

Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective

Delegation Package for Town of Cobourg Council Meeting
December 19, 2022



Northumberland Sleeping Cabin
Collective (NSCC)

A better alternative to a tent.

Initiative Summary

Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective (NSCC) is a committee working to create a transitional cabin village that provides safe and secure living **for those who are currently unsheltered**. It values community, and residents support each other. Taking a rights-based approach to housing, NSCC focuses on inclusion and participation of residents. It is a pragmatic, achievable and immediate solution to many members of our community who have been surviving in rough living conditions. The project fosters safety and wellbeing for those living rough, as well as the wider Cobourg community by ensuring our citizens are well cared for.

Our goal is to establish a 6-month pilot project village housing 12 people in their own heated and insulated 8 ft x 10 ft cabin, each with space for a bed and some belongings. Each cabin will lock, and a fence will surround the village, thus offering a safer and more secure alternative to a tent. And very importantly, it gives each resident stability and hope for the future when they no longer have to worry about their daily survival.

The sleeping cabin communities will be substantially governed by the residents **with wrap-around services that focus on well being such as mental health counseling, the foodbank, harm reduction services, employment services and social workers attending the site to offer support**. This type of transitional housing is a proven solution that has had success in other communities. The vision is that the stability residents receive would ensure they are able to move onto independent, affordable housing after a period (dependent on available supply of affordable housing in the community).

This is not an encampment; this is a housing first initiative that provides rapid shelter to folks with supportive services.

Proposal for the pilot project:

- A 12 cabin, gated village providing safe and secure living for community members currently unsheltered/living rough.
- Each 8'x10' cabin will be heated & insulated, with space for a bed and some belongings.
- Shared kitchen/washrooms and showers in an existing building or portable plumbing facilities and a trailer for a kitchen.
- Access to wrap-around services that address mental and physical well being, addiction counselling, and harm reduction.
- The village will be fenced and locked. All visitors will be required to sign in/out.
- A pragmatic solution gets people out of the cold, tents, alcoves and bus shelters.

Benefits for residents:

- Stability and hope for the future (instead of worrying about daily survival).
- A rights-based solution that aligns with housing first principles.
- An alternative to the temporary, day to day solution of shelter beds and warming rooms.
- Developing autonomy and empowerment through participation in the substantial self-governance model (Village Council).
- Development of and conformance to Village Agreement.

Benefits to the community:

- A proactive, rapid, emergency solution to the needs of the most vulnerable.
- It will offer an efficient housing first option so that elected officials and municipal staff may focus on broader, longer term housing affordability.
- An alternative to encampments, which will reduce conflict/risk for police and fire services.

Community Engagement and Structure:

- NSCC is a special project of Green Wood Coalition (GWC) and as such is governed by their volunteer Board. GWC will handle donations and tax receipts as well as fund distribution, oversight of finances, signing of any contracts needed and insurance.
- Through 10 Open Houses, a strong social media presence and participation in the Port Hope and Cobourg parades, we have engaged over 600 community members in learning about this initiative and how they can get involved.
- Donation of materials at cost and skilled labour in kind to build 12 cabins

Budget considerations – dependent on site selection and which facilities may exist onsite:

- Estimated capital costs will be approximately \$135,000.
- Estimated operational costs will be approximately \$56,000 for a six-month pilot. Raising money through donations and grants with a fundraising target of \$162,000 through a capital campaign.
- One operational funding source will be from Ontario Works direct transfers at an estimated \$28,000 for the six-month trial.

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Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective

A better alternative to a tent

Delegation Package:

This report is outlined in three parts that will define the reason why this initiative is essential for our community, the logistics and how the Town of Cobourg can support this project.

Part 1 - Community Safety

This section addresses why this project is being undertaken and how it provides a practical solution in a way that honours individual value within a community context. This is fundamentally about increasing **community safety** and must be understood as such.

1. Alignment with regional strategic priorities for community health and safety
2. Housing First and community safety
3. Consultation with community partners about village safety
4. The need is greater than our current community resource capacity
5. The village model for community safety and wellbeing
6. Benefits for the community

Part 2 - Logistics of the Village

1. Core Values
2. Management and governance structure
3. Budget Considerations
4. Residents

Part 3 - Town of Cobourg Support

This section outlines our proposal for the Town of Cobourg to donate temporary use of the Memorial Arena parking lot on Furnace Street for the purpose of a six-month sleeping cabin pilot project.

1. Delegation Request
2. Proposed Sites

In the spirit of community collaboration, we invite you to make recommendations and participate in co-creating community understanding with us towards this worthy goal.

Part 1 – Community Safety

Housing is a fundamental human right (Government of Canada, 2017). Living rough or unsheltered means that people experience daily instability. This leads to coping and survival mechanisms that are riskier for all community members. This issue has been recognized by services within the community and the federal and provincial levels of government through various plans and strategies. By stabilizing housing and wrapping residents with supports, we see this initiative as a solution for creating more safety and wellbeing for all citizens unsheltered and housed.

1. Alignment with regional strategic priorities for community safety and wellbeing

Northumberland County, the Town of Cobourg and local health services have discussed the priorities of housing as needed to improve community safety and wellbeing. Each body has consulted with community members and regional leadership to provide strategic direction. Below are some examples of how this initiative is in alignment with these plans.

a. **Town of Cobourg’s Affordable and Rental Housing Community Improvement Plan** (Town of Cobourg, 2021)

In 2021, Council approved the Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the Town of Cobourg. There was a commitment to support **emergency and transitional housing initiatives through partnership opportunities within the approved proposal**. This project provides a tangible transitional housing solution that could give people the opportunity to better enjoy this community they live in.

b. **Northumberland County’s Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan** (Northumberland County, 2021)

In 2021 County Council passed the plan, stating priorities to **move community safety from incident response to social development**, and stated an evidence-based priority to address housing and homelessness. A non-exhaustive list of objectives and associated actions included ‘looking for opportunities to advocate and champion housing and homeless planning.’

c. **Northumberland County Housing and Homeless Plan (2019 - 2029)** (Northumberland County, 2019)

The plan outlines a series of strategies compiled from several **needs assessment and engagement activities** with agencies and community members (which included people with and without lived experience). The strategies include increase affordable housing options; support housing stability; increase supportive housing and supports, and build a diverse housing supply. In consideration of those with lived experience, we believe that this initiative’s approach to housing aligns well with the key strategies outlined.

d. Development of the Ontario Health Team - Northumberland, Emerging Strategic Framework

While the strategic plan is yet to be released, priorities identified in the planning process recognized housing as a foundational principle for creating a healthier and more inclusive Northumberland and identified the need to explore innovative solutions for housing. They recognized the basics of life as a human right.

