



Giwetashkad Indigenous Homelessness Strategic Plan

2020-2023



ATLOHSA
FAMILY HEALING SERVICES

**Nookomis Nibaa Ningashkendam
(Grandmother Sleeps Sad)**

As I'm sleeping in the park
or camping behind the Ark,
I hear the laughter of my grandchildren
forever after the stars have dimmed.
I will always remember them.
Being homeless in this old city was not by choice.
The abuse and the addictions silenced my voice.
As an invisible minority I will fall through the cracks.
Chased and traced by bureaucratic facts!
They inform me that it's easy to do.
Be upstanding, critical and non-addicted too.
The streets can be lonely with nobody to greet.
Waiting for the helpers I'll never meet.
I'm a temporary, homeless, faceless fixture
inside the over thought, under funded picture.
Please help us find the peace
by allotting us the help we need.
Community has been extremely compassionate and kind
to devote energy and resources to help us find
answers for questions that are never asked.
Do we have a future without acknowledging our past?
As I'm sleeping in the park
or camping behind the Ark,
I hear the laughter of my grandchildren
forever after the stars have dimmed.
I will always remember them.

**Elaine V Antone
March 2019
London, Ontario**

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PREAMBLE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Giwetashkad Indigenous Homelessness Strategic Plan (Giwetashkad Plan) was developed through a multi-year, Indigenous-led community engagement process.

We gratefully acknowledge all contributors to the Giwetashkad Advisory Committee, who provided an abundance of support, ideas, and direction to all aspects of the planning process.

A very special thank you to all participants in the community engagement process. To the Indigenous people with lived and/or living experience of homelessness, your courage and honesty in sharing your stories and knowledge contributes to the healing of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness in London and the surrounding area.

We are grateful to the City of London for its generous funding and support of this project.

MEMORIAL STATEMENT

We honour the memory and the lives of those who were with us for just a short time. We honour the strength and hope of those who are missing, that they will be reunited with those by whom they are loved. We honour the lives of those who are disconnected from their families, communities, and territories.

No more homeless deaths; no more homeless missing; no more homeless isolation. Bring people back home.

THE GIWETASHKAD PLAN LOGO AND CONCEPT

Why Giwetashkad Was Chosen for the Name of This Plan

Giwetashkad is an Anishnaabemowin (Ojibwe language) word and concept that can roughly be translated to “circle.” Because the Anishnaabemowin language is not primarily noun based, “circle” can only be understood as an action of moving in a circular fashion or as “coming back around.”

As the root word “giiwe” means “home,” and is also the root of the word “giiwedining” or the Northern direction – where the spirits go home – “Giwetashkad” is a term that evokes movement through the cycles of life, rebirth, and renewal.

This name was initially given to this project to represent the aspect of community coming together. The Giwetashkad Advisory Committee (the Circle) began coming together in April 2017, bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers, cultural knowledge keepers, and individuals with lived and/or living experience of homelessness.

Circle members gathered to talk about Indigenous homelessness in our communities. As the discussions evolved, we came to a deeper understanding of the ways this name speaks to the process of bringing people home and coming around again to our families, communities, ways of being, and land.

The Giwetashkad Plan Logo



The crest in the logo is held within a circle, which is a sacred and strong symbol of community, the interconnected relationship of all things, and a home for everyone. The logo recognizes all peoples as being part of one community with a vision of unity in the city of London.

The graphic in the middle depicts a lodge with a tree resting on top or in the distance. The tree's roots form a lodge - a motif to symbolize core values. The logo recognizes the link for Indigenous peoples between the land and home; it is the land itself that brings people home.

The choice of the great white pine is deliberate. It echoes the story of the formation of the Haudenosaunee, the Great Law of Peace, where Six Nations cast their weapons into a pit under an uprooted tree and replanted a great white pine as a symbol of peace. No more would the Six Nations use their tools of war, which would forever be held under the mighty roots of the sacred tree. The Giwetashkad Plan invokes this sacred gesture by putting hopelessness into the ground and committing ourselves to providing a home for those who have been displaced from their communities.

DEFINITION OF INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit** individuals, families, or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, or ability to acquire such housing.

Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews.

