

SAFE SHELTER NOW



The Manitoba Liberal Plan to End Homelessness

- **Same-Day Housing**
- **Ending Homelessness in Manitoba is an act of Reconciliation**
- **A Supportive Path Towards Independence**
- **Finding Home: Create a Dashboard of Available Supports**

January 31, 2023

Manitoba Liberal Caucus

Land Acknowledgement: We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge that northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of the treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Summary:

Housing is a Necessity of Life

With large numbers of people homeless in Manitoba, urgent action is needed to address the crisis. The current situation has continued for decades under both NDP and PC governments. The Manitoba Liberal Plan offers a realistic alternative to addressing and ending homelessness.

These are the Four Pillars of the Manitoba Liberal Plan to End Homelessness:

- 1) **Commit to Same-Day Housing**, not six-month waits. Currently, people who are homeless may have to be “chronically homeless” for six months before they can qualify for housing. This policy means that we will never end homelessness. Manitoba Liberals will adapt models from Medicine Hat and other cities where rapid housing with relevant supports takes priority.
- 2) **Recognize that Ending Homelessness in Manitoba is an act of Reconciliation**. Many people who are homeless are Indigenous and were once wards of the provincial child and family services system. The 2022 Winnipeg Street Census showed that 68% of those who are experiencing homelessness are Indigenous (with 89% of those sleeping outdoors being indigenous). As a province, we have a responsibility to every Manitoban.
- 3) **A Supportive Path Towards Independence** to help people escape homelessness and poverty for good. This includes assessing and responding to the reasons people are homeless, including poverty, addictions, the Child and Family Services System, Learning Disabilities, ADHD, FASD, Autism, and those who are 2SLGBTQ.
- 4) **Finding Home: Create a dashboard of available supports**, updated daily, to help people and organizations navigate to the help they need and find and use food, services, warming locations and shelter.

Addressing homelessness using the Liberal Plan will have a dramatic impact to reduce the need for health and justice services in the short and long run and in reducing EIA services in the long run.

Introduction: Creating a Manitoba Model for Ending Homelessness

“In Winnipeg, the annual cost of homelessness is estimated to exceed \$100 million, but the numbers of people struggling does not decline,” says Dr Jino Distasio Professor of Urban Geography at the University of Winnipeg.

He also mentions that what Finland found was that, “you can continue to police the ‘problem’ by expending \$60,000 or more on the wrong approaches or you can spend \$20,000 per person” to deliver an effective approach to ending homelessness.” In Finland’s case, this was “Housing First.” Differences between Finland and Manitoba are such that we need to have a Manitoba model. In Manitoba, we will not succeed in ending homelessness by waiting until people are homeless for six months (the current policy) or through the provision of housing alone. We must also address, in a major way, the reasons why people become homeless, so that we drastically reduce the stream of people becoming homeless in the first place. Further, we must provide a path out of homelessness – with many who follow the path being able to be employed. In this Manitoba Liberal Plan to address homelessness, we build on our previous Manitoba Liberal Caucus report (2021) to present what we see as critical elements we have to incorporate into a Manitoba model.

We interviewed many individuals involved with helping people who are experiencing homelessness or have lived experience with homelessness. We heard that the number of people who are unsheltered, precariously sheltered, or are food insecure is higher than ever. The number of people experiencing food insecurity has increased substantially, as was reported to us by Harvest Manitoba, Agape Table, 1Just City, and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre. Too many people on low incomes have been finding their income is not keeping up with increases in costs, particularly those for food and rent. Add to this a report that individuals with frostbite and those requiring amputations as a result have climbed (Winnipeg Free Press 2023).

The status quo and/or the Houston Model are not good enough for Winnipeg and Manitoba. The status quo, continued under NDP and PC governments, has left us with a city and province with far too many people experiencing homelessness. It is not acceptable. The NDP proposal to use the Houston Model to end homelessness in eight years is inadequate in timeline, in approach, and in the lack of initiative to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place. It is basically a slightly modified version of what is already being done. Manitoba Liberals present an approach in this plan that will end homelessness and people living in bus shelters as we now know it within two years in Winnipeg, and we can demonstrate major improvements within the first year.

The 2022 Winnipeg Street Census showed that 68% of those who are experiencing homeless are Indigenous (with 89% of those sleeping outdoors being indigenous). The reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and “Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,” call us to action.

