



SAFE AT HOME

SAFE AT HOME SOCIETY

PROGRAM and IMPLEMENTATION PLAN for '4051 4th Avenue'

*Permanent Supportive Housing
for Youth, Women, and Indigenous Persons*

Prepared for Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's
Rapid Housing Initiative

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DOCUMENT PREAMBLE

This Program Plan was developed in response to and in support of the Safe at Home Society's (SAHS) application to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI). Although launched largely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RHI represents one of the single largest injections of capital funding for affordable housing in Canada in recent years and is a unique opportunity for northern jurisdictions to address a number of significant housing needs in a short period of time - housing needs that have been ever present, but that are now amplified by COVID-19.

This Program Plan is customized for a site-specific project partnership between the SAHS and Northern Vision Development (NVD) and is intended to provide a summary of the program in response to the RHI application requirements. The SAHS is optimistic that the proposed RHI project and this Program Plan meet CMHC RHI funding criteria and is proud to present an innovative project that could forge a new approach to private sector-NGO housing partnerships in Yukon.

This Program Plan is data-driven and evidence-based and will address some of the most critical housing needs in our community. The proposed project demonstrates the strong and broad-based support from all sectors of the Yukon for addressing the housing and support needs of some of our most vulnerable and at-risk citizens. Most importantly, it is intended to signal hope and optimism for the community - for new approaches, new partnerships, and new opportunities to end homelessness in Whitehorse.

This version of the document is an enhanced and expanded *Program and Implementation Plan* for the project, prepared for CMHC's RHI 2.0 application process. This expanded version, different from what was initially submitted to CMHC under Rapid Housing Initiative 1.0, includes additional information regarding the ground floor space in the building, as well as a high-level 'Implementation Plan' that maps out key steps and actions required to move the project from approval to operations in a relatively short period of time.

THE SAFE AT HOME SOCIETY - OVERVIEW

In 2017, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the City of Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and the Government of Yukon joined with non-governmental organizations, people with lived experience, and the business community to formally endorse the vision, goals and actions in the [Safe at Home Community-Based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness](#). The Plan was an unprecedented success for Yukon, and a model for how diverse partners could work through complex matters with urgency and care.

In the years since the Plan was drafted, it has become increasingly apparent that despite the strong commitment of all partners and the innovative work of service providers across the Yukon, there remain significant and urgent gaps in the housing and support continuum. The primary service delivery gap is the absence of a non-profit community housing provider that offers low-barrier services to address the needs of those who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, and who may present with complex challenges.

In November 2020, the Safe at Home Society (SAHS) was formed specifically to address this gap. The organization is purpose-built with the explicit and focused objective of providing a coordinated continuum of housing and support services for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in Whitehorse and across Yukon. Although the formation of the society itself is 'new', Safe at Home has

existed as an umbrella entity coordinating and providing homelessness services and supports for over two years¹.

The Safe at Home Society is proposing to develop and operate “4051 4th Avenue”, a site-based supportive housing program for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Whitehorse. The project is being presented to CMHC’s RHI for capital funding support.

4051 4th Avenue is guided by the SAHS’ vision, mission, mandate, and philosophical framework.

VISION

A compassionate community working together to end and prevent homelessness, where everyone has a safe and affordable place to call home and can readily access the supports they need, when needed.

MISSION

To end and prevent homelessness through the provision of a coordinated, intentional, and person-centered continuum of housing and supports for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

TARGET POPULATION

All individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

Safe at Home Society prioritizes individuals with complex challenges and barriers to housing by offering a continuum of services that are based on Housing First and harm reduction principles; that are low-barrier, stage-appropriate, and trauma-informed; and that advance reconciliation with Yukon First Nations’ leaders and communities.

MANDATE

The Safe at Home Society’s mandate is to offer a range of housing, service and support programs from a low-barrier, stage-appropriate, and harm-reduction orientation. A coordinated continuum of purpose-built housing and supports ensures appropriateness and stability for all individuals. Every program will offer person-centered options that incorporate cultural safety and traditional knowledge, as well as voice, choice, and empowerment for those who access our services.

PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Harm Reduction: We believe in programming and practices aimed at reducing the risks and negative effects associated with trauma, substance use, mental illness, crisis and homelessness. We are committed to staying abreast of the latest research, best-practice interventions, and staying ahead of the curve.

¹ See letter of support from the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition for SAHS background that was submitted as part of the RHI 1.0 application.

2. Coordinated and Comprehensive Care: We support a coordinated system of care where people receive immediate and individualized support through a case planning model. Staff work with individuals to determine their holistic goals and endeavor to work together to accomplish them one step at a time.
3. Participatory Decision Making: We are guided by the voices and input of persons with lived/living experience. We strive to create a culture that shares space and decision-making with the persons most affected by the services and programs provided.
4. Trauma-Informed Care: We are committed to an ongoing acknowledgement and understanding that we, our administration and service provision, are located within a position of power. We are dedicated to providing person-centered care that promotes healing and recovery rather than practices and services that may inadvertently re-traumatize. We do this by continuously reviewing our policies and procedures; seeking guidance and input from people with lived experience; offering regular trauma-informed trainings for staff; and by integrating trauma-informed standards of care into our organization and program-specific evaluation.
5. Advancing Reconciliation. We operate with the belief that Indigenous knowledge must inform our actions. First Nations participation on committees, boards, the organization's leadership team and front-line staff is of paramount importance. First Nation cultural competency and allyship is an expectation for all personnel and all programs at all times. Our organization is committed to meaningfully partner with First Nation leaders and elders to integrate Indigenous Indicators of Success into our evaluation model.
6. Try Harder: If individuals are falling through the cracks, the onus is on us to listen, learn, adapt and try harder. We “roll with resistance”.
7. Strategic Planning and Results-Focused Orientation: We are committed to measuring our progress against specific metrics for success to ensure we are fulfilling our short-term goals and driving towards our long-term vision. Accountability and transparency are inherent to how we function.
8. Shift in Approach: Managing homelessness is not enough; we work to end and prevent homelessness.
9. Innovation and Northern Adaptation: We aim to continuously draw from the wealth of innovative housing research, experience, and best-practice standards that already exist. As a community-driven organization, we will adapt and apply our goals and actions to our Northern, localized context.

4051 4TH AVENUE - WHAT IT IS

4051 4th Avenue is a permanent supportive housing program operated by the Safe at Home Society for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. It is a unique and innovative program that arose out of the need to adapt and respond to the Northern housing crisis in Yukon, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19. Transforming a former commercial hotel into self-contained suites, 4051 4th

Avenue will provide urgent, stable, secure, and supportive housing for a mixed demographic of individuals.

4051 4th Avenue works with tenants on the goals they set for themselves; integrates Indigenous voices and leadership into all aspects of the project; and, incorporates the perspectives and experiences of residents through Resident Committee feedback into our service provision.

BACKGROUND

4051 4th Avenue was conceived in 2020 during a time of uncertainty and upheaval due to COVID-19 and the growing disparities for those who were particularly vulnerable to displacement, illness, violence, and economic turmoil. In order to respond to the homelessness crisis and those at imminent risk of becoming homeless, the SAHS formed a unique partnership with Northern Vision Development Corporation (NVD) that would see SAHS acquire a large commercial hotel and retrofit it into permanent supportive housing.

Although all building development options were considered, the project team of SAHS and NVD elected to pursue refurbishment of an existing commercial hotel into permanent supportive housing as this was the fastest way to increase housing stock in the territory. In addition, the financial downturn in the tourism sector due to COVID-19 provided opportunity to make better use of under-utilized building assets.

THE BUILDING and LOCATION

Formerly the Coast High Country Inn, 4051 4th Avenue is a four-level building located in downtown Whitehorse, Yukon. 4051 4th Avenue will offer 55 self-contained units with a layout that accommodates the unique needs of a mixed population group. Units will include a mix of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom suites, all of which will include kitchenettes or junior kitchens; there will be shared laundry facilities on each floor.

There will be a section for young adults (18-24) that will house up to 16 individuals and that will be distinct from other areas of the building. No less than 75% of all suites will be reserved for people who are Indigenous, and a minimum of 50% of all units will be for vulnerable women. Further tenancies will take into consideration a number of other demographic and/or individual circumstances as the program settles and evolves.

4051 4th Avenue will offer security with the use of cameras in all public areas of the building, and these cameras will be regularly monitored by support staff 24/7. Support staff will be stationed centrally on the main floor and will be available onsite 24/7.

Although not included as part of SAHS' initial RHI 1.0 application², the ground floor of the building includes flexible meeting space, a revenue-generating restaurant that is open to the public, a second small restaurant typically accessed only by hotel guests, and a large commercial kitchen that is able to

² The ground floor area was not included as part of the initial proposal to CMHC as RHI 1.0 was restricted to only residential space and uses. However, the ground floor will be included in the purchase and sale agreement for the building and the sale price will be reduced from its market value - excluding the value of the ground floor area - to reflect that this space is being 'gifted' to SAHS from NVD for the project in the RHI 2.0 application.

support both restaurant operations. There is common space for residents that can be used for a diversity of programs, activities, and social gatherings, as well as several other large meeting rooms that could be made available to the public or other community organizations. The two restaurants and the commercial kitchen and/or building laundromat could also be transformed into social enterprise businesses, and/or a skills training program for building residents.

In addition, the existing Safe at Home Society office will be moved to the ground floor, which will provide increased synergies across programs and services, including SAHS' current Outreach Workers. The building is centrally located with a bus stop that is within one block distance, grocery stores are nearby and most services, such as free meals and medical support, are within walking distance.

Additional information regarding the site zoning and allowable uses, project-built form, and proposed renovations were included in the RHI proposal.³

4051 4TH AVENUE - OPERATING PRINCIPLES

To complement the SAHS's Philosophical Framework, 4051 4th Avenue Operating Principles provide a program-specific approach that guides our work:

1. Supporting Housing Permanency: 4051 4th Avenue endeavors to provide security and stability in housing. We prevent eviction by working through challenges that may arise in the course of an individual's tenancy. Housing stability and service/support plans are developed in collaboration with each resident within the first three months of tenancy, if the individual chooses to participate. Return to homelessness is not an option and where, for various reasons, a tenant may need or want to leave 4051 4th Avenue, staff will work to secure housing alternatives and support the resident with a soft transition.
2. Self-Determination: At 4051 4th Avenue, we support every individual's right to choose what actions they may take to affect change in their lives. Staff work to support self-determination by approaching relationships from a strengths-based perspective and by offering information, tools, resources and referrals.
3. Collaborative Partnerships: Client-centered care is at the core of how staff work with tenants at 4051 4th Avenue. We believe working with individuals in a collaborative manner is conducive to growth, recovery and safety, as viewed through a trauma-informed lens and established best practices. In addition, collaborative partnerships across service providers forms the core approach, where resource and knowledge-sharing are viewed as a strength of immeasurable value.
4. Building Community: Building community in housing is key to harmonious and rewarding relationships between tenants, surrounding neighbours, and staff teams and helps foster greater well-being, acceptance and belonging. Building community occurs through the facilitation of communal activities, tenant-led committees, mediation and conflict resolution, and in our approach to relationship-building.

³ See letter from the City of Whitehorse outlining zoning allowances, and the Description of Municipal Zoning document for the project submitted as part of the RHI application.

5. Cultural Safety and a Gendered Approach to Supports: 4051 4th Avenue acknowledges that systemic injustices and structural inequities impact certain demographics differently than others, particularly Indigenous communities in Yukon. To combat some of these additional vulnerabilities, we must fully integrate trauma-informed care into our practice and retain a high standard of ethics and self-reflexivity; continuously pursue education and learning from those around us; and maintain an openness, transparency and responsivity into our approach to providing care.
6. Flexible and responsive services and programs: Support services and programs are flexible and dynamically tailored to fit the individuals who reside at 4051 4th Avenue, as well as the population group as a whole.

DATA ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN WHITEHORSE, YUKON

Unlike larger provincial jurisdictions, there is limited reliable quantitative data available in small, northern areas that enumerates the scope and magnitude of homelessness. Despite some of these data challenges, there are a few key studies and reports that provide a general snapshot of homelessness in Whitehorse.