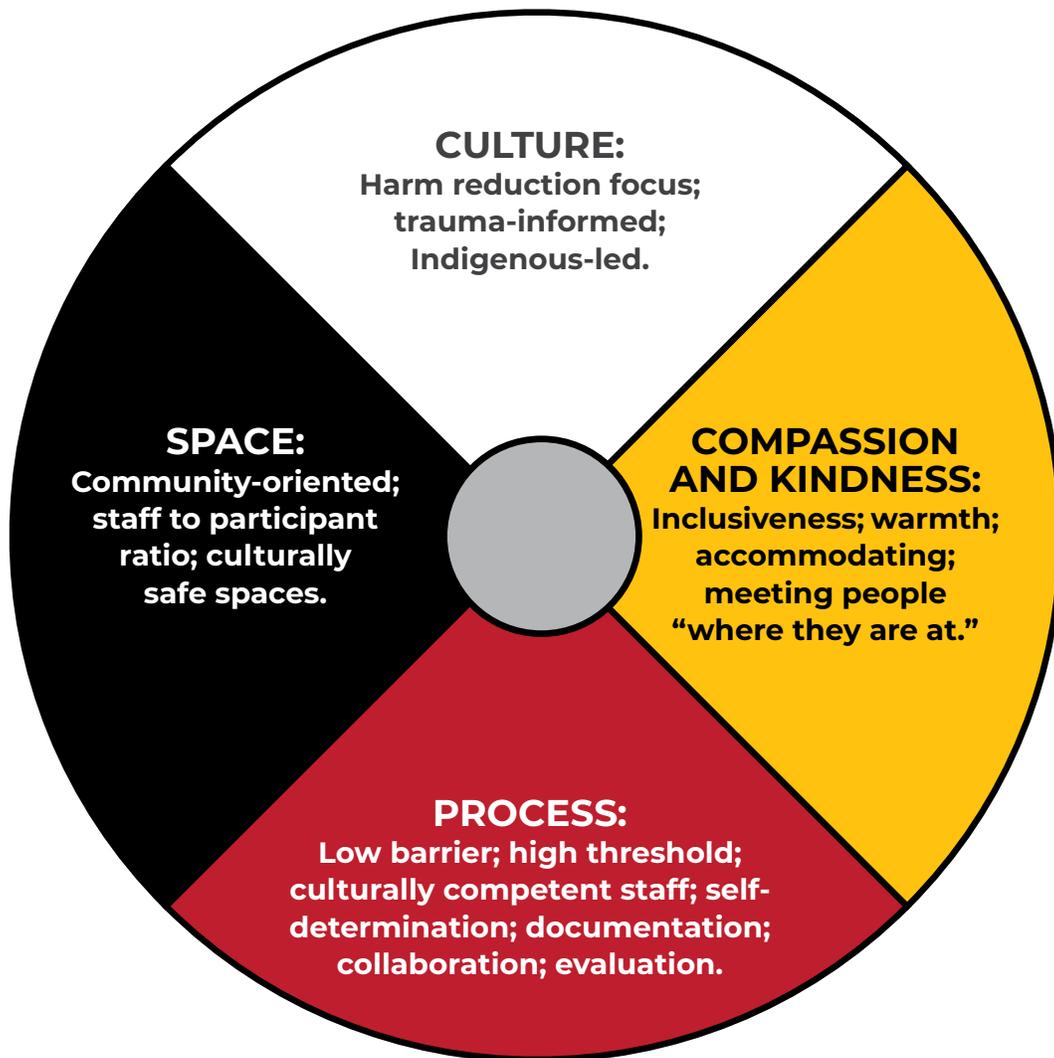
These include: individuals, families, and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally, or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.¹

¹ Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ASCHH). (2012). Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness in Calgary. Retrieved from <http://www.aschh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ASCHH-Aboriginal-Plan-Final.pdf>

ABOUT INDIGENIZED HOUSING FIRST

Evidence has shown that Housing First is effective for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness when it is adapted to meet specific cultural needs and the regional context. That is to say, Indigenized Housing First is a best practice for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness.

The Giwetashkad Indigenized Housing First Model adapts mainstream Housing First practices and philosophy, based within a medicine wheel framework as follows:



INTRODUCTION

THE GIWETASHKAD INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Giwetashkad Plan sets out a vision of home as a place of safety, belonging, and relationship. It provides specific recommendations for addressing Indigenous homelessness.

Using a community-driven, Indigenous-led, and culture-based community engagement process, the voices and perspectives of Indigenous community members with lived and/or living experience of homelessness are at the heart of this plan.

The Giwetashkad Plan shares a community story of “home” based in local knowledge and history, intergenerational resiliencies, and the difficult realities of homelessness for Indigenous people in London.

There is alignment with the strategic areas of focus found in the City of London’s Housing Stability Action Plan: 2019-2024, as well as with national and provincial housing and homelessness strategies and plans. Together, we are partners in this work.

Finally, the Giwetashkad Plan represents a shared journey towards transformation in the spirit of truth and reconciliation. Reconciliation involves breaking the cycles of historic and ongoing trauma by acknowledging the truth of Indigenous experiences in Canada within a framework of cultural knowledge and practice. The Giwetashkad Plan is rooted in this primary belief.

HOW THE GIWETASHKAD PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

Since 2016, the Indigenous community in London has been coming together with its allies to identify a way forward to bring our people home. The Giwetashkad Plan is the outcome of that culture-based, collaborative, community-driven, and Indigenous-led process.

