Environmental Scan: Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan

Off-Reserve and Outside Saskatoon and Regina

Prairie Wild
CONSULTING
Preparing Communities for the Future

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Acknowledgements

As Saskatchewan's first province-wide study on Aboriginal Homelessness Off-Reserve and outside the Cities of Saskatoon and Regina, we would like to express appreciation to all those who have made this project a success.

First, we would like to thank all those people experiencing homelessness who shared their stories with the researchers. These are the people who shared personal accounts and community knowledge. Every piece of information was a valuable asset to the project. We are grateful for all the courage and conviction you have shown.

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Next, we would like to express our gratitude to all the advisors who helped advance this research process. These are the members of the communities and service providers who guided the progress of the project. Thank you for pointing us in the right direction.

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Once again, thank you, each and every one of you.

Background

In September 2014, the Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board (AHAB) and the Provincial Métis Housing Corporation (PMHC) commissioned a project to better understand Aboriginal homelessness in Saskatchewan.

The AHAB and PMHC partner as the Community Entity responsible for province-wide funding through the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) (Non-Designated Aboriginal Homelessness funding stream). This funding is available to organizations in Saskatchewan who address Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve and outside the cities of Saskatoon and Regina. To help with planning and managing the funding stream, these two organizations felt that more evidence was needed on the provincial landscape of Aboriginal homelessness. Prairie Wild Consulting was contracted to collect data and write the report.

Objective of the Project

The objective of this project is to provide a better understanding of Aboriginal homelessness in Saskatchewan and identify the gaps in services for homeless individuals and their families.

Specifically, the project aims to identify:

- ∞ What agencies, service organizations, and other resources exist;
- ∞ Where they are located;
- ∞ The types of resources for homelessness they provide;
- ∞ What data currently exists to help determine the size and make-up of homeless populations; and
- ∞ Where gaps in programming exist.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy's Saskatchewan Non-Designated Aboriginal Homelessness funding stream is one of only three such streams in Canada. Funding policy for Aboriginal Homelessness to date has remained fairly open. The findings of this report may help to further define promising practices for this funding stream.

Methods

Data collection methods for this project included:

- ∞ A background inventory and review of existing learnings (what has been done and said to date about this topic in other research);
- ∞ An online inventory of agencies providing programs and services to help with homelessness; and
- ∞ Community visits and interviews.

Eleven communities across Saskatchewan and one in Manitoba (Flin Flon) were visited (Figure 1). The project team also talked to some service providers in Saskatoon and Regina about the wider provincial context for homelessness.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with service providers, Elders, community members, and people experiencing homelessness. Semi-structured interviews were based around a series of pre-prepared topic questions. The interview template is provided in Appendix C. Conversations were allowed to flow naturally rather than following a set order of questions.

Communities Visited:
City of Lloydminster
City of North Battleford
City of Yorkton
City of Prince Albert
City of Flin Flon, MB
City of Swift Current
City of Saskatoon
   (background data
   collection only)
City of Regina (offices of
   Silver Sage Housing)
Town of Fort Qu'Appelle
Town of La Ronge
Town of Creighton
Northern Village of Sandy
   Bay
Northern Village of
   Buffalo Narrows
Northern Village of La
   Loche

Communities contacted by phone:
City of Meadow Lake
Town of Kindersley
Town of Maple Creek
Northern Village of
   Beauval
Black Lake First Nation
   Reserve

Conversations focused around these topic areas:

∞ Housing;

∞ Local Economics;

∞ Job Market;

∞ Existing Data and Data Sources (service providers only);

∞ Existing Service Provider Networks and Collaboration;

∞ Existing Services and Resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture);

∞ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities;

∞ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals, etc.);

∞ Location of the homeless population - daily round of activities;

∞ Mobility (local and regional);

∞ Definition of Homelessness; and

∞ Causes of Homelessness.

Homelessness Across the Regions of Saskatchewan

To understand the picture of homelessness across the province, a regional approach was used to analyse existing knowledge, the results of the online inventory, and learnings from communities.

This report includes a description of the picture of homelessness in each region, including services and supports available. For a detailed discussion of each region, see the individual region sections in the main body of this report.

Summary of Province-Wide Findings

Over the course of the project, the following themes were noticed:

1. Saskatchewan is filled with hardworking service providers who are dedicated to the communities they serve.

Service providers use partnerships, both formal and informal, to make the most of what are often limited resources.

Individuals spoken to*:

Unsheltered Homeless:	2
Emergency Sheltered:	7
Provisionally Accommodated:	11
At Risk of Homelessness:	15

Agencies spoken to:

83

*Determination of homeless typology based on information provided by participants.

"What's the best thing? There are partnerships, people work together, there is a strong sense of community, [and a] respect for each other's mandates."

"In terms of net-working, we check around, are flexible, see who has the skills to help."

2. Definitions of homelessness can be a barrier to addressing real needs in communities.

Across Saskatchewan, people expressed homelessness as a spectrum of situations that can change quickly. From people living in culverts, to people staying with friends and family (including those in overcrowded housing, or housing in poor condition) to people with varying degrees of housing instability or vulnerability – all are experiencing the adverse impacts of homelessness.

The people we spoke to defined homelessness in a way that fits with the current Canadian definition of homelessness (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness 2012), which is as follows:

> *Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do*

not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing.

*Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other. That is, homelessness encompasses a range of physical living situations, organized here in a **typology** that includes 1) **Unsheltered**, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation; 2) **Emergency Sheltered**, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence; 3) **Provisionally Accommodated**, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, and finally, 4) **At Risk of Homelessness**, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one's shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.*

"Another challenge is the definition of homelessness…People are homeless some days, then have a home for really cold days. So in some communities, even though there is lots of overcrowding, by some definitions, there is no homelessness."

"With homeless people…it's hard to fit them within parameters…you need to be thinking outside the box".

"Yes there is homelessness, but no one is on the street."

"Couchsurfing or no residence is generally how we describe homelessness."

"There is no option to go somewhere else. So you take in whoever needs housing."

The target population for the Housing First approach under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is chronic and episodic homelessness, which is defined as follows:

Chronically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year (i.e., have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation).

Episodically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (of note, episodes are defined as periods when a person would be in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation, and after at least 30 days, would be back in the shelter or inhabitable location) (Employment and Social Development Canada 2015).

As one moves into the more remote areas of Northern Saskatchewan, numbers of unsheltered homeless become smaller. This has to do in large part with a sense of community obligation to shelter people in need. This sense of community is present throughout the province, but is particularly pronounced in northern Aboriginal communities where there are few agencies formally offering services for homelessness.

"In the north, there is not a lot of visible homeless. There is a big Aboriginal population with the dynamics of survival being through kinship. Couchsurfing is like the community looking after that person."

"Nobody will freeze in La Loche…we won't allow it…the community will take people in, families take people in…so people have roofs over their heads, but are in crowded or risky housing situations."

"…strong beliefs, rooted in culture, about family and taking care of others: someone will always open their doors to a homeless person in dire need, and indeed, families often see it as their responsibility to house relations who might otherwise not have a home."

In terms of formal data and programs, this may mean that there is a gap in resources for homelessness in rural and remote Aboriginal communities.

"This can be a disadvantage to Aboriginal people – because their kinship and community system means their ways of supporting community members at risk of homelessness don't get counted...In the North lots of communities are small and don't have major supports for homelessness, like official shelters, etc. So data-wise, it looks like there aren't any homeless there. This can be a big road block. Meaningful supports being given [by the community], but they don't show up in the data."

This learning is echoed by existing research, which has noted the need for more flexible definitions of homelessness in rural and remote areas. (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.; Peters Vallancourt and Hemingway 2006; Happy Valley-Goose Bay 2007; National Council of Welfare 2007).

3. An adequate supply of safe housing is universally reported as a gap and the root cause of many challenges relating to homelessness.

During the creation of the Constitution Act 1982 which includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, adequate housing as a human right was not included. This may be because, at the time, homelessness was virtually unheard of in Canada (Porter, 2004). The Federal government had been building up Canada's affordable and social housing stock significantly since the Second World War. Many people believe that the current situation of unsheltered homelessness and the need for organizations like Food Banks relates to the reduction and then cessation of direct Federal funding for new housing in the 1980's and early 90's (Gaetz, 2014).

> *"From 1977 to 1990, [we] didn't have Food Banks. In the last 25 years homelessness has risen as a major issue."*

> *"With rent increases, people who had homes are now back in shelters."*

> *"Rents are sky-high!"*

> *"Social Housing is hard to come by. Rental housing is available but is incredibly expensive – landlords often ask first, last month's rent and damage – it can cost 3000 just to get moved in – it's hard for people to get that kind of cash."*

> *"I am an Elder and I currently have 8 people living with me. I live in a 2 bedroom house, and am also a foster parent. I grew up with my mother helping people in the same way. Would I feel lonely if they all left? Yes. Many Elders take in family members."*

> *"When kids are not in stable housing, it affects them in school. They don't get enough to eat or haven't slept – so they act out. There's no quiet place for them [to sleep]."*

4. More understanding of culturally appropriate housing is needed.

Current housing across Saskatchewan, including social housing, is designed for the needs of single families or individuals. Cultural traditions of generosity, openness to sharing homes, and a high emphasis on family and kinship exist in Aboriginal communities, as noted above. As such, there is a need to consider alternative forms of housing, such as multi-generational housing or housing that can accommodate short term stays by family or other guests.

5. Cultural competence and Aboriginal-run organizations are important in providing supports for homelessness.

Friendship centres are found across the province (the exception being the Athabasca region) and, in many communities, provide a focus for Aboriginal-run supports, including shelters, help with housing, or other services. These organizations, however, can be

under-resourced and in some cases are run entirely by dedicated volunteers in the community.

Many people spoke to the need for organizations with cultural competence – that is, organizations that understand and have a sensitivity to Aboriginal culture; with a preference for organizations run by Aboriginal people themselves.

> *"Aboriginal people need their own place that is culturally appropriate…Their needs are more sacred to them, a place where they feel safe, a place where they can teach and practice their traditions, and not step on other people's toes."*

> *"Aboriginal people need access to their cultural needs, [to] have safe places to go and just hang out."*

> *"Aboriginal run programs are better."*

> *"Would like an open environment shelter, run by Aboriginal people."*

6. Mental health and addictions are key factors in homelessness.

Across the province, service providers drew a link between homelessness, mental health, and addictions. Mental health and addiction challenges often go hand in hand. A greater understanding is needed of how to address mental health and addiction issues, particularly in terms of the ways they relate to challenges such as a lack of adequate housing, the cycle of poverty, and intergenerational trauma.

There is a need for housing strategies to go hand in hand with healing strategies. In many other jurisdictions, it has been shown that Housing First programs are most successful when they are combined with key supports (including healing supports), often provided collaboratively through a variety of organizations. In addition, culturally-relevant healing supports are critical.

> *"Main reason for homelessness? Addiction and mental health, both seem to coincide."*

> *"Mental health and addictions is the number one problem."*

> *"Housing is inseparable from mental health and addictions."*

7. Determining the extent of homeless populations is a challenge in many parts of the province, particularly the North.

Due to a lack of formal organizations targeted towards homelessness (usually shelters), Northern Saskatchewan has little data to enumerate homelessness. Most data that exists relates to the health effects of crowding and poor housing.
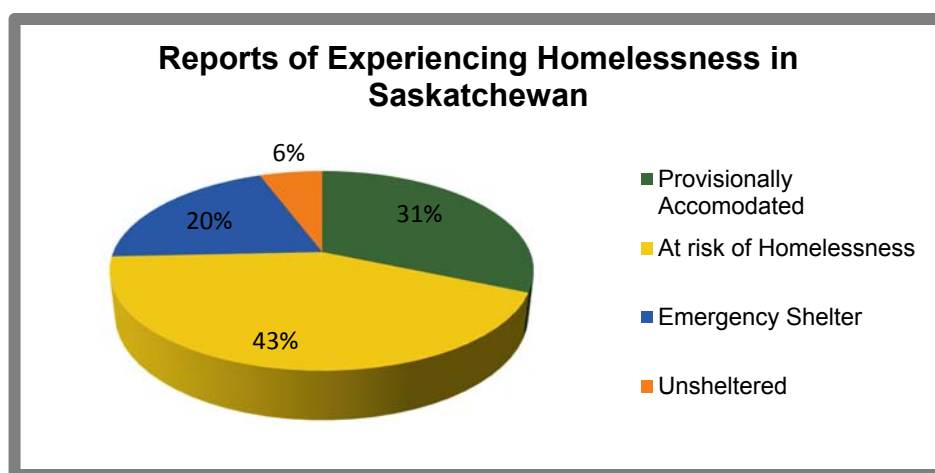
"Data challenge – there's no agency or data source for this type of info in the North. It's also becoming harder because [there is no] long form data from Census 2011. For some areas like La Ronge – can't even get specific [census] data [for the community] because the response rate is too low. Data is worse for areas that are small, rural, and a large Aboriginal population."

Communities we spoke to in Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle also had little data for enumerating homelessness, with the exception of a 2006 study on youth homelessness.

Larger centres such as Lloydminster had some data in the form of homeless counts and other studies. Prince Albert has data from existing shelters and is currently working on a homeless count.

The Figure below is based on the numbers of people experiencing homelessness interviewed as part of this project.

Reports of Experiencing Homelessness in Saskatchewan

- Provisionally Accomodated — 31%
- At risk of Homelessness — 43%
- Emergency Shelter — 20%
- Unsheltered — 6%

8. Determining the extent of hidden homeless populations is a challenge. Qualitative studies with community-based organizations are needed.

There were no formal counts or methods for understanding the extent of hidden homelessness. Several service providers suggested that the best way to do this, and to understand visible homelessness as well, is to rely on established service providers and agencies in the community. These front-line workers get to know the local people and get an understanding of who is homeless – whether on the street, provisionally sheltered, or at risk.

"To get data on the extent of homelessness you have to use CBOs [Community Based Organizations] somehow to survey…use the services going on formally…[these agencies] actually can assess if their programs are being accessed by homeless people."

9. Housing First may require tailored approaches in rural and remote areas.

Many of the learnings from this project shed light on potential approaches for Housing First in rural and remote areas. For example, there may not, as yet, be sufficient capacity, resources, and supports, particularly in northern regions, to successfully implement Housing First using the models of larger centres across Canada. There is also a lack of sufficient housing, as mentioned above.

This is not to say that communities should not strive to implement Housing First, but successful Housing First projects may require creative thinking along with tailored and region-specific approaches.

Some existing studies have made a start at understanding the way Housing First can work in rural and remote areas (Schiff, Turner and Schiff n.d is a good example).

In some places, Housing First ideas have started to take local form in a recognition that strict shelter rules may be counter-productive. Some communities have noted that wet shelters may be helpful, or have relaxed rules to allow intoxication (while still insisting on good behavior). Others have noted that strict rules about leaving during the day and being back at a certain time of night aren't helpful for people trying to work, particularly if they work night shifts.

10. The geography of Saskatchewan can be a factor in homelessness.

The sheer distance between communities in Saskatchewan, particularly in the North, can exacerbate the conditions for homelessness. People who travel south looking for work, or who have recently been released from jail or court appearances, can become "stranded" with no way to get back home, and have to rely on shelters or other means to stay housed until they can find transportation back to their community.

11. More research is needed to understand patterns of mobility.

Many people who work to understand Aboriginal homelessness (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.) have noted the role that mobility plays in understanding how best to provide supports and services. Many community members noted this as well.

People experiencing homelessness may adaptively move from place to place using an in-depth knowledge of their environment - what resources are available where, and when; who they can stay with at a given time and place; knowing when they may have "worn out their welcome"; and how they can survive outside when there is no place to stay. There is a seasonality to mobility as well, with some seasons amenable to camping or staying "in the bush."

A better understanding of how people move around, making use of their knowledge of their environment and the resources available to them, would help to understand how to offer supports and services.

There are many other reasons people may move around – to pursue jobs, education, or services. However, what keeps people from moving permanently to larger centres is connections to the supports of family, friends, and culture.

> *"Will go home to PA for Christmas – I have a place there – but I would rather be here [Flin Flon], all my family is here. I've tried to find housing but it is difficult."*

> *"I've lived in Calgary, Saskatoon, Vegas, Phoenix, BC, PA. I love it here, it's my home. Always get brought back for some reason."*

> *"People also go to major centres, like Saskatoon, because it is easier to get by with more services. But, they come back because this is home and there is family here."*

12. Jurisdictional issues are a factor in homelessness.

Jurisdictional issues were mentioned as a theme frequently by the people we spoke to.

> *"In north – homeless partnerships funds are a significant challenge – On and Off-Reserve are often across the street- and people access services in both."*

> *"Run into large jurisdiction issues – huge population going between Reserve, the Village of Air Ronge and Town of La Ronge. Lots of boundary issues when it comes to finding funding or assistance for many people. For housing, it's just as simple as someone couchsurfing from house to house – just across the street the jurisdiction is different going from Municipal (Town) to federal (Reserve)."*

> *"This really limits the partnerships we can do because of the eligibility of grants available, through federal or provincial funding."*

> *"Best practice is to remove jurisdictional barriers - don't care where you are from, we will still help. It is a constant battle if your mandate means you can't help some people."*

This relates to both service provision, and Federal and Provincial roles:

> *"First Nations get Federal funding while Métis have Provincial funding only."*

13. There is a gap in emergency shelters specifically for men.

All of the study regions of Saskatchewan had at least one women's shelter for domestic violence. However, only two regions had a specific adult men's shelter (Lloydminster Men's Shelter and Riverside Mission in Moose Jaw). There are emergency shelters that

serve both men and women in Prince Albert, North Battleford, and Estevan, though some of these are cold-weather only.

> *"People are often drawn here because there are lots of jobs…Or they get here and realize they don't have the proper tickets (safety, etc) and stay at Men's shelter until they can get them. Or until they can save enough, once working, to pay the first/last month rent etc.*

14. There is a gap in transitional housing.

Overall, opportunities to access transitional housing are low. Transitional housing tends to be targeted for domestic violence, youth, and people recovering from addictions.

> *"Want to do a short term transitional housing. In 3 months you can get them into a training program but the transition period now is not enough."*

> *"Need a transitional housing that is stable enough for people to stay because their need is continual."*

> *"Need for transitional housing."*

15. There is a gap in in housing for single people.

Since social housing priorities are geared predominantly towards families and children, it can be difficult for single people to find housing.

> *"Need housing for single people and couples or small families."*

> *"Can't find a place because houses go to families over singles."*

> *"Single young men need help."*

16. There are gaps in supports for youth, especially in the southern parts of the province.

Many service providers saw a need for more formal supports for youth. Young Aboriginal males were mentioned, particularly since they often can't stay in domestic violence shelters once they are over 15. Related to this is the fact that priorities in social housing tend to favor families and children as opposed to single people. The south most regions of the province in particular noted a need for youth shelters or supports.

Conclusions

This project took a regional approach to scanning the province to provide a picture of homelessness for Saskatchewan. It was found that the different areas of the province are all unique, and strategies to combat homelessness must be tailored to the local context. "One-size-fits-all" approaches are likely to be less effective.

That being said, there were several themes that emerged through the process. These are described in detail above and can be summarized as follows:

1. *Saskatchewan is filled with hardworking service providers.*

2. *Definitions of homelessness can be a barrier to addressing real needs in communities.*

3. *An adequate supply of safe housing is universally reported as a gap.*

4. *More understanding of culturally appropriate housing is needed.*

5. *Cultural competence and Aboriginal-run organizations are important.*

6. *Mental health and addictions are key factors in homelessness.*

7. *Determining the extent of homeless populations is a challenge in many parts of the province.*

9. *Housing First may require tailored approaches in rural and remote areas.*

10. *The geography of Saskatchewan can be a factor in homelessness.*

11. *More research is needed to understand patterns of mobility.*

12. *Jurisdictional issues are a factor in homelessness.*

13. *There is a gap in emergency shelters specifically for men.*

14. *There is a gap in transitional housing.*

15. *There is a gap in in housing for single people.*

Housing and Healing First

One of the most prominent of the themes listed above is the topic of mental health and addictions. Service providers pointed to the fact that poor mental health and addictions (and low levels of wellness in general) can be linked to a host of other factors that also influence homelessness. These include a lack of housing, housing in poor condition, and overcrowded housing; intergenerational trauma; and the cycle of poverty.

In terms of housing, mental health, addictions, and wellness in general, an example of policy to consider for the HPS Non-Designated funding stream would be to support initiatives that promote a "housing and healing first" model, as shown here:

The Saskatchewan Non-Designated Aboriginal Homelessness funding stream supports initiatives that provide both housing and wellness, with the goal of ensuring housing solutions work in tandem with culturally relevant healing and wellness supports.

The term "wellness" is used here because it can represent a variety of healing supports, including mental health and addictions.

Related areas of funding support could include:

- ❖ Initiatives that partner housing development with service providers, including wellness agencies that are able to access external sources of funding (i.e. collaborations with Ministries such as Social Services or Justice); and

- ❖ Initiatives that support capacity-building for wellness supports in communities (such as ensuring agencies and trained workers exist that can partner and provide culturally relevant wellness supports)

Governance to Support "Housing and Healing First" models: Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board

In light of the goals for combining housing and wellness supports, shown above, it is recommended that AHAB consider seeking out board members with service provision and wellness experience, in addition to those with expertise in housing development.

Table of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Phrase
AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
ACTC	Agency Chiefs Tribal Council
AFCS	Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan
AHA	Athabasca Health Authority
AHAB	Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board
BATC	Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs
Battlefords ECIP	Battlefords Early Childhood Intervention Program
BIMFC	Battlefords Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
BNFC	Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre
BTC	Battlefords Tribal Council
CADAC	Creighton Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council
CBO	Community Based Organization
CHR	Cypress Health Region
CHRA	Canadian Housing and Renewal Association
CLSD	Community Living Service Delivery
CMHA	Canadian Mental Health Association
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CUISR	Community University Institute for Social Research
CUMFI	Central Urban Métis Federation Inc
DARE	Drug Abuse Resistance Education
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FFIMFC	Flin Flon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre
FHHR	Five Hills Health Region
FHQTC	File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council
Flin Flon CYRC	Flin Flon Community Youth Resource Centre
FNIHB	First Nations and Inuit Health Branch
FQVFC	Fort Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre
FSIN	Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
HHR	Heartland Health Region
HPS	Homelessness Partnering Strategy
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
IPHRC	Indigenous Peoples Health Resources Centre
KCDC	Keewatin Career Development Corporation
KFC	Kininahk Friendship Centre
KTHR	Kesley Trail Health Region
KYRHA	Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority
LABIS	Lloydminster & Area Brain Injury Society
LSACS	Lloydminster Social Action Coalition Society
LLFC	La Loche Friendship Centre

LLRIB	Lac La Ronge Indian Band
LNFC	Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre
MASCI	Métis Addiction Council of Saskatchewan Inc.
MCRHR	Mamawetan Chruchill River Health Region
MLTC	Meadow Lake Tribal Council
MNS	Métis Nation of Saskatchewan
MUHAS	Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan
NAFR	National Association of Federal Retirees
NHSP	Northern Human Services Partnership
NITHA	Northern Intertribal Health Authority
NRHA	Northeast Regional Housing Authority
NWFC	North West Friendship Centre
NYFC	Newo Yotina Friendship Centre
PA	Prince Albert
PACI	Prince Albert Collegiate Institute
PAGC	Prince Albert Grand Council
PAIMFC	Prince Albert Indian & Métis Friendship Centre
PAPRHA	Prince Albert Parkland Regional Health Authority
PATHS	Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan
PBCN	Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation
PLBS	Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan
PMHC	Provincial Métis Housing Corporation
PNHR	Prairie North Health Region
PWC	Prairie Wild Consulting Co.
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RIC	Regional Intersectoral Committee
RQHR	Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
RRFCSS	Rosetown Regional Family & Community Support Services
SALT	Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Technicians
SAWCC	Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation
SCFC	Swift Current Friendship Centre
SCHR	Sun Country Health Region
SFC	Sipisishk Friendship Centre
SFNFCI	Saskatchewan First Nations Family & Community Institute
SHC	Saskatchewan Housing Corporation
SHIP	Saskatoon Housing Initiatives Partnership
SHR	Sunrise Health Region
SHR	Saskatoon Health Region
SICC	Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre
SIGN	Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours
SIIT	Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
SIMFC	Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
SPRA	Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association

SSFA	Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association
STC	Saskatoon Tribal Council
TATC	Touchwood Agency Tribal Council
WISH	Wichihik Iskwewak Safe House
YFC	Yorkton Friendship Centre
YTA	Yorkton Tribal Administration
YTC	Yorkton Tribal Council
YTHY	Yorkton Transitional Homes for Youth Inc.
VAC	Veterans Affairs Canada

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Definition of Homelessness

This project uses the Canadian Definition of Homelessness (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness 2012) which reads as follows:

> *Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing.*

> *Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other. That is, homelessness encompasses a range of physical living situations, organized here in a **typology** that includes 1) **Unsheltered**, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation; 2) **Emergency Sheltered**, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence; 3) **Provisionally Accommodated**, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, and finally, 4) **At Risk of Homelessness**, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one's shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.*

This definition was selected to ensure a consistent definition with other reports and studies across Canada. It was also selected because it most closely follows how communities define homelessness for themselves – as a fluid spectrum of homelessness ranging from living outdoors all the way to various forms of hidden homelessness or "couchsurfing," acknowledging that persons can be in a variety of places on the homelessness continuum over a given span of time and can change situations frequently.