It is thus critical to have a perspective from members of the Indigenous community. For that reason, we consulted with Grand Chief Cathy Merrick; Grand Chief Jerry Daniels; Cindy Woodhouse, AFN Regional Chief (Manitoba), Damon Johnston President of the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg; Diane Redsky, Executive Director (now former) of Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata; Trudy Lavallee, Executive Director of Anamikii Ozoson Child and Family Services; Jason Whitford, Executive Director of End Homelessness Winnipeg, Cora Morgan Manitoba’s First Nation’s Advocate for Children, James Favel (former leader of the Bear Clan Patrol), Michael

Redhead Champagne with Fearless R2W and Marileen Bartlett, Executive Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development.

This plan considers reconciliation in all its aspects and recognizes that very often Indigenous organizations have knowledge, experience, and the ability to implement improvements which are vital to achieving success.

Pillar 1

Same-Day Housing

1) Manitoba Liberals will make Same-Day Housing the goal of ending homelessness in Manitoba.

Federal funding provides housing for those who have been chronically (at least six months) experiencing homelessness. There is no reason for the Manitoba Government to do nothing until federal funding kicks in.

Manitoba Liberals will provide matching provincial funding which provides for housing as soon as individuals become homeless. This initiative is based on the evidence, which shows that the sooner you intervene when a person become homeless, the better the long-term results are.

During the research leading to this plan, we encountered an individual staying in a bus shelter in Winnipeg. He had previously experienced homelessness in Medicine Hat. He told us that the treatment he received in Medicine Hat and Winnipeg was very different, “like day and night”. He said, “In Medicine Hat they won’t even let you be homeless.” He was immediately put in a room in a motel and provided information on the resources available to him to have a place to stay and to help him with his situation.

We recognize as well that transitioning from the street to being housed needs supports in a variety of ways for individuals in order for this to be a success. The supports are dealt with in Section 3.

In addressing housing needs, it is not clear how many people will need to be housed. The Street Census of 2022 found that there were 1256 people experiencing homelessness in May 2022. It is widely believed that the actual number is larger than this, perhaps much larger. Even if this were an accurate number, and even if all of these 1256 people were housed immediately, then day by day and week by week there will be new people who become homeless. A plan to end homelessness has to be more than just housing 1256 people. It must reduce those becoming homeless and it will need more housing than just housing 1256 people.

At the same time, a team effort is needed because building 20, 50 or even 500 homes falls far short of what the need is. The above being said, we heard from many that there is currently a bottleneck in the shortage of available housing. The bottleneck may be in part from the influx of flood evacuees and immigrants over the last year. There is thus an urgent need for additional housing in Winnipeg.

a) Manitoba Liberals will work with the City of Winnipeg, the federal government and non-profit organizations in order to develop a mix of housing options including small villages, small modular homes etc. Such a project, Astum Api Niikinaahk, is already housing people in Winnipeg (Hobson 2023).

b) Manitoba Liberals will also work with private landlords to house individuals who are homeless. In Medicine Hat, three quarters of those who are experiencing homelessness are placed in units owned and operated by private sector landlords. In Medicine Hat, part of their solution is a much better working relationship between organizations helping those who are homeless and private sector landlords, which includes support to individuals who are homeless who are transitioning into housing where there are mental health or substance abuse issues, and guarantees that rent will be paid promptly by the start of each month. St. Boniface Streetlinks housed 405 individuals who were experiencing homelessness (primarily in encampments) between April 2022 and January 23, 2023. Housing was exclusively within private sector housing. Success in housing in private sector housing depends critically, as was emphasized to us in Medicine Hat, on building effective partnerships with private sector landlords.

c) Manitoba Liberals will work with Manitoba Housing on its future role to facilitate new housing and to better manage and maintain existing buildings. We have been told it is “common knowledge” that gangs have taken over two large Manitoba Housing Units. We know there have been major security issues in some Manitoba Housing Units in the past, and we see that the future role of Manitoba Housing will depend on assurances that housing can be provided which gives adequate support and security to residents. A broader look at the governance of Manitoba Housing may be needed, in part, because the housing units built by Manitoba Housing are routinely costing more than private or non-profit options.