2016

PHASE 1 Formation of the Circle

The Circle was formed to provide guidance and oversee the development of the Giwetashkad Plan. The Circle met monthly during the development of the plan.

2017

PHASE 2 Needs Assessment

A needs assessment was conducted with Indigenous people with lived and/or living experience of homelessness and service providers to better understand Indigenous homelessness in London, Ontario. A literature review was also completed as part of the needs assessment.

2018

PHASE 3 Community Engagement

Culture-based research and ethics guidelines informed the community engagement process. Indigenous people with lived and/or living experience of homelessness shared their knowledge and recommendations to address homelessness, and cultural knowledge keepers shared historical and regional information about Indigenous homelessness. A national program review was also conducted to investigate evidence-based practices to address Indigenous homelessness.

2019

PHASE 4 Strategy Development

The data gathered through the needs assessment and community engagement process was used by the Circle to identify strategic priorities and strategies. The development of the Giwetashkad Plan was an iterative process. A series of meetings occurred to provide sufficient reflection and revision of each strategic priority and corresponding strategies.

2020 - 2023

PHASE 5 Moving to Action

The Circle met and approved the Giwetashkad Plan in February 2020. With this approval, implementation of the strategies will begin and will continue over the next three years. Detailed action plans will be created with specific tasks, timelines, and deliverables to guide the implementation of the Giwetashkad Plan.

PARTNERS IN THE GIWETASHKAD PLAN

The Giwetashkad Plan requires bold leadership, collaborative partnership, and focused action from:

- **Individuals With Lived and/or Living Experience of Homelessness:** Individuals with lived and/or living experience of homelessness will be invited to share their expertise, experience, and stories that will drive recommendations and actions.
- **Indigenous Organizations:** Indigenous organizations will continue to have a strong voice and be partners through implementation.
- **All Three Levels of Government:** Municipal, federal, and provincial partners will provide knowledge, resources, and investments to support implementation.
- **Community Partners:** Both non-profit and private sector partners will assist in providing health, well-being, and housing solutions.



THE NEED FOR AN INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS PLAN IN LONDON

FACTS AND STATISTICS ABOUT INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

Indigenous Population in and Around London

9,725 

Indigenous people reside in London, which is **2.6% of the total population**²

6th 

largest Indigenous population in Ontario is in London

27,000 

is the estimated number of Indigenous peoples **living within Southwestern Ontario**

There Is an Epidemic of Indigenous Homelessness

30% 

of London's homeless population is Indigenous, yet Indigenous people represent only **2.6% of London's total population**

285 

unique individuals have **accessed Atlohsa's Resting Space** since April 2019

Indigenous people are largely overrepresented on the streets and in the shelters in London. There is a strong need for Indigenous-led and culture-based strategies for alleviating Indigenous homelessness that recognize historic and ongoing colonization, including residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and ongoing Millennial Scoop, missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited people, and continued land displacement, as the foundation of Indigenous homelessness.

The Dish with One Spoon territory, otherwise known as London and the surrounding area, has been home to Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. When treaties were signed, it was agreed that there would be sharing of the land, with shared responsibilities between settlers and Indigenous peoples to take care of each other and the land that they were living on.

² Statistics Canada. (2017). London, CY [Census subdivision], Ontario and Saskatchewan [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

Through the process of colonization, that intention was not fulfilled to Indigenous peoples, who have continued to be displaced. This is evident within the city of London, with Indigenous peoples being overrepresented amongst those experiencing homelessness. The number of Indigenous peoples living in public spaces will continue to increase if they are not supported with a Housing First model that is culturally specific, as outlined in the Giwetashkad Plan.

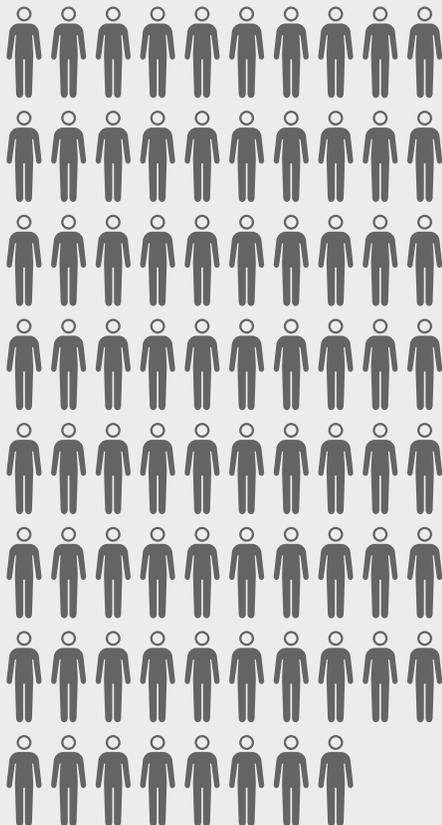
NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

This section presents the collective results from the needs assessment and community engagement process.