It should be noted that the target population for the Housing First approach under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is chronic and episodic homelessness, which is defined as follows:

> *Chronically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year (i.e., have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation).*

Episodically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (of note, episodes are defined as periods when a person would be in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation, and after at least 30 days, would be back in the shelter or inhabitable location) (Employment and Social Development Canada 2015).

Limitations of the Study

Much of the inventory of services for homelessness in this report was generated from what was available online over the course of the project. Information on some services was confirmed during community visits. For many of the records, limitations were narrowed by what was available online, and the accuracy of what was available online at the time.

Through the online scan, a wide variety of other organizations were identified that provide supports for people who may be experiencing homelessness. The number of agencies who help with homelessness expands even further when you consider agencies that provide supports for persons falling onto the "provisionally accommodated" or "at risk" side of the continuum. In this report, it is not possible to describe all the agencies encountered in detail. Of necessity, the scope was limited to those agencies providing services targeted to homelessness on a regular basis.

Community visits were limited to (at most) one or two communities in each of the regions studied. Though the experiences of people spoken to were used to provide a sense of the character of the region, they may not reflect the experiences of everyone in the region.

Definitions for terms for various types of supports can vary, and many agencies offer more than one type of service, or offer uniquely tailored services. Trying to maintain consistent categorization of supports was done wherever possible. There may be some differences; for example, the term "transitional housing" can defined in different ways. Wherever possible, categorizing things was done according to how service providers themselves referred to the services.

1 Breaking New Ground

In September 2014, the Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board (AHAB) and the Provincial Métis Housing Corporation (PMHC) commissioned a project to better understand the Aboriginal homelessness reality in Saskatchewan.

The AHAB and PMHC partner as the Community Entity responsible for province-wide funding through the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) Non-Designated Aboriginal Homelessness funding stream. This funding is available to organizations who address Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve and outside the cities of Saskatoon and Regina.

To help with planning and managing the funding stream, these two organizations felt that more evidence was needed on the provincial landscape of Aboriginal homelessness.

1.1. Objective of the Project

The objective of this project is to provide a better understanding of the Aboriginal homelessness reality in Saskatchewan and identify the gaps in services for homeless individuals and their families.

Specifically, the project aims to identify:

- ∞ What agencies, service organizations, and other resources exist;
- ∞ Where they are located;
- ∞ The types of resources for homelessness they provide;
- ∞ What data currently exists to help determine the size and make-up of homeless populations; and
- ∞ Where gaps in programming exist.

1.2 Scope of the Project

The geographic scope of this project includes areas of Saskatchewan that are Off-Reserve and outside of the city limits of Saskatoon and Regina. Although Saskatoon, Regina and Reserves are outside the scope of the scan geographically, this study does look at the way issues On-Reserve and in major centres can influence homelessness in the rest of the province. For example, many Saskatchewan communities, particularly in the North, have Reserve lands next to (and sometimes within) municipal limits, making distinctions between on and Off-Reserve difficult.

This report refers to Aboriginal homelessness in Saskatchewan throughout. Unless otherwise specified, this refers to Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve and outside Saskatoon and Regina.
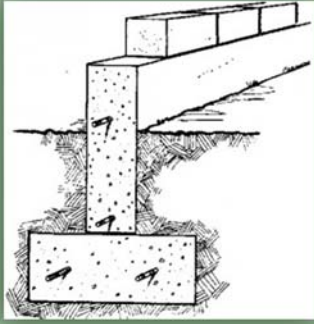
2 Laying the Foundation

This section contains information on the guiding questions and the methods that were used to gather and analyse data for this project.

2.1 Planning Key Questions

The following key questions were used to guide the data collection and analysis for this project.

1) What is the state of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan?

    a. What information is available to understand the extent of Aboriginal Homelessness?

    b. What factors influence Aboriginal homelessness in Saskatchewan?

    c. What are the characteristics of Aboriginal homelessness in Saskatchewan?

    d. How are the needs of Aboriginal homeless people being addressed right now through governments, service providers, and communities?

2) What are the gaps in services homeless individuals and families?

2.2 Constructing An Understanding

There were three broad components to data collection for this project including

- ∞ Document review
- ∞ Inventory of service providers
- ∞ Community visits, interviews and data collection

2.2.1 Document Review

A comprehensive overview of what has been done or thought to date regarding homelessness outside major centres in Saskatchewan was completed. While work on homelessness in major centres or in the national scale were considered for context, the focus was on homelessness in the unique local contexts of Saskatchewan—in particular outside of major centres and reserves.

References (2005 or later) were gathered from:

- ∞ Academic papers;
- ∞ Community and consultant reports (grey literature); and
- ∞ Government reports.

2.2.1.1 Focus

The focus was on literature that spoke to Aboriginal homelessness outside of urban centres, in particular for the prairie provinces. Western Canadian, national, or internationals perspectives were used to provide general context and background on Aboriginal homelessness topics.

2.2.1.2 Databases and Libraries

The following databases were searched:

- ∞ Science Direct;
- ∞ Academic Search Complete;
- ∞ Sage Publications; and
- ∞ Google search engine.

A variety of online publication databases were accessed, associated with organizations such as:

- ∞ The Homeless Hub (www.homelesshub.ca);
- ∞ Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (http://www.caeh.ca/resources/);
- ∞ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/index.cfm);
- ∞ Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) (http://www.usask.ca/cuisr/publications); and
- ∞ Annual reports, strategy documents, and others from the Government of Saskatchewan.

2.2.1.3 Search Terms

General search terms such as "homeless" paired with "Aboriginal" brought up the most relevant results. Adding other terms tended to narrow the list of resources returned considerably. The results expanded to a large number if the word "Aboriginal" was removed. There is a vast amount of literature relating to homelessness and a variety of topics such as mental illness, addictions, housing, and hidden homelessness. There is a fair amount of literature available on Aboriginal homelessness in urban centres. There is comparatively little that relates to Aboriginal homelessness outside of urban contexts on the Canadian Prairies.

The following keywords were used in the search:

"Homeless" and

- ∞ Aboriginal
- ∞ Indigenous
- ∞ First Nations
- ∞ Métis
- ∞ Inuit
- ∞ Native
- ∞ Off-Reserve
- ∞ Rural
- ∞ Mental Illness
- ∞ Addictions
- ∞ Youth
- ∞ Housing
- ∞ Hidden

A search was conducted on the names of authors whose work relates specifically to Off-Reserve Aboriginal homelessness in the Prairie provinces, or to Aboriginal homelessness in the prairies in general.

2.2.2 Inventory of Service Providers

A scan was completed to identify available programs and services that relate to Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve and outside Saskatoon and. All agencies identified in this way were added to a database of service providers.

2.2.2.1 Focus

To get a snapshot of what was available in the province in 2014, the Google search engine was used to scan for agencies in all communities with a population of over 500 (town sized or greater). The names of Northern Villages were also searched (even if their population was less than 500).

The focus was on organizations that:

- ∞ Provide services specifically to help with homelessness;
- ∞ Help with housing;
- ∞ Help with food (Food Banks, soup kitchens);
- ∞ Help with mental health or addictions; and
- ∞ Help with connections to Aboriginal Culture.

There is a vast number of other organizations that could be accessed by homeless people and who would be potential or actual partners with organizations focussed on homelessness. These include services such as job or education counselling, family services, health, education, and many more. Wherever such organizations were encountered, they were included in the database, but the organizations recorded do not represent the full spectrum of services that could relate to or be accessed by homeless persons.

2.2.2.2 Search Terms

The following keywords were used:

[Community Name] and:

- ∞ Homeless
- ∞ Shelter
- ∞ Couchsurfing
- ∞ Social Organizations
- ∞ Homeless Plan
- ∞ Housing Plan
- ∞ Meal Program
- ∞ Soup kitchen
- ∞ Support Services
- ∞ Life Skills
- ∞ Housing First
- ∞ Affordable Housing
- ∞ Street Involved

- ∞ Outreach
- ∞ Clothing Donations
- ∞ Needle Exchange
- ∞ Financial Support
- ∞ Veterans
- ∞ Elders
- ∞ Counselling
- ∞ Drop-in Centre
- ∞ Hostel
- ∞ Disabilities

Information searched included several types of Saskatchewan organizations that provide services in many locations across the province:

- ∞ Aboriginal- Run Housing Authorities
- ∞ Housing Authorities
- ∞ Tribal Councils
- ∞ Aboriginal Friendship Centres
- ∞ Food Banks
- ∞ Shelters
- ∞ Salvation Army
- ∞ Health Regions
- ∞ Transitional Housing
- ∞ Detox Centres
- ∞ Abilities Councils

2.2.2.3 Directories

A variety of local and provincial directories to supplement the information in the database were accessed. An example was Sask 211 (www.sk.211.ca), a joint initiative of the United Way of Saskatoon and Area and the United Way of Regina. This online database provides links to a wide variety of community services. Sask 211 was able to provide us with a cut from their database that included the following province-wide information:

- ∞ Emergency Crisis Services/Hotlines
- ∞ Shelters
- ∞ Food Security
- ∞ Mental Health/Addiction
- ∞ Aboriginal Service Providers

2.2.3 Community Visits, Interviews, and Data Collection

2.2.3.1 Community Visits

Eleven communities across Saskatchewan and one in Manitoba (Flin Flon) were visited in-person. These are shown in Figure 1. The first area visited was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the west central part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle

were visited next. The next trip was the north central including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited to include Creighton, Sandy Bay, and Flin Flon. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current.

In each community, meetings were set up with service provider organizations. Wherever possible, existing group meetings, such as regularly scheduled Interagency meetings, were attended. In some cases, service providers organized a special meeting of interested agencies.

In most communities, a portion of the time was also spent at the local Friendship Centre. Snacks were provided and semi-structured interviews with service providers, people experiencing homelessness, and their families, were conducted.

2.2.3.2 Interviews

A variety of people were engaged through phone and in-person interviews. Some of these took the form of informal conversations, particularly during the formative stages of the project. These interviews helped us determine the lay of the land for the work, understand preliminary key issues, and identify resources and contacts for further interview and data collection, including asking questions on specific topics.

As the project progressed, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a variety of service providers to gather information on programs and services and understand homelessness in communities. Semi-structured interviews were based around a series of pre-prepared topic questions. Conversations were allowed to flow naturally rather than following a set order of questions. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ∞ Housing
- ∞ Local economics
- ∞ Job market
- ∞ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ∞ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ∞ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ∞ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ∞ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ∞ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ∞ Mobility (local and regional)
- ∞ Definition of homelessness
- ∞ Causes of homelessness

A copy of the interview template for service provider organizations and community members is found in Appendix C.

Interviews with service providers were

Individuals spoken to*:

Unsheltered Homeless:	2
Emergency Sheltered:	7
Provisionally Accommodated:	11
At Risk of Homelessness:	15

Agencies spoken to:

83

*Determination of homeless typology based on information provided by participants.

conducted both with individuals and as focus group-style conversations with two or more organizations.

In nine of the twelve communities, semi-structured interviews were conducted with persons experiencing homelessness, or who had family members experiencing homelessness.

The interviews always included the question "who else should be engaged"? After all the topic areas were covered, the participant had a chance to ask questions before the meeting was wrapped up.

2.2.3.3 Statistical Data Collection

Statistical data is used in several parts of this report to provide context for homelessness and for the Aboriginal population living in Saskatchewan. There are some limitations to this data. Population numbers, particularly for small and Northern communities, may be low owing to challenges with statistical data in the 2011 National Household Survey. In the absence of a mandatory long form census, low response rates may occur and data may be suppressed for small communities, causing population numbers to appear smaller than they are. Aboriginal populations in particular also fluctuate due to mobility as people leave communities and come back for education, employment, or other reasons.

To create a context for discussion of each of the areas of Saskatchewan, population and demographic data from Statistics Canada Health Profiles was used. This dataset draws on a variety of sources including the National Household Survey. It is presented by Saskatchewan Health Region.

The boundaries of the study regions used for this project correspond to the boundaries of one or more Saskatchewan Health Regions (Figure 2). In the case where there is more than one Health Region in the study area, data was combined where possible to show the context of the entire area.

Communities Visited and Contacted
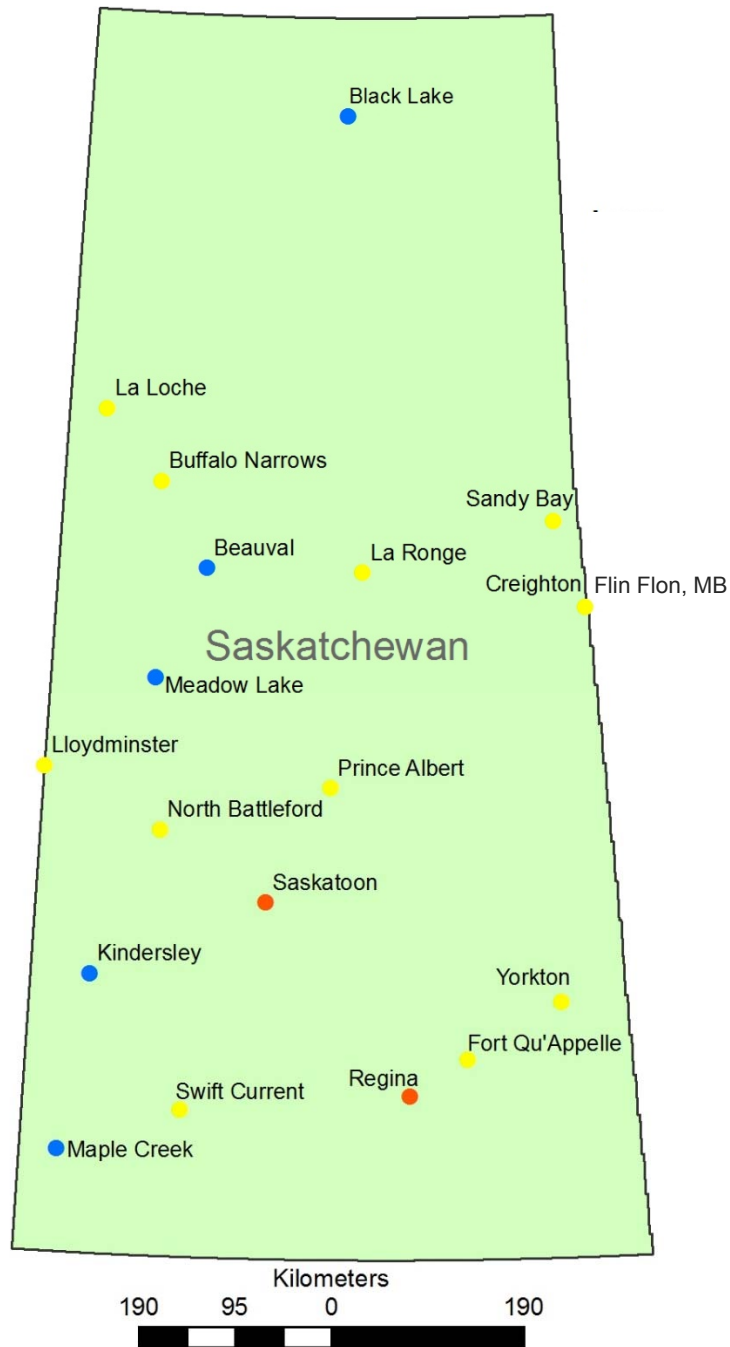
Figure 1. Map of Communities Visited and Contacted
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

Scan for Aboriginal Homelessness Study Regions, Saskatchewan

Legend
- ☐ North West
- ☐ North East
- ☐ East Central
- ☐ West Central
- ☐ South West
- ☐ South East
- ☐ North
- ☐ Health Region Boundary

(7)
North

(1)
North West

(2)
North East

Saskatchewan

(3)
East Central

(4)
West Central

(5)
South West

(6)
South East

Kilometers
190   95   0   190
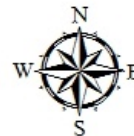
1. **North West:** Encompasses Keewatin Yatthé Health Region.
2. **North East:** Encompasses Mamawetan Churchill: Includes Prairie North and Saskatoon Health Regions.
3. **East Central:** Includes Prince Albert Parkland and Kelsey Trail Health Regions.
4. **South West:** Includes Heartland, Cypress and Five Hills Health Regions.
5. **South East:** Includes Sunrise, Regina Qu'Appelle and Sun Country Health Regions.
6. **North:** Encompasses Athabasca Health Authority.

Figure 2. Map of Environmental Scan Study Regions
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

PrairieWild
CONSULTING
Preparing Communities for the Future
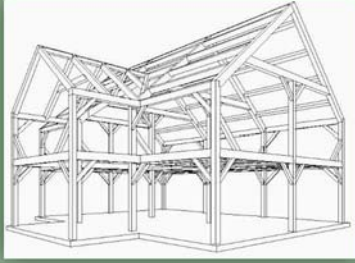
3   Constructing the Framework
3.1   The Province of Saskatchewan in 2014

According to Statistics Canada, the Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan in 2011 was 157,740 or 15.6% of the total population (Government of Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics 2013).

Figure 3 shows the province and the distribution of the Aboriginal population based on Statistics Canada figures from 2011. Aboriginal populations are higher in the northern regions of the province. However, statistics may not be a completely reliable measure of the population. For example community members said that many Métis people (who may be living in the south) have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

The Aboriginal population is young in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has the youngest median age for both First Nations and Métis people in all of Canada (20 years for First Nations, 28 years for Métis) (Government of Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics 2013).

In 2011, Saskatoon had the 5th highest population of Métis people in the Western provinces. Winnipeg had the highest, followed by Edmonton, Vancouver, and Calgary (Statistics Canada 2013).

In 2013, Saskatchewan had the second-highest growth in real GDP (Gross Domestic Product, with the effects in inflation removed) in the country (Sask Trends Monitor 2014) and has generally been doing well since 2009. There is a perception that Saskatchewan is in an economic growth cycle.

At the same time, Food Bank usage has been increasing since 2008. Overall, the change since 2008 has been an increase of 51% (Food Banks Canada 2014). Sask Trends Monitor (2014) has noted a disconnect between prosperity and Food Bank use; depending on how you measure it, provinces with the highest economic growth are not necessarily those with the least Food Bank use.

Of the people who use Food Banks, 64% are Aboriginal. That number rises to 67% in rural areas (Food Bank 2014). Figure 4 shows a breakdown of people who access the Food Banks by housing type. Rental market tenants (both rural and urban) are principal users, as are people living On-Reserve in rural areas. This reflects what was shared in communities, where wages have not kept up with increasing rents, resulting in less money for food for families.

A very small proportion of Food Bank users are living on the street, though this is higher for rural areas than urban areas.

Aboriginal Population of Saskatchewan, 2011 Census

Legend

2011 Aboriginal Identity Population

- 0
- 10 - 45
- 50 - 95
- 100 - 470
- 475 - 31960
- First Nation Reserve Lands
- 405 Rural Municipality
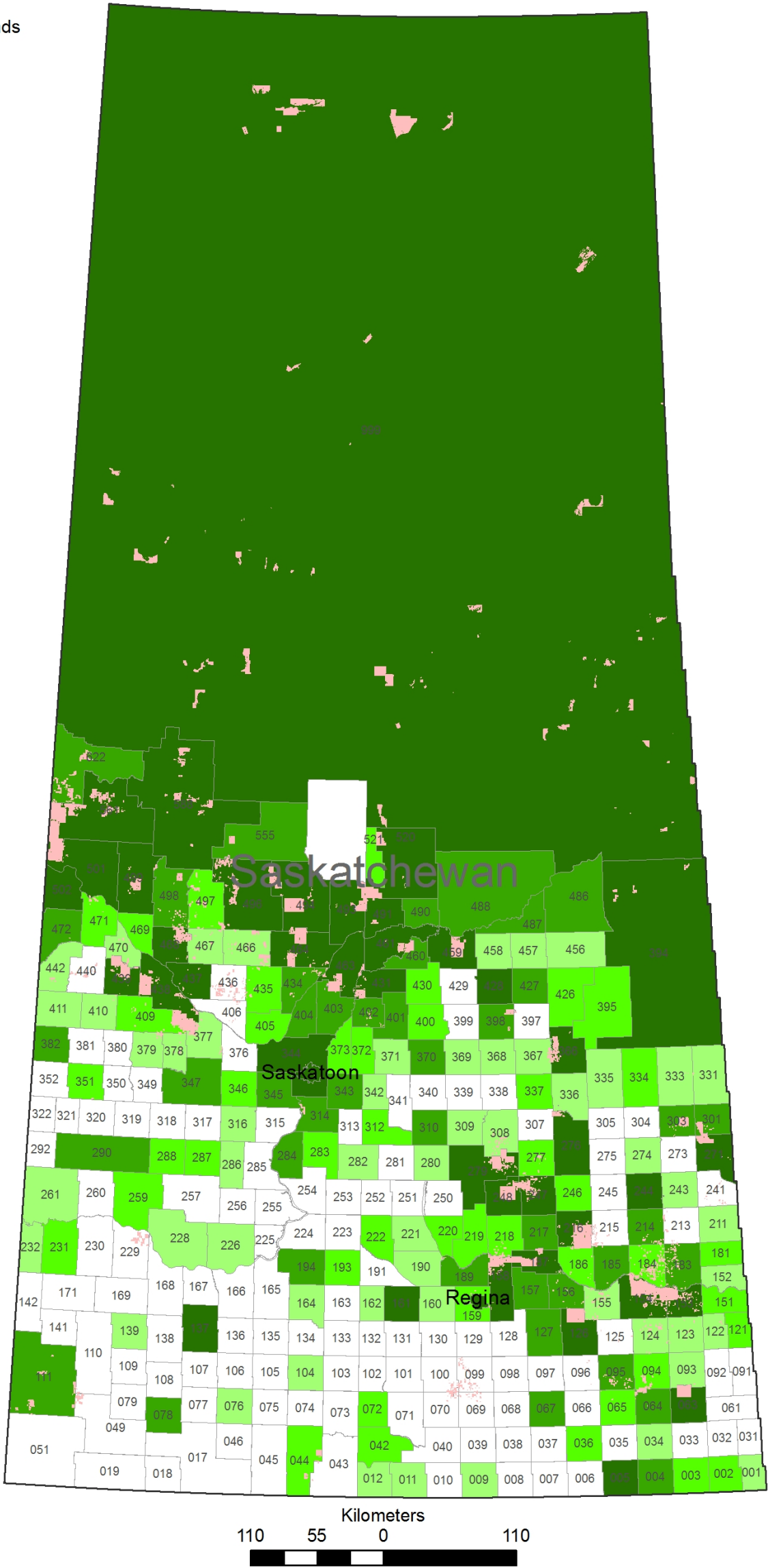
Saskatchewan

Saskatoon

Regina

Kilometers

110   55   0   110

3.2 Building from the Legislation

3.2.1 International Treaties

In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). This document came into force in 1976. Canada ratified this document in that year (Porter 2004). This document, along with the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Canada also ratified, contained an explicit recognition of the right to adequate housing (Porter 2004).

3.2.2 Canadian Charter of Human Rights

Figure 4. Breakdown of Food Bank Use by Housing Type (Food Bank 2014)		
Housing Type	All	Rural
% Homeowners	6.8	12.1
% Rental market tenants	61.0	31.0
% Social housing tenants	19.3	17.5
% Band-owned housing	6.6	33.8
% Shelter or group home	0.7	0.0
% Living on the street	0.3	0.7
% Living with family or friends	5.2	4.8
Number of food banks reporting	31	23

During the creation of the *Constitution Act 1982* which includes the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, rights related to adequate housing were not included (Porter 2004). This may be because, at the time, homelessness was virtually unheard of in Canada (Centre for Equality Rights and Conservation 2002, Porter 2004).

The Federal government had been building up Canada's affordable and social housing stock significantly since the Second World War. The reduction and then cessation of direct Federal funding for new housing in the 1980's and early 90's eventually resulted in a much different situation for homelessness in modern times (Gaetz 2014).

At the current time, many homeless advocates argue that, owing to Canada's participation in international treaties recognizing adequate housing as a human right, there is an obligation to view homelessness as an issue of human rights that must be addressed (Centre for Equality Rights and Conservation 2002, Porter 2004, Eggleton 2009, Tester 2009).

> *"The devaluing of the right to housing in comparison to other rights in Canada is directly linked to the rise of homelessness and to the discriminatory assault on the equal citizenship of Aboriginal people, women and other groups most at risk of homelessness. Homelessness and the housing crisis in Canada is very much a crisis of human rights, and must be addressed as such"* (Porter 2004).

