

**Reaching Home:
Thunder Bay 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](#).*

Designated Community Entity (DCE)(Lakehead Social Planning Council) and Indigenous Community Entity (ICE) (Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre) collaborated to complete the 2024-2028 Community Homelessness Plan. Both Community Advisory Boards (CAB), which include partners from housing and housing support organizations, governments, and other groups and committees, also reviewed the plan and approved the final draft. The broader community was invited to a two-day event that took place May 6 and 7, held by the United Way of Thunder Bay and the Lakehead Social Planning Council. The event focused on making Thunder Bay better for all individuals and members from various sectors including non-profit, business, government, healthcare, police and other groups and organizations were invited and they discussed housing homelessness and housing issues in Thunder Bay. The information was compiled and shared with all who attended the event, creating collective impact around housing solutions in Thunder Bay. Learning sessions were facilitated with both CABs to ensure Reaching Home directives are being met and to encourage collaboration regarding funding decisions. The ICE and DCE also met with the provincial housing funder (Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) any time that new funding or additional funding was announced through Reaching Home to determine where funding should be directed, as well as ensuring that all needs are being met by the various funders. While planning for data collection Indigenous organizations including Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Matawa First Nation have been consulted for advisory and guidance. Thunder Bay provides annual Homelessness individual and Family Information System (HIFIS) reports along with point in time count information that helps contribute to the homelessness data in Thunder Bay, giving a more realistic real time picture of those experiencing homelessness. The ICE also requests specific Indigenous data when required to help with planning and funding decisions.

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 2027-28¹.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total
Reaching Home Annual Allocation	\$1352991	\$1352991	\$1406525	\$1406525	\$5519032

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
Housing Services	25%	25%	25%	25%
Prevention and Shelter Diversion	0	0	0	0
Client Support Services	50%	50%	50%	50%
Capital Investments	0%	0%	0%	0%
Coordination of Resources and Data Quality Improvement	10%	10%	10%	10%
Administration	15%	15%	15%	15%
TOTAL	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 Coordinated Access, the Outcomes-Based Approach and use of HIFIS or existing, equivalent Homeless Management Information System).

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

The Designated and Indigenous CEs utilize their respective allocations of Community Capacity and Innovation (CCI) funding to co-fund the Coordinated Access System in Thunder Bay. The Designated CE is supporting HIFIS management by utilizing \$150,000 on average annually towards data management. The contract is with Lakehead University (LU). The LSPC will continue to contract LU to manage HIFIS until Reaching Home funding cycle completes March 31, 2028. LU has been managing the HIFIS system since January 2023. The LU team consists of computer scientists, researchers, and PHD students. We have been extremely successful with adding new organizations to HIFIS. We support organizations through email and telephone support, as well as onsite visits to ensure all data including housing history is being added into HIFIS. We are currently examining having a staff person at drop in centres in Thunder Bay to ensure as many people as possible that are experiencing homelessness are added onto our by-name list. We have also been working collectively with the Coordinated Housing Access system to ensure that they have all the technical support required, including creating crystal reports, local dashboards with HIFIS data, and offering HIFIS support at bi-weekly coordinated housing access meetings.

The Indigenous CE utilizes CCI funding to support the Coordinated Housing Access System Community Lead position, which is contracted through Alpha Court Non-Profit Housing Corporation. The Community Lead provides leadership and support to the Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) and member agencies in the design and implementation of the coordinated housing access system in Thunder Bay. The Community Lead is responsible for the coordination and facilitation of the bi-weekly CHAT Working Group Meetings and quarterly CHAT Steering Committee meetings. Additionally, the Community Lead works in close partnership with the Data Lead, Indigenous CE and Designated CE in ensuring Thunder Bay is meeting all Reaching Home Minimum Requirements for Coordinated Access, as outlined in the Reaching Home Directives. The total contribution made towards the CHAT Community Lead sub-project between 2019-2026 is \$571,406.32. The Indigenous CE will continue to utilize CCI funding for this sub-project for the remainder of the current Reaching Home cycle until fiscal year 2027-28.

The ICE and DCE recently held a CHAT/HIFIS training session in person for people at organizations that are using HIFIS or are interested in using HIFIS and also those that would benefit from being part of our CHAT. This was extremely successful and we sent a satisfaction survey afterwards to get suggestions for our next in person collaborative CHAT/HIFIS training event. Our HIFIS team is also interested in partnering with ESDC to use HIFIS data to do some analysis on health and homelessness.

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 2027-28². This includes both financial and in-kind contributions.