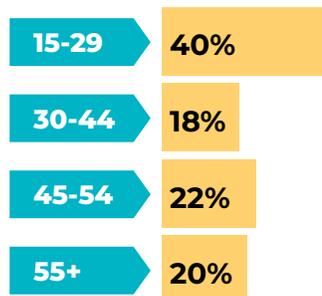
Who Participated?

78 individuals

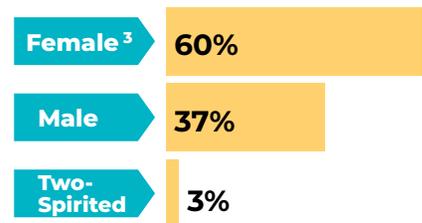
with lived and/or living experience of homelessness who self-identified as Indigenous participated in the needs assessment or community engagement process



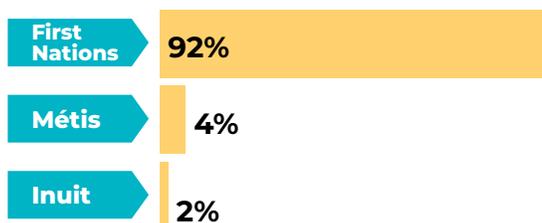
Age (n=51)



Gender (n=78)



Nation of Origin (n=51)



Disability or Health Issue (n=27)



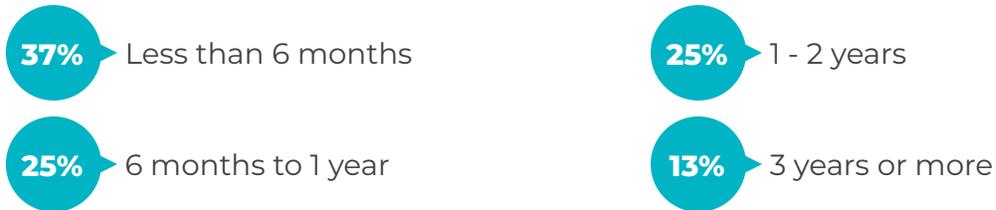
75%

reported having a disability or health issue

³ Circle members noted that it is unique to have so many women represented. This is due to Atlohsha having a number of programs and services for Indigenous women experiencing homelessness.

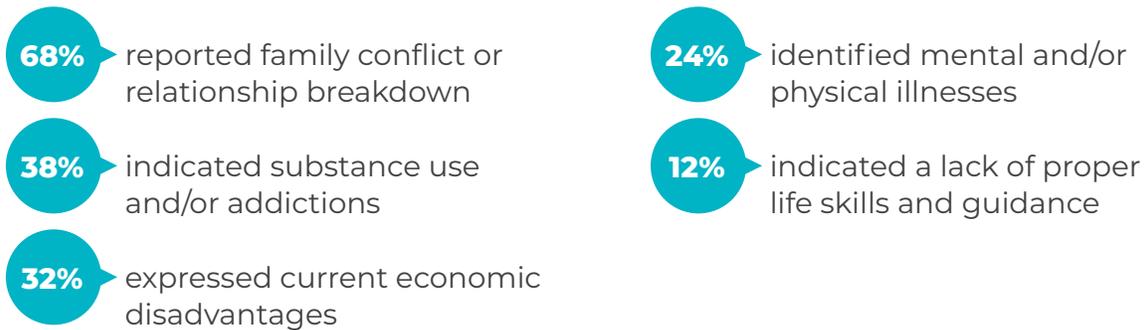
What Were Individuals' Experiences of Homelessness?

Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness (n=56)



Chronic homelessness is defined as a period of homelessness lasting six months or more in the last year. A total of 63% (n=35) of respondents reported experiencing chronic homelessness.

Contributing Factors to Respondents' Current Experience of Homelessness (n=51)



Individuals reported multiple factors that contributed to their experience of homelessness. The intersectionality of these factors needs to be considered in addressing homelessness.

Housing Goal or Plan (n=27)



What Recommendations Did Individuals Have to Solve Homelessness?

The following recommendations were provided by individuals with lived and/or living experience of homelessness through the needs assessment and community engagement process.

1 Access to Land and Culture

- **80%** of individuals described having a very strong connection to culture
- **74%** of individuals indicated they had attended ceremonies and cultural events

Historic and ongoing colonization has displaced Indigenous peoples from the land and targeted cultural practices. From an Indigenous worldview, the land and culture provide everything that is needed to live a good life. Land and cultural practices are the foundations of wholistic wellness and are crucial for alleviating Indigenous homelessness.

Through the needs assessment and community engagement process, individuals expressed a strong desire to learn about and reconnect with cultural teachings, have access to Elders/cultural knowledge keepers and other role models, and have opportunities to participate in cultural and traditional practices, such as smudging, as part of the various services offered in London as well as in their own homes.