2010 HOUSING ADEQUACY STUDY

The 2010 *Whitehorse Housing Adequacy Study*, conducted by Government of Yukon's Bureau of Statistics, was the first study to identify a number of statistically significant factors contributing to homelessness in Whitehorse. According to the study, persons reporting gross household income under \$20,000 were twice as likely to be homeless than higher income respondents; persons who identified as Indigenous were 3.9 times more likely to be homeless than those who did not; and, respondents who were under the age of 25 were 2.1 times more likely to be homeless than older respondents.⁴ The *Whitehorse Housing Adequacy Study* also states that 24% of homeless respondents indicated needing some level of supported housing.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS IN WHITEHORSE

The first Point-in-Time (PiT) count was conducted in Whitehorse in April 2016, providing the first quantitative 'snapshot' of homelessness in Whitehorse. 219 people participated in the PiT count survey with the following results: 64% said that their primary source of income was social assistance; 32% stated they first experienced homelessness before the age of 20; and 78% identified as Indigenous.

The 2018 PiT count in Whitehorse found that, on the day the count was conducted, at least 195 people were experiencing homelessness across the city. Of the 195 people identified in the survey, 57% were chronically homeless and 40% were episodically homeless. Approximately 83% of all respondents were adults between the ages of 25 and 64; 82% of all participants identified as being Indigenous; 39% were female; and, 12% of respondents were youth between the ages of 15-24. In addition, 61% of

⁴ 2010 *Whitehorse Housing Adequacy Study*: https://edmontonsocialplanning.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/edmontonsocialplanning.ca_joomlatools-files_docman-files_B.-NON-PROFITS_B.06-PUBLICATIONS_2010-whitehorse_housing_adequacy.pdf

respondents stated that they experienced homelessness before the age of 24, highlighting the importance of early intervention in youth/young adult homelessness.

The 2018 PiT survey results complemented the 2016 count numbers, and provided quantitative data that affirmed what was well known anecdotally among frontline service providers:

- that there remains a significant number of persons who are chronically or episodically homeless in Whitehorse;
- that women make up a significant percentage of the homeless population;
- that the number of youth who are homeless/at-risk of homelessness is alarming, along with the large number of survey respondents who experienced homelessness before the age of 24; and,
- that Indigenous persons are significantly and disproportionately overrepresented across the homeless population.

More recently, the 2021 PiT count results continue to show a persistent pattern of vulnerabilities and disproportionate representation amongst particular groups of people. On the night of April 13th, 2021, at least 151 individuals were homeless; of these persons, over half have been homeless for at least 12 consecutive months. On the night of the survey, 85% of individuals were Indigenous. In addition, this survey has continued to show that vulnerabilities to homelessness in adult years is strongly associated with social factors in childhood and adolescence. For example, 51% were homeless for the first time when they were under the age of 20; and 41% had experiences with foster care or group homes. Also highlighted in this survey are the impacts of health on experiences of homelessness; for example, 47% reported having a mental health condition and 25% reported having FASD. A new reality for the 2021 PiT count survey included questions on the impact of Covid-19. It was found that at least 13% of individuals who are homeless lost their housing due to the pandemic.

It is important to note that efforts to enumerate the homeless population in Yukon are an underestimate. Due to the cold northern climate and limited service options, there is most certainly a large 'hidden homeless' population in the territory. Hotels and motels, in particular, are compensated at extremely high rates for weekly or monthly stays by either social assistance or by the individual and have insecure rental tenures unprotected under the *Residential and Landlord Tenant Act*. The result is that already vulnerable persons have to make hard decisions about compromising their food security, health, and safety in order to maintain shelter and up until the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals were routinely evicted in April to make way for an influx of tourists in the summer.

WHITEHORSE'S 'BY-NAME LIST'

The SAHS is the lead organization responsible for designing and implementing a coordinated access system for Whitehorse in partnership with service providers in the homelessness-serving sector. Whitehorse's 'By-Name List' (BNL) has been in development for two years and provides a real-time snapshot of the number of individuals (generally captured with specific identifying information 'by name') experiencing homelessness⁵. In a small jurisdiction such as Yukon, having a tool that not only

⁵ The BNL provides complete information on persons who are, or who have, experienced homelessness in Whitehorse. When someone has been housed they will remain on the list and the list is updated to reflect that they are housed. When someone is currently homeless, they will be shown as 'active' on the list.

enumerates but confidentially identifies persons experiencing homelessness has positive impacts in our ability to address homelessness and to rapidly adapt to the changing needs of our homeless population.

As of August 2021, there were 119 actively homeless individuals on the BNL and 75 inactive, which really just means they are out of contact but likely still homeless. This number includes all persons who have consented to be added to the BNL at any time in the last two years. Of the 119 individuals, approximately 47% are male (N=58); 48% are female (N=58); 9% are couples (N=11); 20% are families with children (N=24); and, 66% (N=78) are Indigenous. Seventy-five individuals have been housed since being added to the BNL, however, some individuals who have been housed during their time being on the list have cycled in and out of homelessness. This is likely due to the complex support needs that would be better addressed through some form of permanent supportive housing.

The BNL isn't a robust representation of youth homelessness in Whitehorse, however, 7.4% of persons (N=12) on the list are under the age of 25. Poor enumeration of this age group is due to the fact that youth homelessness is largely hidden in our community.

CORE HOUSING NEED

The 2018/19 Canadian Housing Survey (CHS) found that 14.4% of Yukon households⁶ are experiencing core housing need and live in unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable dwellings. This is higher than the Canadian average of 11.6%, demonstrating that core housing need is typically greater in northern areas of the country. In addition, Yukon has the second highest percent of households in core housing need in Canada, second only to Nunavut. Renters live in core housing need at significantly greater rates compared to homeowners, with 30% of renters in core housing need compared with 23% nationally.

A proposal to the Government of Canada from the Indigenous Caucus Group echoed many of these local statistics and punctuated this by noting that Indigenous households in the north have the highest core housing need, with Nunavut leading at 44.3% core need housing, Yukon at 24.1%, and Northwest Territories at 22.3%. Collectively, the data shows that Indigenous households in the north are between two and six times more likely to be in core housing need than non-Indigenous households.⁷

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of the long-standing housing and homeless challenges in Yukon, placing additional pressures on the limited local social support network. As a result of COVID-19, there has been a notable increase in domestic violence and violence against women, and increased requests for services and supports to the local women's shelter. In efforts to reduce crowding in congregate shelter settings where vulnerable persons may have no choice but to be in close quarters, both the women's shelter and Whitehorse Emergency Shelter have made use of local hotels to reduce onsite numbers. Although this has reduced some of the immediate COVID-19 risks with overcrowding and shared or close sleeping quarters, it has also resulted in significant costs⁸ and unstable housing

⁶ Core Housing Need in Yukon 2018: https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/chs_corehousingneeds_2018.pdf

⁷ Addressing the Housing Needs of Indigenous Families and Individuals in the Urban, Rural and Northern Parts of Canada: https://chra-achru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2018-06-05_for-indigenous-by-indigenous-national-housing-strategy.pdf

⁸ Most hotels have continued to charge commercial market rates for shelter users, typically charging an average of \$2,500 per month.

tenures, as most hotels are only renting to shelter users on a short-term month-to-month basis with no permanent housing options at the end. Shelter usage and occupancy has remained high during this time and is now compounded with additional pressure. For example, the youth shelter reports that the only youth-serving shelter in Whitehorse is being used by the same core group of youth on a semi-permanent basis, providing no other shelter or housing options for other youth populations who may also be experiencing homelessness and hardships. And despite efforts to decrease density at the Whitehorse Emergency shelter, a Covid-19 outbreak amongst this vulnerable demographic of individuals did occur.

On the night of April 13th, 2021, the Whitehorse PiT count survey found that 13% of the 151 individuals who were homeless that night lost their housing due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES AND SERVICE GAPS

Determining the housing and support needs and service gaps in a given community is best done by matching data on the homeless population with an assessment of the current resources available.

Whitehorse has services and supports in key areas along the housing continuum, including shelters, transitional housing, permanent affordable housing, permanent supportive housing, and outreach services. However, a nuanced analysis of the resources that are available demonstrate that most of these housing options have narrow or specific mandates that do not meet the needs of a number of individuals who remain homeless.

For example, there is currently no permanent supportive housing for individuals with health and social challenges who don't require the intensive support model that Housing First delivers; there are also no housing or supportive housing options that focus on the unique needs of youth or young adults. Additionally, many individuals face barriers that prevent them from accessing other social support services, such as women with substance use and mental health issues who are fleeing violence. Collectively, this means that there are critical gaps remaining in the housing and homelessness support continuum in Whitehorse for some individuals.

Shelters

There are currently three shelters operating in Whitehorse:

- one 18-bed shelter exclusively for women and children fleeing violence (Kaushee's Place);
- one 11-bed (8 for males, 3 for female) shelter for youth between the ages of 17 and 23 (operated by Skookum Jim Friendship Centre); and
- one 25-bed general adult-serving (men and women aged 19 and over) shelter (Whitehorse Emergency Shelter operated by the Department of Health and Social Services).

In 2019, the Government of Yukon transitioned the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter from the non-profit operator at that time, bringing the program under management of the Department of Health and Social Services. This transition introduced a new 'low-barrier' approach to shelter operations in the territory and provided opportunity to get a more fulsome understanding of the actual number of persons experiencing homelessness in the community. Immediately after the shelter transitioned to Government of Yukon, usage increased by almost 300%, rising from an average occupancy of 15 to 20 persons per night to upwards of 60. The reason for the increase was due to the change in operational policies and

approach, and that many individuals, particularly persons with substance use challenges, were now able to access much needed shelter services.

Transitional Housing

There is currently one transitional housing project in Whitehorse:

- one 15-unit project for women and children fleeing abuse (Betty's Haven).

In 2019, prior to the operational transition from the Salvation Army to the Government of Yukon, the 20 onsite housing units at the (current) Whitehorse Emergency Shelter were operated as transitional housing. However, when the Department of Health and Social Services took on operations, it was determined that there was a greater need in the community for permanent supportive housing and the units were transformed into a low-barrier Housing First program for persons with the highest acuity care and support needs.

Permanent Affordable Housing

There are currently a number of units of permanent affordable housing in Whitehorse:

- 37 units of affordable rental housing (Gateway Housing);
- 74 units primarily for First Nations families (Grey Mountain Housing Society);
- 235 single-family units for KDFN citizens (Kwanlin Dün First Nation);
- 54 units of affordable housing for TKC citizens (Ta'an Kwäch'än Council);
- 458 total units of affordable rental housing for low-income persons (Yukon Housing Corporation);
- 31 units of affordable rental housing with programming for single parent families (YHC); and
- 12 units of affordable rental housing (Whitehorse Housing Co-op).

As of November 2020, there were 361 persons on the Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) waitlist. This number has climbed in recent years, an indication of the ever-increasing need for affordable housing in Whitehorse, as well as efforts among outreach workers to encourage populations who may not normally connect with YHC (e.g., homeless persons) to apply for housing. YHC estimates that at least 5% of individuals on their waitlist identify as victims of violence.

It is important to note that, of the 361 persons currently on YHC's waitlist – a list that covers all communities in the territory – 295, or 82% are located in or view Whitehorse as their home community. This underscores that the dynamics of homelessness in the territory and between communities and Whitehorse is complex as the vast majority of persons who are homeless are located in Whitehorse. In addition, YHC typically tenants within their existing housing stock and often reports seeing very little movement on their housing waitlist. There are very few new builds or additional units added to the Whitehorse housing stock, with the recent Housing First Project and pending 47-unit, mixed income housing project in downtown Whitehorse being the first YHC new construction in several years.

Supportive Housing

There are currently two supportive Housing First projects in Whitehorse:

- one 16-unit Housing First Project (John Howard Society Pacific and Yukon Housing Corporation)
- 20-onsite units at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter (Department of Health and Social Services).