2. Housing First and community safety

NSCC has consideration for the safety the wider community at its heart. We have compiled research that demonstrates how stabilizing housing needs will assist in increased public safety and community well-being. Housing First is a philosophy that was established by Dr. Sam Tsemberis in the early 1990's. He founded Pathways to Housing in New York City as a response to notion that people experiencing homelessness should not have to prove that they are "housing ready". It has evolved into a housing strategy that has been recognized and adopted in many countries, including Canada. (Pathways Housing First Institute, 2022)

Through a non-exhaustive literature review of outcomes from Housing First strategies on community health and safety, NSCC have noted the following as summarized below. (see Appendix H).

Reduced Crime: Unsheltered individuals are more likely to be victims of crime (particularly women and LGBTQ+) than those with stable housing. By providing housing for the unsheltered, communities can reduce the crime rate by taking people off the streets and providing them with a safe place to sleep and live.

Reduced Health Risks: Unsheltered people are often exposed to environmental hazards and health risks due to limited access to basic requirements such as consistent sleep, nutritious food, running water and sanitation. By providing housing, communities can reduce the risk of health problems associated with lack of access to basic amenities.

Improved Quality of Life: Living unsheltered can lead to a decline in mental and physical health, as well as a decrease in social interaction and an increase in substance use. By providing housing, communities can help to improve the quality of life of unsheltered individuals by providing them with a safe place to rest and sleep, as well as access to basic amenities.

Improved Community Relations: Providing housing for the unsheltered can help to improve community relations by increasing understanding and reducing the stigma associated with

unsheltered living. This can help to create a sense of community and foster positive relations between those in need and those in the community who are willing to help.

3. Consultation with community partners about village safety

As part of our research for this initiative, members of NSCC have had extensive conversations with police, fire and planning departments to ensure consultation and clarity of community safety. The cabins will adhere to all building and fire code requirements set forth by the town and the province, much like any other development. Sample cabin building plans and requirements are included in this package (Appendix A).

Cobourg Police Service

In the July 4th Staff Report entitled: (Larmer, Brent, 2022), town staff engaged with Cobourg Police Services (CPS) and Cobourg Fire Department in regards to concerns related to sheltering and permitting camping on municipal land.

In this report CPS stated that: “The Cobourg Police Service should not be a primary response to many of the issues surrounding homelessness....We support all community agencies aimed at enhancing community safety and well-being. And we recognize that we are not the leaders in certain issues and want to support those agencies in resolving issues of greatest concern for them.”

In our conversations with Chief of Police, Paul VandeGraaf he was supportive of our initiative and stated: “homelessness is not our core police mandate. We unfortunately are left with the unexpected aftermath of the lack of supports.”

Cobourg Fire Department

Cobourg Fire provided a list of requirements for the village. All these requirements have been reviewed and incorporated into the village design and will be enforced.

1. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms shall be installed and properly maintained in each cabin.
2. Any use of fuel-fired appliances inside a cabin shall be prohibited and strictly enforced.
3. Open air burning (i.e. campfires) anywhere on the site shall be prohibited and strictly enforced.
4. Unsafe use of electrical extension cords shall be prohibited.

5. The accumulation of excessive amounts of combustible materials in and around the cabin shall be prohibited and strictly enforced.
6. A minimum spatial separation of 3 metres shall be maintained between each cabin and all other structures.
7. Suitable access for emergency vehicles shall be maintained throughout the site. All access roads shall be a minimum of 6m in width and capable of bearing the weight of a 45,000 lb fire apparatus.

Additional recommendations that will be considered by the NSCC:

- Cabins should be fitted with doors that swing in an outward direction.
- Overhead, infrared heating units are preferred by fire prevention experts instead of electric baseboard heaters. Baseboard heaters can also easily be obstructed by stored items in such a limited space.

In the June 2022 staff report, Cobourg Fire staff reported many concerns with outdoor encampments such as: open air fires, dangers of propane heaters and other heating equipment and concerns about staff being overwhelmed by fire safety prevention calls. Many of their concerns are negated in a sleeping cabin village because all cabins and community trailers such as washroom and kitchen are heated, and fires will not be allowed on site.

4. The need is greater than our current community resource capacity

Current shelter beds do not meet Northumberland County's needs. With an estimated 100 people unsheltered in Cobourg and Port Hope and only enough shelter beds for one third of those.

In speaking with people that are living rough, they have identified some of the barriers in the current sheltering system:

- Shelters offer a bed for a short period; **a cabin is predictable and stable.**
- Shelters are communal – for both persons and their possessions. **Cabins have reliable locks and offer autonomy and privacy.**
- Shelters do not accommodate pets, which can be an essential emotional support to the unsheltered. **A cabin may accommodate pets.**
- Shelters split up couples. Note that while a cabin accommodates only one person, **a couple could occupy two cabins** in a village (thereby **providing ongoing housing regardless of relationship status**).

While the warming room offers some relief from the cold, it does not meet the fundamental needs of people living unhoused in our community year-round.

- Individuals visiting this space must find somewhere else to go during the day.

- No sleeping is allowed in this space due to zoning issues which have not been addressed since the inception of the warming room program three years ago.
- It is currently only operational between December and March. Thus, not meeting the need for shelter during our increasingly hot and humid summer weather.
- Warming rooms are not fitted to store goods so folks are required to bring belongings with them when they enter or leave.

5. NSCC village model for community safety and wellbeing

As we work alongside folks with living experience, we have heard a great deal of feedback from them about the need for wraparound services in the sleeping cabin village.

A key component to the sleeping cabin village will be the provision of wraparound services which we will provide weekly to folks who need and want these services. Folks who are unsheltered have expressed the need for a central location to receive services. They speak of the difficulties of navigating social services in Northumberland:

- struggling to get to the service locations without a car or easy access to public transportation
- not knowing or understanding what services are out there and what these services can offer them
- not having an advocate in their corner to help them navigate the system
- not having the capacity to go to appointments because they are concerned with survival needs such as what to eat and where to sleep.