Obstacles to participating in cultural practices included: the feeling and perception of no longer being welcomed or comfortable in home communities; it being too difficult or expensive to travel to home communities; and a lack of understanding of or connection to the cultural practices of nearby Indigenous communities.

Individuals also pointed to the central importance of connection to the land and described their interest in reconnecting with the land. This included the need for at least one culturally appropriate outdoor space where Indigenous people living in London could spend time together and build community connections, solidarity, and pride. Individuals shared they wanted more opportunities to meet other Indigenous people, socialize, make friends, and find support.

Many individuals expressed the need for more gatherings, feasts, and other cultural and spiritual events in London. Two important themes emerged in relation to the desire for social togetherness. Firstly, individuals explained there was inadequate advertising of cultural events and they often found out about events like powwows after the fact. The recommendation was to improve marketing of these opportunities. Secondly, individuals experienced challenges with finding transportation to these events and recommended providing transportation to attend events.

2 Indigenous-Led, Culture-Based Supports and Services

- Individuals expressed discontent with the barriers they often experienced when trying to access social services
- Individuals emphasized the importance of an Indigenous-led, culturally safe approach to service delivery

When asked about a culturally safe approach to service delivery in emergency shelters or support services for individuals experiencing homelessness, the general consensus was that non-Indigenous agencies do not have services that are culturally safe for Indigenous community members and that they “treat everybody the same.”

Although the current model of treating all community members equally means well, it does not recognize the effects of historical and ongoing colonization and intergenerational trauma faced by Indigenous people. The lack of Indigenous-led, culturally safe social services does not facilitate healing, as Indigenous peoples must navigate systemic barriers within Western-focused services. A culturally safe approach is crucial for the health and well-being of Indigenous people.

Further, respondents expressed extreme discontent with the lack of cultural awareness when accessing emergency shelters, stating that their experiences were not understood in the context of historic and ongoing colonialism. Instead, individuals’ relationships to culture were often dismissed, leading to mistrust towards staff and overall discomfort within the emergency shelters.

In comparison, those who expressed satisfaction with emergency and/or Violence Against Women shelters often stayed at culturally relevant shelters. Respondents stated that while staying in an emergency shelter that also supported cultural practice, they were able to live in solidarity with the rules and structure, which also worked to empower individuals towards their own healing.



3 Stronger Relationships with Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Service Providers

- Individuals stated that due to a lack of general prioritization towards Indigenous people, they do not believe they will receive adequate support
- Individuals recommended that stronger relationships be cultivated amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous service providers

Amongst the Canadian institutions with which many Indigenous people experiencing homelessness interact, including social services, justice, health care, and child welfare, there is a lack of understanding of Indigenous culture, the effects of historic and ongoing colonialism, and intergenerational trauma. Despite best efforts, these systems often end up putting up barriers to people trying to heal and can be re-traumatizing.

Individuals explained that workers in service organizations need to be better informed about Indigenous people. Some individuals reported they had taken it upon themselves to educate non-Indigenous workers. At times, they were proud to share their knowledge, but at other times, they resented having to do so.

In order to make social services more accessible for Indigenous peoples, it is imperative that service providers are educated in culturally safe service delivery. In learning to recognize the impacts of colonialism and cultivating compassion for Indigenous peoples, trust can be built.

Many Indigenous people face barriers in accessing social services due to personal perceptions that they will not be prioritized or helped. Through cultivating a culturally safe approach, social services can come to an understanding of Indigenous lived experiences of trauma/colonial violence, leading to increased compassion for the Indigenous community.



4 Strengthened Family Healing Supports

- It is estimated that **74%** of Indigenous people experiencing family violence do not report their victimization⁴
- Indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence and 3 times more likely to be victims of spousal assault than non-Indigenous women⁵

Respondents identified a need for strengthened family healing supports that are inclusive of all members of the family and extended family unit. As the processes of colonization ultimately targeted the family unit, many families and communities are impacted by intergenerational trauma.

Indigenous peoples with lived and/or living experience of homelessness shared about the significance of extended family, particularly grandmothers. Approximately 40% of the respondents spoke about having children. Overwhelmingly, respondents expressed love, protectiveness, pride, and gratitude in relation to their children. There is an identified need for services that support family reconciliation, healing, and integration.

Many Indigenous people identified requiring specific cultural supports in their own home, such as visits from an Elder/cultural knowledge keeper to smudge the home in preparation for a move-in and/or on an ongoing basis while the person is living in the home. Programs can also support immediate and extended family relationships that are culturally important while a person is settling into a new home through mentorship and connection.