3.2.3 Federal Legislation

The National Housing Act promotes housing availability and choice, efficiency and competitiveness in housing finance; protects the availability of funding for low cost housing; and generally promotes the development of the housing sector in Canada (Government of Canada 2015).

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act established the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which leads Canadian housing initiatives (see also Section 3.3.5) (Government of Canada 2015a).

3.2.4 Provincial Legislation

Legislation regarding housing is at the Provincial/Territorial level. Housing regulations, therefore, vary from province to province.

In Saskatchewan, *The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* and *Residential Tenancies Regulations, 2007* contain rules for landlords and tenants about evictions, renewing and terminating leases, rent increases, deposits, sublets, and numerous others.

The Saskatchewan Housing Corporation Act provides powers to Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) and describes the role of housing authorities.

The *Condominium Property Act, 1993* contains rules about ending tenancies in rented condominiums.

The *Co-operatives Act, 1996* contains rules about ending tenancies in housing co-operatives.

The *Tax Enforcement Act* contains rules about municipalities charging rent or evicting tenants on properties acquired for unpaid property taxes.

3.2.5 Municipal Legislation

Municipal bylaws and property standards often address issues of building condition and repair, but these are often ineffectual or poorly enforced (Gaetz 2014, July).

3.3 Role of the Federal Government

3.3.1 The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)

The Federal government's main funding initiative for homelessness is the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, offered through Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). Starting in April 2014, the Federal government has committed nearly 600 million dollars, over five years, to the HPS.

The HPS provides direct funding for homelessness to 61 designated communities across Canada.

The target population is chronic and episodic homeless– that is, people who have been in a shelter or living on the street for a total of 180 days in the past year; or who have been in a shelter or living on the street at least three times in the past year (with at least 30 days between episodes of homelessness).

See also Section 3.4.3.

3.3.1.1 Aboriginal Homelessness and HPS

HPS funding includes a stream specifically targeted for Aboriginal homelessness. This stream supports Off-Reserve Aboriginal homeless populations by fostering culturally appropriate, community-driven, and integrated service delivery systems. Recognizing that Aboriginal culture and practices are integral to addressing Aboriginal homelessness, preference is given, where feasible, to services provided by Aboriginal organizations as part of supporting promising practices for culturally appropriate service delivery. For the purposes of HPS, Aboriginal organizations are defined as follows.

An Aboriginal service provider is an organization that:

1) Has a mandate to provide services primarily to Aboriginal peoples;

2) Is recognized by the Aboriginal community as an Aboriginal organization;

3) Has a majority representation of Aboriginal individuals on both their Board of Directors and staff;

4) Provides services or proposes projects off-reserve that include addressing homelessness among Aboriginal individuals who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

3.3.2 Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)

AANDC provides funding for housing On-Reserve. This includes an annual capital allocation which can be used for a variety of things including construction, repairs, renovations, and planning and managing housing. ANNDC also provides loan guarantees to help with buying or building homes on Crown lands.

A related federal program is the First Nations Market Housing Fund which supports market housing and the ability to take out mortgages On-Reserve (First Nations Market Housing Fund 2015).

First Nations and Métis people living Off-Reserve do not qualify for this type of funding.

3.3.3 Veterans Affairs Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and other homelessness organizations have partnered to increase awareness of the programs and services VAC provides for veterans facing homelessness. These include a variety of support programs and links funding and other service organizations (Government of Canada 2015b).

3.3.4 Health Canada – First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB)

FNIHB provides a variety of health programs and services On-Reserve. First Nation people living Off-Reserve, and Métis people, must rely on provincial programs for health care (Health Canada 2015, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2014). The Federal government transfers money to the provinces for health care through Canada Health Transfer payments (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2014).

3.3.5 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Starting as far back as the 1930s, the Canadian government has been active in helping Canadian families and individuals have access to safe, adequate, affordable housing.

They have done this in a number of ways, chiefly through enacting legislation and supporting agencies that have a role to play in housing (CMHC 2011). The main such agency is currently Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

The Canadian government incorporated CMHC in 1946 to lead the nation's housing initiatives.

CMHC created Canada's first public housing program (the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Public Housing Program) in 1949 (CMHC 2011). Through this program, the Canadian government entered into agreements with the provinces/territories to provide housing. These agreements were broadened in the 1960's to allow for more systematic housing creation. In the 1970s, amendments to legislation allowed community based organizations, including co-operatives, to become involved in housing (CHRA 2014, CMHC 2011).

Up until the 1980s, the Canadian government (through CMHC) made significant investments directly into Canada's public housing stock.

In the 1980s, spending on housing tapered off until, in 1993, spending on new housing stock was terminated completely (Gaetz 2014, CHMC 2011, City of Grand Prairie 2009, Patrick 2014). The Canadian government did commit, at this time, to long term operating agreements for existing stock. The spending for these agreements was about 1.7 billion in 2013-2014 (Gaetz 2014).

Since 2001, investment in housing from CMHC has focussed on up-front capital contributions rather than ongoing subsidies (CMHC 2011).

For more information on federal reductions to housing spending, see Londerville and Steele 2014 and Gaetz 2014.

Currently, for the years 2011 to 2014, affordable housing is funded through a $1.4 billion combined investment between Federal, Provincial, and Territorial governments. This agreement is called the Investment in Affordable Housing Framework (2011 – 2014). Provincial/Territorial government must fully match contributions and can use dollars in a range of ways, from increasing housing supply to improving affordability and housing quality (CMHC 2011). CMHC makes agreements with all of the provinces/territories to invest in each area.

CHMC's On-Reserve Non-profit Rental Program provides funds for First Nations On-Reserve to construct, develop and repair social housing On-Reserve (CMHC 2011). No similar program exists to help First Nations or Métis Off-Reserve.

3.4   Role of the Provincial Government

3.4.1 Saskatchewan Housing Corporation

The Government of Saskatchewan's primary means of contributing to housing in the province is Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, a Crown Corporation housed inside the Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services.

3.4.1.1 CMHC – Saskatchewan Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing

SHC holds the CMHC – Saskatchewan Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing in partnership with CMHC. This agreement helps to increase the supply of affordable

housing, renovate and repair housing, and foster safe independent living (CMHC 2014, August).

Signed in September 2011, this agreement was for a combined investment $55 million dollars over three years. This agreement was recently extended to 2019 with an added combined investment of about $92 million dollars (Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services 2014).

3.4.1.2 SHC Programs and Services

SHC manages federal funding from CMHC along with funding from the province and municipalities. This funding is used to deliver housing and related services to people who could not otherwise afford adequate shelter. SHC sets housing policy at the provincial government level.

In 2013, SHC provided support to about 29,600 housing units. This includes approximately:

∞ 18,229 rental units (social and affordable housing) that are owned by SHC; and
∞ 11,393 units owned and managed by about 248 non-profit and cooperative groups (SHC 2013).

SHC – owned units are managed by a number of regional and local housing authorities across Saskatchewan.

To achieve its mandate, SHC relies on many partners such as: Federal and Municipal governments, the Ministry of Social Services, other government ministries, local and regional housing authorities, not-for-profit organizations, housing co-operatives, Métis and First Nations housing providers, and private landlords (SHC 2013).

3.4.1.3 SHC Housing Strategy

The Provincial Government's Housing Strategy for 2011-2019 (Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Service 2011-2019) has a section that relates to homelessness. Strategic Direction 3 "Support Individuals and Families in Greatest Housing Need" speaks to both Housing First, and to the need to help with vulnerable populations. Vulnerable populations are identified as "Seniors, recent immigrants, the homeless, students, Aboriginal people and those with disabilities" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Service 2011-2019). Supports are to be provided through partnerships, education, training, knowledge gathering, planning, housing design, and making links between housing programs. While Strategic Direction 1 of the strategy commits to developing new rental housing that is attainable for first time owners, affordable housing is supported mainly through commitments to maintain existing stock.

3.4.2 Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services

The Ministry of Social Services supports housing in a number of ways. Income Assistance Service Delivery, for example, provides family and disability rental supports and includes a shelter allowance as part of social assistance. Income Assistance also maintains service agreements with a number of organizations to provide short term emergency shelter as needed in communities.

3.4.3 Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) in Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, allocation of HPS funding for Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve is guided by the Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board (AHAB). ESDC appoints people from across the province to serve on the AHAB.

The Provincial Métis Housing Corporation (PMHC) acts as the administrative arm of this board, coordinating the funding process and administering the dollars. These dollars are allocated to projects in communities across the province.

Eligible applicants include not-for-profit organizations, individuals, municipal governments, for-profit enterprises, research organizations and institutes, public health and educational institutions, Band/tribal councils, and other Aboriginal organizations.

The latest call for proposals, at the time of this writing, was January 30, 2014, for dollars to be spent by March 31, 2016.

In Saskatchewan, $987,515 was available for the 2015-2016 fiscal year (PMHC 2014).

See also Section 3.3.1.

3.4.4 Saskatchewan Ministry of Health

Saskatchewan Ministry of Health has a variety of responsibilities including oversight, funding, strategic direction, and support to the Regional Health Authorities (Section 3.6.1), who provide most direct health programs and services (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2014).

3.4.5 Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice

Across Saskatchewan halfway houses are available from the Ministry of Justice. They are used for offenders that are serving their time in the community. The community based facilities are rehabilitation for offenders to integrate back into their communities. (Prairie Region Halfway House Association 2014).

3.5 Role of Aboriginal Government

3.5.1 Assembly of First Nations (AFN)

The Assembly of First Nations has a resolution-based mandate in parliamentary and intergovernmental advocacy, communications, and support to First Nations governments. The AFN provides policy advocacy, analysis and communications around housing, health, and other topics that relate to homelessness (AFN 2014).

3.5.2 Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN)

The FSIN is the body which represents 74 First Nations in Saskatchewan. FSIN supports the protection of Treaties and Treaty Rights and participates in initiatives to ensure economic, educational, and social wellbeing for First Nations people. FSIN maintains both housing and health portfolios (FSIN 2015).

3.5.3 Saskatchewan Tribal Councils

There are nine Tribal Councils in Saskatchewan, each serving a number of member First Nations. Some of these may offer programs to their members Off-Reserve.

3.5.4   Saskatchewan First Nations

Some First Nations have urban offices that serve band members Off-Reserve.

3.5.5   Métis Housing in Saskatchewan

Provincial Métis Housing Corporation is the administrator of HPS funding for the province.

Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan (MUHAS) has housing authorities in Regina, the Battlefords, Lloydminster, and Prince Albert.

3.6   Regional Roles

3.6.1 Saskatchewan Health Regions and Other Regional Health Authorities

The majority of health programs and services are offered through Regional Health Authorities (RHAs). There are 12 RHAs in Saskatchewan, in addition to the Athabasca Health Authority which serves the far north. Major responsibilities relating to homelessness of the RHAs include hospitals, health and wellness centres, outreach, needle exchanges, and mental health and addictions.

3.6.2 Northern Intertribal Health Authority (NITHA)

NITHA is a partnership between MLTC, Lac La Ronge Indian Band (LLRIB), PAGC and Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation (PBCN). NITHA provides services such as mental health and addictions capacity building for the partner organizations.

3.6.3 Northern Human Service Partnership (NHSP)

The NHSP builds partnerships between human service organizations in Northern communities. The Vulnerable Persons Initiative of this organization builds capacity and partnerships in organizations working in housing, homelessness, and harm reduction (NHSP 2015).

3.6.4 Understanding the Research

What research already exists that can tell us about Aboriginal homelessness Off-Reserve and outside of Saskatoon and Regina?

From local to international levels, there is a vast amount of research relating to many aspects of homelessness. In addition to the references noted below, a variety of studies were examined that related to homelessness outside major centres, but which were not specifically focused on Aboriginal people. Studies that provide background and context on a number of other issues, including Federal and Provincial responses to homelessness, were reviewed.

The main focus for this literature review, however, is on materials that relate to Aboriginal homelessness outside of major centres and Off-Reserve. The research started with studies that address this topic from across Canada, and then the focus was narrowed geographically, seeking materials that are specific to Saskatchewan and the Prairie provinces.

Many studies that relate to Aboriginal homelessness outside of major centres and Off-Reserve speak to the topic of "rural" or "remote" homelessness. Definitions of "rural" can

vary (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.; Peters 2006), and, in this case, may not apply in all contexts since there are several larger urban centres within the scope. Discussions of rural homelessness, however, do present some insight into the unique approach required for addressing homelessness Off-Reserve and outside centres such as Saskatoon and Regina.

Many authors have noted that research in the area of rural, remote and particularly Northern homelessness is scarce (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.; Native Women's Association of Canada 2007; Christensen 2012; Distasio Sylvestre and Mulligan 2005; Peters and Craig 2014). Schiff et al (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.) presents case studies from across Canada, and ends with a discussion of implications of rural and remote homelessness on Housing First. Kasting (Kasting 2014) looks at housing for Aboriginal people Off-Reserve in the Cowichan region of British Columbia, with a focus on the relations between on and Off-Reserve housing for First Nations. Christensen (2011) and Young (2013) look at patterns or homelessness in the North West Territories. Peters and Vaillancourt (2006) is a review of literature with common themes for rural and remote homelessness. Schiff and Turner (2014) looks at Housing First for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations in rural Canada while noting that Aboriginal homelessness is an area needing intensive study on its own.

Several researchers have noted the need for more flexible definitions of homelessness in rural and remote areas. There are few emergency shelters and cold weather elements is a serious problem, making people more likely to stay with friends and relatives, even if that means staying in crowded, unsafe, unstable, or otherwise vulnerable conditions (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.; Peters 2006; Happy Valley-Goose Bay 2007; National Council of Welfare 2007). This has been noted in remote areas of Nunavut as well (Tester 2009). In Aboriginal communities in particular, there is a strong value placed on social obligations to care for each other, so "no one is allowed to freeze" (Buffalo Narrows resident, personal communication). "In the rural reality, the definition of homelessness includes those that are described as "under housed" (Happy Valley-Goose Bay 2007).

With respect to mobility, researchers such as Schiff et al. (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.) have noted that there are many reasons why people will choose to stay in locations Off-Reserve and outside of urban centres, rather than migrating directly between Reserves and cities (as is often assumed to be the case in the literature). People may wish to remain in rural areas to be closer to family, friends, culture, and the land.

There is a body of material available (SIIT 2000; Distasio 2004, 2005, 2010; Peters and Robillard 2007; Thurston 2011, 2013; Brandon and Peters 2014) that relates to the experience of Aboriginal homelessness in the Canadian Prairies. However, these are focused on urban homelessness in Prairie cities such as Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Regina. Schiff and Turner (2014, May) is concerned with homelessness in rural Alberta. This work addresses (but does not have a specific focus on) Aboriginal homelessness.

Peters and Craig (2014) looks at Aboriginal homelessness in Flin Flon, Manitoba. This is a particularly helpful resource for this study because it addressed homelessness in a

smaller centre and contains many recommendations applicable to the Saskatchewan context.

For Saskatchewan, Peters and Robillard (2007, 2009, and 2013) partnered with Prince Albert Grand Council to complete studies in Prince Albert that looked at hidden homelessness, mobility, and how On-Reserve housing conditions influence urban hidden homelessness.

Irvine (2011) and Quennell (2011) speak to the health implications of housing and overcrowding in Saskatchewan's north.

Materials that shed light on homelessness at the local level are rich in understanding of local realities (many of which are common across communities in Saskatchewan), but are not easy to access in any way other than contacting agencies directly. Service providers were generous in sharing data they had. These resources can consist of documents such as local homelessness plans (Prince Albert 2007, 2011, 2014), homeless counts kept by staff at local agencies, and other planning materials, often prepared for funding proposals.

In conclusion, there is very little existing research on Aboriginal homelessness specific to Saskatchewan, Off-Reserve and outside urban centres.
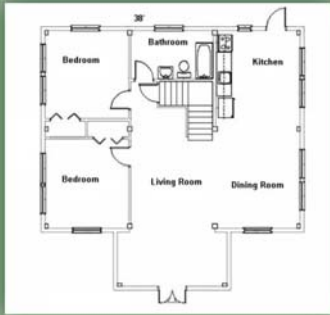
4 Building Regional and Local Features

4.1 North West Region

The North West study region is defined by the boundaries the Keewatin Yatthé Health Region (Figure 5). All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 10,680

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 9,775 (92%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Dené

Treaty Areas:

6, 8, 10

Average Rent: $511

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Canoe Lake First Nation; Churchill Lake First Nation; Dipper Rapids First Nation; Elak Dase First Nation; English River First Nation; Ille-A-La-Crosse First Nation; Knee Lake First Nation; La Loche First Nation; La Plonge First Nation; Peter Pond First Nation; Primeau Lake First Nation; Turnor Lake First Nation; Wapachewanak First Nation.

Métis Region(s):

Northern Regions I, II, III

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

People said there are many great things about the region. These include high rates of high school graduation, many students going on the post-secondary, a beautiful landscape including sand dunes, great fishing, and unique communities; local decision making, and communities that always come together in a crisis, no matter what.

"What gets done in Buffalo is local-based –solutions come out of people who know the community."

Despite all these advantages, resources in the region are a challenge. Within the total population of the region, 52.8% of tenant households are living in subsidized housing (Figure 6). This is the highest proportion of people in subsidized housing of all the Health Regions in the province. Keewatin Yatthé has the lowest median after-tax household income of all the Health Regions in Saskatchewan at $39,767 (see Figure 11, Section 4.3). The unemployment rate is at 16.6 (third highest) with the lowest participation rate of the Health Regions in the province, 39.7 (see Figure 34, Section 4.7). The percentage of occupied dwellings in need of major repair is 27.7%. Keewatin is second only to the North region in this regard (see Figure 33, Section 4.7).

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – North West, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- ● 1
- ● 2 - 3
- ● 4 - 6
- ● 7 - 12
- ● 13 - 21

KEY PLAN

North

North West   North East

East Central

West Central

South West   South East

North West

La Loche

Buffalo Narrows

Île-à-la-Crosse

Beauval

Green Lake

Kilometers

80   40   0   80
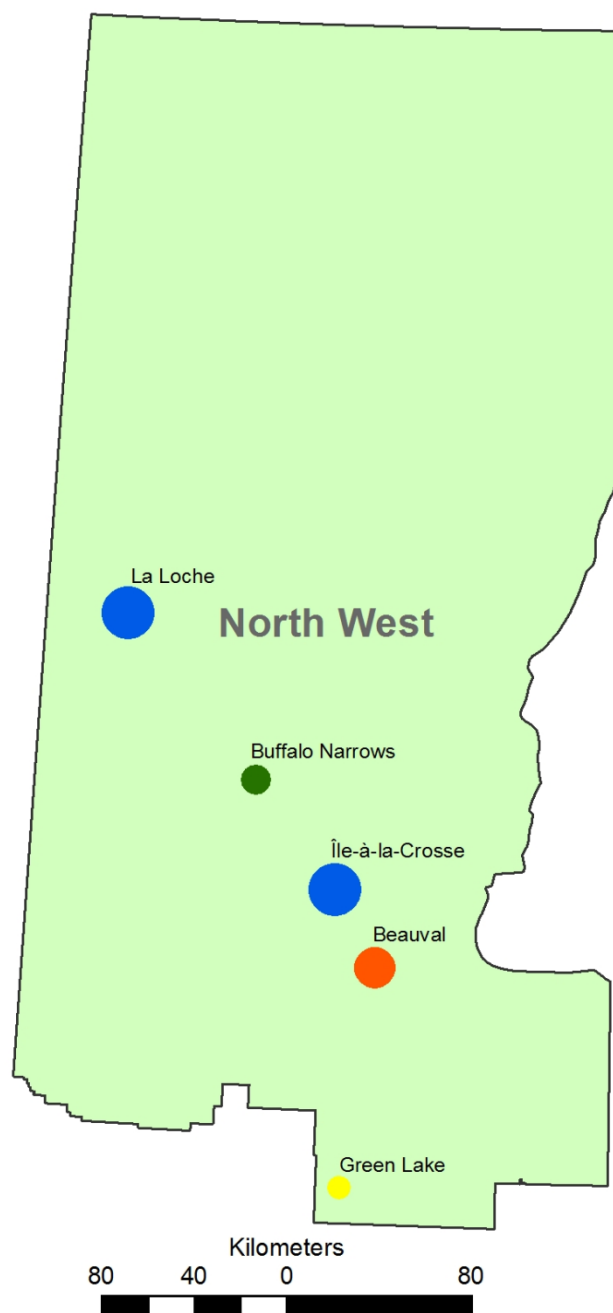
Figure 5. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing
Services for Homelessness, North West SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

Figure 6. % of Tenant Households (Total Population) Living in Subsidized Housing, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles.

Figure 6. % of Tenant Households (Total Population) Living in Subsidized Housing, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

Health Region	%
Keewatin Yatthé	52.8%
Kelsey Trail	35.8%
Mamawetan Churchill River	32.5%
Sunrise	31.4%
Prairie North	30.7%
Athabasca	27.3%
Five Hills	26.6%
Prince Albert Parkland	26.5%
Heartland	26.1%
Regina Qu'Appelle	23.0%
Sun Country	22.9%
Cypress	21.9%
Saskatoon	18.7%
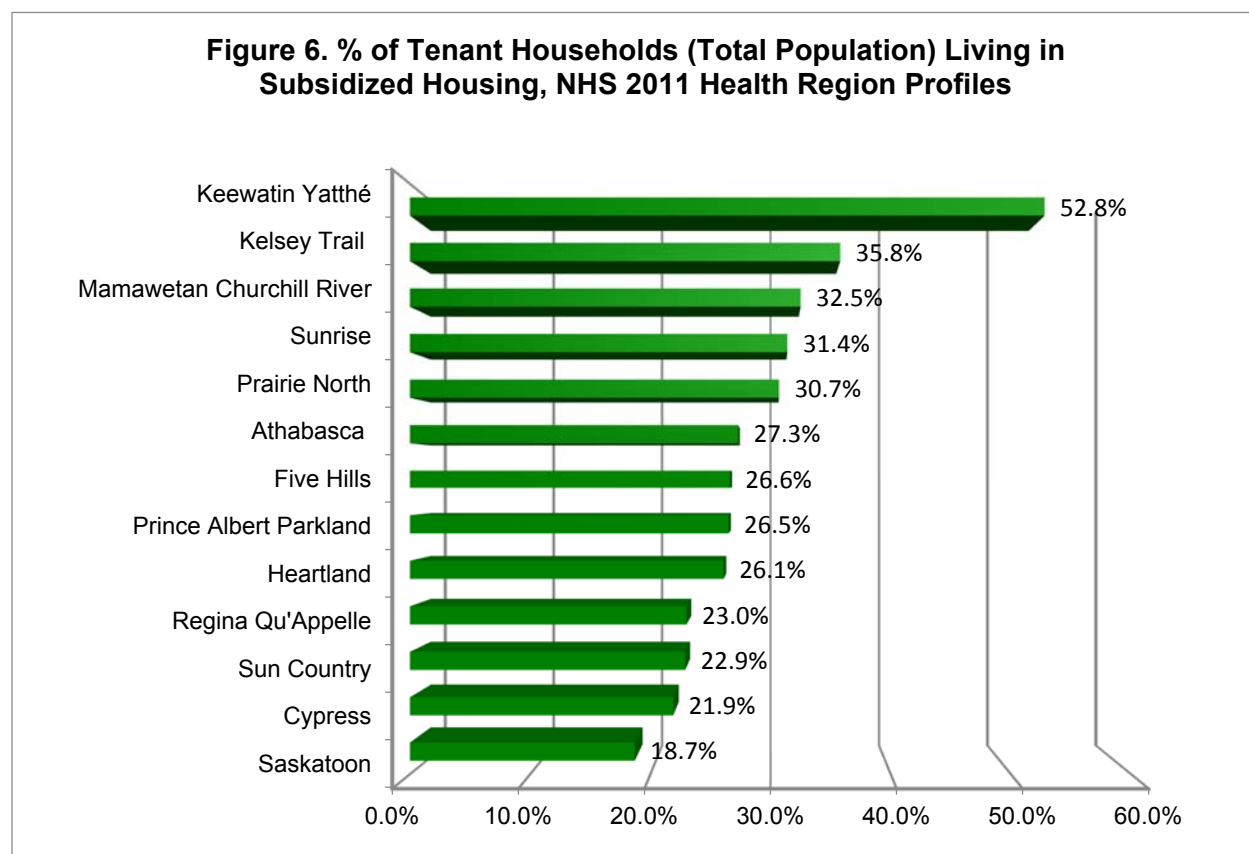
4.1.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the North West?

From the community visits, and speaking with people across the region, information was gathered on the picture of services in the North West. All communities have an interagency committee, which usually consists of a variety of partners such as outreach workers, RCMP, the Health Region, and programs like Kids First North. These committees usually meet once a month. Though service providers work together often, formal partnerships are rare. The Northern Human Services Partnership had just begun to operate as a western branch in the region at the time of this study. Many service providers expressed a wish for more capacity to build partnerships; on the other hand, some found that service providers were required to be coordinated because capacity is so scarce.