The village will have a staff person that visits daily. This staff person and volunteers will be trained to provide High Fidelity Wrap Around services (Debicki, 2014). High Fidelity Wrap Around is a process by where a trained facilitator shifts the focus away from a traditional service-driven, problem-based approach of care and instead follows a strengths-based, needs-driven approach. The intent is to build on individual strengths to help people achieve positive goals and improve well-being. Wraparound is a person-centered and team-driven process. Wraparound will assist residents in achieving their personal goals in relation to services.

Support will be related to harm reduction, food security, financial wellness, income support (Ontario Works), home and personal support, health and hygiene, legal support, mental health and wellness, and personal safety. We have been in touch with many social service providers in Northumberland such as: Green Wood Coalition outreach workers, Fare Share Food Bank, Moms Stop the Harm, Watton Employment Services, Canadian Mental Health Association, and

Northumberland County Social Services who have expressed willingness to work with us in providing on-site services. We have plans to meet with Fourcast and PARN in the future.

6. Benefits for community safety and wellbeing

Short term benefits for community wellbeing

The number of people living unsheltered in Cobourg is growing, a fact we can all see. There is an unavoidable emotional cost to the community, seeing their friends, family, employees, or even strangers suffering. We are surprised/not surprised at the number of citizens who have someone close to them living rough. Some people can turn their heads and not see. For most of us there is a nagging pain that we need to do something. A sleeping cabin village will take 12 people out of alcoves, bus shelters and out of tents and into safety.

Long term benefits for community well-being

By addressing the immediate housing needs of the most vulnerable in our community, this provides an opportunity to focus on the more strategic, complex, longer term affordable housing needs set out by the regional strategic plans.

In a 2012 paper, Stephen Gaetz provides an analysis of the costs that typically arise from people who are experiencing homelessness versus the costs providing access to stable housing. People who are living unsheltered often experience more prolonged bouts of illness, requiring access to more costly medical services including visits to emergency rooms and hospital stays. They are also more likely to engage in risky behaviours (such as substance use) and become incarcerated.

In a 2005 study which looked at the cost per person in four Canadian cities, institutional responses (jails, hospitals, etc.) cost \$66,000-\$120,000 annually. Emergency shelters cost \$13,000-\$42,000 annually, whereas supportive and transitional housing cost \$13,000-\$18,000 and affordable housing without those supports was a mere \$5,000-\$8,000/yr. (Gaetz, 2012)

Part 2: Logistics of the village

1. Core Values

As we prepare for the opening of the village, we have been meeting weekly with potential residents to discuss core values. Below are the two key values of NSCC. We will continue to work with potential residents to determine other core values before they move into the Village.

Housing First is a core value of NSCC that considers housing a foundational requirement and does not require those who are unsheltered to meet readiness requirements (such as sobriety or employment). Once the housing need is met and residents feel safe and secure, healing can begin and wraparound services can be provided to those who need and want it. These services can begin to address mental and physical health issues that will enable the residents to enter the broader community. An essential component of the village is the relative ease with which wraparound services – mental health, addiction counseling, employment counseling, etc. – can be delivered to the group (rather than pursuing individuals as they migrate through the Town/County).

A second core value is **substantial self-governance** by its residents. This will include oversight from a board or steering committee and a project manager for the site(s). This promotes dignity, responsibility, teamwork and a sense of pride and respect for each other and the site. It is imperative that everyone living in the village work together for the betterment of the community and make collective decisions. Residents will maintain, clean and secure common areas of the site (in addition to their own cabin). A weekly village meeting will allow community members to resolve issues as they arise and to discuss each person's roles and responsibilities as needed. A paid project manager may provide facilitation scaffolding if required. A method that encourages the community to resolve issues themselves.

2. Management and Governance Structure

We have incorporated the best governance practices as outlined by A Better Tent City in Kitchener-Waterloo and Opportunity Village in Eugene, OR. Below is the governance structure for this project.

Green Wood Coalition (GWC)

NSCC is a special project of GWC. GWC will manage all finances including budgets, donations, tax receipts, and fund distribution. **They are the legal entity of the project** and will manage all governance, insurance and signing of any required contracts. **GWC aims to hire a project manager to oversee management of the site on an ongoing basis.**

NSCC Steering Committee

In partnership with GWC, the steering committee **will provide operational oversight of the village.** They will be responsible for all planning and fundraising initiatives for the site, manage

volunteers, coordinate logistics, oversee residents and resident council and provide wraparound services. One resident will be elected by the other residents to be part of the steering committee.

Village Council

Leadership within the village will come from a democratic group that will be elected from site residents. This team will lead **daily administration of the site** (including cleaning, security, and maintenance of the common areas). They will also be the first point of contact to whom residents may express a concern. Council will lead regular meetings with the residents. A member of the steering committee or the GWC project manager will also attend these meetings. Elections for council will take place every 6 months or when council member moves out of the village.

3. Budget Considerations

Without a confirmed site it is difficult to propose a firm budget, but we have included key considerations below.

Home Hardware in Port Hope and Henderson Construction will build the cabins at cost with volunteer labour.

Community support has been overwhelming and we are confident in being able to raise the funds through ongoing donations and provision of grants. In addition, operational costs will be offset by monthly revenues. Each resident will pay an amount equal to their shelter allowance from Ontario Works (OW) to help cover costs of one staff and maintenance of the site. We have met with Northumberland County Social Services staff and have coordinated a direct deposit with a contract between OW, NSCC and the resident.

For conservative budgeting purposes, we have assumed no access to an onsite building for amenities, and so will be purchasing trailers for washroom/kitchen facilities. Below is a brief overview of the draft budget. We estimate that approximately \$15,000 of the build project costs will be offset by donated materials and labour.

Capital Revenue

Capital Campaign	\$162,220
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Capital Project Expenses

Build Project	\$72,000
Program Costs	\$3,875
Site Services	\$50,000
Project Dismantle	\$3,400
Site Preparation	\$27,750
Estimated Project Costs	\$157,025
<i>Difference</i>	\$5,195

Operational Revenue

Resident contributions	\$28,080
Donations/grants	\$75,000

Operational Project Expenses (for a 6-month pilot)

Administrative	\$650
Program	\$37,746
Site Services	\$55,950
Governance	\$2,500
Estimated Operational Costs	\$96,846

(for six month period)

Difference **\$6,234**

4. Residents

Resident Selection

Our goal is that a currently connected community of people who already survive together unsheltered can be housed in the sleeping cabin village. This will build upon already existing support and community.