In February 2020, the territory's first low-barrier Housing First project for adults opened in Whitehorse. The primary resident group are persons who were homeless at the time of tenant selection, and who were identified as having complex support needs and who would benefit from a low-barrier housing model. Although the opening of the Housing First Project was a significant first step towards meeting the needs of homeless persons in Whitehorse, the project includes only 16 units of permanent housing, well under the estimated need for Whitehorse. Even with this critical first step in supportive housing programming, there remains considerable supportive housing need in Whitehorse for both adults and youth.

In April 2020, 10 of the 20 units located onsite at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter were tenanted on a permanent basis. The target resident population group were persons who were chronically homeless and frequently accessed the onsite shelter services, and who were determined to have the highest acuity support needs. Although the units are available to all adults aged 19 and over, in tenanting the project to align with the focus on persons with highest acuity support needs – whether due to medical needs, mental health challenges, active substance use, and/or violent or aggressive survival behaviours – the units are predominantly occupied by older males and so functionally are not suitable for many other population groups. It is likely that the remaining ten onsite units will be tenanted with a similar focus, given the mixed-use nature of the facility and common areas, and the lack of options for this population group in the local housing continuum.

Outreach Services and Supports

There are over 15 outreach and/or 'housing navigator' positions supporting homeless persons in Whitehorse across seven different organizations. These include:

- Community Outreach Services, Department of Health and Social Services
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Society
- Safe at Home Society
- Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition
- Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre
- Blood Ties Four Directions Centre
- Yukon Women's Transition Home Society

There are also 13 LWEH (Landlords Working to End Homelessness) units and five 'tiny homes' where tenants receive itinerant supports from one or more of the above-mentioned outreach workers.

Most of the outreach positions are intended to support homeless persons (or specific homeless sub-population groups) with finding and maintaining housing, typically in the private rental market. For a small jurisdiction, this is a relatively robust and well-resourced complement of outreach supports.

However, even with outreach supports, many individuals remain homeless for an extended period of time due to the lack of available, permanent and affordable housing stock, and because they require additional supports to successfully maintain housing where a scattered site model with itinerant supports is not likely to meet their needs. This echoes some of the data previously outlined.

POPULATIONS NOT SERVED OR UNDER-SERVED

As described above, there remain critical gaps in the local housing and support service continuum for certain population groups. These gaps include:

- No permanent supportive housing options for individuals who do not require the level of intensity of support provided through the Housing First Project and at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter, but who still require a 24/7 supportive model in order to maintain housing stability;
- A complete absence of housing, supportive housing and outreach services targeted at youth/young adults (18-24);
- Only 15 of the 36 Housing First units available through Health & Social Services are home for women, leaving a gap in supportive housing for women who may have concurrent disorders and are at high risk in the community; and
- A consistent and critical lack of culturally relevant, supportive housing for Indigenous persons.

It is notable that with the opening of the two Housing First-oriented programs (the 16-unit program and the onsite units at the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter), there is now low-barrier housing available for individuals who were chronically homeless and who have the most complex barriers to housing and the highest level of support needs. Tenant selection for one of these Housing First programs resulted in a prioritization of predominantly men of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous ancestry. While both projects saw a significant evolution in the local supports available, this has shifted the population most in need of housing to be women (particularly women who have experienced trauma, use substances, and have mental health issues) and youth or younger adults. Although women and younger individuals are not excluded from either of the Housing First programs, women and younger individuals are not ideal co-tenants with a male resident group due to their additional vulnerability.

The SAHS is aware of the recent Whitehorse response to CMHC's Shelters Initiative for Indigenous Women and Children. The SAHS supports the efforts of these partner organizations, while noting that, based on all available evidence, permanent housing is the solution to homelessness. Shelters fill an important place in the support continuum, but affordable, appropriate permanent housing options are still required for someone to ultimately exit homelessness.

WHO WE SERVE

4051 4th Avenue was designed to house individuals who have experienced homelessness or who are at high-risk of homelessness. Under this umbrella, we take a unique approach to tenanting, by prioritizing individuals who lack appropriate housing options elsewhere in the territory and who are further vulnerable due to systemic injustices, structural inequalities, and a range of health and social challenges.

In response to a local scan of housing options in Whitehorse, as well as data from the Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts and the BNL previously outlined, 4051 4th Avenue intends to address the current gaps in the continuum by prioritizing housing for Indigenous Peoples, vulnerable women, and youth/young adults.

While everyone we serve falls under our philosophical framework, specific priority populations will be prioritized for housing at 4051 4th Avenue and are outlined in further detail below. Trauma-informed practice requires a nuanced approach, awareness, and lens when working with differing group's experiences and potential vulnerabilities.

PRIORITIZING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (First Nation, Metis, and Inuit)

4051 4th Avenue operates with the belief that the over-representation of Indigenous peoples facing homelessness is a result of colonization, historical and multi-generational trauma, oppression, racism, and discrimination. The SAHS, through every aspect of the design and implementation of 4051 4th Avenue, is committed to advancing reconciliation and supports the pursuit of equity and justice for Indigenous peoples. We do this by ensuring strong partnerships in program planning and implementation phases; by a commitment to strong Indigenous representation in hiring practices and on boards and advisory committees; by forging meaningful partnerships with local First Nations throughout our tenure; and, by developing policies, procedures and programming that is culturally safe, appropriate, and relevant for the people we serve.

Supporting Indigenous Peoples in Housing – Rationale and Best Practices

82% of people experiencing homelessness in Whitehorse at the time of the PiT Count (2018) were Indigenous and in 2021, 85% of people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous⁹. In the Yukon, core housing need is one of the highest in the country (24.1%) and Indigenous households are between two and six times more likely to need housing than non-Indigenous households.¹⁰ As a result of this data, 4051 4th Avenue is committed to designating a minimum of 75% of all suites for individuals who are Indigenous.

Indigenous Peoples will be further prioritized for tenancy where compounding vulnerabilities exist, where no other more appropriate housing options are available, and where it is determined that a support staff onsite is desired by the individual in order to support their long-term housing stability. As permanent supportive housing, 4051 4th Avenue prioritizes individuals who have health and social challenges, and who have a history of homelessness or housing instability. Indigenous Peoples are prioritized for occupancy across all demographic groups within the building.

⁹ Whitehorse PiT Count (2021): <https://yapc.ca/>

¹⁰ A For Indigenous By Indigenous Housing Strategy: https://chra-achru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2018-06-05_for-indigenous-by-indigenous-national-housing-strategy.pdf

4051 4th Avenue, through the SAHS, believes the For Indigenous By Indigenous Strategy (FIBI) is best practice in the provision of increasing core housing for Indigenous peoples, including a supportive housing mandate. In absence of ready-resources to realize Indigenous-owned, led, managed, developed, and delivered housing programs – and in the interests of expediency for the large proportion of Indigenous community members experiencing homelessness right now – 4051 4th Avenue will fill an urgent need fast. We will do this by developing a best practice framework and support model, and by convening a local and diverse Indigenous Advisory Council for every stage of the design and implementation. The goal will be co-creation of the program, with active participation and leadership of Indigenous persons in developing the program details. SAHS has the foundation of strong partnerships among First Nations governments and organizations, and further program development will include these and other organizations in the project.¹¹

At the outset, 4051 4th Avenue is committed to supporting the following FIBI Strategy Governing Principles:¹²

- Housing and support services are provided on an inclusive basis to all Indigenous Peoples regardless of their Indigenous origin, ancestry or nation;
- Housing and support services are provided with respect, without judgement and without discrimination;
- Wrap-around support services to the Indigenous household are often as important as the provision of the home itself;
- Collaboration, coordination and partnerships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis are important to Strategy success;
- Collaboration, coordination and partnerships with provinces, territories and municipalities are critical for the successful delivery of housing and support programs to Indigenous Peoples in urban, rural and northern areas;
- Indigenous housing and support service delivery promotes sustainable development as well as sound efficient management; and
- There is equity between the housing circumstances of Indigenous households and non-Indigenous households.

The local context in Yukon is unique compared to the rest of Canada, with 11 of the 14 local First Nations having self-governing agreements. These First Nations make laws and decisions on their Settlement Land and for their Citizens. In general, self-governing First Nations prioritize their limited housing resources towards their Citizens. This is understandable, given the significant need and fixed resources available; however, there are many non-Yukon Indigenous persons living in Whitehorse for whom there are few – if any – prioritized affordable or supportive housing options. SAHS will endeavour to hold and operationalize the spirit of the first Governing Principle of the FIBI and provide housing and supports “on an inclusive basis to all Indigenous Peoples regardless of their Indigenous origin, ancestry or nation”, and will be guided by the voices, experiences and perspective of local Yukon First Nations and other resident Indigenous Peoples.

¹¹ See letter of support from Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

¹² A For Indigenous By Indigenous Housing Strategy: https://chra-achru.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2018-06-05_for-indigenous-by-indigenous-national-housing-strategy.pdf

Indigenous persons who reside at 4051 4th Avenue can expect the following:

- Support and services from a support team that has received continued education in local First Nation foundational studies and awareness of social and structural injustices Indigenous Peoples have and continue to face;
- A commitment to trauma-informed practice, with an awareness and understanding of the effects of intergenerational trauma;
- The principle of self-determination as a core value in both philosophy and daily practice;
- Integration of traditional and cultural practices, activities, and opportunities that are developed and led by people who are Indigenous, including by resident's themselves;
- To feel and be valued and to have voice and choice in the services and programs available; and
- To live free of discrimination and re-traumatization within their home environment.

SAHS, through 4051 4th Avenue, is committed to serving Indigenous Peoples by operating as a true ally and partner in full alignment with and furthering of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.¹³ We do this by deconstructing colonialism in our practice and community advocacy; by prioritizing housing for individuals who are Indigenous and developing holistic wrap-around supports that are culturally safe and relevant; by maintaining strong and meaningful relationships with First Nation partners; and by designing all aspects of 4051 4th Avenue with Indigenous-centred knowledge and agency.

Additionally, SAHS recognizes that Indigenous women are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of colonialism and multigenerational trauma and that this impact will be experienced on many levels with the Indigenous women we serve at 4051 4th Avenue. To combat this reality, 4051 4th Avenue will seek guidance to ensure that all our actions are aligned as a partner with the Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy. We are committed to authentic allyship in every role that we may take to fully support the Four Paths to Dignity and Justice outlined in the Yukon action plan, including:

- Strengthening Connections and Support;
- Community Safety and Justice;
- Economic Independence and Education; and
- Community Action and Accountability.¹⁴

Through 4051 4th Avenue, and the collective input of project partners, SAHS is uniquely positioned to immediately further action 3.6 outlined in the Plan:

*“Safe Housing and Freedom from Poverty: Appropriately and safely meet the needs of Indigenous women, girls and Two-spirit+ people **which includes the provision of gender-specific options for safe and affordable housing, food, clothing, and other essentials.**”*
(emphasis added)

¹³ Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action: http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

¹⁴ Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People Strategy <https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/wd-yukons-missing-murdered-indigenous-women-girls-two-spirit-people-strategy.pdf>

By ensuring that Indigenous women, girls and Two-spirit+ people have a voice in program development at 4051 4th Avenue and are prioritized for housing, we endeavor to support further progress towards meeting other action items in the Plan, as safe and appropriate housing is foundational to so many aspects of health, wellness, and economic independence and self-determination.

PRIORITIZING WOMEN

4051 4th Avenue was designed with the safety needs of women at the forefront, both in the planning and implementation phases. Women will be the lease holders of a minimum of 50% of all suites. Staff onsite will work with women to provide support 24/7 to help ensure a higher level of safety and security and will work creatively with women where safety challenges may occur.

Women will be further prioritized for tenancy where compounding vulnerabilities exist, where no other more appropriate housing options are available, and where having support staff onsite is desired by the individual. With this gap in mind, women who present with a range of health and social challenges - including those with active substance use, street-entrenched behaviours, engagement in the sex trade, sexual exploitation, exposure to violence, and a number of other vulnerability factors that result in barriers to stable housing – will be prioritized, given the absence of other appropriate permanent housing options. Women who are Indigenous or who are racialized minorities will be given additional consideration for residency at 4051 4th Avenue in acknowledgement that colonialism and racism can profoundly impact a person’s journey into and out of homelessness. It is likely that all tenancies will be offered through Whitehorse’s coordinated access system.