"The outreach coordinator and all outreach coordinators are responsible for organizing inter-agency meetings. These meetings are primarily, currently, about coordinating services. However, they might be a good platform to develop more joint capacity and that would be a good way to go. There are not a lot of forums or roundtables but it would be nice to develop more in this regard."

"Lack of man power, support, funding, and partnerships for programming..."

Buffalo Narrows often acts as a hub where service providers serve the larger region. Turnover rates vary: people who come in from outside often leave after a few years. However, for the people for whom the region is home, there is a lot of longevity and dedication in the people who work in communities.

"High turnover rate, except those that are from here."

"There is a core group of 20-30 people – most are service providers and some are volunteers – trying to get stuff done."

Organizations such as the Friendship Centre and others provide what help they can, but capacity is limited. There is no formal person to turn to in looking for information or support on homelessness, less so with regards to hidden homelessness.

People don't know where to go or who to talk to get services for homeless family members. "I wish there was a place to go…like, if you see a poster that says, are you depressed? Go here…"

4.1.2 What Services Are Available?

4.1.2.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters "provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences" (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

The Dené Empowerment Centre in La Loche has an emergency shelter for women, and transitional housing (see Section 4.1.2.2 below). Community members stated that the shelter is always at capacity.

There were no other emergency shelters found in the North West Region. Part of the reason is the lack of capacity and that the community identifies itself as the "shelter." Significant community resources go into sheltering the homeless. Like the homeless themselves, these contributions are "hidden." Communities feel a sense of social obligation to care for family and friends and, because of the conditions of extreme weather, it is simply not possible to allow people to live on the streets for an extended period.

"…strong beliefs, rooted in culture, about family and taking care of others: someone will always open their doors to a homeless person in dire need, and indeed, families often see it as their responsibility to house relations who might otherwise not have a home."

4.1.2.2 Transitional Housing

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

> "…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."

The Dené Empowerment Centre provides both emergency shelter and housing for low-income, single-parent families. It also contains offices, classrooms, and a day care. The project's later phases are designed to allow single parents to transition to more independent living. The Centre was initially created by repurposing a hospital building slated for demolition. Partners included the La Loche Community Development Corporation, Northern Village of La Loche, CMHC, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, Saskatchewan Department of Community Resources, and several community groups (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation n.d.). The Centre won a National CMHC National Housing Award in 2006.

4.1.2.3 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that:

> "Typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."

Sakitawak Group Home in Ile-a-La-Crosse provides supportive housing for people with disabilities.

4.1.2.4 Detox Facilities

The NorthWest Rehabilitation Centre in Ile-a-La-Crosse has residential addiction services.

4.1.2.5 Aboriginal Organizations

4.1.2.5.1 Friendship Centres

Buffalo Narrows, Ile-a-La-Crosse, Beauval and La Loche all have Friendship Centres.

4.1.2.5.2 Traditional Aboriginal Healing

Culverts behind Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre, where people who are experiencing absolute homelessness sleep

Communities shared that there was nothing for formal programs with traditional healing, in particular since European religions had taken a very strong hold in the communities and much knowledge of traditional culture had been lost.

> *"We lost our culture in Buffalo Narrows, we are more mixed than other communities, people in Buffalo have lost a lot of those traditional practices. It would be nice to have more capacity to revive this. Elders might be shy or worried about being criticized or talked about and so may not share a lot of traditional crafts."*

4.1.2.6 Other Supports for Homelessness

Clearwater River Ministries in La Loche provides Sunday services, tent meetings, Sunday School, a soup kitchen, clothing, hospital ministry, radio programming, and houses the La Loche Food Bank.

Overall in the region, there is a gap in supports to get people off addictions or to cope with mental illness. Suggestions for supports needed included harm reduction programs, grief and loss counselling, residential school survivor supports, cultural traditional healing, and many others. It would be helpful to have a welcoming environment, free of judgement, for people to come to:

> *"Would like an open environment shelter, run by Aboriginal people."*

4.1.3 Building off the Local Numbers

No data was found to enumerate homelessness. Organizations that support homelessness are working at capacity to meet existing needs for food and shelter for the homeless, and there are few shelters to collect information.

4.1.4 Drafting Primary Research: Community Voice

4.1.4.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the North West Region?

How did communities define homelessness?

"Mental health and addictions"

"Lots of couchsurfing, People live with grandparents, there is also overcrowding"

In the North, as mentioned above, couchsurfing, overcrowding, and poor housing conditions were often seen as part of homelessness. As well, many people expressed that mental health and addictions play a key role, particularly in those people actually living on the street. Though the community will take people in, some people have mental health or addiction problems to the extent that they "burn all their bridges" with their families, or their families feel it isn't safe for them to shelter them. These people end up completely unsheltered.

4.1.4.2 The picture of Homelessness in the North West Region

4.1.4.2.1 Who is Homeless?

People from Buffalo Narrows estimated that there between 8 and 20 unsheltered homeless in the community. Estimates in La Loche ranged up to 100. In La Loche, unsheltered populations were described as usually older males with the occasional female, all with addictions, who have "burned all ties" with family and friends. In Buffalo Narrows, unsheltered people can be found in the culverts behind the Friendship Centre.

Elders are typically not homeless, but (especially in communities like La Loche), they almost always have family living with them – even if their housing is meant for a single occupant.

> *"Almost every Elder takes in family."*

4.1.4.2.2 Housing

The people we spoke to reported that overcrowding was a serious problem in communities like La Loche. Statistics bear this out; 18.4% of homes in La Loche have more than one person per room (the fourth highest in the province) (Quinn and Irvine 2014).

> *"Crowded in the house. Had her mom sign over the house to her, only way to own a house is to inherit it. 5 bedroom house. 2 adults, 3 children (1 disabled), 2 grandchildren, and her mother."*

Housing is also difficult to get into, families have priority so it is hard for singles; as well, regulations surrounding the application process and criteria for prioritizing homes is not well understood.

With respect to provisionally accommodated people (including those couchsurfing), 50.2% of people in the region (who weren't part of census families) said they were living with relatives or non-relatives (Statistics Canada 2013b). Indeed, the three Northern Health Regions (Athabasca, Keewatin, and Mamawetan) have the highest numbers of all Saskatchewan for people living with relatives or non-relatives (see Figure 8, Section 4.2.1) (2011 Census). This may be an indicator of couchsurfing.

4.1.4.2.3 Mental Health and Addictions

Mental health and addictions are seen as a critical problem relating to homelessness in the region, both for unsheltered and hidden homeless.

> *"Addictions - People get evicted or don't get homes because of their addicted lifestyle."*

Transitional housing also relates to mental health and addiction issues. Some service providers noted that while people can go through detox to get clean, there is nothing in the region to support them once

La Loche RCMP, Officers will try to take in people to prevent freezing to death

they get out. Many fall back into old patterns. It was suggested that transitional housing focused on addictions would help get people the supports they need to stay sober.

"We want…some transitional housing to get people with addictions out of detox and then into a place where people work with them to break the cycle of addictions – we get them clean physically but don't do anything with their mind."

4.1.4.2.4 Youth

There are no shelters or agencies targeted for youth.

4.1.4.2.5 Hopes for the Future

Hopes for the region include:

- ∞ Individualized services for homeless people
- ∞ Harm reduction programs
- ∞ Community development on a regional scale
- ∞ Grief and loss counselling
- ∞ Elder supports
- ∞ Education for health care providers
- ∞ Centralized supports
- ∞ Local knowledge and involvement

4.2 North East Region

The North East study region is defined by the boundaries the Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region (Figure 7).

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 21,850

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 17,820 (81.6%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Cree

Treaty Areas:

6, 10

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Amisk Lake; Four Portages; Birch Portage; Fox Point; Grandmother's Bay; Kisakie; Lac La Hache; Lac La Ronge; Little Hills; Mirond Lake; Montreal Lake; Morin Lake; Old Fort; Pelican Narrows; Potato River; Sandy Narrows; Southend; Stanley; Sucker River; Woody Lake.

Métis Region(s):

Northern Regions I, II, III

Eastern Region I

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

Many of the people shared that Northern Saskatchewan is a beautiful place to live, with friendly, unique communities, opportunities for growth, and direct access to nature.

Average Rent: $700

"There is something about being in a wilderness…it heals. There is a healing component."

"You know when you walk through the trees right after it rains – smells incredible."

"La Ronge, and the north in general is a very beautiful place to live, there are opportunities, it's the vulnerable population that face the biggest challenges."

A comparison of statistics to the rest of the province shows there are conditions to create vulnerable populations. Mamawetan has the second-lowest median after-tax household income of all the Health Regions in Saskatchewan at $44,888 (see Figure 11, Section 4.3). The unemployment rate is at 17.1 (second highest after Athabasca) with one of the lowest participation rates in the province (50.8). Of all the Health Regions, Mamawetan has the highest numbers of all Saskatchewan for people who reported they were living with relatives or non-relatives in 2011 (66.4%) (Figure 8) (2011 Census).

Within the total population of the region, 32.5% of tenant households are living in subsidized housing (third highest of Health Regions in Saskatchewan) (see Figure 6, Section 4.1). The percentage of occupied dwellings in need of major repair is 27.1% (third highest in the province) (see Figure 33, Section 4.7).

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – North East, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- 🟠 1
- 🟡 2 - 3
- 🟢 4 - 6
- 🔴 7 - 12
- 🔵 13 - 21

KEY PLAN

- North
- North West
- North East
- East Central
- West Central
- South West
- South East

North East

- Wollaston Lake
- Pinehouse
- Sandy Bay
- La Ronge
- Creighton

Kilometers
80   40   0   80
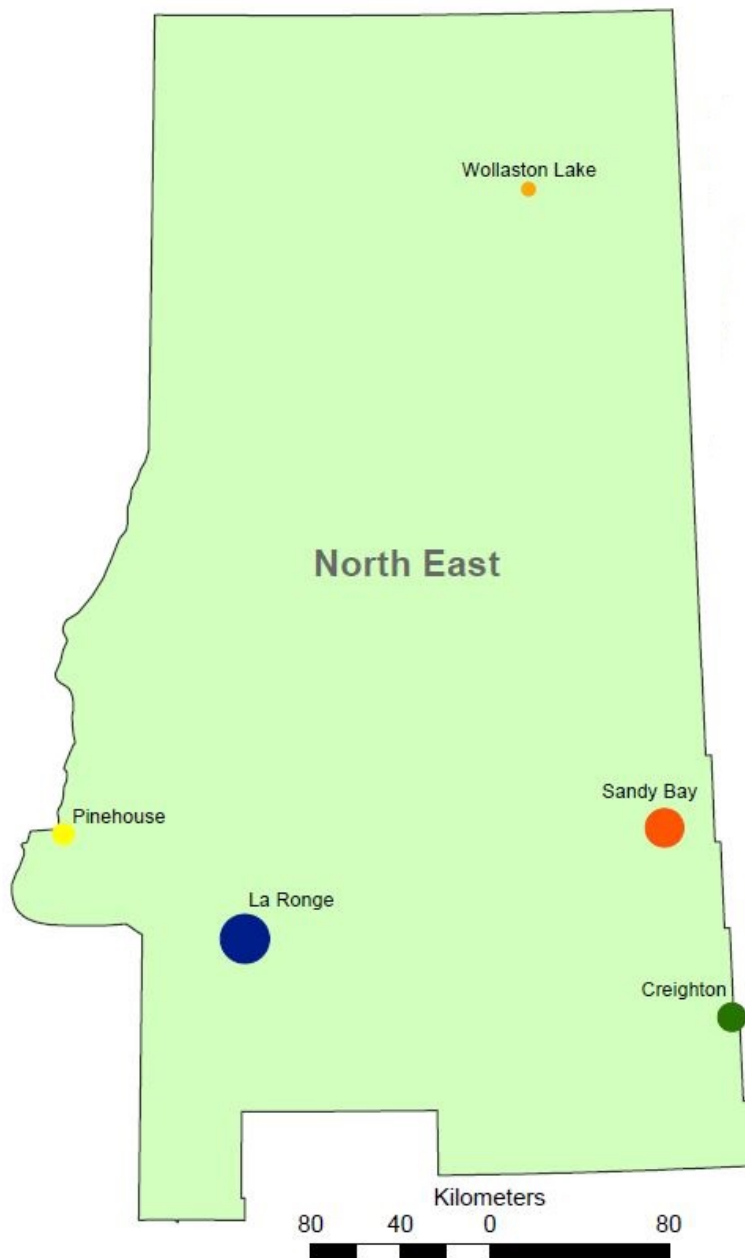
Figure 7. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness, North East SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

Prairie Wild
CONSULTING
Preparing Communities for the Future

4.2.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the North East?

Numerous services providers in this region partner to improve the lives of Northern residents in this region.

Figure 8. % of People Not in Census Families that were living with Relatives or Non-relatives, Census 2011 Health Region Profiles.

Figure 8. % of People Not in Census Families that were living with Relatives or Non-relatives, Census 2011 Health Region Profiles

Health Region	%
Mamawetan Churchill River	66.4%
Athabasca	65.9%
Keewatin Yatthé	50.2%
Saskatoon	41.6%
Prairie North	40.4%
Prince Albert Parkland	36.5%
Regina Qu'Appelle	36.0%
Sun Country	26.1%
Kelsey Trail	23.5%
Five Hills	22.3%
Sunrise	20.9%
Cypress	20.3%
Heartland	20.1%
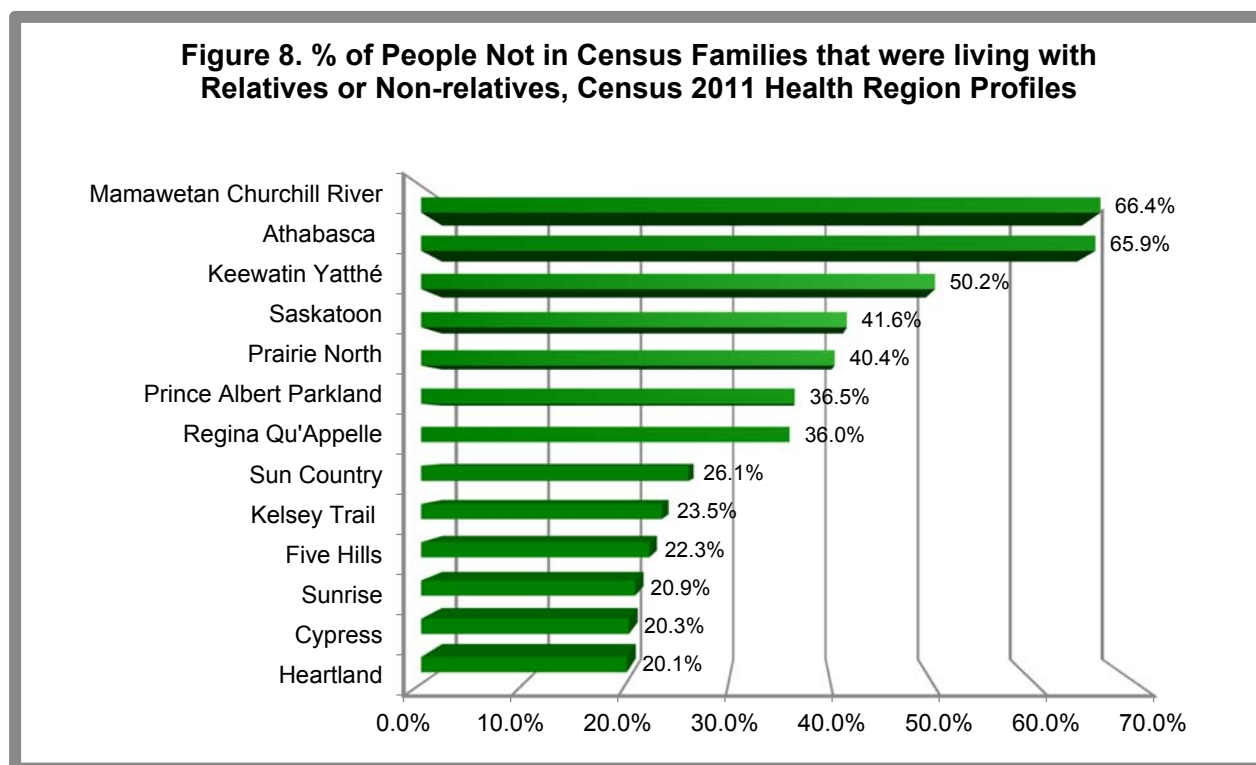
Scattered Sites Outreach, La Ronge

"We have a good food box now, Breaking Trails, a literacy program, school has social workers…"

"They have a passionate group there."

A variety of community organizations collaborate regularly with numerous provincial service providers on various projects to help with homelessness. The Health Region is a centre for information sharing and collaborative relationships to provide supports.

"Mental Health, addictions, all in partnership with each other. Close cooperation."

"Health Region has been fantastic, they are willing to help in any way, to try and make something work to better the situation."

The Scattered Sites Initiative (see below) partners with organizations such as the Health Region, RCMP, and Aids Saskatoon, to name a few. At the time of the study, Scattered Sites staff were approaching potential industry partners for funding.

"Partnered with AIDS Saskatoon, Health Region, 601 Health…"

Snapshot of Partnerships: Breaking Trails Family Place in Sandy Bay

The Breaking Trails Family Places provides family supports including parenting, information, family wellness, and referrals.

Breaking Trails was formed collaboratively through the efforts of the Northern Human Services Partnership, KidsFirst North, Mikisew Aboriginal Head Start, Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region, the Community Resource Centre, the Elder's Sub-Committee, the Good Food Box Committee, the Community Reference Panel, Northern Lights School Division (Hector Thiboutout Community School) and the Sandy Bay Student/Parent Babysitting Corporation.

Funding for a pilot was supplied by the Ministry of Education - Early Years Branch and the Ministry of Social Services.

The Northern Human Services Partnership (NHSP) and various Saskatchewan Ministries including Justice, Education, and Social Services are just some of the organizations that work in this region.

The NHSP builds partnerships between human service organizations in Northern communities. The Vulnerable Persons Initiative of this organization builds capacity and partnerships in organizations working in housing, homelessness, and harm reduction (NHSP 2015). For example, the NHSP has worked to establish Breaking Trails, a family support centre located in the community of Sandy Bay.

As with many Northern Communities, Interagency meetings play a role. In Sandy Bay, the interagency group consists of organizations such as Peter Ballantyne Family Services, Breaking Trails, the local housing authority, early years education agencies, the RCMP, mental health, addictions, and home care. As in other communities in the North, building capacity to allow for more partnerships would help:

"[Interagency] - has it worked well? We talk together, but it's mostly venting. We need to educate kids, deal with crisis issues, resources overstretched…"

As with many communities, there are not many formal structures, but people know and work with each other regularly.

"In terms of net-working, we check around, are flexible, see who has the skills to help. Also some people tend to have their "go-to" person."

In border communities like Creighton, there is the dynamic of people crossing the border in search of services. For example, Creighton has very little in the way of

supports for homelessness. The Friendship Centre in Flin Flon however, provides inexpensive meals and laundry services, a clothing bank, warming station, blankets, and low cost shelter, is visited by residents of both provinces.

Multiple jurisdictions create barriers for service providers:

"Would be nice if people could openly use either Manitoba or Saskatchewan services, same with service providers – would be nice if you could share data. Lots of our Aboriginal tenants – technically Manitobans, but have family here or were born here."

"Government of SK offices are here [in Creighton] but no health – people go to Flin Flon. Crisis Unit is there. Not even groceries on SK side."

Snap Shot: Visible Homeless in Flin Flon

"Visible homeless: People sleep in sheds, go to relatives when it's really cold. Tents or cabins in the bush… live on rabbits and fish. In the bush around here – you'll find little shelters about 3 or 4 logs high with a tarp over top. There will be a mattress inside. You can maybe sit up in the middle, sleep around the edges. Or people make little forts in the rocks, and crawl in."

Jurisdictional issues apply within Saskatchewan borders as well:

"What is Reserve and what isn't is all mixed up – people aren't sure what is and what isn't- and don't get that the rules for Off-Reserve are different than On-Reserve."

"I stay at my mom's house with 17 people. Sleep on the floor on a mattress. We have mold and electrical failures. Mom went to the band for help, but because we don't live On-Reserve they can't help."

4.2.2   What Services Are Available?

4.2.2.1 Emergency Shelters

Snapshot of Partnerships: Piwapan Women's Centre

Piwapan Women's Centre is a shelter for women fleeing domestic violence located in La Ronge.

It is governed by the La Ronge Native Women's Council. Funding comes from Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice; the Sexual Assault Program is a three year project funded by Status of Women Canada.

Emergency shelters "provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences" (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

Piwapan Women's Centre is a shelter for women fleeing domestic violence located in La Ronge. Several community members mentioned that more Northern shelters would make it easier for people to stay closer to the supports of family.

"Need a northern shelter – some people have never left north in life – so abuse plus culture shock."

"[need a shelter for violence]…Detrimental to take people out of their own community."

Several people have indicated that La Ronge is in need of an emergency shelter for the homeless. Scattered Sites Outreach is currently trying develop one.

"La Ronge has a need for emergency shelter. Need to be looking at strategic planning for the emergency shelter."

Near Creighton, the Flin Flon Aboriginal Friendship Centre has a hostel with 11 units, 2 for families. Flin Flon also has a women's shelter (the Women's Resource Centre).

4.2.2.2 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that:

"Typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."

The Wawuhtewikumihk Group Home in La Ronge provides supportive housing for people with disabilities.

4.2.2.3 Detox Facilities

The La Ronge Health Centre has a Detox facility.

4.2.2.4 Aboriginal Organizations

Kikinahk Friendship Centre in La Ronge provides a variety of services including Christmas hampers, parenting programs, and outreach.

4.2.2.4.1 Traditional Aboriginal Healing

Raymond's Camp in Sandy Bay provides counselling and cultural activities including sweats.

There were very few other formal programs for traditional healing Off-Reserve in this region.

"Nothing for spirituality here- maybe on Reserve."

"Cultural practices – we didn't do much when I was young, that came later, although individual people would do [traditional cultural practices]."

4.2.2.5 Other Supports for Homelessness

Scattered Sites Outreach in La Ronge provides addictions counselling, lunch, coffee, clothes, tents when available, showers, and laundry services.

> **How did communities define homelessness?**
>
> *"Other challenge – definition of homelessness – much more couchsurfing. People homeless some days, then have a home for really cold days. So in some communities, even though there is lots of overcrowding, by some definitions, no homelessness.*
>
> *"Couchsurfing, new trend emerging, house surfing – youth going from party to party just to have a place to stay".*

4.2.3 Building off the Local Numbers

No data was found to enumerate homelessness.

> *"Data challenge – there's no agency or data source for this type of info in the North. It's also becoming harder because [there is no] long form data from Census 2011. For some areas like La Ronge – can't even get specific data because response rate is too low. Data is worse for areas that are small, rural, and a large Aboriginal population."*

> *"To get data on the extent of homelessness – have to use CBOs [community based organizations] somehow to survey – services going on formally – actually can assess if being accessed by homeless people."*

4.2.4 Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.2.4.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the North East Region?

In the North, as mentioned above, couchsurfing, overcrowding, and poor housing conditions were often seen as part of homelessness. As well, time and seasonality affect who is homeless.

> *"Winter vs summer…more visible homelessness in the summer. Can pitch a tent."*

4.2.4.2 The picture of Homelessness in the North East Region

4.2.4.2.1 Who is Homeless?

A recent news article stated that there were about 100 homeless people in Flin Flon (Naylor 2014).

Example of Housing in Sandy Bay

4.2.4.2.2 Housing

As elsewhere in the North, housing is in short supply. Overcrowding and poor housing conditions create the conditions for poor health and other negative consequences. Figure 9 shows Saskatchewan communities with dwellings with more than one person per room. This map shows both On-Reserve and Off-Reserve; the 40.1 and above range are all Reserves. However, there are still a number of northern Off-Reserve communities with very high crowding compared to the provincial average, which is 2% (Statistics Canada 2013c),

"When you are not stable, it affects you in school. Kids – not enough to eat, not enough sleep – act out. No quiet place for them [to sleep]."

"I'm one of these young people – I went away and got my education. I came back because I want to be in community. I have to live at my parents place, away from my three kids, because there are no homes here."

Figure 9. Crowding in Saskatchewan Communities: % of Dwellings with More than 1 Person per Room. Map prepared by Quinn and Irvine (2014), 2011 NHS.