We have been surveying people with lived/living experience for their expertise and feedback. Some of these individuals are helping with the planning of the project and a few people have joined our steering committee. These steering committee members have helped us to identify potential residents for the project. As well, Green Wood Coalition and Moms Stop the Harm have referred folks to us who are a potential good fit for the village. We have begun to bring this group together to meet on a regular basis to see if they will be able to live and work together for the betterment of the village and each other. This group of potential residents is working on establishing the core values of the village as well as rules, responsibilities, and maintenance of the site. Once NSCC has confirmed and approved who will be the first set of residents for the

site, these residents will elect a council of 2-3 members. Each resident will be required to sign the Village Agreement.

Village Agreement

Based on consultations with other sleeping cabin communities, an individually signed village agreement is a set of basic rules that has successfully promoted community cohesiveness. NSCC is currently working with a group of potential residents to finalize a list of rules.

The following basic rules would apply to the village community:

1. I will not commit violence to others
2. I will not persist in disruptive behaviour
3. I respect each person's property and the property of the village—I will not steal or damage property
4. I will contribute to the operation and maintenance of the village and attend weekly village meetings
5. I will treat others with respect regardless of beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and background
6. I will be a positive member of this community making it a safe, secure and pleasant place to live

Residents will meet regularly before they move onto the site to elect Village Council members. As issues arise, members are encouraged to bring them up to the Council for collective resolution. If the group requires mediation or facilitation, the NSCC Steering Committee member or project manager can help. Voting will take place on issues as needed. Quorum for voting will be defined as 50% of residents. The NSCC Steering Committee and Green Wood board of directors may override any decision made by the Village Council.

Part 3 – Town of Cobourg Support

Delegation Request

The Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective is seeking Cobourg Council support for the safety of all in our community, including those who are unsheltered, by undertaking the following requested actions:

- 1. Donate temporary use of the Memorial Arena parking lot on Furnace Street for the purpose of a six-month sleeping cabin pilot project. To support this, the following is recommended:**

- a. **Direct Town of Cobourg staff to form an appropriate use agreement with the Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective—through Green Wood Coalition.**
- b. **Direct Town of Cobourg staff to identify by-laws, permits and authorizations that must be in-place prior to the beginning the pilot project; and to bring any required by-laws or items requiring approval to Cobourg Council at the soonest opportunity (due to the urgent current community need).**

Should you have additional ideas about research or community engagement that may help build community understanding we invite you to participate in collaboration on this project with us.

Proposed sites

We are asking the Town of Cobourg to lease a portion of land to Green Wood Coalition with a **temporary use of land for a 6-month period**. The sleeping cabins will be mobile and can be easily removed when pilot ends. NSCC/GWC is able to handle the fundraising, site management, operations, labour and resident selection/management for the site. Our goal is to have a site in Cobourg that is close to services and transportation. The land will need to be a fenced area of approximately **4,500 sq ft to accommodate 12 cabins plus supporting shared washroom and kitchen** (if not already present onsite). The land will need to have electricity and water servicing in place.

We have reviewed the Town's land inventory of potential sites, created through community consultation, that are identified as suitable for affordable housing. (Cobourg, 2022) We think the former Memorial Arena site parking lot could be a very good fit for this project.

216 Furnace St (Memorial Arena)

We understand that the Town has deemed this site for the Fire Fighters Museum as well as affordable housing. Our village would utilize part of the parking lot to install sleeping cabins and portable washrooms and kitchen facilities. It would need to be hooked up to services on this site through the existing building.

NSCC has met with and proposed temporary land use for our 6-month pilot project with five private/organizational land-owners, one of whom is open to hosting the project in principle but there are significant infrastructure issues with the site.

We have provided the following additional information:

- Site map below for the 12 cabins plus supporting washrooms and kitchen.
- Literature review of existing sleeping cabin initiatives
- Sample construction specifications and drawings

If at the end of the pilot project the Town chooses not to continue with the agreement, the cabins and accompanying trailers can be relocated if needed (this is included in NSCC's budget considerations).

We thank you for your time, hope, and consideration for this project.

Appendix A - Sleeping Cabin Building Requirements and Sample Drawings

Floors

- Raised off the ground to accommodate forklift forks
- PT plywood on the base
- Vapour barrier (2)
- 5.5" cavity with insulation (2"x6" running the 10' length)
- Subfloor of non-PT plywood

Framing and Insulation

- 16" on centre framing
- Batt Insulation (Roxul, fibreglass) or Spray Foam –removes requirement for separate vapour barrier; Rigid Board —still requires a vapour barrier
- Boarded with 3/16" or 1/4" plywood
- All internal plywood treated with fire retardant spray (FX Lumber Guard XT - Exterior Fire Retardant ASTM E2768 CLASS A15)

Windows

- Two windows, with screens (one on the side of the door; one on another wall)
- Caulk to reduce air leakage

Insulated Steel Doors should:

- Open inwards (with no screws accessible from outside)
- Not have windows
- Have a deadbolt lock