Supporting Women in Housing – Rationale and Best Practices

According to *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016*, the average percentage of women experiencing homelessness nationally was 27.3%.¹⁵ The 2018 PiT Count in Whitehorse reported that almost 40% of individuals experiencing homelessness were women¹⁶ and in 2021, 44% were women. Coupled with a higher than national average of women experiencing homelessness is the lack of appropriate or inclusive local resources. See above discussion for a description of the housing and service gaps for women in Whitehorse.

Best practices indicate that to appropriately support women to maintain housing and seek improved safety and well-being in their lives, support models must understand and acknowledge that women’s experience of homelessness is gendered. Women have different vulnerabilities and traumatic-experiences with violence, including intimate partner violence; may have fewer opportunities to engage in the labour market or earn a living wage; often have differing responsibilities and experiences with family of origin or child care that constitute push and pull factors; are more likely to experience sexual exploitation or engage in the survival sex trade; and, navigate the world of surviving homelessness differently than their male counterparts.

¹⁵ Cited by Homeless Hub. Priority Populations, Women. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/single-women>

¹⁶ Whitehorse PiT Count (2018): https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Whitehorse%20PiT%20Count%202018%20FINAL_0.pdf

According to the *Best Practice Guideline for Ending Women's and Girls Homelessness*:

Ultimately, housing and service provision must be individualized to the unique needs of women and girls. This is necessary, as women often experience multiple compounding and intersecting issues, which contribute to their pathway into homelessness, and likewise the barriers they face in exiting it. Recognizing which issues are in the foreground for women and girls can assist providers in connecting them to the appropriate services and housing. In addition, understanding which issues are in the background can aid providers in supporting women and girls through the transitional stages of exiting homelessness.¹⁷

At 4051 4th Avenue, operational policies and procedures will be developed to support women through a gendered lens. In addition to offering choice in location within the building and ensuring a representative complement of female staff, support teams will work with women to ensure:

- Women are provided with gender-specific opportunities for psychosocial and other pursuits;
- Women are supported through guest management and visitation challenges or safety concerns if they arise;
- Women have access to a staff team that is trained in safety planning and prevention of violence strategies;
- Women's self-determination is valued and respected at all times and case management goals are women-defined and led;
- Women feel respected and accepted in their home environment and in how services and programs are delivered; and
- Women can feel confident that their voices are heard and that their input and feedback is valued and put into action wherever appropriate.

SAHS is confident that the provision of women-centered supportive housing will not only fill a critical gap in service, but that it will do so in a way that promotes safety, stability, acceptance, belonging and dignity.¹⁸

PRIORITIZING YOUNG ADULTS – The Young Adult Supportive Housing Program

4051 4th Avenue has designated a section of the building to provide up to 16 suites for young adults ages 18-24. Falling under the umbrella of 4051 4th Avenue Philosophical Framework and Operating Principles, young adults will be approached with an additional lens of consideration and a tailored support model that attends to this earlier developmental stage. In order to focus attention on the unique needs of young adults, there will be a dedicated Youth Support Worker on the team, in addition to the other onsite staff.

Young adults with compounding vulnerabilities will be further prioritized for housing where no other more appropriate housing options are available. In particular, 4051 4th Avenue will be the only permanent supportive housing facility that pays specific attention to the unique needs and issues facing

¹⁷ Best Practice Guideline for Ending Women's and Girl's Homelessness: <http://londonhomeless.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Best-Practice-Guideline-for-Ending-Womens-and-Girls-Homelessness.pdf>

¹⁸ See letter of support from the Government of Yukon's Women's Directorate submitted as part of the RHI 1.0 application.

the younger adult demographic. As such, young adults who present with health and social challenges, are at-risk from substance use, present with trauma and/or intergenerational trauma, mental health conditions, and who may be experiencing exploitation or violence, will be prioritized for occupancy. Young adults who are Indigenous or racialized minorities will be further prioritized for occupancy at 4051 4th Avenue in acknowledgement that colonialism and racism can profoundly impact a young person's journey into and out of homelessness.

It is important to note that there may be a number of youth transitioning from or who have experienced the child welfare system who may be in need of supportive housing and while these youth may reside at 4051 4th Avenue, this program is not exclusively for youth aging out of care, but rather, for any and all young adults who would benefit from a different, supportive approach to housing.

Young Adults – A Different Approach

The young adult unit within 4051 4th Avenue is a youth-based housing program (based on age as a 'qualifying criteria') that falls within the permanent supportive housing mandate. When residents age beyond 24 years, they are offered a choice of permanent housing options that transition young adults from the youth-based supported strategy and location, including an option to reside in the adult suites at 4051 4th Avenue. Much of the case management and support work with young adults will focus on developing greater independence and life skills for navigating successfully through their older adult years. The Youth Support Worker and other frontline staff will work with young adults to determine what their goals are with regard to housing in the future, so that when the time comes, residents may decide if they want to live in a permanent supportive suite at 4051 4th Avenue or more independently in the community.

4051 4th Avenue offers a youth-based strategy that prioritizes young adults in acknowledgement that this demographic is particularly vulnerable to the impact and cumulative consequences of homelessness and therefore, must be housed as fast as possible.¹⁹

Supporting Young Adults in Housing – Rationale and Best Practices

Street-involved youth are six times more likely to experience violent victimization than older adults.²⁰ Young adults differ in their route to homelessness; their ability to navigate the world around them; their ability to maintain stable housing independently; their experience of age-based discrimination from landlords; their opportunities for employment that provides a living wage; and, their social and relational skills may be in earlier developmental stages than older adults. In addition, a high percentage of youth who experience homelessness have a history of being in the care of child protective services, have experienced tumultuous and/or abusive relations with their caregivers or family of origin, and are more likely to have experienced discrimination and violence due to their gender expression or sexual orientation.

The majority of young adults residing at 4051 4th Avenue will be Indigenous. Through an Indigenous advisory committee in the planning and implementation phases, special attention will be paid towards building and maintaining a program and service model that is culturally safe, relevant, and that looks for

¹⁹ See letter of support from the Boys and Girls Club of Yukon submitted as part of the RHI 1.0 application.

²⁰ Cited by Homeless Hub. Priority Populations, Young Adults: <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/youth>

opportunities for building natural support networks. 4051 4th Avenue will work to maintain strong partnerships with First Nation governments and Indigenous organizations to ensure opportunities are provided for young adults to engage in their cultures and to stay connected or reconnect with their traditional teachings. 4051 4th Avenue will look for opportunities to both integrate Indigenous cultural elements and teachings directly inside the program model, as well as any ways to reintroduce and connect young adults to their culture and teachings in their wider community and family of origin, where appropriate.

Young Adult Supportive Housing - Commitments and Objectives

The following are operating commitments and objectives for the youth program that is part of the project:

- Prevention: Homelessness for youth must be prevented. Where homelessness is a reality, youth must be moved off the streets as early as possible. Early intervention is key to mitigating the cumulative traumatic consequences of homelessness. Young adults are prioritized for housing at 4051 4th Avenue so that we may get youth off the streets as fast as possible.
- Choice: Self-determination and offering “choice and voice” in housing options and services is key to housing stability and for the development of confidence and skill-building in young adults.²¹
- Person-centered: 4051 4th Avenue works from a client-centered and strengths-based orientation at all times. There is no one size fits all approach to working with young adults. Service and support plans are tailored to the unique needs and interests of the individuals we serve. Support work is collaborative in nature and seeks to build confidence and voice for each individual, so they may grow towards greater independence in the future.
- Trauma-informed supports: Trauma-informed care is a central guiding approach and special attention is paid towards the unique experiences of trauma and intergenerational trauma that may surround a younger adults life experience. Staff work to build positive and safe relationships and help support the development of healthy boundaries, confidence building, and modelling respectful adult relationships for future success.
- Supporting goals and opportunities: Opportunities for social inclusion, connection and reunification with culture, tradition and/or family and natural supports; and educational or employability opportunities are encouraged as a way to build belonging, confidence, purpose, and hope for a future that honours an individual’s goals and dreams for themselves.
- Early intervention: Early-intervention initiatives that attend to increasing safety and well-being for young adults who struggle with mental health and/or substance use are encouraged and supported by taking a patient and persistent approach.
- Focused supports: Caseloads of young adults working with the Youth Outreach Worker will remain reasonably small to allow for more focused and dedicated supports to be provided.

²¹ Boys and Girls Club of Calgary: The Infinity Project. https://www.ighhub.org/sites/default/files/BGCC_0.pdf

- Community connection: Staff will work with young adults to build support services in the wider community in order to increase the resources available and work towards a wrap-around support system that will stay with an individual if they choose to move into independent housing in the future.
- Relational: Relationship-building and rapport are key to working with young adults through very complex and challenging coping mechanisms and challenges.

MIXED POPULATION GROUPS

In addition to a focus on housing people who are Indigenous, young adults, and women specifically, 4051 4th Avenue will also house other demographics of individuals who have health and social challenges and barriers to housing. Consideration for tenancy of mixed demographic groups prioritizes individuals who have compounding vulnerability factors, a history of homelessness or high-risk of homelessness, and may be a good fit within a program model that offers 24/7 support staff.

PROGRAM SUPPORT MODEL – PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Supportive housing is a well-researched model of housing individuals with health and social challenges and has many variants for best practices. Models of support are individualized and range from minimal support interventions and semi-independence, to more intensive wrap-around community-based supports for individuals who require this level of care. Additionally, supportive housing may be transitional or permanent in its mandate. Supportive housing models have been shown to greatly increase housing retention rates, particularly for those with mental health challenges and other barriers to maintaining traditional housing. Participation in supportive housing is voluntary, flexible in its service, and individualized in its approach to providing services.²²

One of the strengths of the supportive housing model for individuals who experience barriers to housing is its adaptability to the population served and the environment in which it is located. In Whitehorse, there is a lack of housing and services for individuals with a range of additional needs to stay housed. Currently, Whitehorse does not meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness who fall into the large gap between the lowest barrier Housing First programs and high-barrier market housing. 4051 4th Avenue will help fill this gap by entering into a space on the continuum that does not currently exist locally. Our model of supportive housing provides permanent homes for 55+ individuals in a service model that is individualized, flexible, and promotes independence through a tenancy that falls under the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (RLTA)*.

²² Homeless Hub: Permanent Supportive/Supported Housing. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/transitional-housing/permanent-supportivesupported-housing>

A SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICE SERVICE APPROACHES IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Paraphrased from the *Ontario Supportive Housing Best Practice Guide*, the following list compiles a comprehensive literature review and geographical scan of best practice principles for supportive housing, both nationally and in the US.²³ 4051 4th Avenue ascribes to, promotes, and adheres to each of the following best practice principles and has made adaptations only if required to fit the Northern Yukon context:

1. Support Services are Flexible, Respond to Changing Needs, and are Based on Personal Goals and Choice
 - a. Supports can be more intensive initially, if needed, to support transition, and may fluctuate in intensity, according to needs and are not time-limited
 - b. Supports are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
 - c. Supports are re-assessed/modified regularly in partnership with the person receiving service
 - d. Supports assist people to move from supportive housing, if they choose to do so, and help people to access support services after moving
2. Promote and Support Independence, Personal Growth, and Dignity
 - a. Supports improve housing stability by assisting people to take on responsibilities to maintain their tenancy (e.g. keeping the unit clean, maintaining good neighbourly relations)
 - b. Supports assist people to navigate other systems when more intensive or different services are required (e.g. primary care, specialists, substance use treatment, etc.)
 - c. Supports must be free from discrimination, be culturally sensitive, respectful and accepting of people's values, beliefs, identities and life experiences
3. Connect People with their Communities and Promote Inclusion
 - a. Supports assist people to stay healthy, be involved in the community, develop skills, achieve goals and participate in meaningful activities/opportunities (e.g. employment, education/training, social activities, volunteering experiences)
 - b. Supportive housing services staff establish linkages with, and help people to access a wide range of complementary community services, as required, in a timely manner
 - c. Supports improve access to opportunities for social engagement, as well as help people to participate and be included in community life and gain independence
 - d. Supports provide people with information about community resources and activities, including neighbourhood and building orientation, and rights and responsibilities of tenancy
 - e. Supports assist people with access to transportation to community events
 - f. Supports enable people to connect with peers and non-peers
 - g. Supports help people to develop and strengthen positive relationships with natural supports
 - h. Supports assist people to take on leadership opportunities in their supportive housing (e.g. to sit on tenant advisory committees and peer support initiatives)
4. Tenancy Rights are Promoted and Respected
 - a. Rights of tenancy apply according to the *Yukon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act 2016*
 - b. People have the right to reasonable enjoyment of the rental unit and the residential setting in which it is located for all usual purposes

²³ Ontario Supportive Housing Best Practice Guide: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=15988>

- c. People have security of tenure - no limits on length of stay - and housing security is not contingent on participating in support services
- d. People have a written lease and are provided with a signed copy of the lease.
- e. People are supported to understand their rights and responsibilities as tenants
- f. Procedures are in place to help to prevent eviction

IN-HOUSE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

24-HOUR TENANT SUPPORT STAFF

Tenant Support Workers (TSW's) will be available for residents of 4051 4th Avenue on a 24/7 basis. TSW's primary role is to build relationships and rapport with residents, to work through housing stability and service/support plans, and to facilitate a warm, supportive, and home-like environment. Within the first year of hire, TSW's will be trained in non-violent crisis intervention, suicide prevention, First Aid and CPR, how to use Naloxone, Yukon First Nations core training, basic case planning and case management skills, trauma-informed care, and motivational interviewing.