Student housing was noted as being in demand. In addition, the process of getting student housing could be a future subject for collaborative work:

"With some schools – they send acceptance letters in August – but it takes months to arrange for housing for a family – many people just give up."
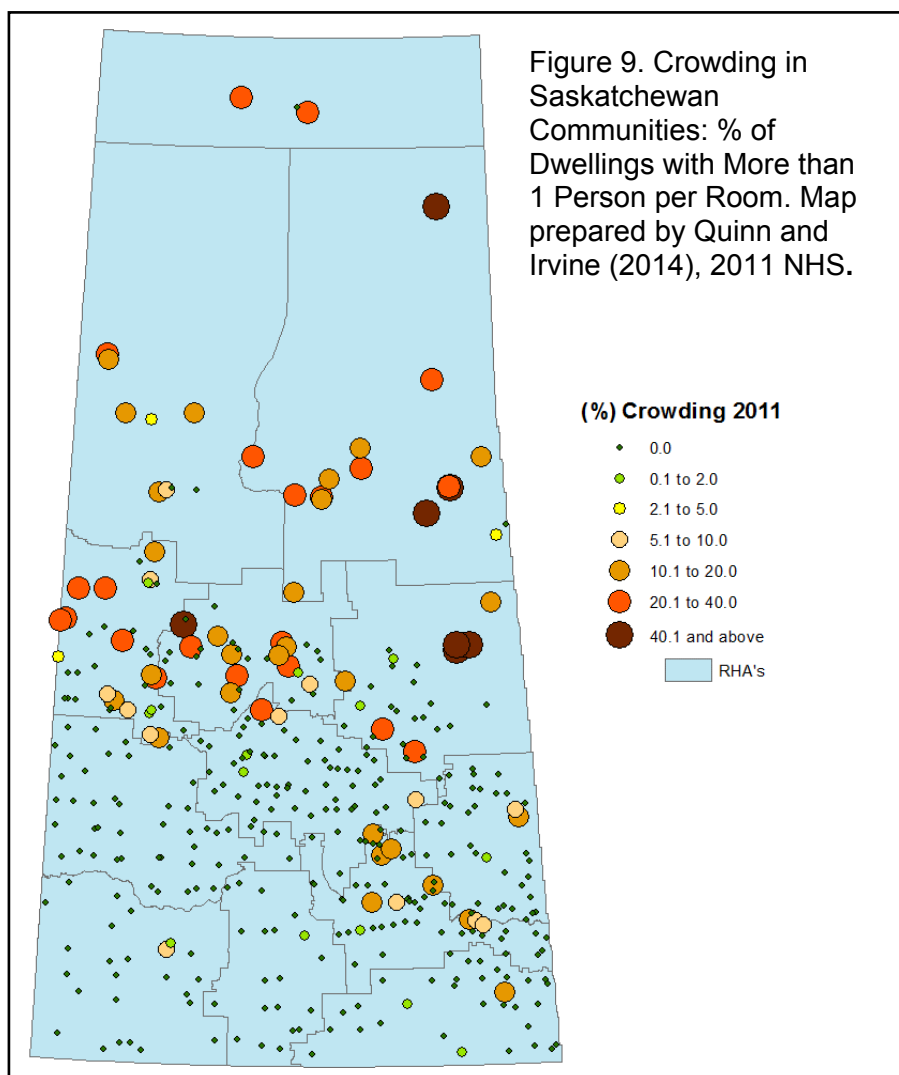
4.2.4.2.3 Mental Health and Addictions

The role of mental health and addictions for homelessness was noted in this region.

"People who are living on the street often don't want to be inside. Mental health and addictions. Try to get them into single units, but if they aren't taking meds etc, they get into trouble, get beat up, evicted."

The Hatchet Lake Health Centre in Wollaston and Youth Addiction Services with the Health Region in La Ronge both provide addiction services and counselling.

4.2.4.2.4 Hopes for the Future

Hopes for the region include:

- ∞ Housing
- ∞ Affordable housing
- ∞ Perhaps tiny homes
- ∞ Training and healing facilities
- ∞ Emergency shelter
- ∞ Transitional housing
- ∞ Housing to meet the demographic needs

Sandy Bay Village Office, a hub for the community

Creighton's landscape, people sometimes sleep in the rocks

Example of Housing in La Ronge

4.3 East Central Region

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 113,125

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 34,950 (31%) (Parkland is 38.9%, Kelsey is 16.6%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Cree

Treaty Areas:

   4, 5, 6

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Kelsey: Budd's Point; Carrot River; Cumberland House; Kinistin; Muskeg River; Pine Bluff; Shoal Lake; Yellowquill.

Parkland: Ahtahkakoop; Big River; Bittern Lake; Cumberland; James Smith; Little Red River; Lucky Man; Mistawasis; Montreal Lake; Moosomin; Muskeg Lake; Muskoday; Opawakoscikan; Pelican Lake; Salteaux; Sturgeon Lake; Wahpeton; Witchekan Lake.

Métis Region(s):

   Northern Region I

   Eastern Region I, II

   Western Region I, Ia, II

Average Rent: Kelsey, $569; Parkland, $754

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

The East Central study region is defined by the boundaries the Prince Albert Parkland and Kelsey Trail Health Regions (Figure 10).

All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

"What's the best thing? There are partnerships, people work together, and there is a strong sense of community, respect each other's mandates."

"PA has had to be good at working together with social issues."

Compared to the Prince Albert Parkland Health Region, with a median after-tax household income $48,553, Kelsey Trail Health Region has a slightly lower median after-tax income of $45,631 (third lowest in the province) (see Figure 11). Compared to the three northmost Health Regions, Kelsey and Parkland have moderate numbers of people who reported they were living with relatives or non-relatives in 2011 (Kelsey is 23.5%, Parkland is 36.5%) (see Figure 8, Section 4.2.1) (2011 Census). There is a considerable difference between the two Health Regions in terms of the percentage of people who are paying more than 30% of their income on shelter: For Kelsey, the number is 15%, while Parkland, which contains the City of Prince Albert, is 21.8%. Kelsey Trail has the second highest number of tenant households living in subsidized housing (35.8%) (see Figure 6, Section 4.1), with Keewatin Yatthé being first.

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – East Central, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- 1
- 2 - 3
- 4 - 5
- 6 - 9
- 10 - 44

KEY PLAN

North

North West / North East

East Central

West Central

South West   South East

Cumberland House

Big River

Candle Lake

East Central

Spiritwood   Canwood   Nipawin

Carrot River

Shellbrook   Prince Albert

Leask   Kinistino   Hudson Bay

Birch Hills   Melfort   Tisdale

Blaine Lake

Porcupine Plain

Kilometers

80   40   0   80

Naicam

Kelvington
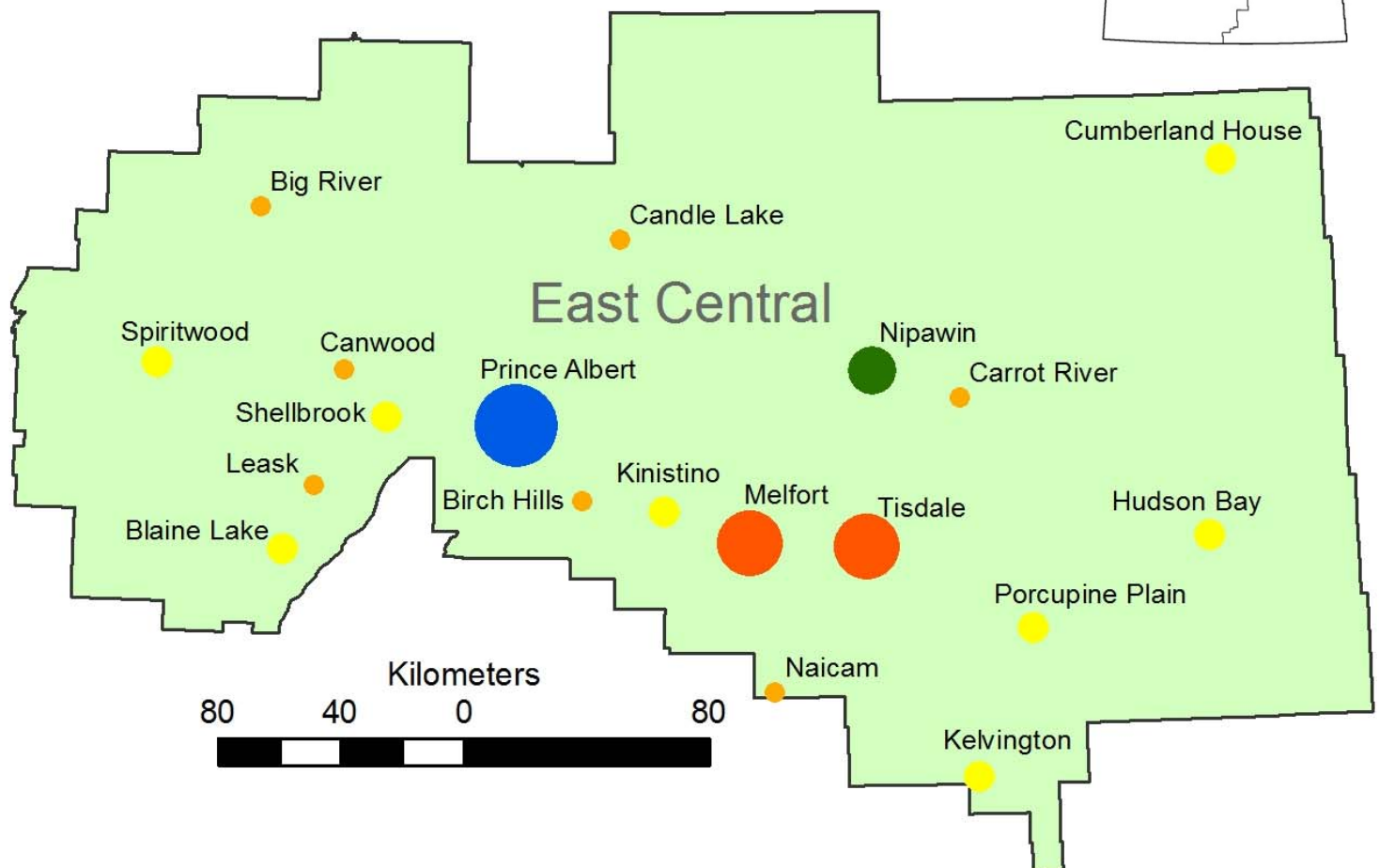
Figure 10. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – East Central, SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

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Figure 11. Median After-tax Household Income (Total Region), 2010, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

Region	Income
Sun Country	$62,089
Regina Qu'Appelle	$59,304
Saskatoon	$57,576
Prairie North	$53,205
Cypress	$51,658
Heartland	$51,244
Prince Albert Parkland	$48,553
Five Hills	$47,630
Sunrise	$45,837
Athabasca	$45,791
Kelsey Trail	$45,631
Mamawetan Churchill…	$44,888
Keewatin Yatthé	$39,767
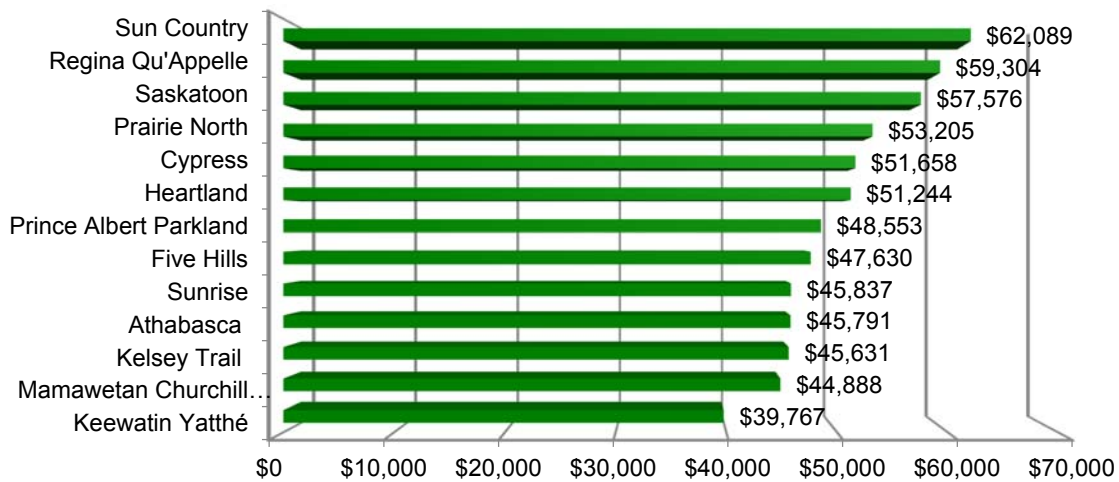
Figure 11. Median After-tax Household Income (Total Region), 2010, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

4.3.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the East Central Region?

Numerous services providers in this region partner to improve the lives of residents in this region.

A variety of organizations such as Food Banks, schools, and housing authorities partner with agencies such as the Prince Albert Outreach program and the Prince Albert YWCA to provide programs and services.

"Inter-connected with outreach and youth worker. Lots of partnerships in the community."

"When we do outreach – work on the street, work with the schools."

"In some cases, if two organizations applied for funding and the other found out, they may pull out because they feel it would be better suited for the other organization."

Funding for a variety of initiatives is provided from by Saskatchewan Ministries such as Justice, Social Services, Economy, Government

YWCA's Our House, Prince Albert

Relations, Health, and Corrections, to name a few. Donations and fundraising are also sources of funding. Prince Albert Grand Council, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and the United Way also help with funding in Prince Albert. (YWCA Prince Albert 2014).

4.3.2 What Services Are Available?

4.3.2.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters "provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences" (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43). Figure 12 shows emergency shelters.

Figure 12. Emergency Shelters in the East Central Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Prince Albert Safe Shelter for Women	Prince Albert	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. 26 beds for women and children.
YWCA Prince Albert – Central Avenue – Crisis Shelter	Prince Albert	Emergency shelter for women with or without children.
YWCA Prince Albert – Central Avenue – Youth Shelter	Prince Albert	Male and female youth 16-18.
YWCA Prince Albert – Our House	Prince Albert	Emergency shelter, 12 beds for women and 10 for men; 10 bed cold weather shelter in the winter.
Prince Albert Children's Haven	Prince Albert	Emergency Shelter. 17 beds for children up to 12.

Bushes behind big box stores in Prince Albert, a place to camp out.

4.3.2.2 Transitional and Supportive Housing

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

"…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."

Figure 13 below shows transitional and supportive housing.

Figure 13. Transitional and Supportive Housing in the East Central Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
YWCA Prince Albert – Youth Peer Support Home	Prince Albert	Supportive and Transitional Housing. 8 female and 7 male spaces for ages 16-21.
YWCA Prince Albert – Rendalyn Home	Prince Albert	Supportive and Transitional Housing. 10 beds for youth 16-21 who are pregnant or have children and are involved with the Ministry of Social Services.
YWCA Prince Albert – Our House	Prince Albert	8 co-ed transitional beds.
YWCA Prince Albert – Central Avenue – Transitional	Prince Albert	Women's transitional shelter.
Prince Albert Safe Shelter for Women	Prince Albert	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. 26 beds for women and children.
Ranch Ehrlo Society	Prince Albert, RM of Buckland	Transitional housing for youth in treatment for addictions. 20 beds in three units.

4.3.2.3 Mental Health and Addictions

Inpatient treatment services for mental health and addictions are provided by organizations such as the Valley Hill Youth Treatment Centre, and the Prince Albert Family Treatment Centre (Prince Albert Parkland Health Region).

4.3.2.4 Aboriginal Organizations

Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (MACSI) has stabilization, inpatient, and outpatient services for addictions.

The Prince Albert Friendship Centre has a variety of supports including an Elder, family programming, Aboriginal court worker program, gang alternatives, and HIV/AIDs education.

Sakwatamo Lodge Treatment Centre with Prince Albert Grand Council has inpatient services.

Cree Nations Treatment Haven has inpatient treatment for addictions.

The Métis Heritage Corporation in Melfort provides programming and advocacy.

The Prince Albert Métis Women's Association has a variety of support services including HIV/AIDs and parenting programs.

4.3.2.5 Traditional Aboriginal Healing

The Prince Albert Outreach Centre has male and female Elders who work with youth through cultural ceremonies, teachings, warrior circles, talking circles, and sweats.

The Prince Albert Spiritual Healing Lodge incorporates programming for Aboriginal healing into services for people nearing the end of their prison sentence.

4.3.2.6 Other Supports for Homelessness

The Prince Albert Outreach Centre provides outreach to street youth, sexually exploited youth, at risk youth, and gang involved youth. Programs include a counselling team, crisis intervention, van outreach team, alternative schooling programs, and a drop-in centre (P.A. Outreach 2014).

The Salvation Army has locations in Prince Albert, Nipawin, and Melfort, with Food Bank and thrift store services.

AIDS Saskatoon has their 301 North Outreach centre in Prince Albert.

The Hudson Bay Family & Support Centre has a Food Bank and family violence prevention services. Family violence supports also exist in Melfort (North East Crisis Intervention Centre).

Lived Experience in Prince Albert

Female, 20's

"I stay with guys every night, but sleep with them to spend the night. I come to the friendship centre to warm up".

4.3.3 Building off the Local Numbers

Since the region has a larger centre (Prince Albert), there are several shelters that have worked to collect data on homelessness. The Prince Albert YWCA, Prince Albert Outreach Centre, and the P.A. Food Bank were able to share data that helps begin painting a picture of unsheltered populations. This information is presented in Sections 4.3.4.2.1 and 4.3.4.2.2.

4.3.4 Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.3.4.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the East Central Region?

With a larger centre like Prince Albert, unsheltered populations are much more prevalent. Couchsurfing, however, still exists along with many people who are vulnerable.

4.3.4.2 Who is Homeless?

4.3.4.2.1 Shelter Data

The Prince Albert YWCA, Prince Albert Outreach Centre, and the P.A. Food Bank were able to share data that helps begin painting a picture of unsheltered populations (Figures 14 – 17).

Many of the people accessing shelters in Prince Albert are Aboriginal. 71% of people using the YWCA's Our House in 2013-2014, for both emergency and transitional shelter, were First Nations.

> **How did communities define homelessness?**
>
> *"Not too many actually homeless. Many more hidden homeless".*
>
> *"With homeless people – hard to fit them within parameters, need to be thinking outside the box".*

Figure 14. Breakdown of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Crisis Floor), 2013-March 31, 2014
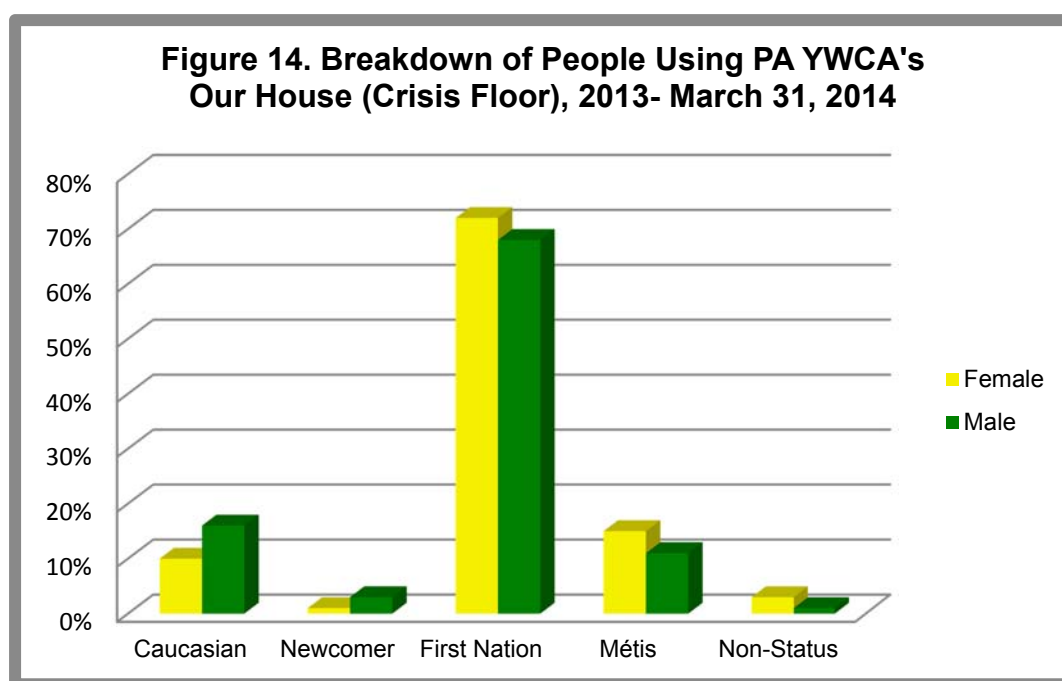
Figure 14. Breakdown of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Crisis Floor), 2013- March 31, 2014

Figure 15. Breakdown of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Transitional Floor), 2013- March 31, 2014

Figure 15. Breakdown of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Transitional Floor), 2013- March 31, 2014

Figure 16. Self-Declared Traits of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Transitional Floor), 2013- March 31, 2014
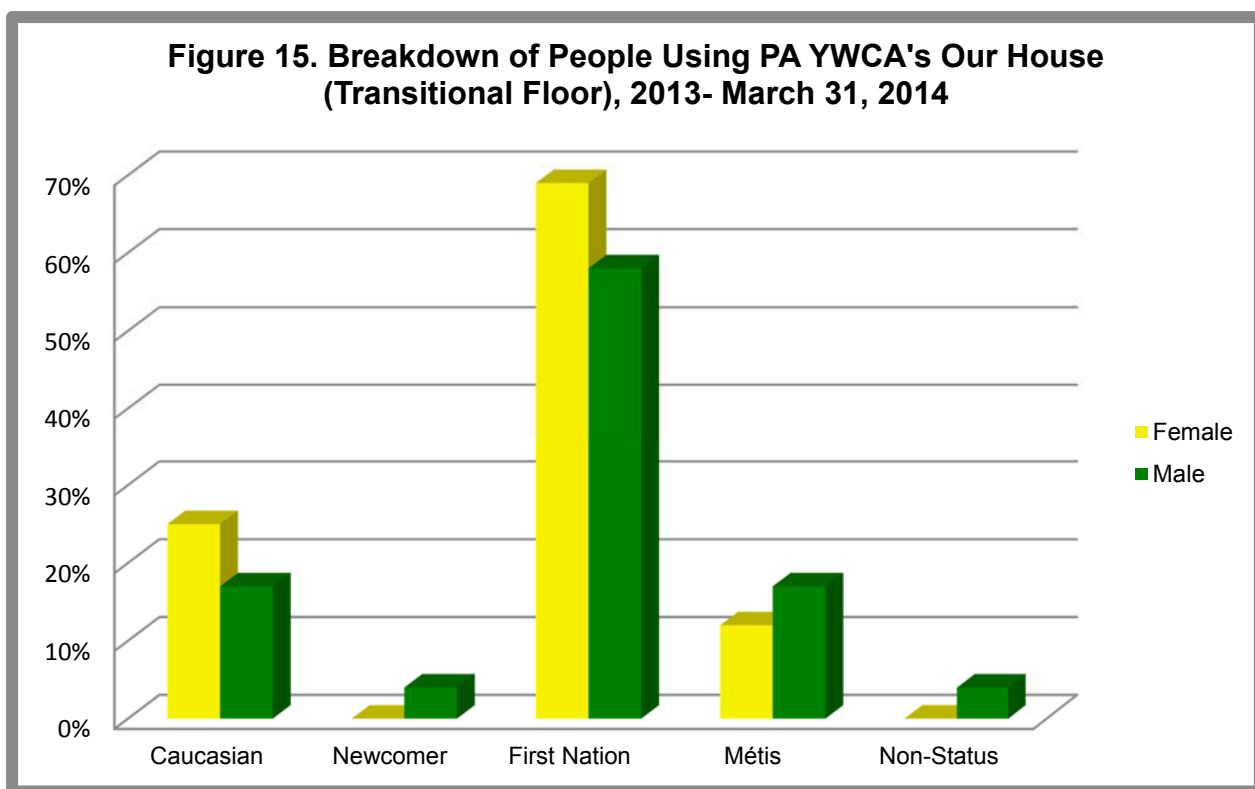
Figure 16. Self-Declared Traits of People Using PA YWCA's Our House (Transitional Floor), 2013- March 31, 2014
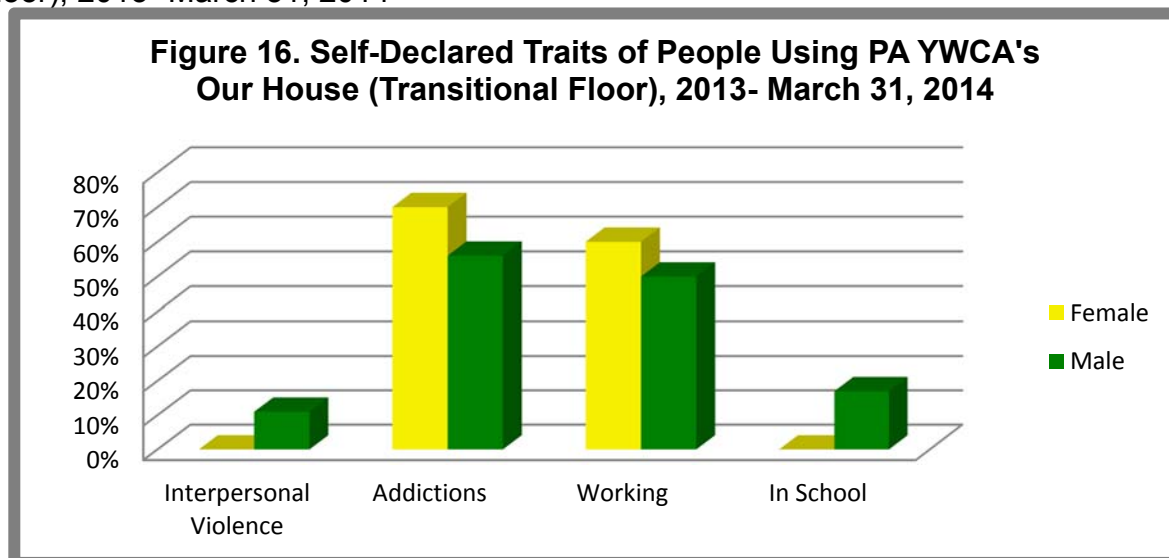
People who are using Our House often self-declare that they have addictions. Many are also working.

