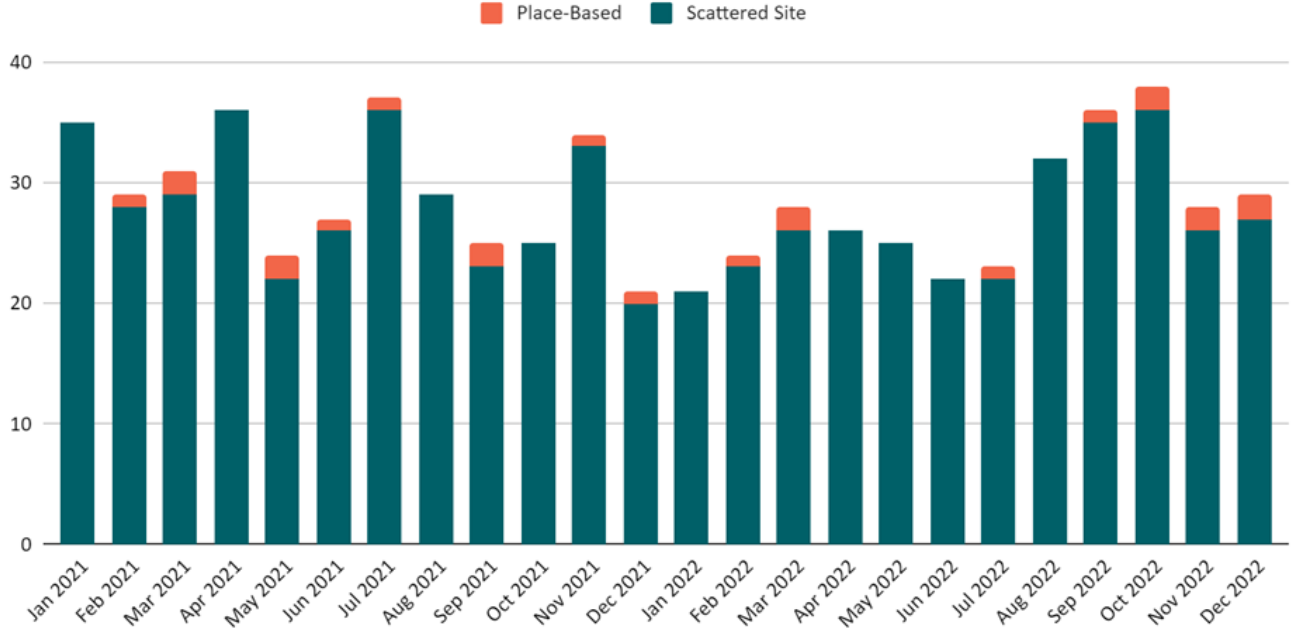
*** YTD October 25th, 2023

** YTD October 23rd, 2023

****6 -month Seasonal Program

Outreach to Housing

Place-Based & Scattered Site Housings of Unsheltered Edmontonians 2021-2022



- Over 1,100 housings of unsheltered individuals were completed across place-based (Supportive Housing) and scattered site (Intensive Case Management, Rapid Rehousing) housing options 2020-2023 YTD
- On average, 35% of individuals utilizing Bridge Housing options each month were previously unsheltered
- These solutions are provided through over 25 program types at 26 community agencies

Housing Solutions in Action

Street Outreach & Coordinated Access

- Engagement to assess need, BNL identification
- Create Housing Plan, inclusive of interim options
- Provision of basic needs resources
- Crisis or emergent service connection
- Assertive outreach to maintain contact

Housing Outreach

- Program intake, document preparedness- ID, Income, other
- Apartment viewings
- Lease signing and inspection
- Move in process- First months rent and damage, utilities, insurance, home furnishings through FIND, household start up items, groceries, etc.
- Warm transfer to case management

Case Management

- Develop case plan
- Broker individualized supports in alignment with case plan (Physical Health, Recovery, Mental Health, Employment, Education, Finances, Family and natural supports, etc.)
- Housing sustainability effort with Landlord and Rental Assistance
- Preparation for program exit with community supports in place

Expanding Housing Solutions

Outreach and Housing Solutions

- Targeted effort to house 100 additional people, summer 2023
- Dedicated staffing from Coordinated Access Team at Homeward Trust
- Housing Outreach Program- increased housing and caseload capacity
- Increased capacity with City Centre Outreach Team
- Access through Edmonton Public Library

Supportive Housing

- An additional 215 units across 5 projects added in 2022/2023,
- People experiencing unsheltered homelessness are a priority population to be served
- 98 -unit project (Currently under renovation)
- Work to secure additional 170 units underway



Learning Integration in Moving Forward



- **Action Research**- unravelling complexity in homelessness dynamics and addressing Indigenous overrepresentation
- **Prevention**- enrolling systems partners to reduce inflow to unsheltered homelessness
- **Recovery from experience of homelessness**-supporting the individuals to move forward
- **Managing expectation while maintaining urgency**-create clear plans, promote standardized operations, adapt strategically
- **Taking care of Front Lines**- making the same investment in staff as we do the people we serve

Thank You!

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