TSW's will work with residents to accomplish the goals they set for themselves by developing holistic care and support plans. Services and case management support plans will be available for residents at 4051 4th Avenue and follow other national and international standards and well-established evidence-based practices. Support plans will be developed and documented through collaboration between the TSW's and residents, based on the residents' choice.

Specialized TSW's, called Service Plan Coordinators, will work primarily during business hours and have a leadership role in the case planning aspects of a person's support plan. Service Plan Coordinators will work closely with other community services in order to coordinate support plans and reach a greater level of wrap-around support for residents.

The purpose of a service and support plan is to document and establish a common understanding of a person's support needs. A service/support plan includes the person's goals, activities, types and levels of support to be provided, where the service will be provided, use of other community services, and service provider commitments. Service/support plan participation is voluntary, where some residents may want to engage in only aspects of support services available. Service/support plans are developed entirely separately from tenancy agreements and non-participation in no way impacts a person's tenancy rights.

TSW's also work to build community by working with tenants to develop regular in-house psychosocial activities and may assist in supporting and facilitating the tenant committees. TSW's adhere to the SAHS' philosophical framework and 4051 4th Avenue operating principles. Staff attend regular staff team meetings and workshops in order to offer supportive care that is consistent, client-centered, culturally safe and appropriate, as well as trauma-informed.

YOUTH TENANT SUPPORT STAFF AND OUTREACH WORKER

The area of the building with the 16 studio units intended for youth/young adult residents can be easily sectioned off from the rest of the building (including the other residential units), allowing for secured access and separate oversight. There is also space that could be converted into an office only accessible to youth residents, enabling this wing of the building to operate as a 'program within a program'. As such, the goal of the project is to have a staff team that is dedicated to supporting youth residents, providing the focused and youth-oriented support required. This will include Service Plan Coordinators (SPC) and Tenant Support Workers (TSW) specifically for youth.

There will be a Youth Outreach Worker who adds an additional layer of focused support and who pays particular attention to the skills and holistic support needs young adults have to live more independently in the future. The Youth Outreach Worker works together with the SPCs to build case plans alongside the young adults, where young adults define their goals and dreams for the future and their support team helps to build confidence, skills, and resources to move towards successful outcomes. Particular focus is on working with individuals to build healthy social and relationship skills, explore educational and employability programs, and other interventions to increase safety, well-being, and housing stability. They will also work to support the youth with connecting to other community resources on an outreach basis to facilitate smooth transitions to other supports based on individual needs.

HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

In the medium-term, 4051 4th Avenue will employ Home Support Workers (HSW) whose role is to help ensure all resident suites meet health and safety standards. HSW's primary role is to build relationships with tenants and take a non-intrusive and patient but persistent approach to ensuring health and safety standards are met. HSW's offer practical assistance, such as cleaning suites and assisting with laundry at times when individuals may be unable. HSW's and TSW's work together to strategize on individual approaches to providing assistance. This team works to build capacity with tenants to maintain suite hygiene and cleanliness standards where appropriate.

INDIGENOUS PROGRAMMING

Indigenous programming is centralized in the day-to-day opportunities for meaningful engagement within and outside of 4051 4th Avenue. Through strong partnerships with First Nation governments and organizations, as well as through the encouragement and support for tenants to lead activities, individuals are offered opportunities to get out on the land, participate in sweats, go ice fishing, attend First Nation events and activities in the wider community, share communal meals utilizing traditional foods, host and attend workshops by First Nation facilitators, engage in crafts and artistic activities, amongst others. SAHS, through 4051 4th Avenue, works to ensure funding is available to support these activities and is committed to forging strong relationships with First Nations and supporting Indigenous residents to voice their desires and take the lead wherever possible.

RESIDENT COMMITTEE

As a core principle, one-way participatory decision-making is put into practice is through the 4051 4th Avenue Resident Committee. The Resident Committee's role is to ensure tenants have a voice in and inform the services they receive. The role of staff at 4051 4th Avenue is to support the facilitation of regular meetings, to ensure the meetings are a safe and respectful space for all participants, and to ensure tenant's voices are put into action. Tenant committees are integral to building community and positive relationships within 4051 4th Avenue and are key to ensuring relevancy and appropriateness of service provision. Tenant committees also offer opportunity for peer support, skill-building, knowledge-sharing, and ideas for additional programming and activities.

HARM REDUCTION PROGRAM

4051 4th Avenue accepts and supports individuals who are active in their substance use. Staff will be trained in harm reduction philosophy and practices and will provide information on safer drug use, provide referrals for healthcare or treatment and detox, and provide safety planning with residents who are at risk of overdose. Harm reduction supplies such as clean injection equipment, safer inhalation kits, naloxone and sharps containers are available for pick up 24/7. All staff will be trained in using Naloxone before their first shift occurs and regular training sessions will be provided for all interested residents.

OTHER PROGRAM AND SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

4051 4th Avenue looks for opportunities to provide comprehensive opportunities for resident engagement and benefit by partnering with a number of local organizations. With the resident demographics in mind, we will build connections with organizations and initiatives that are of particular relevance to Indigenous Peoples, women, and younger adults. Workshop and engagement activities hosted by our partners may include educational series on harm reduction, safety planning and prevention of violence, Indigenous cultural and traditional activities and events, life skills, employability and training programs, amongst others. In future years, as the program settles, it may be possible to work with health providers in the community to offer itinerant health services onsite, as may be needed, or for enhanced health-related supports to be provided directly by program staff. Feedback and input from resident's will be paramount in informing present and future programming and service ideas.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR USE OF THE GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor at 4051 4th Avenue provides a unique opportunity to explore enhanced onsite programming, offer meeting and gathering space for both residents and the broader community, and potentially develop a social enterprise or training program for residents and/or community members.

The ground floor currently includes between 11,000 square feet of multi-use, multi-purpose space, including (but not limited to):

- A revenue-generating restaurant/bar open to the general public;
- A small restaurant primarily for hotel guest use;
- A commercial kitchen that supports both the restaurants/bar; and

- Several large and small meeting spaces separated into three distinct rooms and areas.

Given that many future building tenants may struggle with substance use challenges, the restaurant/bar will cease operating primarily as a bar once residents have moved in. However, the location of the building and the onsite commercial kitchen and related dining amenities provide opportunity to revision use of this space into a potential social enterprise and/or skills training program, or even simply to provide commercial rental revenue for the project. Many other jurisdictions in Canada have begun experimenting with new and innovative approaches in social enterprise development, including utilizing social enterprise businesses as a way to generate revenue for large-scale social program operations.

4051 4th Avenue intends to draw upon the emerging expertise and innovation in this sector²⁴ and will explore a combined social enterprise and skills training program aligned with future ground floor operations. The program will work to develop confidence and skills for individuals - potentially including both residents and other community members - who are interested in engaging in labour and employment opportunities.

Designed with a lens for supporting the goals and interests of individuals who have a range of health and social challenges, the program will meet individuals where they are at by offering opportunities that are individualized, attuned, and responsive. This is will be done through designing and implementing the program in such a way that recognizes and adapts to atypical employment needs and arrangements, while also providing adequate pay and remuneration for work by residents and persons with lived/living experience.

Consistent with best practice in this area, peer supports will be integrated into the program. In the future, after a period of operational stability and when revenues are sufficient to support program expansion, funding and support will be made available for: A Peer Program Coordinator role; occupational training workshops and certifications; honorariums for attendance, participation, and work; and work tools for participants. In time, the program will facilitate numerous opportunities for labour and employment and this will not only help to develop confidence and skills for participants but will also help build connections and relationships with the wider community.

In addition to the extensive social enterprise opportunities that could be adapted from repurposing the restaurants and commercial kitchen, the large meeting rooms also offer the potential for a diversity of uses, including:

- Space to host resident activities;
- Community meeting and gathering space, provided at no cost or as a revenue generating option;
- Introduction of new social enterprise opportunities, such as a community laundromat; and
- Community drop-in programs and services, in collaboration with other community partners.

The design of the facility enables the ground floor to be safely and securely separated from all private residential space, allowing programming and activities to be carried out as part of the overall program, or distinct from it as a general community-use asset.

²⁴ Government of Canada, Business and Industry website: http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/053.nsf/eng/h_00006.html

Optimal use of the ground floor space, including the range of possibilities for social enterprise, skills and training programs, and revenue generating opportunities, will be carefully considered during future project development phases. As this represents a significant opportunity to diversify funding and revenue sources for the project, along with the community amenity benefit of the space and future employment opportunities it affords, this will be scoped out separately in further detail.

STAFFING MODEL AND PROGRAM

SCALABLE STAFF PROGRAMS

In developing the ideal support program for residents of 4051 4th Avenue, SAHS explored a range of 'scalable' service options for the project. As scalable options, additional supports and services can be layered on to the core minimum staff program as capacity and need expands, and as additional funding resources are secured.

In general, the scalable program options can be grouped as follows:

1. **The minimum core program:** this is the minimum staff complement required to operate the program as a supportive housing project. In the minimum core program, there would be one (1) staff onsite at all times, and two (2) staff onsite for shift transitions.
2. **Option 1 - minimum scale-up:** this option would include the minimum core program plus one (1) additional TSW shift per day. There would be a minimum of 10 hours per day where there are at least two (2) staff onsite.
3. **Option 2 - full scale-up:** this option would include the minimum core program plus two (2) additional TSW/SPC shifts per day. This would provide a minimum of 20 hours per day where there are at least two (2) staff onsite, or three (3) during shift overlap or peak activity periods.
4. **Youth option 1 - minimum program:** this option would provide one (1) SPC-youth-specific worker and shift each day, in addition to the minimum core program and other scale-up options implemented. This would ensure that youth received dedicated supports for at least 10 hours each day.
5. **Youth option 2 - full program:** this option would provide two (2) TSW/SPC-youth-specific shifts each day, in addition to the minimum core program and other scale-up options, as well as a Youth Outreach Worker to support youth tenants with connecting to offsite resources.
6. **Ancillary supports option 1 - minimum supports:** this option would provide one (1) 10- or 12-hour Home Support Worker shift each day.
7. **Ancillary supports option 2 - full supports:** this option would provide two (2) 10- or 12-hour Home Support Worker shifts each day.

SAHS will begin operations with the minimum core program plus a Youth Outreach Worker for the youth housing program. This is a fully self-sustaining program and operating budget based entirely off rental

revenue and does not require additional resources. However, the goal is to scale-up operations as additional sources of funding are secured. This includes revenue derived from the ground floor (whether through commercial rent or social enterprise profit sharing), as well as targeted program funding for specific population groups (e.g., youth/young adults). With consideration for these implementation, operational, and financial realities for the project, **the preferred final scaled-up program and staff model for 4051 4th Avenue includes the following:**

- Option 2 - full scale-up; AND
- Youth option 2 - full program; AND,
- Ancillary supports option 1 – minimum support, with a 12-hour shift pattern.