⁴ Scrim, K. (2017). Aboriginal Victimization in Canada: A Summary of the Literature. Victims of Crime Research Digest No. 3. Canadian Department of Justice. Retrieved January 26, 2018, from <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/victim/rd3-rr3/p3.html>

⁵ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. (2017). Domestic Violence. Homeless Hub. Retrieved January 26, 2018, from <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/legal-justice-issues/domestic-violence>



5 Indigenous Outreach

- **66%** of respondents indicated that additional support and guidance would help them in their efforts to overcome their current homelessness
- Individuals identified outreach, counselling, and housing stability services as critical to assisting individuals experiencing homelessness

The need for more Indigenous support workers to perform outreach around London was raised. In particular, respondents envisioned Indigenous support workers distributing resources and assisting people to find in-the-moment supports leading to long-term housing.

Many individuals identified a need for one-on-one assistance from Indigenous workers who could “take you around and help you do whatever,” in particular by helping to facilitate apartment viewings, acting as a referral, and assisting with interpreting and completing forms. Later in the process, respondents explained that these support workers could assist by providing pre-emption interventions, enabling individuals to maintain housing stability.

The desire for Indigenous outreach to combat loneliness and prevent isolation amongst those experiencing homelessness was also voiced. Very often, individuals said they just needed someone to “listen and understand.” This leads back into the dimension of Indigenous homelessness being about a loss of connection to community and culture.

In addition, Indigenous individuals identified a crucial need for one-on-one counselling support that is Indigenous-led and culture-based.





THE GIWETASHKAD PLAN

VISION

Bringing people home.

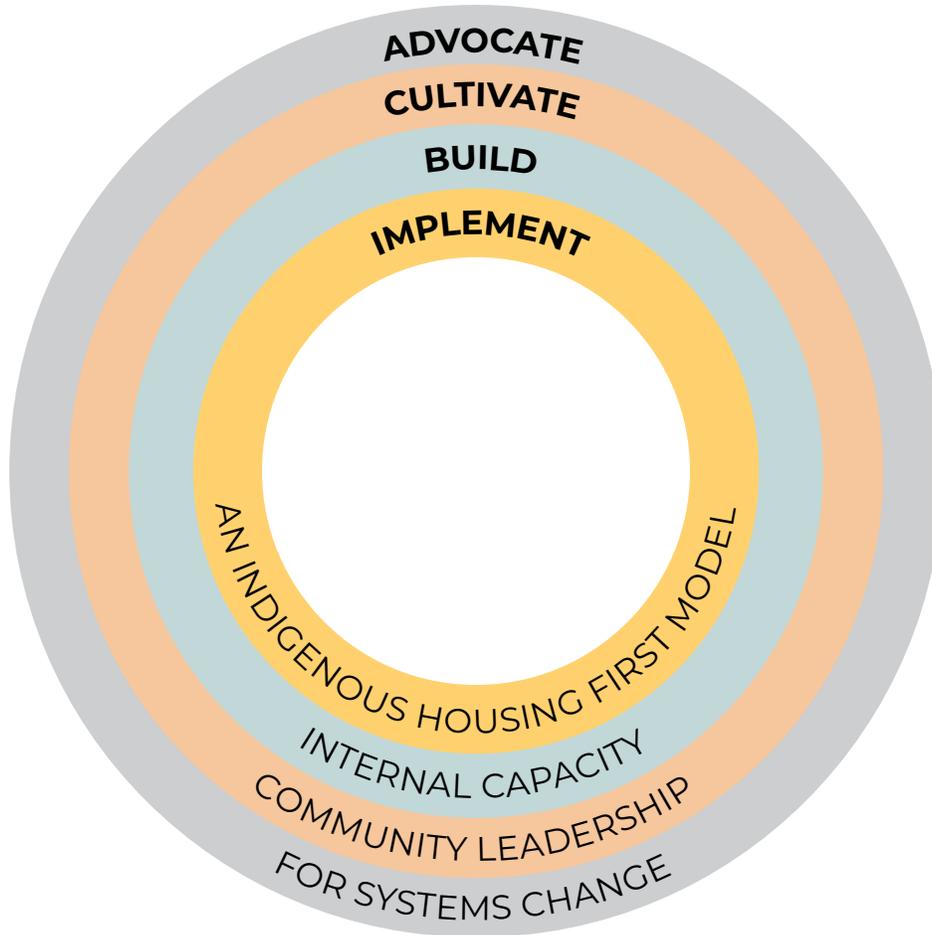
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide our work together.

- 1. Strengths-Based:** Acknowledging the inherent strengths of individuals, families, and communities.
- 2. Trauma-Informed:** Using trauma-informed practices.
- 3. Culture:** Implementing cultural practices as the basis of our understanding.
- 4. Intersectionality:** Recognizing that the experience of every individual is unique.
- 5. Indigenous Leadership and Inclusion:** Prioritizing the engagement and employment of Indigenous individuals, families, communities, and organizations.
- 6. Environmental Stewardship:** Honouring the land that we come from and treating it with great respect.
- 7. Collaboration:** Affirming the role of community in the development, implementation, and evaluation of all activities.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

To achieve the vision of *bringing people home*, four strategic directions will be implemented. Each strategic direction has a goal, expected result, strategies, and description.