d) Manitoba Liberals will ensure specialized housing needs are available. We recognize that there are currently individuals being discharged from hospital directly to shelters. This included an individual who had two recent strokes being discharged straight from hospital to one of Winnipeg’s major shelters. It was totally inappropriate for him to be recuperating in a shelter. In a similar vein, we note that we were told by one major Winnipeg shelter that they periodically have youth who have been in the care of child and family services immediately referred to them for shelter on their 18th birthday when they age out of care. In both these examples, there is a need for specialized housing. In the first case with medical supports and in the second case with a transitional plan to go to housing that is more appropriate with supports as they transition. There is also a need for housing for those who are homeless who are 2SLGBTQ.

e) Manitoba Liberals will establish a cooperative effort to address urgently threatened evictions. It is expensive to rehouse a person who has become homeless. It is desirable to put in place a team which can address urgently threatened evictions.

We recognize, in all the above, that a teamwork approach of the federal government, provincial government, City of Winnipeg, Indigenous organizations, non-profit organizations and the private sector is needed. Manitoba Liberals will take on the task of working cooperatively with all. We will take a leadership role in achieving effective solutions.

Pillar 2

Recognize that Ending Homelessness in Manitoba is an act of Reconciliation

As a province, we have a responsibility to every Manitoban. The reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and “Reclaiming Power and Place: the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,” call us to action.

Many people who are homeless are Indigenous and were once wards of the provincial child and family services system. The 2022 Winnipeg Street Census showed that 68% of those who are experiencing homeless are Indigenous (with 89% of those sleeping outdoors being Indigenous).

52% of people who are homeless in Winnipeg were once in the custody of Child and Family Services. Since 2000, Manitoba took more children into custody than any other jurisdiction in the world.

In 2022, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs successfully sued the Manitoba Government for their treatment of First Nations Children in care. From 2006-2019, in addition to doubling the number of children being seized, the Manitoba Government also seized the children’s federal support benefits, or “special allowance” with some estimates of the seizure totalling \$338-million. Further, in 2020, the Manitoba Government attempted to cancel all future court cases, denying children their day in court.

Often, when these children turned 18– they lose all supports and may immediately find themselves homeless.

The Manitoba Court found that the Government of Manitoba, under the NDP and PCs alike, systematically violated the rights of First Nations children, by taking them from their families, taking their money (from 2006-2019), and then taking away their day in court in 2020.

The CFS system in Manitoba had far more children in custody than attendance at the peak of Residential Schools, with 80-90% being Indigenous.

Today, children are still being seized, including newborns, and many children are “aging out” of care with no place to live.

When we talk about the “harms of the past” we must not turn a blind eye to the harms of the present.

As a matter of principle, rapid housing and supports for Indigenous wards of CFS is a matter of justice and reconciliation.

Child and Family Services (CFS): Substantial evidence supports that being in the care of child and family services in Manitoba is a significant risk factor for a person to experience homelessness. More than half of those who are homeless were in the care of Child and Family Services at some point in their life. Over one third, (37.6 percent) first became homeless between the ages of 12 and 20. Among those whose first experience of homelessness was at age 18, more than 60 percent had spent time in foster care, group homes, or another CFS placement. Most children in the care of CFS lose support, including financial resources and other help, from their former guardian (CFS social work staff) at the age of 18. For some, this is extended to age 21, but this usually requires participation in employment or education, which youth who have experienced major trauma or did not complete high school may not be prepared for (Winnipeg Street Census 2022).

a) Manitoba Liberals will change the CFS system so that there is adequate preparation of every child in care for transition to housing and to independent living at age 18.

This is certainly not happening now. Indeed, we hear that there are shelters which receive youth who have been in the care of CFS on their 18th birthday with the expectation that life in a shelter will provide the basis for the youth to transition. This is completely unacceptable and a terrible result of incompetent governments over the last two decades.

In helping children who have been in care transition at age 18 it is important to recognize that often the trauma experienced by children in care is not addressed adequately. Many children in CFS care are developmentally slower at age 18 than their peers. Currently, there is not mandatory comprehensive planning for children in CFS care leading up to the time when they reach 18. Today, many plans are insufficient and not realistic given that a significant proportion of children in care have a low IQ, ADHD, autism, a learning disability, or FASD, and may have a mental health or substance abuse issue as well. Many jurisdictions provide a legal requirement that children in CFS care are adequately transitioned. Manitoba Liberals will provide such a framework for Manitoba, as has been recommended by the Child Welfare League of Canada (2021).