SHIFT PATTERNS

SAHS is planning to adopt a 10-hour shift pattern for the majority of frontline TSW/SPC staff shifts in the program. Research indicates that long shifts over 10-hours can result in burnout, reductions in staff alertness, compromised staff and client safety, and potentially results in adverse health outcomes for employees. Implementing a maximum 10-hour shift provides a compromise between an 8-hour or 12-hour shift pattern because it balances staff safety, provides employees with full-time hours, and still allows for extended days of rest (at least three, occasionally four consecutive days of rest). It also provides six hours of shift overlap where there are two staff onsite in the minimum core staff program. This will:

- Ensure appropriate time for information sharing between shifts;
- Ensure that during the later hours of a shift there is always someone beginning their shift who not fatigued and is more alert; and
- Provide additional frontline staff resources during peak activity periods.

Extensive modelling has been done for both the minimum core program and final scaled-up program model to optimize shift patterns and staff coverage.

PROJECT PARTNERSHIPS

Developing and fostering meaningful partnerships and shared decision-making is vital to the SAHS mandate and program vision. With a particular focus on providing housing for women, Indigenous Peoples, and young adults, SAHS will partner with local First Nation governments and organizations, relevant women's organizations, and organizations that serve youth. In order to provide services that are appropriate, meaningful to the people we serve, and culturally safe, these partnerships will not only provide a valuable infusion of expertise and knowledge but will also help to ensure our program's vitality throughout each of its key elements.

Key project partners may include:

- Kwanlin Dun First Nation
- Yukon Housing Corporation
- Yukon Youth Partnership Table
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council

- Boys and Girls Club of Yukon
- Yukon Aboriginal Women’s Circle

There will be a program Steering Committee comprised of these key advisory and operational partners, and others as may be relevant and as the full program scope is further developed. The role of the Steering Committee will be to provide advice, recommendations, or participate in key decisions with the SAHS, in the following areas:

- Prioritize offers of tenancy, consistent with local data as available;
- Program design;
- Service delivery complement and components; and
- Operational considerations, including psychosocial programming and activities.

After initial project development and start-up, the role of the Steering Committee will reduce, and the role of the Resident Committee(s) will be paramount in informing program development and evolution.

4051 4TH AVENUE PROGRAM OUTCOMES, GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Outlined below are preliminary goals and objectives for 4051 4th Avenue. These goals and objectives will be further refined with our project Steering Committee and our Resident Committee to ensure they are relevant and reflective of the program and resident goals.

Goal 1: To reduce homelessness among the target resident demographic groups.

Objectives:

- i. To provide stable and permanent supportive housing by prioritizing persons who are without a home or at high risk of homelessness at the start of tenancy.
- ii. To complete a Tenant Support Plan within 6 months of residency that meets the resident’s needs in a way that is appropriate within the stages of change model and tailored to their individual circumstances, goals, needs and desires.
- iii. To follow-up on and monitor individual progress within Tenant Support Plans by reviewing and discussing the plans with residents at least once every month.
- iv. To achieve a housing retention rate greater than 85% by providing supports that meet individual needs and providing alternative housing options where necessary or desired.
- v. To achieve the rate of ‘eviction into homelessness’ that is 0%, with the exception of urgent health and safety matters, by assisting tenants who may not be suitable for the project with securing tenancies elsewhere.
- vi. To support other partner organizations to reduce homelessness and increase housing stability in their programs by participating in community-wide advocacy and education opportunities on homelessness and issues related to homelessness.
- vii. To ensure cultural and demographic relevancy for the population groups we house by providing a staff team that is representative and by soliciting feedback from residents in a variety of ways.

Goal 2: To empower residents to define and realize what matters to them, to actively participate in the ideas and decisions that impact their lives, and to increase their sense of individual well-being.

Objectives:

- i. To ensure that Tenant Support Plans are approached collaboratively and where at least 75% of defined goals are resident-driven.
- ii. To maintain bi-monthly Tenant Committee meetings and routinely look for a variety of opportunities where participatory decision-making is realized, and residents are empowered to shape the programs that impact them.
- iii. To approach relationship-building from a strengths-based approach and trauma-informed lens.
- iv. To improve residents' sense of overall well-being, as assessed through Tenant Support Plan follow-up meetings, by providing a variety of psychosocial programming and services based on residents' wishes.
- v. To provide a regular roster of monthly training modules for staff to develop the skills and education that is necessary to ensure high rates of housing retention and a high level of compassionate, ethical, culturally and contextually appropriate work standards.

Goal 3: To advance reconciliation and anti-oppressive practice.

Objectives:

- i. To combat the over-representation of homelessness found in Indigenous populations by ensuring 80% of all suites are reserved for Indigenous persons (inclusive of First Nation, Inuit, and Metis).
- ii. To ensure the staff team are representative of the population they serve by prioritizing staff members who are Indigenous and/or female.
- iii. To provide First Nation core foundation training for all staff within 6 months of hire.
- iv. To provide trauma-informed care training for all staff within the first month of hire.
- v. To form strong partnerships with local First Nation governments and organizations throughout the planning and implementation processes through majority Indigenous participation on the project Steering Committee and other advisory committees.
- vi. To ensure that the majority of all programming is of interest, relevance, and meaning for the various demographic groups we house by seeking input from the Resident Committee during each monthly meeting, as well as directly from residents as opportunities present.

Goal 4: To operate a program that is transparent, cost-effective and that achieves the overall outcomes and goals.

Objectives:

- i. To conduct a cost-benefit analysis approximately every 5 years to be accountable to funders and measure the socioeconomic benefits of housing individuals with complex challenges and barriers as compared to the costs of homelessness.
- ii. To conduct a program evaluation every 2-5 years to ensure we are meeting the overall outcomes and goals of the program.

- iii. To implement and act on every recommendation and suggestion in the program evaluation within 6-months to 1-year to ensure program improvements are enacted in a timely and meaningful way.
- iv. To share the cost-benefit analysis and program evaluation with residents, funders, partners, and the general public when completed.
- v. To stay abreast of the latest advances and research in best practices for supportive housing by reviewing the effectiveness and relevancy of our program model at least every 3 years.

Intended Outcomes:

- Reduction or elimination of homelessness in Whitehorse.
- Improvement in the health and well-being of residents.
- Reduction in 'response' system usage.
- Increased investment in supportive housing projects.
- Advanced reconciliation with Indigenous citizens.

APPENDIX A – PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Appendix A is a high level ‘Implementation Plan’ intended to assist with moving from project approval to operations in a short period of time. A project of this scale requires a thoughtful and measured approach to implementation across several different domains, particularly given some of the challenges inherent in developing and operating a program of this complexity in a small, northern jurisdiction.

This Implementation Plan addresses five key areas:

- Program governance and oversight;
- Program and organizational policies and procedures;
- Project finances;
- Human resources; and
- Tenanting and occupancy.

The Implementation Plan is not intended to be exhaustive of all of the actions required to implement the project, but rather is meant to provide a general guide or framework. Each section includes a recommended timeline for completing steps and actions in that area. They provide benchmarks for completion to achieve the ambitious timelines outlined in the RHI application, and to house tenants as quickly as possible.

The timelines presented in this plan use the start of construction as ‘week 1’. All actions are framed with reference to the start of construction, but without specific dates, so as to provide flexibility for changing construction timelines. Actions identified in advance of ‘week 1’ are preparatory work that will be needed and that can be initiated after project and funding approval from CMHC.

Given the significant scope of work required in each domain, as well as others not outlined here (e.g., coordination with the construction Project Manager), SAHS may need to explore hiring a Project Manager to ensure timely completion of all of the necessary actions, and so that this work does not fall exclusively to the Executive Director.

Appendix A.1: Program Governance and Oversight

As outlined previously in the Program Plan, developing and fostering meaningful partnerships and shared decision-making is vital to the SAHS mandate and vision. Given the emphasis on prioritizing housing for women, Indigenous Peoples, and young adults - and that best practice guidelines recommend active participation and leadership by representative population groups - SAHS is committed to providing multiple opportunities for input by project partners and residents.

The SAHS is positioned in a complicated nexus where formal decision-making roles and responsibilities merge with genuine intent to create participatory structures for active input by a range of community partners. The SAHS was formed in November 2020 with the objective of providing a coordinated continuum of housing and support services for individuals who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness in Whitehorse and across Yukon. Through formal incorporation, the SAHS became a distinct entity with a Board of Directors that is responsible for making decisions on behalf of the society. This means that the new SAHS Board of Directors holds sole legal responsibility for the activities of the organization.

If approved, 4051 4th Avenue will be the largest supportive housing project in Yukon. It has the potential to have a significant impact in ending homelessness in Whitehorse and will form a large footprint in the currently modest supportive housing continuum. The SAHS and staff will need to balance the formal roles and responsibilities of the organization and the Board with honoring the commitment to truly collaborative community-based processes and maintaining best practices around user group involvement. Therefore, the governance and oversight structure for the project will need to be clearly identified for all partners, while also being designed to be flexible, adaptive, and responsive to project and participant needs.

Outlined below are the roles and responsibilities for key project partners.

Safe at Home Society Board of Directors

Role: *makes final and formal decisions for the SAHS, including key aspects of the 4051 4th Avenue project.*

As a formally incorporated society under the *Societies Act (Yukon)*, the SAHS Board is the sole legal decision-making authority for all activities related to the organization and its staff, including all projects (such as 4051 4th Avenue) undertaken by the society. It has a linear reporting structure where the Executive Director reports to and receives direction from the Board, and in turn enacts that direction through the organization.

Project Steering Committee and Indigenous Advisory Committee (pending)

Role: *provides advice and recommendations on several aspects of the project. Is treated as a 'de facto' decision-making body for the project, though recognizing that the SAHS Board has full ownership of the building asset and final responsibility for financial decisions and operations.*

A project Steering Committee will be convened and comprised of these key advisory and operational partners, as well as others that may be relevant as the program scope evolves. The role of the Steering Committee will be to provide advice, recommendations, or participate in key decisions with the SAHS Board of Directors, in the following areas:

- Program design;
- Processes for tenant selection;
- Service delivery complement and components; and
- Operational considerations, including psychosocial programming and activities.

The Steering Committee should be small in size so as to be nimble and flexible in decision-making. It should include the following organizations or agencies, at minimum:

- Kwanlin Dun First Nation
- Yukon Youth Partnership Table
- Yukon Housing Corporation
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
- Boys and Girls Club of Yukon
- Yukon Aboriginal Women's Circle

Resident Committee (pending)

Role: provides advice and recommendations on several aspects of the project, particularly program operations, service delivery, and engagement opportunities for residents.

After initial project development and start-up, the role of the Steering Committee will reduce, and the role of the Resident Committee(s) will be paramount in informing program development and evolution. The Resident Committee would provide input into programming and service delivery, recommendations for how to increase tenant involvement in activities, and other areas as they emerge.

Project Partners, including Safe at Home Government Partner Committee

Role: shares information with SAHS and may have some involvement in onsite programs and services where it aligns with the role and mandate of the partner organization.

The Safe at Home Society was borne out of many years of shared, collaborative efforts by a diversity of government, NGO, business community partners, and persons with lived/living experience. The process of developing the plan demonstrated how these partners could come together and work through complex matters with urgency and care. One of the primary vehicles that has continued to drive and coordinate work under the Safe at Home Plan is the Government Partners table. However, with the formation of Safe at Home as a distinct society with a Board of Directors that holds primary decision making over the organization's activities and finances, the decision-making role of the SAH Government Partners committee will shift to a relationship that is primarily founded on information sharing and partner collaboration.