Figure 17. Turnaways, P.A. YWCA's Our House 2013- March 31, 2014
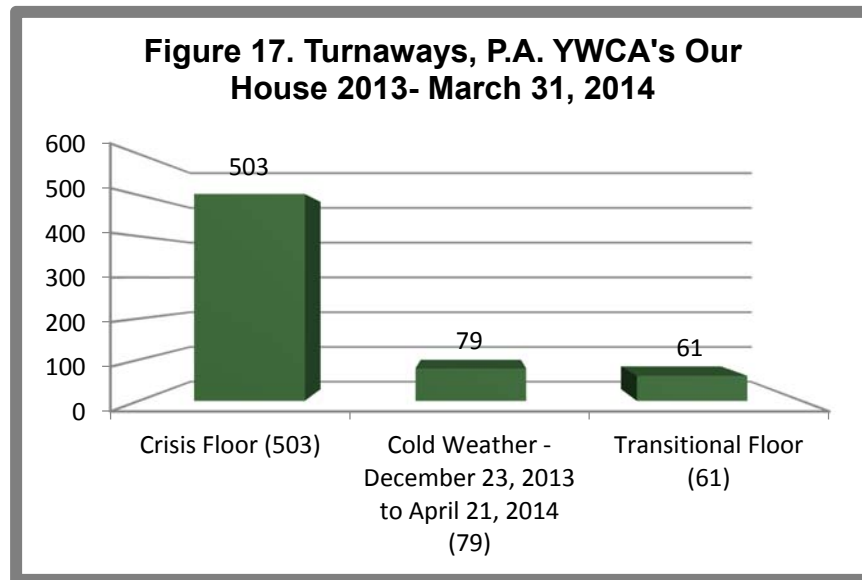
Figure 17. Turnaways, P.A. YWCA's Our House 2013- March 31, 2014

Shelters are often at capacity. The table below shows the number of turnaways at Our House due to the shelter being full in 2013-2014.

Demand for cold weather shelters is apparent through the P.A. YWCA's Our House. This agency opened a Cold Weather Shelter in their basement this year. It ran from December 23, 2013 to April 21, 2013 and had a 95% occupancy rate during that time (YWCA Our House 2014).

Other observations from service providers shed light on the picture of homelessness:

"In the past year there has been a shift in the type of clientele seeking our residential services. We have seen more single fathers, immigrant families, deaf/blind, and clients battling depression and mental health issues needing our help."
(YWCA Prince Albert 2014)

4.3.4.2.2 Food Bank Data

Data from the P.A. Food Bank dating from April to November 2013 (Figure 18) shows that the largest group of Food Bank users were rental

> **Lived Experience in Prince Albert**
>
> Male, 28 years old
>
> *From Patuanak. Used to stay around the railways, and the grave yard in the bush. Was in the military for 3 years. Was a peace officer and security. Addictions took over.*
>
> *Homeless, stay at Our House. Hard to stay there. 90% of people are intoxicated. I've been sober for 52 days and want to keep it that way (alcohol, not drugs).*

> **Snap Shot: Women Accessing P.A. YWCA's Central Avenue Residential Services (YWCA 2014)**
>
> ∞ Clients who are Aboriginal: **91%**
> ∞ Clients between 20-29 years of age: **39%**
> ∞ Clients who came to the Y to escape abuse: **40%**
> ∞

tenants. Prince Albert has a fairly high average monthly shelter cost for rentals compared to other regions in the province (Figure 20). It may be hard for people to manage both shelter and food.

"Rental is the worst trouble maker, from private rentals to low income housing. Wages and rent do not match."

The second largest group using the Food Bank is people living with family or friends. Only a small number of unsheltered people use the Food Bank.

Figure 18. Breakdown of Food Bank Use by Housing Type, April- November 2014 (Prince Albert Food Bank 2014).

Figure 18. Breakdown of Food Bank Use by Housing Type, April- November 2014 (Prince Albert Food Bank 2014)

Housing Type	All
% Homeowners	1.0
% Rental market tenants	70.4
% Social housing tenants	3.7
% Band-owned housing	0.7
% Shelter or group home	1.0
% Living on the street	1.2
% Living with family or friends	18.9
% Declined to Answer	7.8

4.3.4.2.3 Housing First

The YWCA is starting to work on Housing First at Our House, where people are allowed to stay no matter what their condition. Supports exist in place. If a needed support is not available, staff will take the person to the support.

"Our House…this is where you see the chronic homeless people."

"Lots of partnership with the housing first model. Find out what works for individuals."

4.3.4.2.4 Mobility and Transportation

As seen elsewhere, people move around for various reasons. Transportation is a key issue in the North. With great distances between remote communities, people can have a hard time moving around.

"In the summer, when they come in from the north – these people also have issues with food security back at their Reserve. People coming in summer include those from La Loche, Black Lake, mostly from Reserves. Lots of reserves are moving toward dry reserves, banning people with substance abuse…this is becoming an issue for urban communities."

"People get stranded in PA after they are flown in from the north for court appearances. When they get flown in, they usually go to parties, afterwards they try to find a way home. They usually stay in shelters until they can find a way back home up North."

Prince Albert's Train Bridge and River Bank

4.3.4.2.5   *Hopes for the Future*

Hopes for the region include a drop-in centre.

"What PA needs is a place where people can go, PA doesn't have a drop-in centre, or a place people can come in and hang out. Have nowhere to go during the day.

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 373,680 (Prairie North 69,335; Saskatoon 304,345)

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 49,865 (13%) Prairie North 30.3%, Saskatoon 9.5%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Cree

Treaty Areas:

4, 6

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Prairie North: Joseph Bighead; Lean Man; Little Pine; Makaoo; Makaw Lake; Meadow Lake; Ministikwan; Moosomin; Mosquito-Grizzly Bear's Head; New Thunderchild; Poundmaker; Red Pheasant; Salteaux; Seekaskootch; Sweetgrass; Waterhen.

Saskatoon: Asimakaniseekan Askiy (urban Reserve in Saskatoon); Beardy; Okemasis; Fishing Lake; One Arrow; White Cap.

Métis Region(s):

Eastern Region II, III

Western Region I, Ia, II, IIa

Northern Region III

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

Average Rent: Between $754 and $928.

4.4   West Central Region

The West Central study region is defined by the boundaries of two Health Regions: Prairie North and Saskatoon (Figure 19).

All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

This region covers a broad area with a diverse range of communities, and many opportunities in terms of jobs.

"Lots of jobs in oil and gas and construction in Lloyd. People are often drawn here because there are lots of jobs...[but they] get here and realize they don't have the proper tickets (safety, etc.) and stay at Men's shelter until they can get them. Or until they can save enough, once working, to pay the first/last month rent etc."

Like Creighton and Flin Flon on the opposite side of the province, Lloydminster is a "border city", with people potentially accessing services on both sides of the border.

Lloydminster, North Battleford, and Saskatoon tend to be hubs, this is both an advantage and a disadvantage.

"North Battleford has it tough – between Saskatoon and Lloyd, many services go to one or the other."

Battlefords and District Food Bank

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – West Central, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- 1
- 2
- 3 - 4
- 5 - 10
- 11 - 28

KEY PLAN

North

North West | North East

East Central

West Central

South West | South East

Meadow Lake
Loon Lake
Paradise Hill
Lloydminister
Turtleford
Maidstone
North Battleford
Duck Lake
Laird
Rosthern
Waldheim
Wakaw
Radisson
Hepburn
Hague
Cudworth
Delmany
Osler
Humboldt
Martensville
Wason
West Central
Wadena
Delisle
Allan
Lanigan
Watrous
Wynyard
Hanely
Nokomis
Strasbourg

Kilometers
80 40 0 80
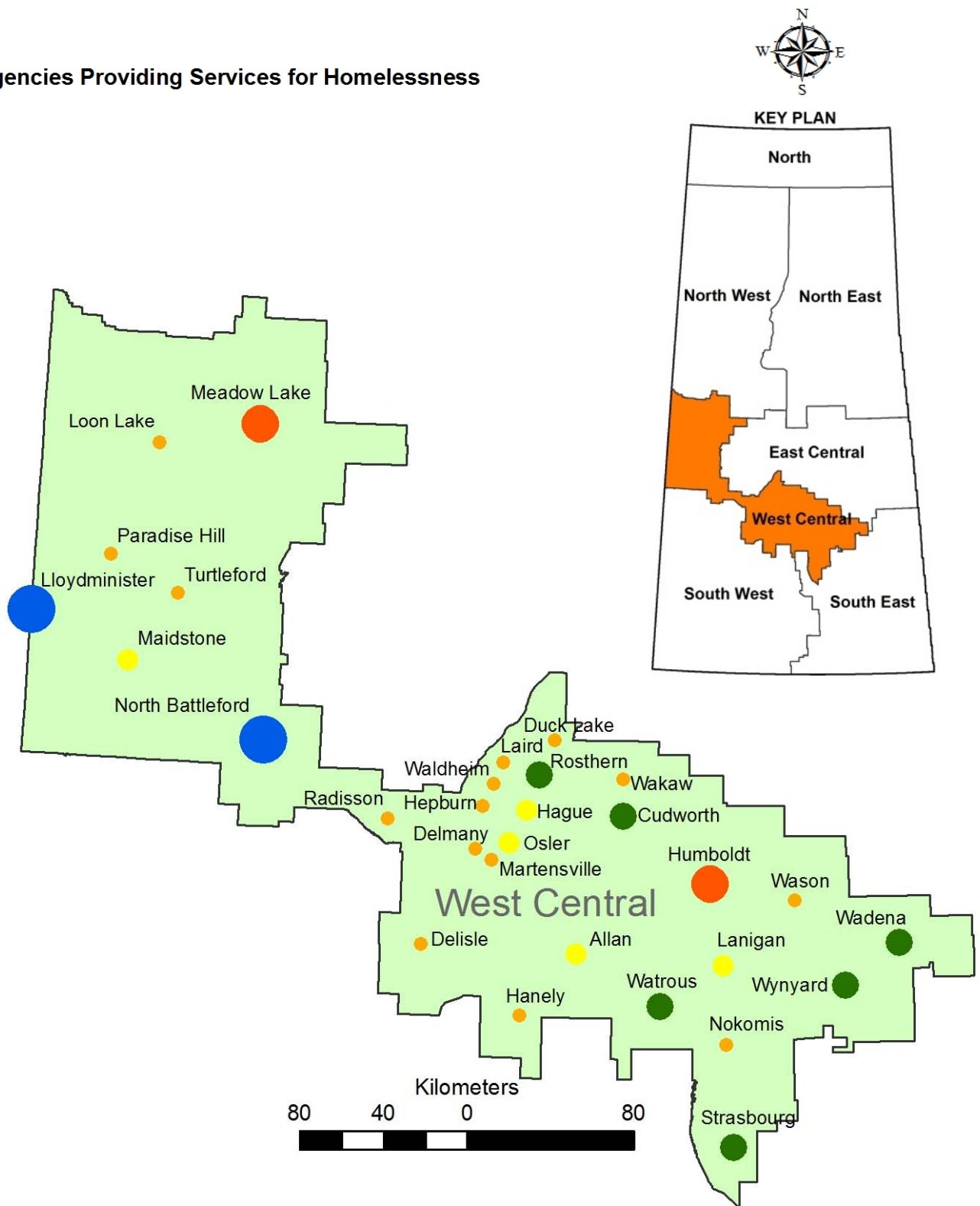
Figure 19. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – West Central, SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services
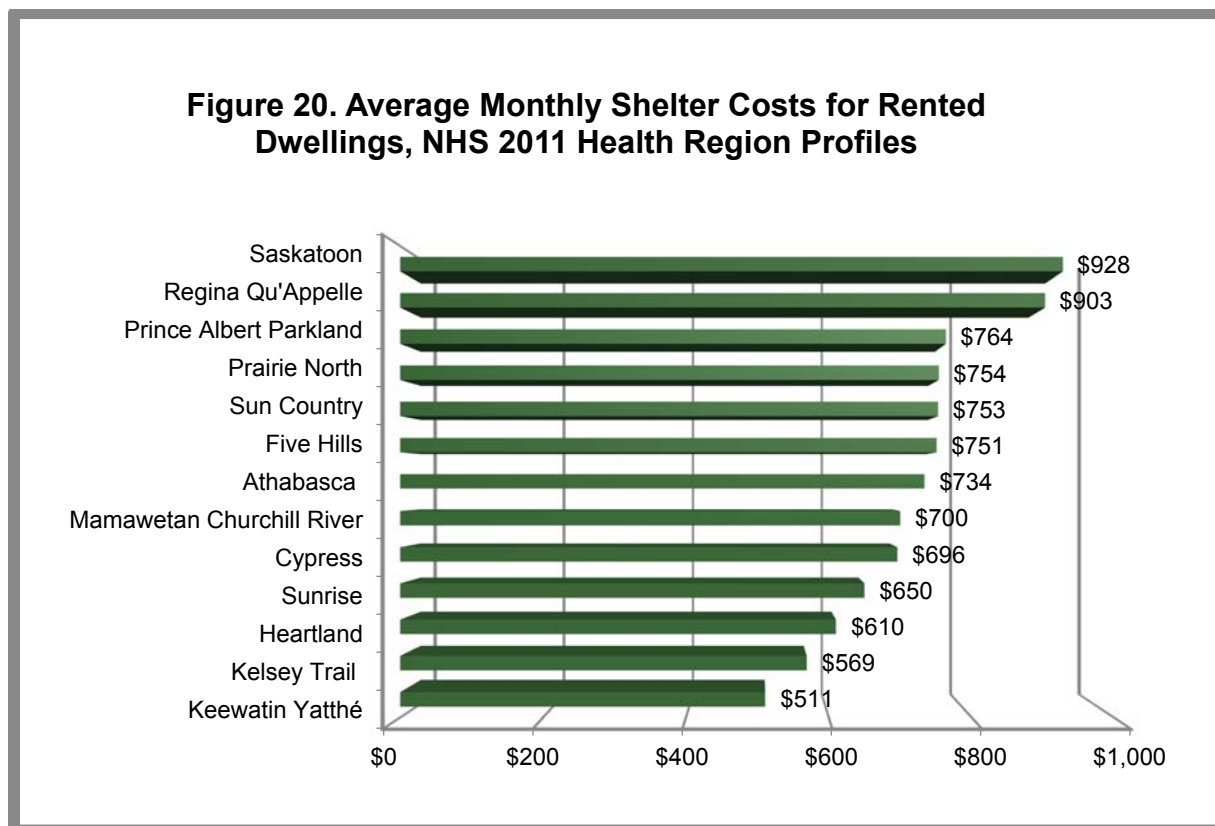
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Figure 20. Average Monthly Shelter Costs for Rented Dwellings, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

Region	Cost
Saskatoon	$928
Regina Qu'Appelle	$903
Prince Albert Parkland	$764
Prairie North	$754
Sun Country	$753
Five Hills	$751
Athabasca	$734
Mamawetan Churchill River	$700
Cypress	$696
Sunrise	$650
Heartland	$610
Kelsey Trail	$569
Keewatin Yatthé	$511

Figure 20. Average Monthly Shelter Costs for Rented Dwellings, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

Prairie North Health Region has a higher percentage of people living in subsidized housing than Saskatoon: 30.7% compared to 18.7%. The average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings is between $754 (Prairie North) and $928 (Saskatoon) – some of the highest rents in the province (Figure 20). Higher rents in the province form a "belt" running from Lloydminster southeast to Estevan. Both Saskatoon and Prairie North have fairly high numbers of people living with relatives and non-relatives (about 40%, see also Figure 8 Section 4.2.1), though not as high as more northern regions.

4.4.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the West Central Region?

Like many regions, there is a core of dedicated service providers helping with homelessness. Lloydminster provides an example.

"Lloyd has an incredible history of volunteers and people stepping up to the plate."

In Lloydminster, Habitat for Humanity, Lloydminster Métis Housing, and St. John's Anglican Church partner on providing a men's shelter. Many other partnerships exist to help with homelessness. For example, the City of Lloydminster has recently helped by selling a building to the Lloydminster Social Action Coalition Society (LSACS) for $1 to be developed into transitional housing for working men (Gibney House). On projects such as these, local businesses often provide donations, and the local press can help with raising awareness about the work being done.

"The city has been wonderful…They have bent over backwards and really, that's one of the things that I really like to emphasize in terms of Lloydminster. Its many people, organizations and entities working together" (Biggrigg 2014).

4.4.1.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters *"provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences"* (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

Figure 21. Emergency Shelters in the West Central Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Battlefords Interval House Society	North Battleford	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. Women and children, 16 beds/six families.
Reclaim Outreach Centre	North Battleford	Emergency shelter for men, women, and children.
Battleford Indian and Métis Friendship Centre	North Battleford	Cold weather shelter October to March. 20 cots.
Lloydminster Interval Home	Lloydminster	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. Women and children (no male children over 16).
Lloydminster Men's Shelter	Lloydminster	Men's Shelter. 28 beds.
Waskoosis Safe Shelter	Meadow Lake	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. Space for 7 families/21 residents. Services in Cree and English.

Figure 21. Emergency Shelters in the West Central Region

4.4.1.2 Transitional Housing

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

> "…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."

Figure 22. Transitional Housing in the West Central Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Jedediah House	North Battleford	Youth 12-16 under the care of Ministry of Social Services.
North Battleford Transitional Housing	North Battleford	Transitional low-income housing for people who are homeless/at risk of homelessness.
Door of Hope - Meadow Lake Outreach Ministries Inc.	Meadow Lake	Transitional/Affordable housing for single mothers and children.
Dol-Mar Manor	Lloydminster	Part of Lloydminster Interval house. Transitional housing for women leaving the domestic violence shelter.

Figure 22. Transitional Housing in the West Central Region.

4.4.1.3 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that:

> "typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."

Supportive housing for people with disabilities exists in places such as North Battleford, Aberdeen, Humboldt, Wynyard, and Maidstone.

The Libbie Young Centre in Lloydminster provides supportive living for people with mental illness.

North Battleford Eagle's Nest Youth Ranch provides supported living for vulnerable youth.

4.4.1.4 Detox Facilities

Community members told us people usually go to Saskatoon if they need detox. The Thorpe Recovery Centre, located across the border in Blackfoot Alberta, has spaces for the transition after detox. The Northwest Health Facility in Meadow Lake has detox.

4.4.1.5 Aboriginal Organizations

"Aboriginal run programs are better."

"Friendship Centre shelter…Very lenient – supposed to be 0 tolerance…If you're drunk and you don't cause issues you can stay the night…If you're drunk and are causing problems RCMP are called."

Mistahey Musqua Treatment Centre is located in Loon Lake and provides addiction supports.

Ekweskeet Healing Lodge provides addictions inpatient services from Onion Lake Reserve.

4.4.1.5.1 Friendship Centres

There are Friendship Centres in Lloydminster, North Battleford, and Meadow Lake.

4.4.1.5.2 Aboriginal Housing Authorities

The following Authorities/Organizations provide housing:

- ∞ Carleton Housing provides First Nations Off-Reserve housing.
- ∞ Battlefords Urban Native Housing Corp - Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan Inc. (MUHAS) provides housing.
- ∞ Lloydminster Métis Housing Group Inc. - Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan Inc. (MUHAS) provides housing.
- ∞ Meadow Lake Native Urban Housing provides housing in Meadow Lake.

Snapshot: North Battleford Friendship Centre

Centre Employee

"My job…help with housing, help with transitional housing interviews, find jobs and help with resumes, help with addictions, upgrading education, contact for wellness councillors, help with clothing donations…help in any way I can".

Lloydminster Friendship Centre, Bread Basket

4.4.1.5.3 Traditional Aboriginal Healing

Kanaweyimik Child and Family Services Inc. in North Battleford provides family wellbeing services grounded in cultural traditions.

Regarding access to traditional healing, there doesn't seem to be a large number of resources Off-Reserve.

"Nothing in town – you have to find someone to give you a ride out to the Reserves. No funding, not covered for any transportation to ceremonies. Put a star by that one!"

4.4.1.6 Other Supports for Homelessness

St. Johns Anglican Church, Lloydminster

There are Food Banks in North Battleford, Lanigan, Humbodlt, Meadow Lake, Lloydminster, Turtleford, Rosthern, Watrous, and Wynyard.

The Olive Tree in Lloydminster is an example of meal programs, providing suppers twice a week.

St. John's Anglican Church in Lloydminster houses a youth drop-in centre with hot meals three evenings a week, games, and socializing.

Battleford Hopeview Recovery Centre has short and long-term addictions recovery housing. Teen Challenge Saskatchewan provides inpatient addiction programs in Allan. Ranch Ehrlo has youth addictions inpatient program in Martensville.

4.4.2 Building off the Local Numbers

There are several sources of data to look at the numbers of homeless in the Lloydminster area and North Battleford areas.

In North Battleford, the Friendship Centre's cold weather shelter averages about 10 people a night. Service providers estimated there were between 50 and 90 unsheltered people in North Battleford, and over 200 hidden homeless.

Snapshot: Unsheltered in Lloydminster

"Homeless counts are hard – homeless don't like to be found, for various reasons. It is dangerous for them. There is a "white posse" that goes around and it is dangerous for an Aboriginal homeless person to be caught by them. Homeless people, the ones really on the street, are known as "coyotes" and behind the fire hall, by the train tracks is called "coyote flats". People also live in sheds, in attics, in rooms without proper windows/fire escapes. Couchsurfing too. In the past a whole area of cardboard shacks was burnt down – probably deliberate arson. Three homeless people were trapped in a burning shack – two women and one man – the man kicked the wall down with his feet and the women got out but he was badly burned".

The Battlefords and District Food and Resource Centre provided data from their annual Hunger Counts for 2005-2014. These show that Aboriginal people have steadily made up between 74% and 78% of Food Bank users for the last three years (2012-2014). As with other Food Banks, the majority of users are rental tenants. In North Battleford, the number of Food Bank clients who report living in band-owned housing has climbed from 6% in 2008 to 24% in 2013, with a slight decrease to 19% in 2014 (North Battleford Food Bank 2014).

Carleton Housing in Lloydminster calculated that, for their organization, 83% of applications for housing were from Aboriginal people. Of these, 20% were from people categorized as "homeless"- living with family or other people or staying in shelters.

Estimates from the Lloydminster Community Youth Centre were that there were about 35 youth on the street.

The Lloydminster Social Action Coalition Society (LSACS) has done homeless counts for the last two years. A breakdown of the types of people counted is shown below in Figures 23, 24 and 25.

Of the 162 people counted in 2013, 89 were living in shelters or on the street. The count considered anyone paying more than 1/3 of their income to housing to be "at risk" – 25 people were found that fit this description.

Half the people counted were men. The other half divided between women and children.

The count found that slightly more than half the people counted were Aboriginal.