	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Total
Reaching Home Annual Allocation	\$1352991	\$1352991	\$1406525	\$1406525	\$5519032

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

Projected Funding From Other Funders towards Homelessness Initiatives

Program Name and Funder	2024-25 (\$)	2025-26 (\$)	2026-27 (\$)	2027-28 (\$)	Total (\$)
	\$16,559,000	\$16,559,000	\$16,559,000	\$16,559,000	\$66,236,000
District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP)					
TOTAL					\$66,236,000

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 guide³, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024⁴. 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?
HIFIS MR 1	N/A	HIFIS MR 3	X
HIFIS MR 2	X	HIFIS MR 4	X

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

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

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.

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

5. Coordinated Access

5.1 Using your 2023-24 CHR as a guide⁵, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024⁶. 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 checked="" 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.

Minimum requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

⁵ For more information on how the minimum requirements align with your CHR, please consult the Community Plan Guide.

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

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

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.

The Indigenous CE, CAB, and Indigenous partners have played a key role in the development of Coordinated Access from the beginning of the implementation process and continue to be actively involved as we maintain and improve the local Coordinated Access system.

CHAT Policies and Procedures underwent extensive review and revision during the 2024-25 fiscal year, with the Indigenous CE taking on a lead role in this work. CHAT Policies and Procedures reflect the current status of Indigenous Homelessness in Thunder Bay, as 78% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Thunder Bay identify as Indigenous according to 2024 PiT Count data. A commitment to reconciliation and proportional allocation of resources is written into the Policies and Procedures and supported by CHAT participating organizations.

Consultation with Indigenous partners occurs regarding key aspects of Coordinated Access including Entry Points and HIFIS use, and we plan to facilitate check-in sessions annually at minimum. Indigenous partners participating in Coordinated Access are onboarded to HIFIS and receive training and support through the Data Lead. We currently have two Indigenous specific Entry Points for CHAT, and have ensured that all entry points serve a range of client populations including Indigenous individuals; women, Two-Spirit, non-binary and gender diverse individuals; individuals involved in the criminal justice system; and individuals with mental health and/or addictions concerns.

Ongoing quality improvement of the CHAT system is guided by feedback from Indigenous community members and partners. Based on feedback from partners, we are working towards the implementation of an Indigenous led assessment process and moving away from our current assessment tool, which partners, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, have identified as often being retraumatizing, particularly for Indigenous folks. More specifically, Thunder Bay is a preparation site for the Personalized Assistance to Housing (PATH) Process, an Indigenous-led assessment process designed by the National Indigenous Homelessness Council (NIHC). Membership for the local PATH Working Group includes the Designated and Indigenous CEs, Community Lead, and both Indigenous and Designated sub-project representation.

The Designated CE and CAB have fully supported recommendations from Indigenous partners and community members and are working collaboratively to implement changes.

6. Outcomes-Based Approach

6.1 Using your 2023-24 Community Homelessness Report as a guide⁷, please check the box if you have met the following minimum requirements as of March 31, 2024⁸. 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 type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 2	N/A	OBA MR 7	<input type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OBA MR 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OBA MR 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OBA MR 9	<input checked="" 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: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

Minimum Requirement not yet met: N/A	
What are the next steps the community will take to meet this requirement?	Target date for completion

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

⁸ 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.

Most of the homelessness data in Thunder Bay is Indigenous data, as most people experiencing homelessness in Thunder Bay are Indigenous. We are cognizant of ensuring that there is collaboration with the ICE and ICAB, so that we can make data decisions that are appropriate and culturally sensitive. In our community the ICE funds the Coordinated Housing Access management and the DCE funds HIFIS management. Together we collaborate as both work hand in hand. We use HIFIS and CA as tools to inform about homelessness data. This leads to collaboration around policy changes, funding arrangements and planning as well as data management and reporting. Through collaboration between the Indigenous CE, Designated CE, Data Lead and Community Lead, we are working to ensure there is consistent messaging around data collection and data entry with all Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations participating in CHAT. This has been done through revisions to the CHAT Policies and Procedures, training sessions and regular updates to CHAT participating organizations, which are all done in collaboration with the Indigenous CE. The HIFIS team makes in person visits to Indigenous organizations that are using HIFIS to offer support and training. This is ongoing and can last as long as is necessary. Our HIFIS management team also provides data to the ICE as requested. All forms that pertain to the minimum requirements including policies and procedures are created collaboratively with advisory and guidance from the ICE. Thunder Bay also participates in the Homelessness Indicator Project Community of Practice, led by the Homelessness Policy Directorate. The Indigenous CE is invited to join these meetings and receives updates on the status of this project as we work towards ensuring local data meets the six core components of an Outcomes-Based Approach.

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.

All Reaching Home funded organizations are encouraged to offer programs in both official languages. When this is not possible and organizations require support, 211 Ontario North can offer translation services. The LSPC is also connected to French organizations in Thunder Bay that can be called upon for translation and French services.