TIMELINE

| Week | Duration | Action |
|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Preparatory work | | Confirm potential Steering Committee members and invite them to participate in the Committee. |
| | | Draft a Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Steering Committee. Identify key project issues for Steering Committee information, input or decision. |
| | | Draft information materials about the project to share with partners and the community, inviting their participation, as applicable. |
| Week 1 | 2 wks. | Convene first Steering Committee meeting. Committee should review, revise and finalize the ToR, and establish a meeting schedule. |
| Week 3 + | ongoing | Meet with the Steering Committee on an ongoing basis as needed, and as determined by the Committee. |
| As needed | ongoing | Provide opportunities for information sharing with project partners and other community members. This may include larger open house meetings and forums, small group or individual discussions, or newsletters and information bulletins. |
| Week 35 | 1 to 2 wks. | First tenant occupancy. |
| Week 47+ | ongoing | Establish Resident Committee within 3 months of full occupancy. Terms of Reference for the Committee to have been drafted along with policy/procedure manual. |

Appendix A.2: Program and Organizational Policies and Procedures

Outlined below is a list of proposed policies and procedures to support program operations. Some of the listed policies would also likely apply to and cross over with organizational policies and procedures and will be revised or adapted accordingly to create a comprehensive and consistent organizational and program policy manual.

This list was developed through a comprehensive jurisdictional scan of policy and procedure manuals for similar supportive housing programs, with additional consideration for operations in a northern context, and based on the organization's vision and mandate.

All policies and procedures will be drafted with a gendered perspective and with consideration for imbuing cultural safety and relevance across all aspects of operations. However, given the importance of ensuring a sensitive and relevant program for the priority resident group(s), it is proposed that there be dedicated 'sub-manuals' written for the *Enhanced Services* section, and with more direct, focused input from key partner groups.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL INDEX

Vision and Mandate

- Organization mandate
- Program vision
- Operating principles and practices
- Program and service description
- Resident rights and responsibilities

Resident and Community Involvement

- Resident Committee
- Community neighbors
- Community partners

Administration

- Organization chart
- Documentation and communication
- Petty cash
- Program purchases and expenses

Human Resources

- Job descriptions
- Schedules
- Timesheets
- Callouts
- Leave provisions
- Employee benefits
- Employee wellness and supports
- Staff code of conduct
- Fraternization

- Staff vehicle use
- Staff discipline
- Staff complaints and grievances
- Dispute resolution between staff

Admission

- Priority resident group(s)
- Referrals for tenancy
- Resident selection process
- Intake
- Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*
- Lease agreement
- Move-in process
- Resident orientation and handbook

Facility Management

- Rental rates
- Rent collection
- Room inspections
- Repairs and maintenance
- Household maintenance
- Change in household composition
- Pets
- Guests and visitors
- Theft and damage to property
- Lease violations
- Health and safety violations
- Resident responsibilities
- Staff responsibilities

Program Operations

- Resident safety
- Conflict management
- Substance use and harm reduction
- Threatening or violent behaviors
- Suspected drug dealing
- Court orders
- Holding or dispensing resident monies
- Potential missing persons
- Duty to report – harm to self or others
- Cultural safety
- Gendered approach to providing support
- Indigenous perspectives on programs and supports

Resident Supports

- Crisis intervention and support
- Mental health supports
- Medical distress

- Medication administration²⁵
- Case planning supports
- Outreach and service connection supports
- Programming and activities
- Program employment supports
- Other programs offered (customized based on population)
- Assistance with home maintenance
- Assistance with personal care and ADLs
- Transportation

Incidents

- Incident definitions
- Incident reporting
- Critical incidents
- Critical incidents – deceased person
- Resident support following critical incidents
- Staff supports following critical incidents

Complaints and Disputes

- Tenancy complaints
- Program complaints
- Staff complaints
- Guest disputes

Discharge and Eviction

- Roles and responsibilities
- Eviction due to critical lease violation
- Eviction due to program or safety violation
- Change in program placement due to change resident needs
- Program discharge and transfer

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Resident consent
- Collection, use, and disclosure of information
- Information sharing with ancillary supports
- Use of surveillance cameras and recordings
- RCMP requests for information
- RCMP requests regarding missing person(s) and exigent circumstances

Workplace Safety

- Hazardous materials
- Critical incident follow-up
- Exposure to blood
- Exposure to infectious diseases
- Bed bug mitigation
- Conflict management and physical interactions

²⁵ Likely to specify that medication administration is not a part of the initial program services.

Communication during critical incidents
Working in teams
Working alone
Safety equipment

Building Operations

Emergency protocol drills (fire, earthquake, power outage, etc.)
Fire or fire alarm
Earthquake
Power outage
Building lockdown
Other facility emergencies
Smoking in or near facility
Maintenance
Custodial services
Pest control
Pest control – bed bugs
Repairs and maintenance

Enhanced Services (dedicated sub-manual for each area)

Home Support
Youth Supports and Outreach
Outreach Services
Indigenous Programming

Forms²⁶

Application and Referral form
Lease agreement
Consent form
Petty cash form
Leave request form
Incident report
Building repair and maintenance form
Housing Stability Plan template
Case Planning template
Local resource guide
Information forms

²⁶ This is not an exhaustive list of forms that will be required, as its likely new forms and documentation tools will emerge through the policy and procedure drafting process.

TIMELINE

An aggressive drafting timeline is proposed so that the policy and procedure manual can be completed to align with staff hiring and first tenant occupancy. It is likely that some policies/procedures may still be in draft format during the hiring and initial tenanting processes; this has been incorporated into the proposed phased and 'grouped' drafting timeline, so that the most urgent and timely policies/procedures – from an operational perspective – will be completed first.

Building Operations policies/procedures are proposed to be drafted last, as it is likely that all facility renovations will not be completed until after first tenant occupancy, and so building systems may not yet be finalized.

| Week | Duration | Action |
|----------------|------------------|---|
| | | Retain consultant(s) to draft policy and procedures manual(s). |
| | Preparatory work | Consultant to undertake jurisdictional scan on other policy/procedure manuals for supportive housing and similar programs. |
| | | Consultant to identify key policy and procedure issues requiring decision. This may include guest policy, pet policy, smoking, lease violations, etc. |
| Week 1 to 4 | 4 wks. | SAHS to consult with Board, Steering Committee, and other partners as applicable, on key policy issues. Iterative process with consultant to further identify, refine, and respond to key policy issues and decisions. Consultant to begin drafting simpler policies/procedures during this time. |
| Week 5 to 6 | 2 wks. | SAHS to provide final policy/procedure direction on key issues to consultant. |
| Week 7 to 23 | 16 wks. | Consultant to draft policy/procedure manual based on an agreed upon phased timeline. Drafting could be done in six (6) sections or groups, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision and Mandate, Administration, Human Resources - Admission, Facility Management, Discharge and Eviction - Incidents, Complaints and Disputes, Privacy and Confidentiality, Workplace Safety - Resident and Community Involvement, Program Operations, Resident Supports - Enhanced Services (and sub-manuals, as applicable) - Building Operations Consultant to provide draft sections for review and feedback in two- to three-week cycles. |
| Week 23/26* | 4 wks. | Final review of policy manual(s). |
| Week 30 | | First staff hiring. Majority of key operating policies should be largely completed by this time. |

* 2 to 3 weeks additional time provided if unforeseen circumstances delay completion

Appendix A.3: Project Operating Budgets and Project Finances

Annual Project Operating Budget

4051 4th Avenue is a large-scale project with a complex operating budget. The project financials are made even more complex by the ambitions that SAHS not require any ongoing funding from Yukon government in order to sustain operations. This will be accomplished by diversifying the revenue streams for the project, including leveraging the ground floor for social enterprise opportunities.

The table below outlines the annual project operating budget for the minimum core budget, which is a fully self-sustaining operating budget using rental revenues.

The SAHS has also done a detailed analysis of scale-up program options to achieve the final preferred scale-up program and the incremental funding required. This includes an assessment of the financial risks and potential mitigating strategies, as well as sources of additional funding. These additional funding sources are currently being explored and pursued, and SAHS will undertake a detailed business case plan for use of the ground floor and social enterprise development.

| <u>ANNUAL PROJECT OPERATING COSTS*</u> | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| | <u>Revenue</u> | |
| 1 | Rental revenue | \$664,120 |
| | <u>Expenditures</u> | |
| 2 | Program Personnel Costs | -\$393,507 |
| 3 | Program Costs | -\$33,200 |
| 4 | Fixed Building Costs | -\$234,616 |
| | TOTAL | \$2,797 |
| * | Annual budget based on full fiscal year of operations; partial year operations would be pro-rated on a monthly basis | |
| ** | Because the project falls under the <i>Residential Landlord and Tenant Act</i> , a damage deposit will be required of residents; this is estimated to be \$57,055 available for repairs, if needed, and held/managed consistent with RLTA requirements | |
| 1 | Rental revenue based on the following assumptions: | |
| | - 12, 2-bedroom units rented at \$1,225/month based on social assistance rates | |
| | - 43 studio/1-bedroom units rented at \$985/month based on social assistance rates | |
| | - 3% vacancy rate | |
| | - \$55,343/month revenue based on the above assumptions | |
| 2 | Based on the minimum core program | |
| 3 | Includes: phone, television, security, office supplies, etc. | |
| 4 | Projected fixed building costs based on average total costs for previous three years | |

Appendix A.4: Human Resources

4051 4th Avenue is committed to equity and diversity in its hiring practices. As a values-driven organization, we look for a staff team that are philosophically and ethically aligned with our approach to providing supportive housing. The SAHS is committed to hiring and developing a staff team that is skilled, compassionate, reflects the philosophical values of the organization, is representative of the tenant group being supported, adheres to the highest standards of professionalism, and that excels in providing exceptional services and supports to vulnerable persons.

A. PROJECT STAFFING NEEDS

One of the most important requirements for project success is having a full understanding of the human resource needs required to deliver the program(s), and a planned approach for how best to achieve them.

The table below provides a high-level human resource needs assessment for the project for both the minimum core program and the future final scaled-up program. This includes the estimated number of full-time staff needed for each role, as well as the respective skills required:

| Staffing Role | # FTE Needed | | Skills Needed |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | Minimum core program | Final scaled-up program | |
| Supervisor | 1 | 1 | Social Work degree, or similar. Extensive experience in human services and housing/supportive housing. |
| Service Plan Coordinators | 2 | 4 | Diploma or course work. Experience working in housing and/or human services, and experience doing case planning activities. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. |
| Tenant Support Workers | 2.5 | 6 | Diploma or course work an asset. Experience working in housing and/or human services. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. Comfort with and ability to work independently. |
| Service Plan Coordinators - youth | | 2 | Diploma or course work. Experience working in housing and/or human services, and experience doing case planning activities. Experience working with youth. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. Comfort with and ability to work independently. |
| Tenant Support Workers - youth | | 2 | Diploma or course work an asset. Experience working in housing and/or human services. Experience working with youth. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. Comfort with and ability to work independently. |
| Outreach Worker – youth | 1 | 1 | Diploma or course work. Experience doing outreach and case planning activities. Experience working with youth. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------------|--|
| SPC/TSW On Call | ~2 | ~3-4 people | Diploma or course work an asset. Experience in this sector an asset. Focus on philosophical 'fit'. Ability to be flexible in hours worked to cover a diversity of shifts. |
| Home Support Worker | | 2 | Diploma or course work an asset. Experience providing personal care and home support. Philosophical 'fit' important. Comfort and ability to work independently. |
| On Call – Home Support Worker | | ~1-2 people | Diploma or course work an asset. Experience providing personal care and home support. Philosophical 'fit' important. Comfort and ability to work independently. Ability to be flexible in hours worked to cover a diversity of shifts. |
| TOTAL | 8.5 | 22-24 | |

B. STAFF HIRING CRITERIA

The following outlines the hiring criteria for all staff positions, as well as criteria specific to different roles.