Further, for too many currently, the preparation before age 18 is insufficient. Youth who have been in care may have difficulty in getting a guarantor so that they can rent an apartment. Some organizations like Resource Assistance for Youth (RAY) help youth age 18-25 get jobs, but in too many circumstances, youth at age 18 do not have such support. Indeed, for a child not in the care of CFS, parents often encourage part time work experiences at age 16 or 17. This is rarely seen in youth in CFS, so they have less experience to build upon. For youth who have been in care, a degree of understanding from an employer is often needed for a successful work experience. Youth who turn 18 often choose to return to their biological parents. In some instances, extra support is needed under these conditions but it is not provided. There is a need for independent living skills to be taught in school, because school is universally available. Teaching of such skills needs to start in grade 7, because currently too many children drop out in grades 9 and 10. The independent living skills should include budgeting, nutrition and cooking, doing a resume, driving a vehicle, getting a driver's license etc. Schools are a critical piece of what is needed for youth to succeed.

b) Manitoba Liberals will improve funding and support for children in CFS custody after they turn 18

Sometimes, the children are in a group home and thus are discharged when the youth turns 18 without adequate planning and continued support. For a while, some extensions were being given, but extensions of care are becoming less common. Under current guidelines, extensions of care are for those going to post-secondary education or who are working. The result is that higher risk youth are excluded by the guidelines from receiving extensions of care. Paradoxically, these are the youth who are most in need of extensions of care. Extensions of support after a person's 18th birthday should include funding and social supports, but youth should no longer be under the guardianship of CFS. The province does not adequately fund supports after age 18. This is in contrast to the federal funding which does much better in enabling supports after age 18 up until their 26th birthday for youth on reserve. However, even while the federal government provides for support up until age 26, there needs to be increased training and capacity to do this well. The provincial support needs to at least match the federal support.

Some youth who have been in the care of CFS react negatively toward CFS because their experience with the agency has been so bad that when they turn 18, they want nothing more to do with it. Some youth who reject any help from CFS when they turn 18, come back later and are denied help, because it is considered "too late."

It should never be too late to help people who need support.

c) Manitoba Liberals will implement the recommendations of the 2018 report "Transforming Child Welfare Legislation in Manitoba" for families and children in the provincial child welfare system.

These recommendations will dramatically reduce the need for children to be in the care of CFS through several measures including the mandated use of Family Group Conferencing or an alternative approach to supporting families such as the "Circle of Care" model used in the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation.

Manitoba is still apprehending far too many children when better supporting the family could have avoided the apprehension altogether. The legislative framework would change the context of the situation by replacing the word "apprehension" with the phrase "separation from parents and caregivers."

During the course of the research leading to this report, we learned that the office of the First Nations Advocate for Children has had remarkable success in keeping families together and in reuniting families. This effort needs to be better recognized with better funding support provided.

d) Manitoba Liberals will look at measures needed to assure the safety of women who are particularly vulnerable in shelters. The report of the Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls brought this to the forefront. Recent news that the four women found murdered in Winnipeg may have been preyed upon when they were in shelters has emphasized this need. Measures to improve the separation of women and men and to add security staff may be needed.

Jon Gerrard visiting with Grand Chief Cathy Merrick on January 17th. The Grand Chief and her team including Cora Morgan, Walter Spence and Natalie Ballentyne talked about N'Dinawemak, Our Relative's Place, the effective way it works providing culturally based services for unsheltered relatives, separating the women for safety reasons and with the SABE peacewalkers providing security. The Grand Chief emphasized the need for continued long term funding. Also emphasized was the need for additional housing and that there is a need for urgent action – planning and implementing a strategy - to help those who are unsheltered and to prevent people from becoming homeless in the future. Grand Chief Merrick agreed that a public Dashboard would be helpful. Cora Morgan emphasized the need for better efforts to keep families together and to reunite families where children have been taken away and the need for additional funding for her organization to help do this work.



Grand Chief Cathy Merrick and Jon Gerrard met to discuss the urgent need to act to help those who are unsheltered and to prevent homelessness in the future.