We are cognizant that in our community most people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous (more than 75%) and there are many people that speak Cree, Ojibway and Oji-Cree as either a first or second language. We acknowledge that these languages are the official languages of many Anishinabek people in the Robinson Superior Treaty area. We work with the ICE to ensure that people can work with translators, Elders, and other professionals in their preferred language.

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.

(Lines below can be removed where not applicable)

Sector	CAB Members
Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)	Emily Yacuk, Glenn Budgell
Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)	Bonnie Krysowaty
Provincial/Territorial government	Aaron Park, Stephanie Veneruzzo
Local/Municipal government	Rilee Willianen, Louisa Costanzo
Indigenous government	
Individuals with lived experience of homelessness	5 individuals
Indigenous Peoples, nations and organizations, Friendship Centres	Annika Gregg, Daniel Gilbard, Taylor Adair, Charlene Baglien, Daniel Gilbards, Paul Magiskan, Jessica Gasci, Paul Capon, Sarah Racine, Stephen Lee, James Wilkinson, Joanna Mazanti, Ken Miller, Meagan Drebit, Jamie-Sue Sykes
Indigenous housing organizations	
Youth and/or child-serving organizations, including Child Welfare agencies	Tannis Piche,
Organizations serving survivors of domestic violence and their families	Debbie Zweep, Jessica Argueta
Seniors and senior-serving organizations	Pauline Vranesich, George Saaranen, Ann McGuire
Newcomers and newcomer-serving organizations	
The private sector	
Police and correctional services	
Landlord associations and/or the housing sector	
Health organizations, including hospitals and other public health institutions, and organizations focused on mental health and addictions	Brittany D'Angelo, Bryanna Blassizzo, Holly Gauvin, Raynell Casey, Nicole Latour, Moneka Joyce, Rob Barrett, Diana Gowanlock, Donna Kroocmo, Jennifer Doig, Jessly Bonifacio, Emily Juurakko, Bambi Pepe, Suanne White, Tatum Landry, Candace Davies, John Schmidt
Veterans Affairs Canada and/or Veterans-serving organizations	Casi Lozynski
Organizations serving individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness	Alaine Auger, Alice Bellavance, Brendan Carlin, Cathy Oleshcuk, Colleen Peters, Melody Macsemchuk, Kevin Haynen, Gary Ferguson,

	Lindsay Martin, Scotland Morrison, Georgina MacKinnon, Lana Vukelic,
Other	Rebecca Schiff, Vijay Mago

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.

Alice Bellavance
Name

Alice Bellavance
Signature

2025-01-28
Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Name

D. L. Williamson
Signature

2025-01-30
Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Name

Signature

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

9. Community Advisory Board—Indigenous Homelessness

Sector	CAB Members
Infrastructure Canada (Ex-Officio Member)	Emily Yacuk – HICC
Community Entity (Ex-Officio Member)	Annika Gregg and Charlene Baglien – TBIFC
Provincial/Territorial government	
Local/Municipal government	
Indigenous government	
Individuals with lived experience of homelessness	
Indigenous Peoples, nations and organizations, Friendship Centres	Annika Gregg and Charlene Baglien – TBIFC; Paul Capon – Matawa First Nations; Collin Graham – ONWA; Tracey Lawrence – Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic; David Wilkinson-Simard, Ruth Solomon, Evangaline Dixon, Linda Barkman – Indigenous Community Member Representatives
Indigenous housing organizations	Jessica Goodman – Beendigen, Paul Capon – Matawa First Nations
Youth and/or child-serving organizations, including Child Welfare agencies	Marilyn Juunila and Eugema Ings - Shkoday
Organizations serving survivors of domestic violence and their families	Jessica Goodman – Beendigen
Seniors and senior-serving organizations	
Newcomers and newcomer-serving organizations	
The private sector	
Police and correctional services	
Landlord associations and/or the housing sector	
Health organizations, including hospitals and other public health institutions, and organizations focused on mental health and addictions	Angela Carter and Sean Moore- Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Solvent Abuse Treatment Centre
Veterans Affairs Canada and/or Veterans-serving organizations	
Organizations serving individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness	Annika Gregg and Charlene Baglien- TBIFC, Paul Capon- Matawa First Nations, Collin Graham- ONWA, Tracey Lawrence – Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic, Jessica Goodman – Beendigen, Angela Carter and Sean Moore- Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Solvent Abuse Treatment Centre
Other	

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.

TK Lawrence
Name

TK Lawrence
Signature

2025/01/31
Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Name

Signature

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)

Name

Signature

Date (YYYY-MM-DD)