Requirements for all staff positions:

Knowledge

- Understanding of and adherence to harm reduction philosophy and practice
- Knowledge of various housing models, including permanent supportive housing
- Knowledge of low-barrier service provision and how that translates into practice and why
- Understanding and adherence to strengths-based philosophy
- Understanding and adherence to trauma-informed care
- Ability to contextualize challenging behaviours
- Understanding of the Yukon First Nations landscape and social context
- Understanding of what it means to provide support and services that are culturally safe, relevant and meaningful
- Understanding of anti-oppressive practice
- Understanding of concurrent disorders

Skills and experience

- Skills and experience with crisis de-escalation and conflict management
- Ability to maintain and convey empathy without judgement through challenging circumstances and behaviours
- Ability to maintain a high level of self/other awareness
- Ability to think critically and respond in a stage-appropriate and contextualized manner
- Strong work ethic and drive to build relationships and rapport with the individuals we serve by being proactive and taking initiative

Program Manager:

- Social Services or Social Work education, such as Social Services Certificate/Diploma or BSW preferred
- Advanced knowledge, skills, and experience in all areas of the fundamental requirements
- Strong case management and case planning skills
- At least two years relevant experience in a management capacity, or four years in a supervisory capacity
- At least 4 years' experience working with individuals who have concurrent disorders and challenging survival behaviours, ideally in a supportive housing or shelter environment

Program Supervisor:

- Social Services or Social Work education, such as Social Services Certificate/Diploma or BSW preferred
- At least three years' experience working with individuals who have concurrent disorders and challenging survival behaviours, ideally in a supportive housing or shelter environment
- Strong case management and case planning skills
- Advanced knowledge, skills, and experience in all areas of the Fundamental Requirements
- Experience in creating staff schedules, human resources, and supporting staff teams
- At least two years' experience in a relevant leadership capacity
- A relevant combination of education, skills, and experience considered

Tenant Support Workers:

- Social Services Worker Certificate or Diploma preferred, or relevant course work in the field of Social Work and/or Mental Health and Addictions
- Experience working in one or more of the following:
 - supportive housing
 - shelters
 - mental health and addictions services
 - First Nation organizations or governments
 - women and/or youth serving organizations
 - other relevant human-serving programs, operations and organizations

Service Plan Coordinators:

- Social Services Worker Certificate or Diploma preferred, or relevant course work in the field of Social Work and/or Mental Health and Addictions
- Experience working in one or more of the following:
 - supportive housing
 - shelters
 - mental health and addictions services
 - First Nation organizations or governments
 - women and/or youth serving organizations
 - other relevant human-serving programs, operations and organizations
- Understanding of case planning and case management models, and demonstrated experience developing strengths-based case, care or service plans with clients

Home Support Workers:

- Home Care Worker Certification, or relevant course work in this field preferred
- At least two years experiencing providing home support services for individuals
- Experience working with persons who may have mental health and substance use conditions and/or challenging survival behaviours

C. STAFF TRAINING

As supportive housing service delivery is a relatively new and emerging area in Yukon, finding staff who are trained or experienced in this sector may be challenging. Ensuring staff are appropriately trained and equipped to do the job requires fulsome training in a range of areas. This will provide new and potentially less experienced staff with the philosophical understanding of the approach to service delivery, as well as the tools to equip them to deal with a range of challenging situations.

Another way to potentially address the lack of direct experience in this sector is to ensure that the management and supervisor/oversight team have direct and extensive experience and skills in the areas required, and the ability to transfer this knowledge to new staff through side-by-side training and mentorship.

Mandatory or Core Training Credentials and Certificates

For all of the following training, SAHS will make efforts to coordinate group training for all new staff, or to contract training opportunities for staff as available and needed. Staff that miss training opportunities funded and scheduled by SAHS will need to obtain this training independently within the interval of time prescribed. If staff do not obtain the training within the period of time required, they may not be allowed to work until completed.

- First Aid/CPR: within three months of hire and to be maintained annually, as required.
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention: within 30 days of hire.
- ASIST: within 4 months of hire.
- First Nations 101 and the Button Blanket Exercise: within 6 months of hire or when available locally.
- Trauma-Informed Care: within 1 year of hire, or when available locally.

Future Training (beyond year one)

- Motivational Interviewing (levels one and two)
- Concurrent Disorders
- Basic Counselling and Crisis Counselling Skills

Onboarding Introductory Training Session

- Timeframe: approximately two 6-hour mandatory workshop sessions with all initial new staff before first shift. Once all new staff are hired and trained, individual new hires may receive one 4-hour abridged version with their supervisor/manager and the remainder of their training can take place on-shift with senior frontline staff using the staff onboarding training agenda and checklist.
- Who: Training completed with the program manager and/or supervisor.

- Topics:
 - a) Introduction to the project
 - Organization and program-specific mandate; vision; goals; philosophy; guiding principles, including:
 - What is low-barrier service delivery?
 - What is harm-reduction philosophy?
 - What is trauma and what is complex trauma? What is trauma-informed care?
 - What does it mean to work from an anti-oppressive lens?
 - How we attend to the needs of different population groups, including women; First Nations; and youth.
 - Brief introduction to stages of change theory and how this applies.
 - Relationship building and proactive engagement.
 - How referrals for housing at the project work
 - b) Staffing
 - Schedules; duties and roles
 - Shift change, communication and how all teams work together
 - Support and leadership staff, duties and roles/responsibilities
 - How and when to access supervisory or management staff
 - Schedule changes, vacation, sick time
 - How to manage and approach inter-staff conflict
 - Who to contact with a protracted inter-staff conflict or concern
 - c) The Building: layout, safety, emergencies, cameras, maintenance, access and restricted access, who to contact when there is a maintenance or other building concern, and cleaning duties. All new staff should receive a thorough walk-through of the building.
 - d) Working with professionalism, as teams and amongst each other, and with residents and the public:
 - Professional boundaries
 - How to avoid a toxic workplace, building positivity
 - Use of social media
 - Confidentiality
 - Accountability and reliability
 - Punctuality
 - Working with emergency services
 - Documentation standards (objectivity)
 - Documentation and Database: how, what, where, why. HIFIS?
 - e) Case Planning 101:
 - Roles and expectations for front line staff
 - Introduce Housing Stability Plan template and Case Planning template
 - f) Harm Reduction
 - Naloxone Training
 - Harm Reduction supplies training
 - g) Case Studies and problem solving
 - Tenant conflict management
 - Unwelcome or dangerous guest/visitor
 - High risk substance use
 - Street and survival behaviours inside the building, our role.
 - h) Questions and Discussion
 - i) Next steps and shadow shift training

- Provide New Staff Training Agenda/Checklist and ask for return after 3 training shifts
 - Explain how the first 3 shadow/training shifts will work and what to expect
 - Ask all staff to submit their paperwork for their HR file (certifications, contact, emergency contact, income tax, etc.)
- Future Goal: to complete this training in person with a theory and case-studies based hardcopy or online training component that complements this introductory in-person training.

In-Service Workshops During Staff Meetings

These trainings will be facilitated by SAHS staff, community organizations, or other local experts and contractors.

- Introduction to FASD
- Professional boundaries
- MSWU programs and services
- Information on other frequently used local resources for staff to learn
- Case planning in more detail
- Indigenous Cultural safety and relevance
- Working with youth/young adults
- Working with women through a gendered lens
- Safety planning and prevention of violence
- Ethical decision-making models
- Self-care

Onsite, Side-by-Side Training

We understand that the time required to do side-by-side training and mentorship is considerable, but it is our experience that this is one of the best methods for training new individuals to work in this sector. As new staff are hired, more experienced frontline workers can also provide formal or informal mentorship and training through work shadowing.

TIMELINE

To ensure a smooth transition to operations and a welcoming home environment for tenants, all initial staff hiring, and training must be completed at least three to four weeks in advance of the first tenanting.

It is proposed that hiring be done in phases, beginning with the Project Supervisor and the Housing Programs Manager (as applicable). This will allow the Manager and/or Supervisor to be directly involved in selecting their staff team and will provide opportunity to lift some of the required work from other Safe at Home Society staff positions, namely the Executive Director.

| Week | Duration | Action |
|------------------|-----------------|--|
| Preparatory work | | Draft job descriptions, shift duties and responsibilities, and job postings. Do preliminary scoping for potential candidates for the Supervisor and Housing Manager roles. |
| Week 1 to 4 | 4 wks. | Post Project Supervisor and Housing Manager ²⁷ jobs. |
| Week 5 to 6 | 2 wks. | Screen resumes and set up interviews for Supervisor and Manager. |
| Week 7 | 1 wk. | Interview for Supervisor/Manager positions. |
| Week 8 | 1 wk. | Select Supervisor/Manager positions. |
| Week 11 | 1+ wks. | Onboarding for Supervisor/Manager positions. |
| Week 12 to 13 | 2 wks. | Supervisor/Manager to confirm shift schedule and meet with Employment Standards Branch to confirm proposed work hours align with <i>Employment Standards Act</i> ; request an exception to standard hours, if required. |
| Week 14 to 18+ | 5+ wks. | Post for Tenant Support Workers (TSW) and other remaining positions. |
| Week 16 to 18+ | 5+ wks. | Supervisor/Manager to draft staff resources and training materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program Training Manual, theory and case studies - Staff information and resource quick reference guide - Initial staff training checklist - Arrange for training workshops and courses - Others as needed |
| Week 22 to 24 | 3 wks. | Screen resumes and set up interviews. |
| Week 25 to 27 | 3 wks. | Select preferred candidates. |
| Week 30 | 3 wks. | Staff onboarding and training. |
| Week 33 | 1 to 2 wks. | Staff <u>in-facility</u> shift training and orientation. |
| Week 35 | | First tenant occupancy. |
| Post move-in | | Supervisor/Manager to revise and add to staff training and resource materials, including new staff training orientation |

²⁷ Funding for this position is being explored with the Housing Transformation Centre (HTC). Position will only be posted if funding is received from the HTC.

Appendix A.5: Tenanting and Occupancy

Once complete, 4051 4th Avenue will be the single largest supportive housing project in the territory. With a total of 55 units, incorporating a distinct ‘program within a program’ that includes 16 studio units for youth/young adults, tenanting the project in a thoughtful and measured way will be challenging.

Tenanting for 4051 4th Avenue is likely to be a collective, community effort. It is the goal that the majority of tenants are selected from the By-Name List and that tenanting for the project can occur concurrently with other projects, such as the soon to be completed Cornerstone Project. This will provide opportunity to match potential tenants with the program(s) that will best meet their needs.

As there are gaps in supportive housing for many vulnerable populations, roll-out of communications about the project and how to access the units will need to be done thoughtfully, and in a way that engages community members and organizations. There will also need to be considerable research and due diligence completed for lease agreements, tenancy forms (e.g. unit inspection forms), and clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of the SAHS as both the building owner and program operator, and the property management company, NVD. The process of tenanting may also take some time and should incorporate administrative requirements, such as unit inspection, damage deposit payment, etc.

TIMELINE

It is assumed that phased renovations will be done on a floor-by-floor basis, allowing tenants to move in gradually as sections and floors of the building are completed.

| Week | Duration | Action |
|------------------|----------|--|
| Preparatory work | | Inform key housing service and support partners about preliminary project approval. |
| | | Determine whether tenanting will happen exclusively through the BNL or primarily through the BNL supplemented by other methods. |
| Week 1 to 2 | 2 wks. | Develop information materials about the project, including the approach to tenant selection. |
| Week 3.... | 4+ wks. | Distribute communications to community members regarding the project and approach to tenanting. |
| Week 12 | 3 wks. | Meet with staff at the Residential Tenancy Branch regarding the project and rights and responsibilities of SAHS as building owner (ultimate landlord) and program operator. |
| Week 15 to 18 | 4 wks. | Develop the lease agreement and other tenancy-related forms, including tenant handbook. |
| Week 19 to 22 | 4 wks. | Make decisions on majority of tenants with BNL and other community partners. Newly hired Supervisor/Manager to participate in end of the process and to lead the remaining coordinating work moving forward. |
| Week 23 to 26 | 4 wks. | Supervisor/Manager to inform potential tenants of offer of tenancy and confirm tenant interest. |
| Week 27 to 30 | 4 wks. | Supervisor/Manager to develop phased tenanting plan and schedule, including identifying key move-in supports, lease agreements, rent payment arrangements, etc. |
| Week 35 | | First tenant occupancy |
| Week 38 | | Second tenant occupancy |

| | |
|---------|--|
| Week 41 | Third tenant occupancy |
| Week 43 | Fourth tenant occupancy |
| Week 45 | Tenancing complete – project has full occupancy. |