Strategic Direction 1: Implement an Indigenous Housing First Model

Goal: Indigenous peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness have culture-based services and supports to secure and maintain housing.

Strategic Direction 2: Build Internal Capacity

Goal: The appropriate resources are available to address the needs of Indigenous peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Strategic Direction 3: Cultivate Community Leadership

Goal: Culturally safe services are available to support Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Strategic Direction 4: Advocate for Systems Change

Goal: A coordinated and connected system of service provision to meet the needs of Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1:

IMPLEMENT AN INDIGENOUS HOUSING FIRST MODEL

Goal

Indigenous peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness have culture-based services and supports to secure and maintain housing.



Strategies

1. Create a culture-based outreach program to engage street-involved individuals.
2. Create an Indigenous Housing Hub, including emergency/resting space beds.
3. Develop and implement a culture-based Healing and Housing First Model.

Expected Results

- A decrease in the number of Indigenous peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- An increase in the number of Indigenous peoples maintaining housing stability.

About This Strategic Direction

We see an opportunity for transformative change in how we address Indigenous homelessness in London. The development of the Giwetashkad Indigenous Housing First Model is crucial to ensuring a continuum of services and programs that address the causes of Indigenous homelessness in London.

Through a culture-based Indigenous Housing First approach, the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual needs of Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness will be addressed.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2:

BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY

Goal

The appropriate resources are available to address the needs of Indigenous peoples at risk of or experiencing homelessness.



Strategies

1. Engage Indigenous people to support the work to be completed through the Giwetashkad Plan.
2. Secure the financial, physical, and material resources required to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the Giwetashkad Plan.
3. Facilitate community engagement to better understand the needs of Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
4. Implement evaluation practices to measure progress and report on outcomes.

Expected Results

- An increase in the number of Indigenous people employed in leadership positions and engaged in efforts related to addressing Indigenous homelessness.
- An increase in resources available to support the implementation of the Giwetashkad Plan.
- An increase in quality data to inform decision-making related to Indigenous homelessness.

About This Strategic Direction

Indigenous peoples and organizations have the skills and expertise to lead our community towards solving Indigenous homelessness. Through a focus on strong leadership, knowledgeable staff, and peer mentorship, we are confident that the strategic priorities outlined in the Giwetashkad Plan can be realized.

Solving Indigenous homelessness also requires resources and knowledge. Resources required will be in the form of financial investment, physical space, and materials. Knowledge will be developed through local community engagement by exploring and listening to the needs, ideas, and insights of individuals with lived and/or living experience of homelessness and cultural knowledge keepers. Knowledge will also be developed by evaluating our work against our intended outcomes to determine whether we are having a positive impact.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3:

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Goal

Culturally safe services are available to support Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.



Strategies

1. Develop culturally relevant needs assessment tools and materials.
2. Establish culturally safe discharge, referral, and warm transfer processes for agencies.
3. Provide cultural safety training for homeless serving programs and supports.
4. Develop an interagency Indigenous housing support network.

Expected Results

- An increase in knowledge of culture-based services, supports, and tools to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples.
- An understanding of Indigenous lived experiences of trauma/colonial violence, leading to increased compassion for the Indigenous community.
- A decrease in the number of individuals discharged to homelessness.
- An increase in the number of warm transfers and referrals.

About This Strategic Direction

It is crucial that all services work to improve access for Indigenous peoples. To alleviate Indigenous homelessness in our community, it is essential that community members and service providers at all levels understand the impact of historical trauma and its effects on the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples.

By addressing Indigenous homelessness using a culturally safe approach, service providers can offer recognition and support; this is only possible through collaborative, cooperative, and supportive relationships with allies.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4:

ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

Goal

A coordinated and connected system of service provision to meet the needs of Indigenous people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Strategies

1. Advocate for the development of formal relationships between the City of London and the local First Nations.
2. Engage and include First Nations on Indigenous homelessness and housing issues and initiatives.
3. Partner with homeless serving agencies, government, and funders to influence policy change to meet the needs of Indigenous people.
4. Collaborate with emergency shelters and service agency intake systems in the city of London to ensure Indigenous self-identification is captured and reflected.

Expected Results

- An increase in the number of partnerships between government, service providers, and First Nations.
- Improved policies, processes, and practices to support Indigenous people with lived and/or living experience of homelessness.
- Improved data collection processes and practices related to Indigenous self-identification.

About This Strategic Direction

We urge the City of London to continue to develop formal relationships with the three local First Nations: Chippewas of the Thames, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation.

First Nations will be actively engaged to address Indigenous homelessness and housing. Engagement will be ongoing and includes traditional governance structures. Through collaboration, it is possible to find a practical and effective solution to the crisis of Indigenous homelessness.