Pillar 3

A Supportive Path Towards Independence

It is important to recognize that becoming homeless is traumatic and that people need a range of supports to return to independent housed living and work.

The Housing First model is intended to provide such supports, but it is so seriously underfunded that care workers have far too many people on their caseloads to do an optimum job.

- a) **Manitoba Liberals will ensure adequate additional funding for Housing First so that there can be more Housing First teams, resulting in caseloads that are smaller and more effective in providing support for those transitioning from homelessness into housing.** This will also improve coordination and help to provide better working relationships between Housing First teams and landlords. St. Boniface Streetlinks has had success in moving whole groups of people in a single encampment into housing in a single building. This has proved to be an effective way to enable maintaining social connections and a sense of belonging which are an important part of success. Red Road Lodge has also recognized the importance of such social connections and suggests the potential contribution of having Wifi connectivity to help enable such connections. N'Dinawemak (190 Disraeli) is a further example of an organization which recognizes the importance of social and cultural connections in its efforts.
- b) **Manitoba Liberals will ensure there is quick access to addictions services, including safe consumption sites, which are needed to reduce overdose deaths and to facilitate access to further services, including detox, treatment and a seamless movement from treatment into supportive housing.** We will also ensure that addictions and mental health support are provided together. NDP and PC governments have talked of doing this, but have been completely unable to achieve it. There continue to be significant gaps in the provision of addictions services and the access to them. One example of a gap is in the ability to provide suboxone treatment quickly when needed for individuals for whom this is currently the standard therapy. Manitoba Liberals have repeatedly called for the suboxone to be covered initially for all, so individuals who cannot afford it and are not on EIA can receive this therapy and do not have to wait until they are on EIA.

There remains a serious and potentially tragic disconnect between help for addictions and help for mental health issues. This disconnect was present under the former NDP government and has continued under the PCs. Manitoba Liberals will ensure individuals can get help with both addictions and mental health issues together because they are frequently co-occurring.

c) Manitoba Liberals will provide support for community training programs.

BUILD, Morberg House and Two-Ten Recovery Inc. and the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD) have shown they can help people transition effectively to independent living with jobs. BUILD has a track record of success over many years in taking people who might otherwise be homeless and finding them employment. It is tragic that funding for BUILD has been cut by the Conservative government. Morberg House and Two Ten Recovery also have a strong track record of moving people off the street into supportive situations and into employment. CAHRD has an excellent track record in training individuals for employment. Michael Redhead Champagne pointed to his efforts to have people trained by Persons Community Solutions and in Indigenous Kinship Values, in de-escalation, and anti-racism and then they can be employed as Community Safety Hosts helping with security. As Michael Champagne further pointed out – if you give people a cup of coffee and respect, they are much less likely to act out. For these programs to be effective, improved access to childcare is needed.

Lee Earnshaw died June 14, 2021 from what is believed to be an opioid overdose. He had made a number of attempts to get help for his addiction and had been repeatedly turned away. More recently a man sought help for his addiction and was turned away from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, a RAAM clinic and the Main Street project . These two stories illustrate the difficulty of an individual with an addiction getting access to help in Manitoba.

d) Manitoba Liberals will ensure transitional support for individuals in CFS care when they turn 18 (see further details under Pillar 2) and also for individuals with FASD, ADHD, autism and learning disabilities where it is needed (see more below).

e) Manitoba Liberals will assess safety issues and work with organizations to address concerns. We heard from a number of individuals that it is important that the shelters, housing and transit are safe. We were impressed to hear of various efforts in this direction and the positive impact that the SABE peacewalkers have had at N'Dinawemak, and with the efforts that Micheal Champagne is making in training individuals with lived experience to help with safety concerns. We see this as an important issue, most particularly, but not exclusively, for women and that there can be actions taken to address this following further discussions with organizations involved in helping those experiencing homelessness.

f) Manitoba Liberals will address risk factors to decrease the number of individuals becoming unsheltered in the first place.

Poverty: The NDP largely failed to reduce poverty in Manitoba when they were in government. The PCs said it would be their top priority in 2016, but did not carry through with effective measures. The results has been dramatic increases in the use of foodbanks and food tables in the last year. More effective measures are needed. This is important for individuals and families

and it is important for society. Particular attention is needed for children and youth. If children are hungry when they go to school – they do not learn as well, they get behind, become frustrated and may drop out of school. It is important for the future of our children and youth and the future of our province that we act. The Manitoba Child Nutrition Council is helping ensure more children and youth receive the food they need, and though there has been an increase in funding, more is needed to help all children and youth reach their potential.