Venting

- Rooftop vents or alternate as proposed by builder

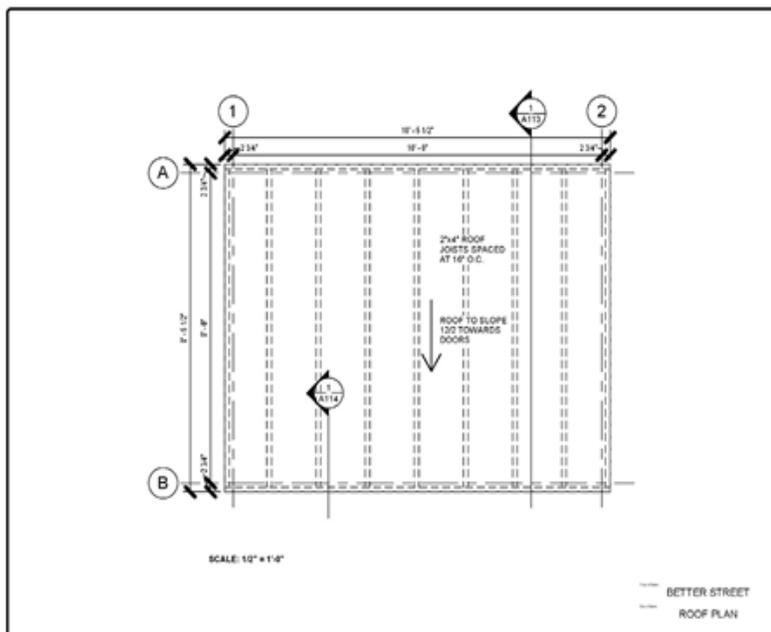
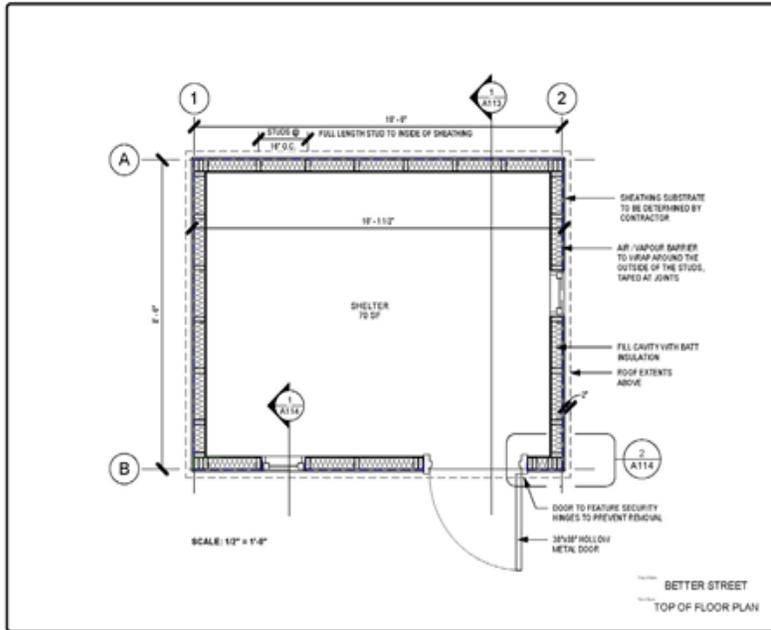
Fire Retardant

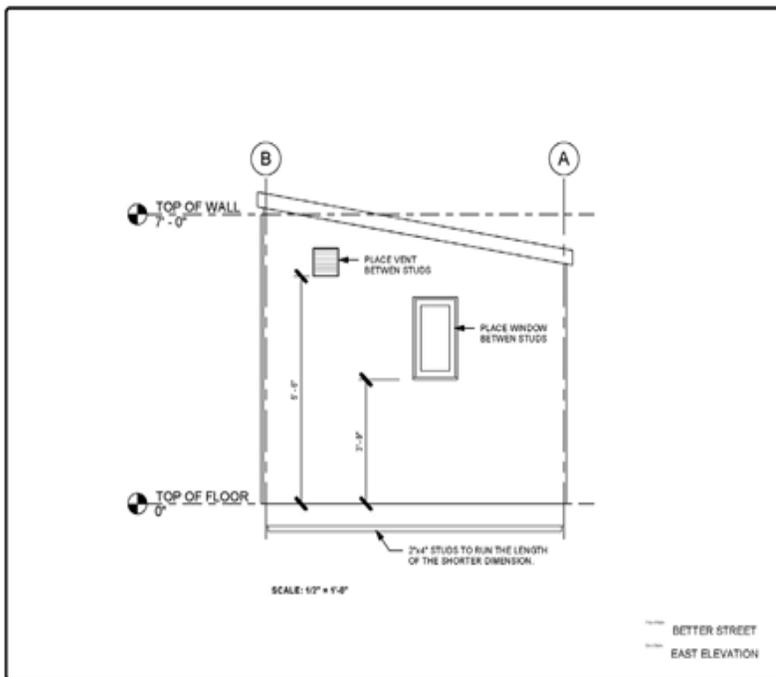
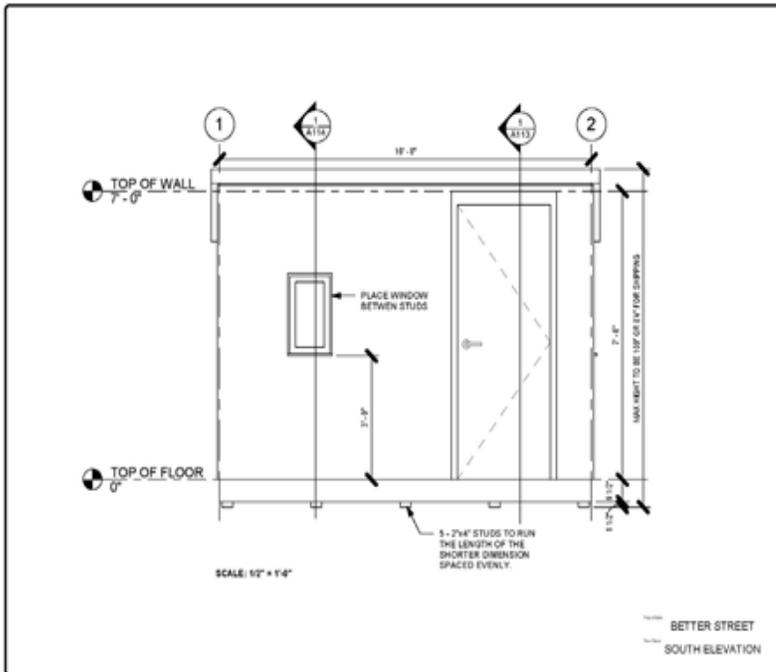
- Fire retardants should be added to all internal plywood as well as the exterior base and underside of the home
- One option for fireproofing the homes is FX Lumber Guard XT - Exterior Fire Retardant ASTM E2768 CLASS A19

Electrical

- One 20 amp circuit
- Two electrical receptacles
- Hardwired:

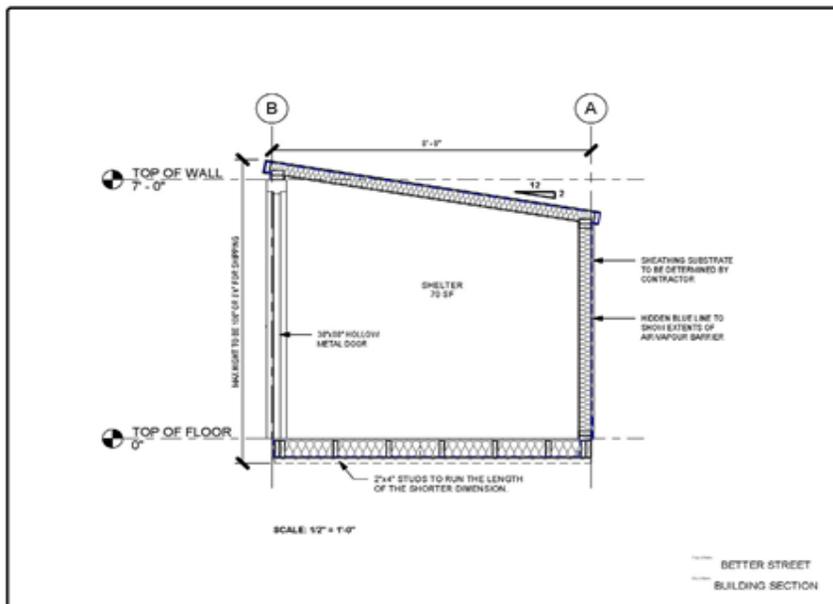
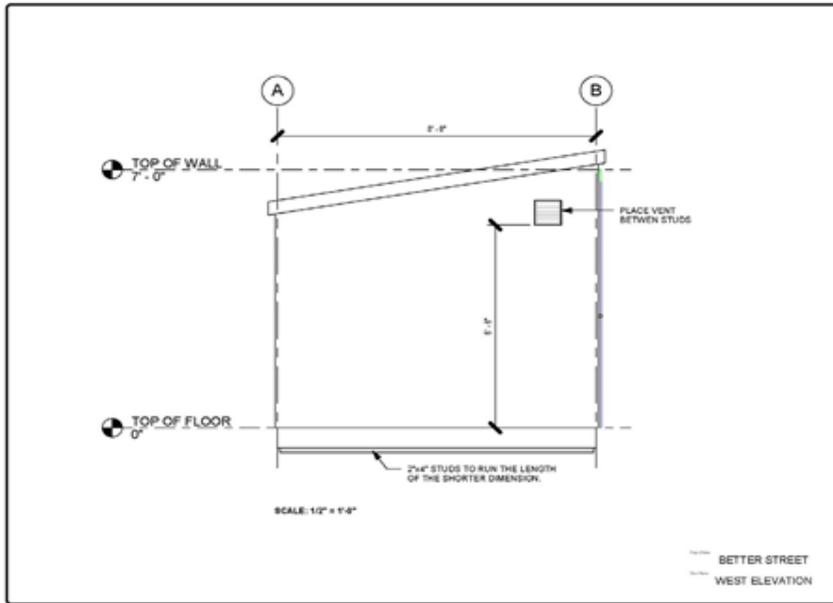
- One interior light
- One exterior light
- Smoke detector
- Electrical disconnect on the side of the building near the front door