To truly find a solution, we must not only create effective interventions towards housing stability, but also address colonization as the root cause leading to homelessness for Indigenous people. This will be achieved through policy changes at federal, provincial, and municipal levels.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GIWETASHKAD PLAN

MOVING FROM STRATEGY TO ACTION

The Giwetashkad Plan is a commitment to move beyond strategies towards action. It is through action that we will achieve the goals and expected results outlined in this plan.

There are four critical and immediate next steps to begin the implementation of the Giwetashkad Plan. These are described below.

- 1. Prepare an Implementation Plan:** While there are strategic directions and strategies outlined in this plan, annual implementation plans will need to be created. Implementation plans will have specific actions and timelines that correspond to each strategy.
- 2. Develop a Governance Structure:** The work of the Giwetashkad Plan will be community-led. A governance structure will be required to outline the key roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. A strong governance structure will serve as the backbone for the implementation of the plan.



3. Create a Business Plan for the Giwetashkad Housing First Program:

The Giwetashkad Housing First Program requires a business plan. The business plan will serve to clearly define the core components of the Giwetashkad Housing First Program, along with the administrative and financial resources required for operations.

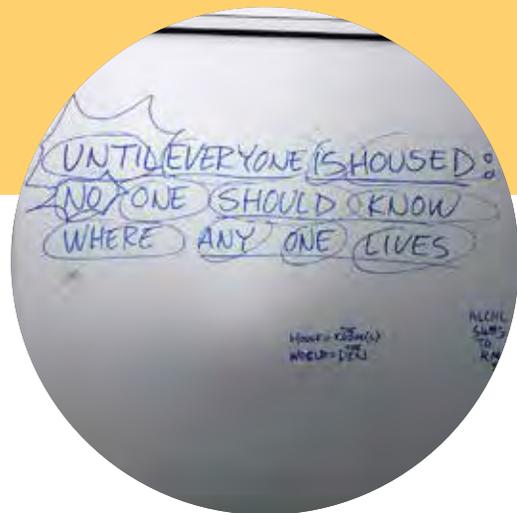
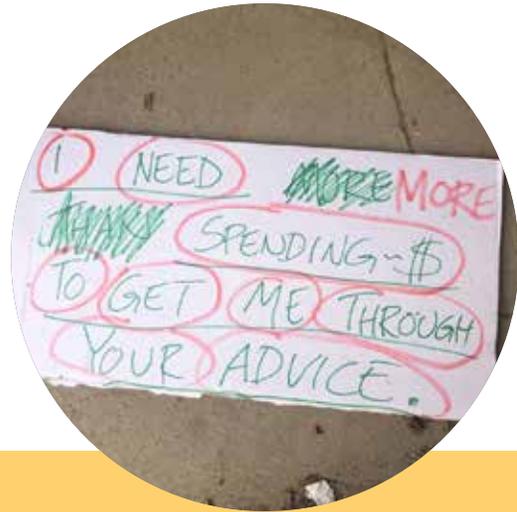
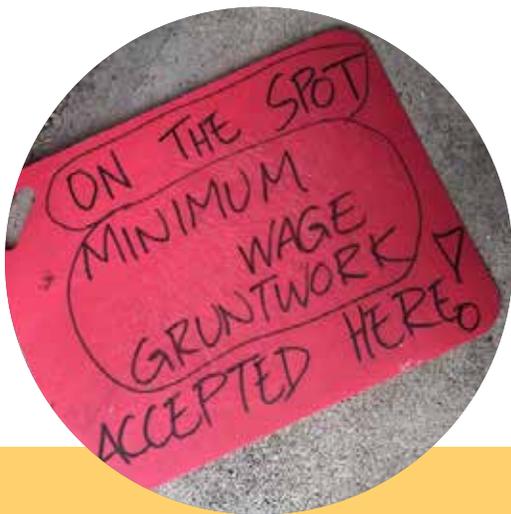
4. Secure Financial Investment: The implementation of the Giwetashkad Plan requires financial investment. Opportunities through government, private donors, and foundations will be explored to secure the financial resources necessary to implement this plan.

These are only the initial steps towards implementation. The implementation plan will further outline the critical actions to be taken over the next three years.



EVALUATION AND MONITORING

We will closely monitor and evaluate our work over the next three years. On an annual basis, we will review and reflect on our progress by exploring what's working, what's not working, and what needs to be changed. We will use benchmarks and key metrics to determine whether our efforts are having the intended impact. We will use our results to make informed decisions on how to move the Giwetashkad Plan forward.



The artwork in these photos was created by an individual who has accessed Atlohsa's Resting Space. It is his personal commentary on his experience of homelessness.

Photo Credit: We would like to thank Art Connelly, Andrea Jibb, Daniel Londono, and Darr Sands for contributing the photography included in this report.



**Giwetashkad Indigenous
Homelessness Strategic Plan**
2020-2023



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