Figure 23. Results of Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)

Figure 24. Breakdown of Homeless, Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)

Figure 24. Breakdown of Homeless, Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)

- Men — 52%
- Women — 21%
- Children — 26%
- Other — 1%

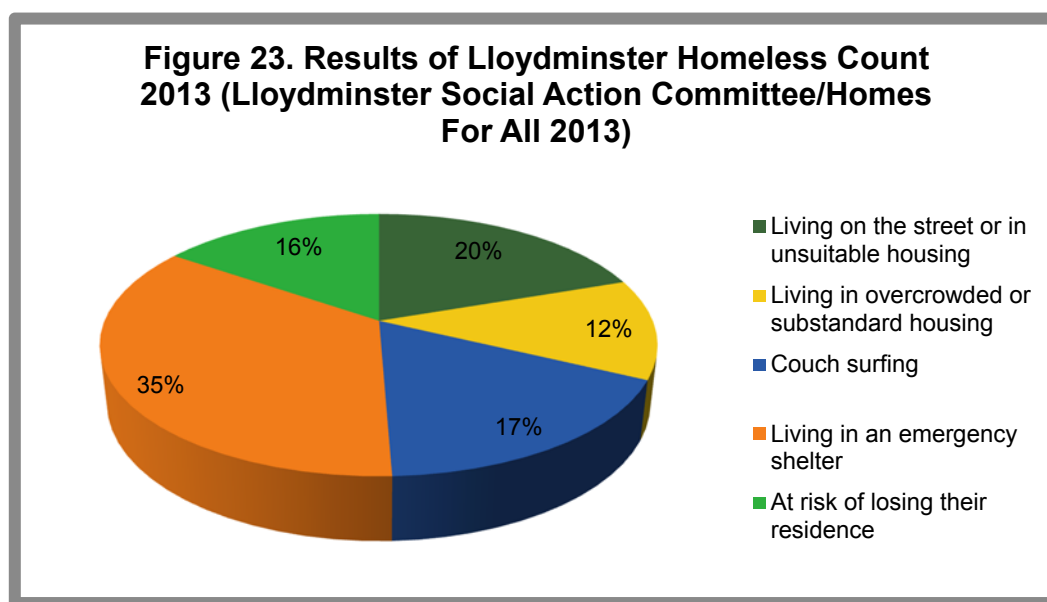Figure 25. Homeless Ethnicity, Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)

Figure 25. Homeless Ethnicity, Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)
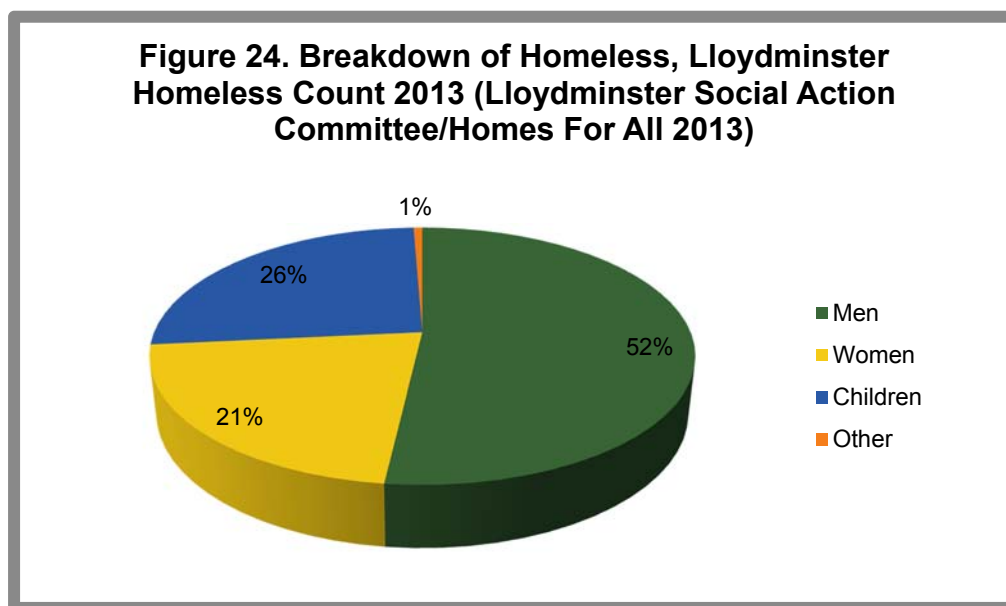
- Aboriginal — 52%
- Caucasian — 45%
- Other/Unknown — 3%
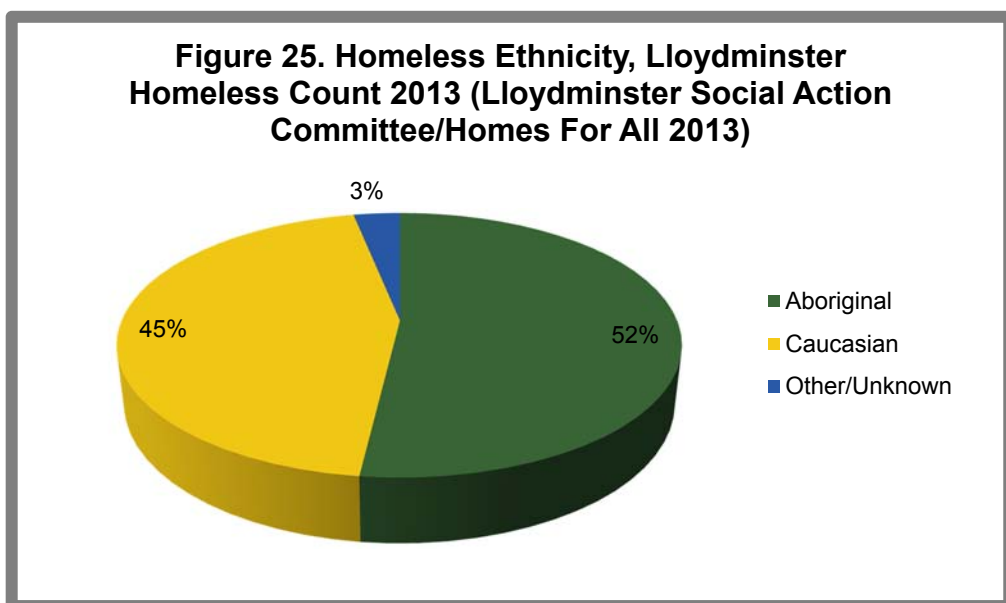
4.4.3 Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.4.3.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the West Central Region?

People were more likely to define homelessness as unsheltered, although couchsurfing and inadequate housing was noted as well.

4.4.3.2 The picture of Homelessness in the West Central Region

4.4.3.2.1 Housing

As in other regions, housing is in demand. In this region in particular, rents are high which puts pressure on families.

> *"One woman was paying up to 50% of income for rental housing."*

> *"There is a 3.5 year wait if you are a family of 3 to get into a house."*

> *"Rents are sky-high!"*

> *"With rent increases, people who had homes are now back in shelters."*

> *"Housing boom devastated people…200-300/month for rent now more like 700-800/month."*

> *"Social Housing is hard to come by. Rental housing is available but is incredibly expensive – landlords often ask first, last month's rent and damage – can be 3000 just to get moved in – hard for people to get that kind of cash."*

4.4.3.2.2 Mobility

Communities like Lloydminster are hubs, and also centres for job-seekers.

> *"People come from all over Canada…looking for oil and gas jobs."*

> *"Knew a guy that needed medical attention in Edmonton…used shelters all along the way…always came home to Lloyd, but sometimes took him 6 months…People "shelter jump" from community to community."*

How did communities define homelessness? *"*

"Someone without a roof over their head"

"Someone of no fixed address"

Lived Experience in North Battleford

Male, 40's or 50's

Lives in a rough neighbourhood. Lives with two ex-wives, and their two ex-husbands. He'd like to live somewhere safer, but he is an alcoholic and that gets in the way of getting a better place. Goes to the Friendship Centre. Library opens at 10:30, he likes to go there too.

Lived Experience in Lloydminster

Male, 40's

"Just in town this week. Was in Cold Lake AB before. He is a bricklayer and was all over Alberta with that work. He is staying the men's shelter waiting for a way to get to Edmonton. Tough because you have to be sober. You have to leave in the morning – he goes here to the FC, also the library, also the midget hockey game. You have to catch a ride to the reserve (Onion Lake) to go to a sweat or traditional healing".

4.4.3.2.3 Jurisdictional Issues

Like Creighton and Flin Flon on the opposite side of the province, Lloydminster is a "border city," with people potentially accessing services on both sides of the border.

Lloyd falls into the cracks for HPS – too big for rural and remote, and when split SK and AB, too little.

4.4.3.2.4 Hopes for the Future

The Lloydminster Social Action Coalition Societies 2012 homeless count report noted the following hopes (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013):

"A wet shelter, for those who cannot pass the sobriety standards of the two local shelters."

"Additional shelter space, namely for women and families (people were very concerned that present arrangements force families to be split up)."

"Transitional housing for men, apart from the men's shelter (working men do not needs to be in the Shelter, and indeed…the shelter is sometimes less than conducive to their work and schedules)."

Lloydminster train tracks, some people will sleep in and around them

A transitional house for men may be on the way through the recent acquisition by the Society of Gibney House (see Section 4.4.1).

Other hopes include:

"Housing inventory like Banff and Kenmore – pinpointed what their shortage was and then ask major players – what can we do about this? Major players coming together – province, feds, city, landlords, non profits, builders, major employers – all together."

Lloydminster Library, a place to warm up in the winter

"In the city…Infill and mixed use plans, higher density, advocating for granny suites, garage suites to help with housing…Why are businesses only one story? Used to be, you'd have two stories with housing on top. Need to think outside the box."

4.5 South East Region

The South East study region is defined by the boundaries of three Health Regions: Regina Qu'Appelle, Sunrise, and Sun Country (Figure 26).

All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

This region covers a broad area in the south east part of Saskatchewan. Sunrise Health Region has a fairly high percentage of people living in subsidized housing (31.4%, fourth highest in the province) (see Figure 6, Section 4.1). All three regions are mid-range (see Figure 8, Section 4.2.1) when it comes to numbers of people living with relatives and non-relatives. In the province, the Sun Country Health Region has the lowest percentage of people who pay more than 30% of their income for shelter (13.2%). Predictably, some of the highest average monthly rents are in Regina Qu'Appelle ($903). Sunrise Health Region contrasts this with $650 (see Figure 20, Section 4.4).

Places like Fort Qu'Appelle and Yorkton are hubs. Services may be drawn to the major centre of Regina.

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 357,410 (Regina Qu'Appelle 249, 960; Sun Country 54,095; Sunrise 53,355)

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 38,100 (10.7%) (Regina Qu'Appelle 12.3%; Sun Country 5.0%; Sunrise 8.9%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Regina Qu'Appelle and Sun Country: Cree; Sunrise: Ojibway

Average Rent: Between $650 and $903.

Treaty Areas: 2,4

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Regina Qu'Appelle: Assiniboine; Cowessess; Day Star; Gordon; Hay; Kawacatoose; Kahkewistahaw; Kinookimaw; Little Black Bear; Muscowpetung; Muskowekwan; Ochapowace; Pasqua; Peepeekisis; Piapot; Poor Man; Sakimay; Standing Buffalo; Starblanket; Wa-Pii Moos-Toosis.

Sun Country: Ocean Man; Pheasant Rump; White Bear

Sunrise: Cote; Keeseekoose; Key; Little Bone; Minoahchak, Shesheep.

Métis Region(s):

Eastern Region II, IIa, III

Western Region IIa, III

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

"Barely anything here, they say we can go to Regina for services."

"Qu'Appelle is a hub, far enough from Regina to be central."

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – South East, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

South East

Kilometers

80 40 0 80
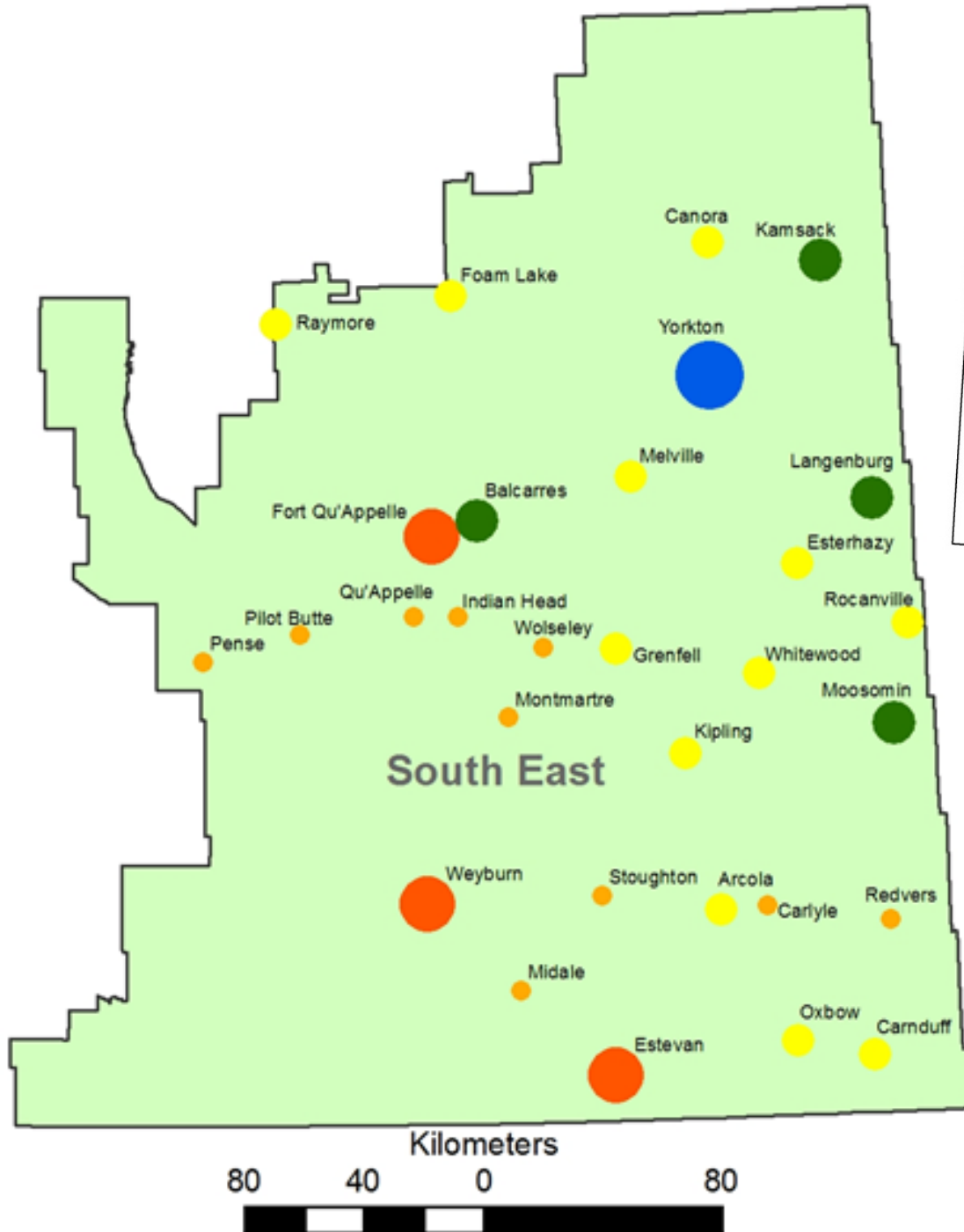
Figure 25. Chart of Homeless Ethnicity, Lloydminster Homeless Count 2013 (Lloydminster Social Action Committee/Homes For All 2013)

Date: March 27, 2015

Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

4.5.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the South East Region?

As in other communities, there are interagency committees that bring service providers together.

> *"Networking – our CEO is on an interagency committee, they meet quarterly. Linkage with local Health Region."*

In Fort Qu'Appelle, the Friendship Centre and the Community Outreach Management Centre often partner together. Parkland College will often help out its students wherever they can.

In Yorkton, a variety of organizations such as the Friendship Centre, the Health Region, Kids First, 601 Aids outreach, and the Prairie Harvest Employment Centre. Several local businesses also make donations; for example, a local potato farm donated 1,500 pounds of potatoes to the Friendship Centre.

Currently, a group of CBO's in Yorkton are working on developing a shelter for youth 15-29.

> *"Within Yorkton, they have the resources, and the will power to make a difference."*

4.5.1.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters "provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences" (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

Figure 27. Emergency Shelters in the South East Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Warm Welcome - St. Paul's United Church/Salvation Army Estevan	Estevan	Cold weather shelter running November 2014 to March 2015.
Qu'Appelle Haven Safe Shelter	Fort Qu'Appelle	Emergency shelter for women and children leaving abusive situations. 8 spaces.
Yorkton Tribal Council Safe Shelter	Yorkton	Emergency shelter for women and children leaving abusive situations. 8 spaces.

Figure 27. Emergency Shelters in the South East Region.

4.5.1.2 Transitional Housing

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

"…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."

Figure 28. Transitional Housing in the South East Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Shelwin House	Yorkton	Transitional housing for women fleeing domestic violence. Can accommodate 15 people.
Yorkton Transitional Homes for Youth Inc.	Yorkton	Transitional housing for youth 16-18. 10 spaces, five male and five female.
Community Support Program - Weyburn - Sun Country Regional Health Authority	Estevan	Transitional housing for people recovering leaving inpatient treatment for addictions.

Figure 28. Transitional Housing in the South East Region

4.5.1.3 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that:

"typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."

Supportive housing for people with disabilities exists in places such as Estevan, Ituna, Kipling, Moosomin, Melville, and Weyburn.

4.5.1.4 Aboriginal Organizations

4.5.1.4.1 Friendship Centres

There are Friendship Centres in Yorkton, Fort Qu'Appelle, and Carlyle.

4.5.1.4.2 Aboriginal Housing Authorities

Silver Sage Housing, based in Regina, is an Aboriginal housing authority with housing in Regina and the surrounding region.

"All our staff are mostly First Nations. We accept applications from anyone, even people who are not from our 15 owner nations. Our clients almost exclusively First Nations…word of mouth…people automatically come here because we are First Nations run. Being First Nation can be tough on service providers – people say "you are First Nation too, how can you kick me out." But generally people do appreciate First Nations staff."

All Nations Healing Hospital

Yorkton Parkland Housing is an Aboriginal Housing Authority that administers 131 housing units in the Yorkton Parkland Region. Yorkton Parkland Housing membership consists of six member bands in the Yorkton Tribal Council.

4.5.1.4.3 Traditional Aboriginal Healing

White Raven Healing Centre is located in All Nations Healing Hospital in Fort Qu'Appelle.

Leading Thunderbird Lodge Youth Treatment Centre, near Fort Qu'Appelle, provides culturally based inpatient youth drug and alcohol recovery.

Lived Experience in Fort Qu'Appelle

Male, youth

Trying to stay in school, finish grade 10 at Parkland. Can't find a place to stay or rent for that matter. Tried to share a place with friends, but can't get accepted to rent from Saskatchewan Housing because families are the priority.

Saulteaux Healing & Wellness Centre Inc. in Kamsack provides culturally based healing and wellness.

Fox Valley Counselling Services in Edenwold (Muscowpetung First Nation) provides culturally-based family healing.

The Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours (SIGN) provides family violence programming and cultural programming including sage, sweet grass, awareness and healing circles.

4.5.1.5 Other Supports for Homelessness

Salvation Army's exist in Weyburn, Yorkton, and Estevan.

AIDS Saskatoon has a Yorkton satellite centre providing HIV/AIDs education and outreach.

Food Banks are located in Carlyle, Kipling, Moosomin, and Melville.

File Hills First Nations Police Service provides Aboriginal policing services to Little Black Bear, Okanese, Peepeekisis, Star Blanket and Carry the Kettle First Nations communities.

4.5.2 Building off the Local Numbers

The Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre (2006) commissioned a study into homeless Aboriginal youth. A variety of service providers in the region were interviewed for this study. Within those interviewed, estimates of homeless youth ranged from 25-100. *"Participants generally noted that many of the homeless youth were experiencing hidden homelessness and moving from one relative/friends house to the other, often to find themselves in equally compromising situations, although knowledge of episodes of absolute homelessness were reported during interviews"* (Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre 2006).

Yorkton Friendship Centre

Many of the homeless youth

were noted as being mostly young adult males.

> *"Qu'Appelle Haven provides services to female victims of violence and their children. Officials noted that they received several phone calls a year from young men that are victims of violence seeking shelter or for other reasons, but that the Qu'Appelle Haven must turn them away. Males over the age of 15 are not allowed to stay in the shelter"* (Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre 2006).

> *"Interview participants from the Aboriginal Community knew of many youth, primarily Aboriginal males, both under and over the age of 18, unable to stay with family because of an unstable home environment or overcrowding. Without exception, interview participants had either taken in their children's homeless friends, or had family/friends that had taken in youth unable to return to the home environment. Knowledge of several youth changing dwellings on a regular basis was consistent throughout the interviews"* (Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre 2006).

The results of this study were recommendations to examine the feasibility of constructing a facility for Aboriginal male youth, developing further partnerships with the study participants to look at developing a local Food Bank, and look into pre-employment programs for youth (Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre 2006).

4.5.3   Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.5.3.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the South East Region?

People that we spoke to were more likely to define homelessness in terms of couchsurfing, and some unsheltered populations as well.

> **How did communities define homelessness?**
>
> *"Yes there is homelessness, but no one is on the street".*

4.5.3.2 The picture of Homelessness in the South East Region

4.5.3.2.1 Housing

As in other regions, housing is in demand. In this region in particular, rents are high which puts pressure on families.

> *"People can't afford to pay first month's rent and then damage deposit on top of that."*

> *"As service providers we also take people in."*

It was noted, as in other regions, that single people are at a disadvantage.

> *"In housing, families are priority. Nothing available for single people."*

> **Lived Experience in Fort Qu'Appelle**
>
> *Elder – Fort Qu'Appelle*
>
> *Currently has 8 people living with her. Lives in a 2 bedroom house, also a foster parent. Grew up with mom helping people in the same way. Would feel lonely if they all left. Many Elders take in family members.*

4.5.3.2.2 Mobility

Qu'Appelle in particular was noted as a hub, with people coming to the region from all over.

> *"People come and go from all over…around the Qu'Appelle Valley, surrounding Reserves."*

People in the region also move in an attempt to get a better housing situation.

> *"Housing is tough On-Reserve….overcrowding…there is a linkage between Reserve housing and Off-Reserve – shortage of one can cause people to try and move. People go back and forth to Regina, stay with relatives and friends."*

4.5.3.2.3 Hopes for the Future

As noted above, a shelter or housing for youth (particularly young males) and single people has been seen as beneficial.

4.6 South West Region

The South West study region is defined by the boundaries of three Health Regions: Heartland, Cypress, and Five Hills (Figure 29).

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 129,695

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 4,520 (3.5%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Cree

Treaty Areas:

   4 (Cypress, Five Hills)

   6 (Heartland)

Average Rent: Between $610 and $696.

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

   Nekaneet First Nation

   Wood Mountain First Nation

Métis Region(s):

   Western Region IIa

   Western Region III

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

Within the total population of the region, 24.9% of tenant households are living in subsidized housing – about mid-range for the province overall (see Figure 6, Section 4.1). The average monthly shelter costs for rented dwellings is between $610 and $696. The percentage of occupied dwellings in need of major repair is 11.1% - towards the lower end when compared to the rest of the province. Renters (as opposed to home owners) make up 21.2% of housing tenure.

4.6.1 Who is Helping with Homelessness in the South West?

The community visit to Swift Current and phone interview in Maple Creek revealed there are several established organizations serving the region that can help with homelessness, largely located in major centres such as Swift Current, Maple Creek, and Moose Jaw.

In Swift Current, these include agencies like the Swift Current Friendship Centre, an Aboriginal organization run by volunteers. Agencies such as the Friendship Centre, the Salvation Army, the Swift Current Youth Homelessness initiative, and the Swift Current Welcome Centre refer clients to each other regularly and are all aware of each other's activities. As of yet, there are no formal structures to bring organizations together.

At the meeting, discussions around the table centreed on creating a central, welcoming place for Aboriginal people where a number of services could be located.

"People will come when you can offer coffee, hot chocolate and conversation. Some people just need a place to sit and be with people, and play some cards."

"Ideally, it is good to have everything in the same location or building because you can easily walk someone down the hallway to where they can get help rather than referring the person to a different location."