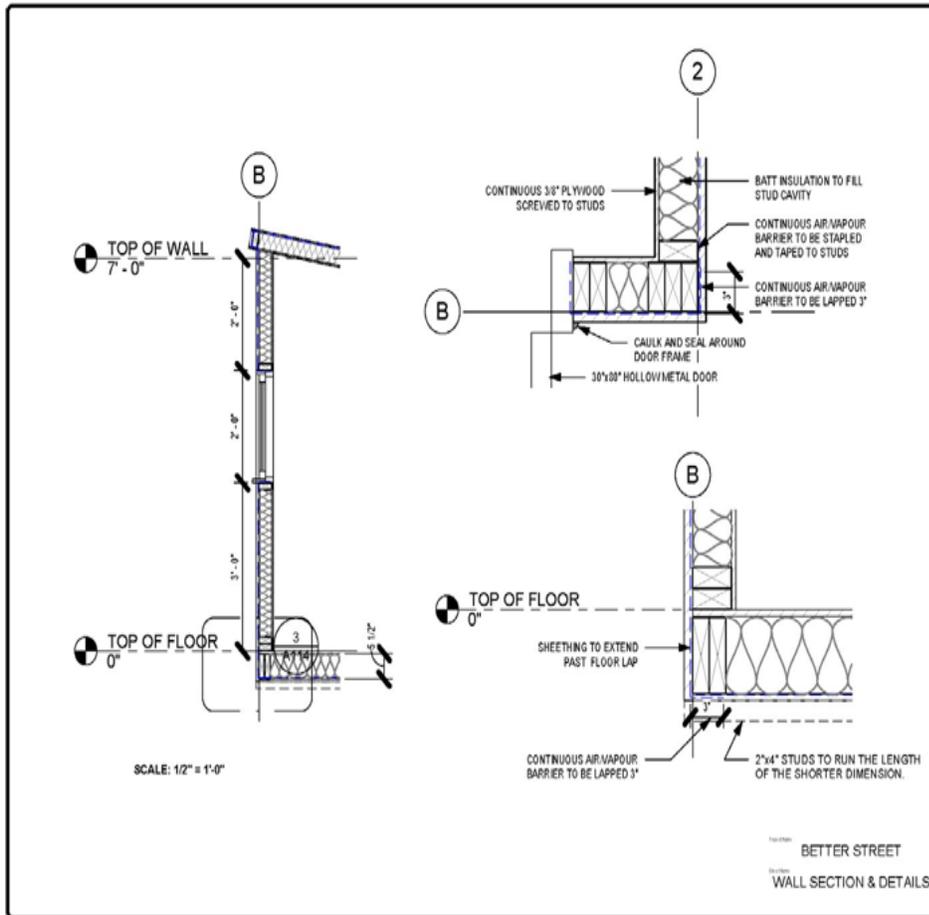




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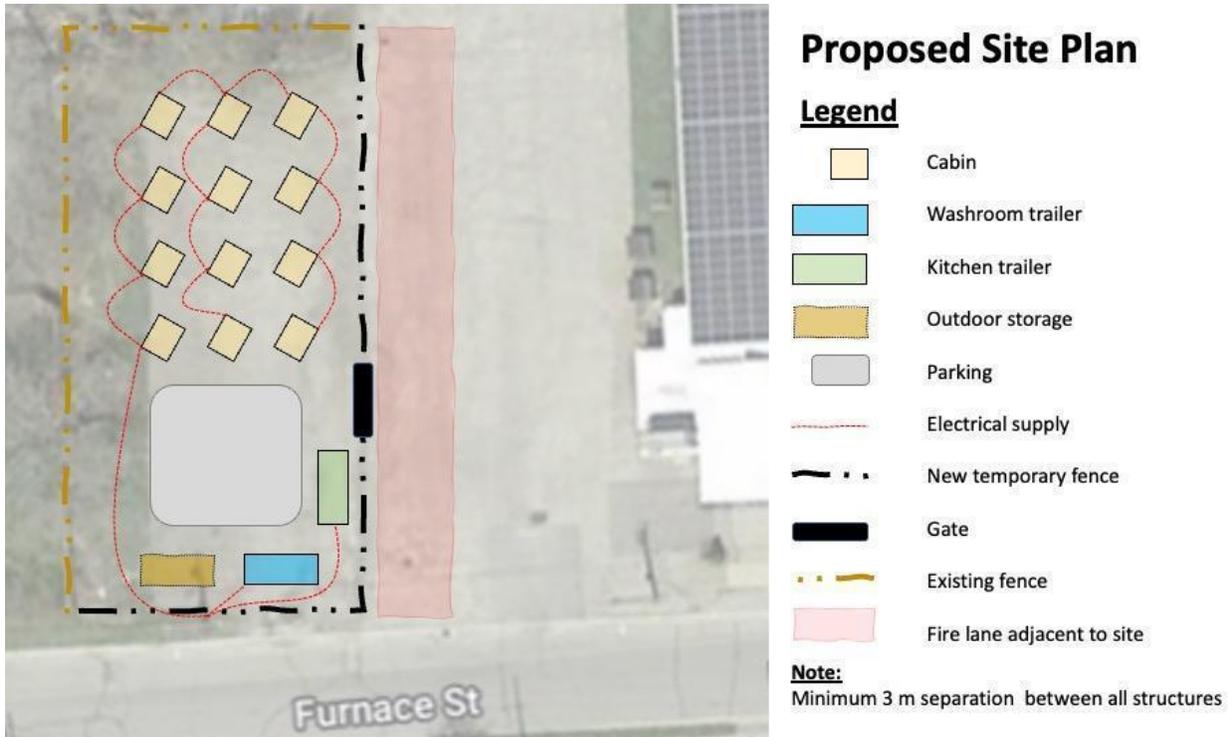
A better alternative to a tent





Appendix B - Proposed Location and Site Plan





Appendix C – Community integration case studies and jurisdictional review

In looking at communities that have established similar village projects, we can better understand their impact on community safety and neighbourhood relations. These case studies have demonstrated how sleeping cabin villages are a positive addition to neighbourhoods.

Case Studies

Case Study 1: Beloved Community Village, Denver Colorado

Report by: Barton Institute for Philanthropy and Social Enterprise and the Center on Housing and Homelessness Research

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc0c64290f904038485248a/t/5fca6b92238abd3554b806ac/1607101335681/2020-BCV-Report-Findings-One-Pager-V2.pdf>

Highlights of the Report:

- ✓ Neighbours identified having positive or neutral feelings about Beloved Community Village's overall impact on their neighborhood.
- ✓ During the year that this study occurred, not one person in the neighborhood called the police about the village.
- ✓ Local government supported, through planning, the provision of future tiny home sites.

Case Study 2: Quixote Village, Olympia Washington

Report by: Tiny Home Alternative To Conventional Housing, BC Housing Research Centre, 2021

<https://www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/housing-forms-designs/tiny-homes-alternative-conventional-housing>

Highlights of Report:

- ✓ "There are now 30 extra sets of eyes monitoring the neighborhood. As a result, crime and vandalism in the area decreased." Pg 113

Case Study 3: Opportunity Village in Eugene, Oregon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhqmwE3MLhw>

- ✓ Residents report feeling safer and able to tackle personal challenges in their life due to increased feeling of safety within the village community.

Case Study 4: Green Wood Tower Motels, Port Hope

<https://www.greenwoodcoalition.com/history.html>

Over time, this community of motel units went from a safety concern for local service agencies to a thriving community of supportive friends and neighbours. Has since integrated a VON nursing clinic, wrap around supports and outreach workers on site.

Case Study 5: A Better Tent City video, Waterloo

https://vimeo.com/486941338?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=24505222

Learning from other Municipalities: Jurisdictional Review (Ontario)

There have been successful sleeping cabin programs in other communities. Municipalities that have established communities provide bylaw and zoning precedent and safety considerations we collectively can learn from.

1. *Kingston, Ontario: Staff Report to Council, October 2021 (Hurdle, Lanie, 2021)*

Staff report explaining the need for sleeping cabins through provision of information on best practices, and recommendations in relation to building code, fire and life safety, support services, land use planning, cost, and associated way forth to rezone for sleeping cabins use.

Precedent in Zoning discussed in staff report: “It may be possible to permit sleeping cabins on a temporary basis through a temporary use zoning by-law enacted pursuant to Section 39 of the Planning Act.”

2. *Kitchener, Ontario: Staff Report to Council, July 2020 (Oosterveld, 2020)*

Staff report recommending zoning bylaw changes to allow for “A Better Tent City” (a sleeping cabin village to operate on private property).

Appendix D - Timeline of NCSS community engagement

Since August, NCSS has operated with urgency, connecting with the community and town partners in hopes to ensure this project's success. Hours spent working toward this initiative have been extensive.

Late-August 2022

Group of volunteers from Green Wood Coalition came together to brainstorm a solution to the question of homelessness in our County. "Where are people supposed to go?". Video from Kitchener-Waterloo of A Better Tent City is shared and it is agreed we will begin to research this as an emergency solution.

September 2022

Research of various sleeping cabin villages including: A Better Tent City, Kitchen-Waterloo; Our Livable Solutions, Kingston, ON; PATH, Peterborough, ON; Plum Street Village, Olympia, WA; Community First!, Austen, TX; Opportunity Village, Eugene, OR. Currently there are 100's of sleeping cabin villages in the United States.

Meeting with Tony Stortz who is a consultant and was the superintendent at A Better Tent City the first year they operated. He has written the following free guide on how to create and run a sleeping cabin village: <https://www.betterstreet.ca/the-book>

Steering Committee of Jenni Frenke, Shane Watson and Meghan Sheffield is formed. We begin to send out proposals to private landowners for land donation for the project in Cobourg and Port Hope. *See this list under site selection.*

October

The committee visits to A Better Tent City in Kitchener-Waterloo and Our Livable Solutions in Kingston. A sample cabin is brought from Kingston for awareness and promotion with our community, preparations for cabin Open Houses begin.

Community Cabin Meeting at Grace church in Port Hope. 50 volunteers show up to offer their help, skills, ideas and hope to this project. Brandon Miller, Tiffany Palfrey, Yvonne O'Neill and Alastair McKeating join the steering committee.