A New Mandate for Manitoba’s social assistance system – lifting people out of poverty

Manitoba Liberals are proposing a suite of reforms and changes to EIA to address poverty in Manitoba, starting with a change in mandate – to lift people out of poverty through engagement, participation, training and work. The details will be covered in the Manitoba Liberal Party’s 2023 Platform.

Breaking down barriers to treatment for individuals with addictions and substance use issues

Many individuals with substance abuse issues cannot access programs. We will work to increase the number of public health professionals working in addictions to ensure that people who want treatment get referrals as quickly as possible.

Children and youth with learning disabilities and other forms of neurodiversity

Studies have found that a significant proportion of those who are experiencing homelessness have a learning disability. Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury are also known to be more likely to be unsheltered or precariously sheltered. Add to this individuals with neurodiverse conditions like ADHD, Autism, and FASD and there is a significant group of people who are homeless as a result of varied brain health conditions.

There is much evidence that those who have learning disabilities are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness. Substantial evidence supports learning disabilities as contributing to the likelihood that a person will become homeless (Barwick and Siegel 1996). Siegel (2016) says “83 percent of the homeless youth we tested in Toronto, Canada, have learning disabilities that have not been properly recognized or treated...Their learning disabilities are not the result of a difficult home life or substance abuse or a disadvantaged economic background.... One of the reasons that these young people ended up homeless and on the street was that their learning disabilities were not addressed by the schools.”

Individuals who are 2SLGBTQ

Manitoba Liberals will work with the 2SLGBTQ community in addressing housing and other support needs.

Individuals who have experienced trauma

Manitoba Liberals recognize that experiencing trauma can have very negative long-term effects and will include psychological therapies under Manitoba’s Medicare coverage in to order to address this important issue.

Individuals experiencing a family breakup

The Winnipeg Street Census in 2022 found that one quarter of individuals experiencing homelessness became homeless because of a family breakup. Manitoba Liberals will review the experiences of those who are unsheltered because of a family breakup and look at whether there could be changes made so that family breakups are less likely to result in individuals becoming homeless.

Pillar 4

Finding Home: Create a dashboard linked to supports

Manitoba Liberals will create a dashboard linked to supports, updated daily, to help people and organizations navigate to the help they need and find and use food, services, warming locations and shelter.

- 1) **Manitoba Liberals will improve co-ordination among those providing food, warming locations, mobile outreach and emergency shelters for those who experience homelessness.**

Through our conversations, we heard that much improved coordination and communication among organizations is vital to all aspects of helping those experiencing homelessness and in preventing homelessness. This is especially true in the coordination of mobile outreach teams and for assistance with addictions and mental health. We also heard there is a need for a provincial framework for supporting organizations providing food.

a) Manitoba Liberals will work with all organizations, in particular the City of Winnipeg and End Homelessness Winnipeg, to implement a public dashboard to show critical numbers like the daily shelter occupancy rate, as is currently available in Toronto. This would enable those who are experiencing homelessness to see where warming centres, shelter space or food is available. It would facilitate the timely opening of public spaces like Community Centres as warming sites when the weather is very cold and the notification to those in need. The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) can serve as the base for the dashboard. The HIFIS system could also help to find a person who is a regular at an organization like Siloam Mission when they do not show up. We note that experiencing homelessness is increasingly city wide, with people living in bus shelters in the south of Winnipeg along Pembina Highway; in the west of Winnipeg along Portage Avenue; and in north Winnipeg along Main Street. Having gateways for help for people outside the core of Winnipeg is also essential. Expanding this Dashboard to include options for various stages of assisting individuals with addictions and substance use issues would also help coordination of services in this area.

b) Manitoba Liberals will work with non-profit organizations involved in helping those who are homeless to provide a framework for ongoing and stable provincial support for operating and capital for the provision of emergency support services. It is to be recognized that we now have four major emergency shelters with the addition of N'Dinawemak at 190 Disraeli to the Main Street Project, Siloam Mission and the Salvation Army. There is a need for a fair framework for provincial funding which addresses the need and the results achieved. There is also a similar need for a provincial framework to support agencies providing emergency food including agencies like Harvest Manitoba and Agape Table and Ma

Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre. With recent concerns at Link (formerly MacDonald Youth Services) there may need to be a broader look at governance issues.

c) Manitoba Liberals will work with all mobile outreach units, which are a critical part of the provision of emergency support to improve coordination of units to ensure improved coverage of Winnipeg. Such outreach units help in many ways, including perhaps most importantly through building trust so that help to those who are experiencing homelessness can be more effective and so that individuals can be better helped to move to supportive housing. We also heard that there is a need for sufficient funding to have enough staff and volunteers to enable units to operate even if one person is sick. Currently some units cannot operate if someone is away sick. There is also a need for improved coordination in approaches. For example, some youth living in bus shelters are just told to leave without even being given a referral or help as to where to go next.

d) Manitoba Liberals will work with all organizations providing services to those with addictions and/or mental health issues to enable much improved coordination and integration of services so that individuals with addictions or substance use issues and/or mental health issues can get access to treatment quickly when needed. Those with addictions will progress seamlessly from detox or a drug stabilization unit, and through to recovery in supportive housing. On January 18, 2023, the report “Rights Delayed are Rights Denied” of the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth showed that the government is a long way from an integrated approach for youth (MACY 2023). The stories of Lee Earnshaw and others have shown how difficult it can be to get help for those with addictions. There needs to be far better public information on the options for services. As an example, St. Raphael Wellness Centre (SRWC), though not well known, fills important gaps in helping those with addictions at stages where other organizations are not as active. It is an example of an organization where a little more public support could make a big difference in the lives of many.

e) Manitoba Liberals will work with all organizations to ensure transitions occur more smoothly rather than with sudden shocks. The ending of the moratorium on evictions was sudden and resulted in massive evictions; the ending of a program for supporting food under Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata resulted in a sudden shift from 1,000 hampers a down to 50 even though the need was still there. Shocks like these are very disruptive to the lives of those on low incomes.

List of people with whom we have consulted in the preparation of this Manitoba Liberal Plan to End Homelessness (not all are included as some wished to remain anonymous)

- Grand Chief Cathy Merrick, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
- Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, South Chiefs' Organization Inc.
- Cindy Woodhouse, Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief
- Jamil Mahmood – Executive Director, Main Street Project
- Tessa Blaikie Whitecloud, CEO, Siloam Mission
- Mark Stewart, Executive Director, Salvation Army
- Cora Morgan, Manitoba's First Nations Advocate for Children (also with N'Dinawemak, Our Relatives Place).
- Jason Whitford, President and CEO, End Homelessness Winnipeg
- Marion Willis, Executive Director, St. Boniface Streetlinks and Morberg House.
- Damon Johnston, President, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg
- Diane Redsky, Executive Director, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre (now former Executive Director)
- Michael Redhead Champagne, Fearless R2W Inc.
- Glynis Quinn, Executive Director, 1JustCity
- Jim Steep, Executive Director, Agape Table
- Peter McMullen, Director, Lighthouse Mission
- Jino Distasio, Professor Urban Geography, University of Winnipeg
- Jennifer Frain, CEO, New Directions
- Marileen Bartlett, Executive Director, Centre for Aboriginal Resources Development Inc. and Neeginan Inc.
- Colleen Allan, Executive Director, St. Raphael Wellness Centre
- James Favel, President, Anishinabi Ambassadors Inc.
- Paula Havixbeck, Two Ten Recovery
- Nicole Cruickshank, Life's Journey
- Shawn Feely (Vice President Manitoba and Nunavut, Canadian Red Cross
- Richard Walls, Founder, Red Road Lodge
- Vince Barletta, President and CEO, Harvest Manitoba
- Abbie Bajon, General Manager, Corydon Community Centre
- Romeo Ignacio, President (now former President), Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505.
- Kelly Holmes, Executive Director, Resource Assistance for Youth.
- Christina Maes Nino, Executive Director, Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association.
- Trudy Lavalley, Executive Director, Animiki Ozoson Child and Family Services
- Shaun Loney, Encompass Co-op and author of Beautiful Bailout
- David Northcott, former Executive Director, Winnipeg Harvest, and founding member of the Canadian Association of Food Banks.
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