First Cabin Open House at Grace Church in Port Hope. 80-90 people attend to show support. Dawn Campbell joins steering committee.

Northumberland Sleeping Cabin Collective

A better alternative to a tent

Home Hardware in Port Hope and Stevenson Construction come on board to offer materials at cost, volunteer contractors to build the cabins, 2 industrial buildings to store them and machinery to move cabins to site when finished. In 2 days, with skilled volunteers, they will be able to complete 4 cabins.

November

NSCC hosts first open houses. We have been overwhelmed by the amount of support, ideas and volunteer help for this project from both the Cobourg and Port Hope communities. Since the end of October we have had 10 Open Houses. Each Open House has around 30 people attend each time, each coming with hope, ideas and connections for the project.

Green Wood Coalition officially agrees to take NSCC on as a project and to provide governance under their volunteer Board as well as receive donations and administer tax receipt. Jenny Whyte, Lyss Warmland and Brad Grundy join the steering committee. Weekly meetings begin with potential residents for the village.

Meetings with Cobourg Town Planning, Police and Fire. Meeting with Mayor Cleveland and Deputy Mayor Nicole Beatty. Meeting with Northumberland County Social Services and Planning.

December

Meeting at potential site (Memorial Area parking lot) with Anne Taylor Scotts and Brian Geerts.

We currently have over 600 followers on facebook. We were published in the Northumberland newspaper:

<https://www.northumberlandnews.com/news-story/10754966-impact-a-better-alternative-to-a-tent-check-out-the-sleeping-cabin-touring-cobourg-port-hope/>

We now have a donation page set up through Greenwood Coalition and are forming a fundraising committee to raise the funds needed for the village.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/76480?v1=true>

Appendix E - Steering Committee

We currently have 11 volunteer Steering Committee members each spending on average 10 hours per week on this project. We come from a variety of backgrounds, some of us are housed and some are unsheltered. We are tenacious, determined and will not stop until we have housed at least 12 neighbours. And we are not going anywhere, once the site is up and running we are here for the long haul of operating the site until the time when there is enough affordable housing for all.

Jenni Frenke

Meghan Sheffield

Shane Watson

Brandon Miller

Tiffany Palfrey

Alastair McKeating

Yvonne O'Neill

Dawn Campbell

Jenny Whyte

Lyss Warmland

Brad Grundy

Appendix F – Research and Evaluation of Project

Wrap Around evaluation model

Evaluation of this program is an important component of our consideration as we want to better understand our impact and reflect on how to improve.

Wrap Around Canada has developed an extensive ‘common measurement tool’ and logical model which looks to understand how intervention activities are creating short and intermediate term outcomes which can be adapted for this community’s evaluation.

We will also ensure the voices, experiences and goals of people living in this community are included in the evaluation metrics to understand what residents deem as progress.

Green Wood Coalition has experience implementing successful wrap around programs within our community and has connections with leaders of Wrap Around which can be drawn on as the initiative evolves.

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Appendix H - Literature Review

Citizen Guides for Establishing Tiny Homes

A Home of Their Own, A guide to Building A time Homes Community - By Tony D'Amato Stortz

<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/61fc90a9c61aa86568c63074/t/62f9c1597ec10d685e63928d/1660535130735/A+Home+Of+Their+Own+Ebook.pdf>

Founder of BetterStreet, which offers strategies, problem-solving, and training for groups helping those who experience homelessness, drug addiction, and mental health problems. Tony worked for a year as Site Superintendent for A Better Tent City in Kitchener, Ontario., one of the tiny home communities in Canada.

Page 34 - Discusses municipal approval process and considerations needed

Housing First Logic/Housing as a Human Right

Housing first impact on costs and associated cost offsets: a review of the literature.

Ly, A. & Latimer, E. (2015). *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 60 (11), 475-487.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4679128/>

Literature review of 34 studies on chronic homelessness and a Housing First approach.

Highlights of the Study:

- Housing First approach reduces shelter costs, decreases the rate of police contacts, arrests, detentions, and court appearances.
- This review found a decrease in emergency department visits, though with an increase of outpatient clinic visits likely due to participants now seeking care for conditions they previously neglected.
- Savings in cost of services overall demonstrated by the interventions of Housing First as opposed to traditional interventions.

National Final Report: Cross-Site At Home/Chez Soi

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/mhcc_at_home_report_national_cross-site_eng_2_0.pdf

An exploration of the outcomes of the At Home/Chez Soi project, a large Canadian Housing First project. This provides tangible data to support why the Housing First model is beneficial.

A randomized controlled trial of the effectiveness of Housing First in a small Canadian City

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6704672/>

A study that observed participants over 24 months. The data suggests that providing immediate housing stabilizes longer term housing sustainability, a deeper sense of community connectedness and perceived improvement in mental health illness.

The Real Cost of Homelessness: Can we save money by doing the right thing?

https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/costofhomelessness_paper21092012.pdf

Page 5 - Visual on costs associated with people living with homelessness

Page 7 - Health costs of homelessness

Additional Resources

Canada's National Housing Strategy

<https://www.placetocallhome.ca/-/media/sf/project/placetocallhome/pdfs/canada-national-housing-strategy.pdf>

Page 8 - Housing rights are human rights

Page 18 - The federal government will empower communities to develop a combination of housing measures alongside people with lived experience

Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts, Edition 2

https://thecanadianfacts.org/The_Canadian_Facts-2nd_ed.pdf

We reduce health inequities by acknowledging how to provide people with access to those pieces that give them the best opportunity to experience good health. Housing is one of these components. This paper examines those social determinants that are required for someone to be able to live with dignity in good health.

Page 13 - Introduction, Figure 1.1

Third Door Coalition, Database of Research and Sources

<https://www.thirddoorcoalition.org/research-and-sources>

A non-exhaustive sampling of studies concerning the effectiveness of Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing to address chronic homelessness, as well as a sampling of non-academic news media highlighting progress in several cities and states.

Tiny Home Alternative To Conventional Housing, BC Housing Research Centre, 2021

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hbO6kwIC6me-5SeFko3nRM1ga7l8tURE/view?usp=share_link

This report also shares the challenges of this form (tiny homes): code and standard compliance (structural, fire, plumbing, seismic), zoning, financing and tenure, and political and public support. Findings demonstrate that cities are taking steps to further explore the typology, and some tiny communities are now fully developed, supported and thriving. To tackle this discussion, the economics and basic principles of tiny living, and the challenges and opportunities of these homes are explored in more detail.