Silver Sage Housing Units in Swift Current

Swift Current Friendship Centre

Bridge in Swift Current, a known place to sleep

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – South West, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- 🟠 1
- 🟡 2 - 3
- 🟢 4 - 6
- 🔴 7 - 12
- 🔵 13 - 21

KEY PLAN

North

North West | North East

East Central

West Central

South West | South East

South West

Unity
Wilkie
Macklin
Biggar
Kerrobert
Rosetown
Kindersley
Outlook
Davidson
Leader
Moose Jaw
Swift Current
Gull Lake
Maple Creek
Gravelbourg
Pontiex
Shaunavon
Limerick

Kilometers

80   40   0   80
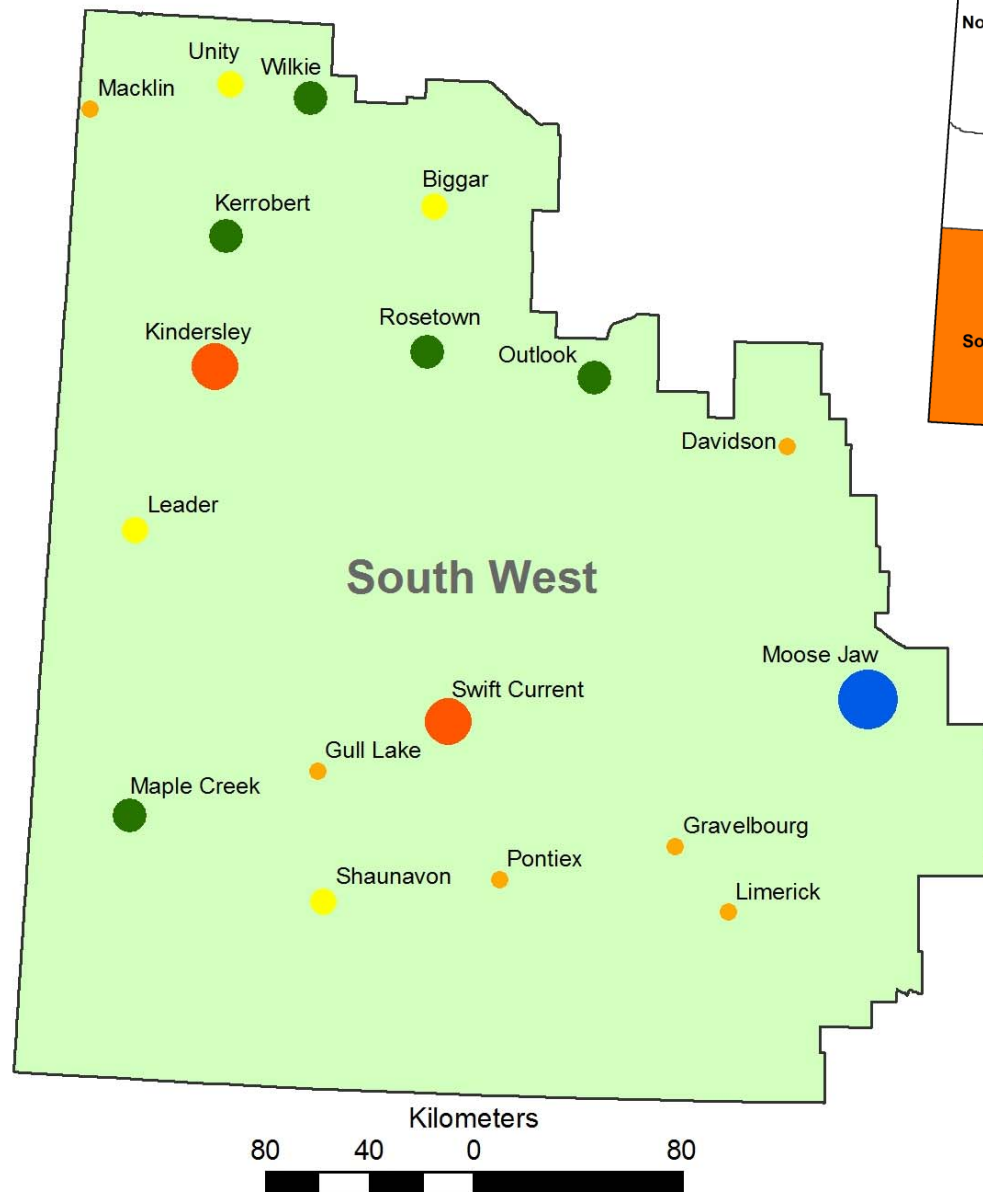
Figure 29. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing
Services for Homelessness – South West, SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

Prairie Wild
CONSULTING
Preparing Communities for the Future

4.6.2 What Services Are Available?

4.6.2.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters *"provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences"* (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

Three agencies were found that provide emergency shelters in the South West region. In addition, the Swift Current Youth Homelessness initiative is currently trying to develop a youth shelter in that city.

Figure 30. Emergency Shelters in the South West Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Riverside Mission	Moose Jaw	Men's shelter. 9 beds.
Southwest Crisis Services - Safe Shelter	Swift Current	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence.
Moose Jaw Women's Transition House	Moose Jaw	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. Can accommodate 6 families.

Figure 30. Emergency Shelters in the South West Region

4.6.2.2 Transitional Housing

"In 3 months you can get them into a training program but the transition period now is not enough. All the organizations have same problem and are working together to get emergency/short term housing."

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

"…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."

There are three agencies providing transitional housing in the South West region.

Figure 31. Transitional Housing in the South West Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Southwest Crisis Services - Genesis House	Swift Current	Longer term women's housing (usually six months) for domestic violence.
Moose Jaw Women's Transition House	Moose Jaw	Emergency women's shelter for domestic violence. Can accommodate 6 families.
Hope Inn – Salvation Army	Moose Jaw	Transitional housing for ages 16-24 while undergoing addictions treatment.

Figure 31. Transitional Housing in the South West Region

4.6.2.3 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that

"typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."

There are a number of agencies who provide supportive housing for people with intellectual, physical, and developmental disabilities and/or mental illness. Additionally, Fresh Start in Swift Current has four long-term spaces for youth 15-17.

4.6.2.4 Detox Facilities

Figure 32. Detox Facilities in the South West Region

Agency Name	Location	Description
Wakamow Manor (Thunder Creek Rehabilitation Association)	Moose Jaw	20 bed detox facility where people can stay for up to 14 days.
Angus Campbell Centre	Moose Jaw	20 bed detox facility where people can stay for programs ranging for 7 to 42 days.

Figure 32. Detox Facilities in the South West Region

4.6.2.5 Aboriginal Organizations

"Aboriginal people need their own place that is culturally appropriate…Their needs are more sacred to them, a place where they feel safe, a place where they can teach & practice their traditions, and not step on other people's toes."

4.6.2.5.1 Friendship Centres

The Swift Current Friendship Centre is a volunteer-run Aboriginal organization. Though they provide a place in the community to meet and get assistance with such things as training and education, capacity is limited.

4.6.2.5.2 Aboriginal Housing Authorities

Silver Sage Housing (see also Section 4.5.1.4.2) has affordable rental units in Swift Current. These are located right across from the Salvation Army, which is helpful in providing supports to the people living there. At the time of this study, no Aboriginal families were living there and newcomer families had been found to fill up the space.

4.6.2.6 Other Supports for Homelessness

Snapshot of Supports: Swift Current Salvation Army

(From the project notes for the community visit to Swift Current)

It was end of the day on Christmas Hamper pick-up day. The whole gym had been filled with hampers, with toys lining all the edges of the walls. It was a busy day. The chapel had to be used to display tuques, mitts, and other clothing – even brand new stuff donated by WalMart.

The people who participate in the meal program also help cook: "It gets people involved and makes them feel like they belong – not just a gray line shuffling by getting soup – lots of talking, laughing".

"Here in the kitchen – as you are working – is when you get to talk to people. That's when you find out what they need – counselling, mental health, whatever".

The Salvation Army has locations in Moose Jaw, Maple Creek, Swift Current, and Assiniboia. They provide a range of supports outside (and in some cases, in addition to) shelter services, including referrals, family advocacy programs, victim services, food, clothing, community kitchens, and many others. In Swift Current, the Salvation Army maintains ties with the Friendship Centre in recognition of the need for Aboriginal service providers for Aboriginal communities.

There are numerous organizations that distribute food or hold meal programs, both in larger communities and in slightly smaller centres such as Unity, Biggar, and Kerrobert.

4.6.3 Building off the Local Numbers

There are two domestic violence shelters and one men's shelter in the region (see Figure 30, above) which may have some data on the populations they serve. There were no other potential sources of data were discovered to enumerate unsheltered and emergency sheltered populations in the region. As in other regions, understanding the numbers of hidden homeless is difficult. Statistics and population data, as well, may not reflect the Aboriginal population accurately for the region.

4.6.4 Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.6.4.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the South West Region?

Most people defined homelessness as either people living on the street, or couchsurfing. With respect to provisionally accommodated people (including those couchsurfing), 21.1% of people in the region (who weren't part of census families) said they were living with relatives or non-relatives (Statistics Canada 2013b).

> **How did communities define homelessness?**
>
> *"No place to call home"*
>
> *"Couchsurfing or no residence is generally how we describe homelessness"*

4.6.4.2 The picture of Homelessness in the South West Region

4.6.4.2.1 Income, Employment, and Housing

Various people in communities within the region commented that entry-level jobs were available, but that rental costs were outstripping wages.

The median after-tax household income for the region is between $47,630 and $51,658. The unemployment rate is between 3.4 and 4.8 (participation rate is between 69.4 and 71.8). 17.2% of tenant households report spending 30% or more of total household income on shelter costs.

As in many regions, there is a lack of affordable and social housing in good repair.

> *"Need is higher than it's ever been in this time of growth – because the rents are going up – and way less money going into social housing."*

> *"There is some housing but the cost is too high for low income families. There is also some housing that is in horrible conditions. Slum housing with slum landlords."*

4.6.4.2.2 Mobility

People come and go from other centres as far away as Alberta. Generally, the ability to find jobs and housing is what helps people to stay and encourage family members to join them. When these are not available, people tend to move on.

> *"Usually, the Aboriginal families initially move here without relatives but later the relatives move in slowly and they eventually runs out of space/rooms. Which results in them trying to find their own place but it is difficult to find a home."*

> *"…So people that are couchsurfing go back to their home Reserve but for some reason they like it here and so they come back. But again there is not enough housing."*

4.6.4.2.3 Youth

In Swift Current, youth homelessness is a concern.

> *"..Definitely, lots of couchsurfing with the youth. Also kids living in cars, tents, baseball dugouts and under the bridge during the summer. You don't really see people living in doorways though but is certainly homelessness. They are a few that went to Tim Horton's when it was opened in Downtown for 24hrs but they were soon asked to leave."*

4.6.4.2.4 Hopes for the Future

Hopes include:

- ∞ Educational training
- ∞ Central place with resources available
- ∞ Short term housing
- ∞ Resources for single men and single fathers

4.7 North Region

Snapshot of the Region

Population of Region: 2,310*

Population that self-identifies as Aboriginal*: 2,210 (95.7%)

Most common Aboriginal Language Spoken: Dené

Treaty Areas:

6, 8, 10

First Nation Reserves (Figure 3):

Black Lake First Nation; Fond du Lac First Nation

Métis Region(s):

Northern Region I

*Based on numbers from Statistics Canada. Statistical numbers may show lower populations that actually exist. For example, many Métis people have historically been reluctant to declare their identity, including for census purposes. Also, the removal of the mandatory long form census may is likely to result in lower response rates of some sectors of the population, including Aboriginal people (AANDC 2013).

Average Rent: $734

The North study region is defined by the boundaries of the Athabasca Health Authority (Figure 35). All population statistics for this region are taken from 2011 National Household Survey (Statistics Canada 2013b), unless otherwise indicated.

The North region is home to spectacular natural landscapes including the Athabasca Sand Dunes, Lake Athabasca and the Fond Du Lac River. It is also home to northern communities unlike any other in Saskatchewan. The region has a relatively small population spread across a wide geographic area (Athabasca 2013).

The region is unique from other Saskatchewan regions in several important ways. One includes its geographical location. There is only one all season road to the region, which goes to Black Lake, and this road is sometimes impassable. This is a gravel highway. All the other communities - Stony Rapids, Fond Du Lac, Uranium City, and Camsell Portage must be accessed by barge or (in the winter) on winter roads, or by plane. This affects homelessness in two ways. The sheer logistics of getting building materials into communities means that obtaining materials to build and repair homes is extremely costly and difficult. As a result, repairs and new construction are delayed or done with whatever materials are available. Housing is then often in poor repair or overcrowded.

"For our clients, this is huge. There is no option to go somewhere else. So you take in whoever needs housing."

"Overcrowding causes issues for mental health – there can be conflicts when there are too many people in one house. People can be stressed about other people's behavior, or people don't sleep properly."
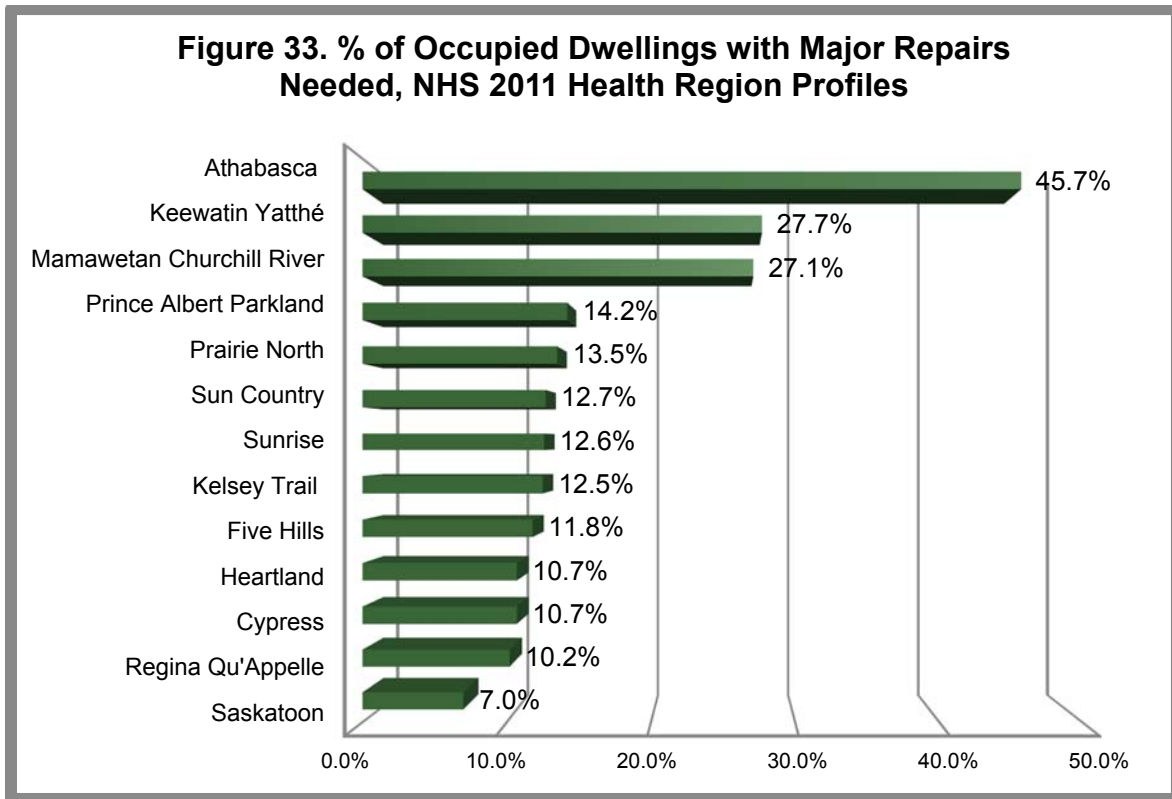
Figure 33. % of Occupied Dwellings with Major Repairs Needed, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles
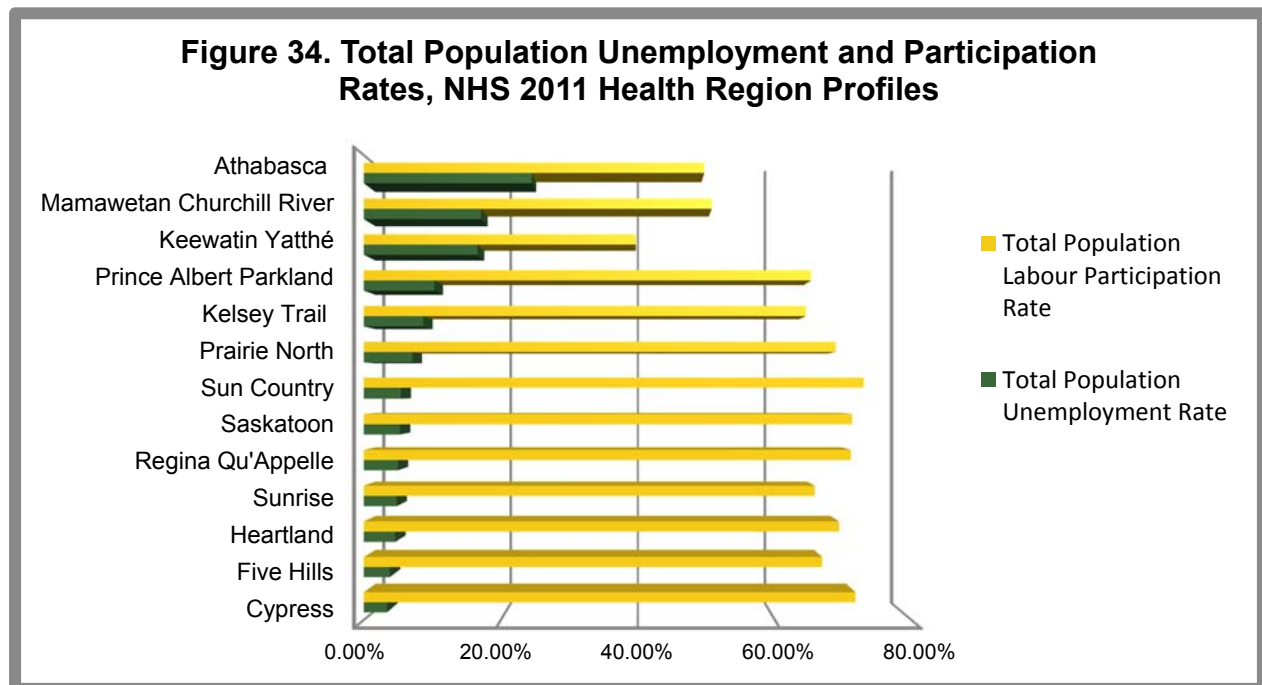
Figure 34. Total Population Unemployment and Participation Rates, NHS 2011 Health Region Profiles

These conditions are borne out in the statistics for the region. This Region has a significantly higher number of occupied dwellings in need of major repair than any other region in the province (Figure 33). The North also has the second highest percentage of people who reported, in 2011, that they were living with relatives or non-relatives (and were not part of census families (65.9%, see also Figure 8, Section 4.2.1). The North region also has the highest unemployment rate with one of the lowest participation rates in the province (see Figure 34, Section 4.7) (24.5 and 29.7, respectively).

The geographic isolation of the communities affects mobility as regards to On and Off-Reserve. In the North region, there is no real mobility between On and Off-Reserve directly in the region – Stony Rapids is Off-Reserve, but it adjacent to Black Lake First Nation and is not a destination for people to migrate to for jobs, education or services. All migration and mobility in the region is to the south of the province.

Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness – North, SK

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness

- 1
- 2 - 3

KEY PLAN

North

North West | North East

East Central

West Central

South West | South East

North

Fond du lac

Black Lake

Kilometers

80   40   0   80
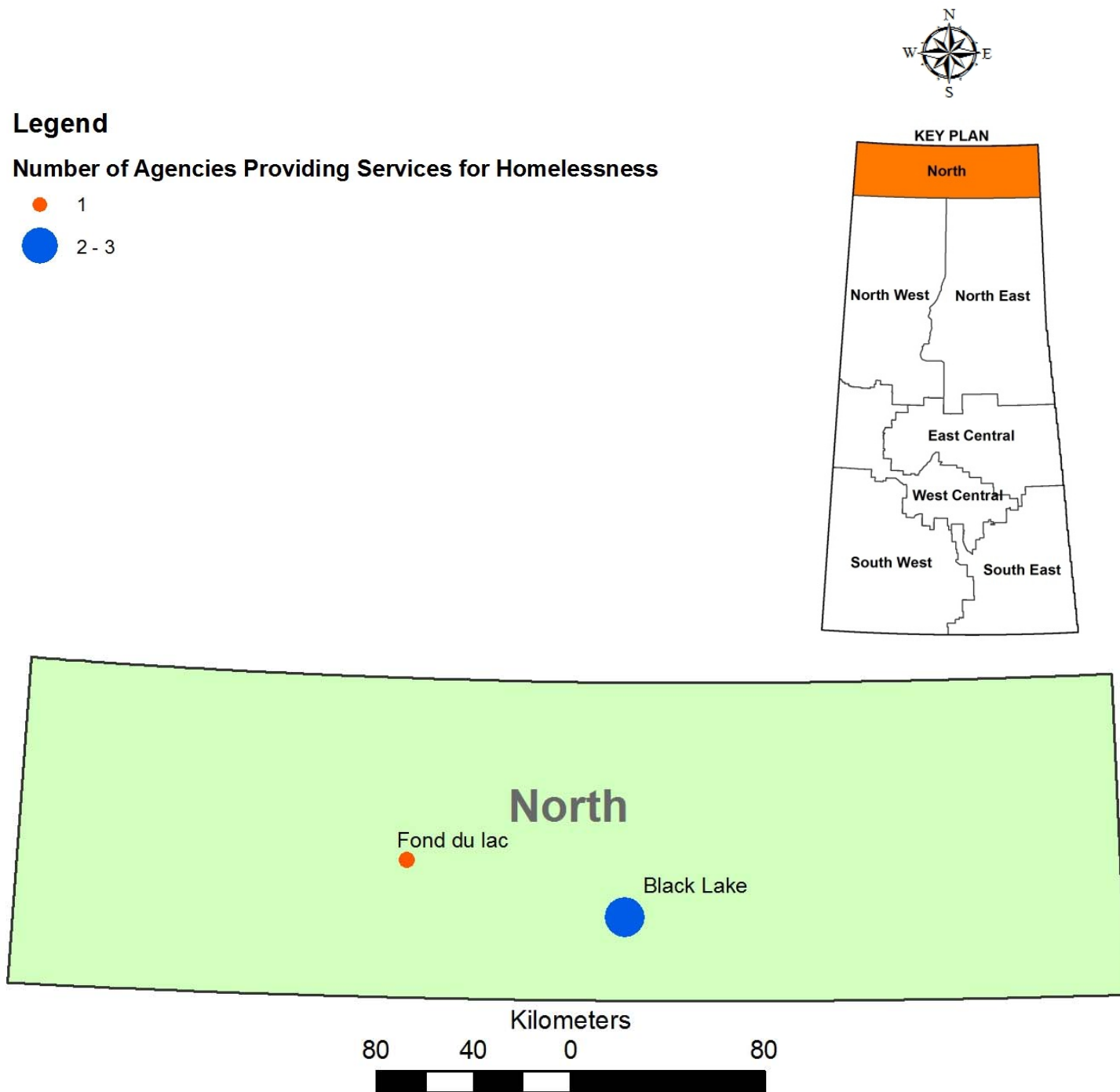
Figure 35. Map of Regional Distribution of Agencies Providing
Services for Homelessness – North, SK
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

4.7.1   Who is Helping with Homelessness in the North?

In 2013, the Athabasca Health Authority celebrated 10 years of operation (Athabasca 2013). The Health Authority provides a variety of programs to support families including Kids First North. They also offer mental health, addictions, and suicide intervention. They also have a traditional health program.

4.7.2   What Services Are Available?

4.7.2.1 Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters *"provide temporary, typically overnight, accommodation to people who would otherwise sleep on the streets. They are not intended to be regular residences"* (United Way Saskatoon 2013 pp 43).

An online scan revealed no emergency shelters in the North region.

4.7.2.2 Transitional Housing

The United Way Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013, pp 43) defines transitional housing as housing that:

> *"…typically provides temporary accommodation (up to 3 years) to individuals who wish to stabilize their housing situation while resolving other issues in their lives, such as unemployment, addictions and/or mental health, education and violence. Individuals and families living in transitional housing have access to a mix of supportive services that would enable them to move towards self-sufficiency and more independent living."*

An online scan revealed no transitional housing in the North region.

4.7.2.3 Supportive Housing

The Saskatoon Plan for Homelessness (2013) defines supportive housing as housing that

> *"Typically provides long-term accommodation with a support component to allow people to live as independently as possible. The housing providers, whether public, private or nonprofit, receive funding to provide the support services to the residents, who also often receive some direct funding. Supportive housing can be called special needs housing."*

4.7.3   Building off the Local Numbers

No data was found to enumerate homelessness.

4.7.4   Drafting the Primary Research: Community Voice

4.7.4.1 How is Homelessness Defined in the North?

> **How did communities homelessness?**
>
> *"There is no option to go somewhere else. So you take in whoever needs housing".*

As in other regions of the North, communities shelter people who might be left outside in extreme cold weather. Rather than having people unsheltered, people tend to live in overcrowded conditions instead.

5 Finishing's

This report has been a "scan" of the picture of homelessness across the province. Reflecting on that picture, we can offer the following thoughts.

5.1 Programs and Services in Saskatchewan

Figure 36 shows the provincial distribution of programs and services discovered through the online scan and community visits. Figures 37 to 43 map out the distribution of various categories of agencies or services homeless people could access. They include:

- ∞ Aboriginal Housing Authorities (Figure 37);
- ∞ Aboriginal Friendship Centres (Figure 38);
- ∞ Salvation Army Corps (Figure 39);
- ∞ Transitional Housing (Figure 40);
- ∞ Emergency Shelters (Figure 41);
- ∞ Harm Reduction (Figure 42); and
- ∞ Emergency Food Services (Figure 43).

Provincial Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness, Saskatchewan

Legend

Number of Agencies Providing Programs and Services for Homelessness

- 1 - 2
- 3 - 6
- 7 - 12
- 13 - 28
- 29 - 44

La Ronge

Saskatchewan

Lloydminister

Prince Albert

North Battleford

Yorkton

Moose Jaw

Kilometers

190   95   0   190
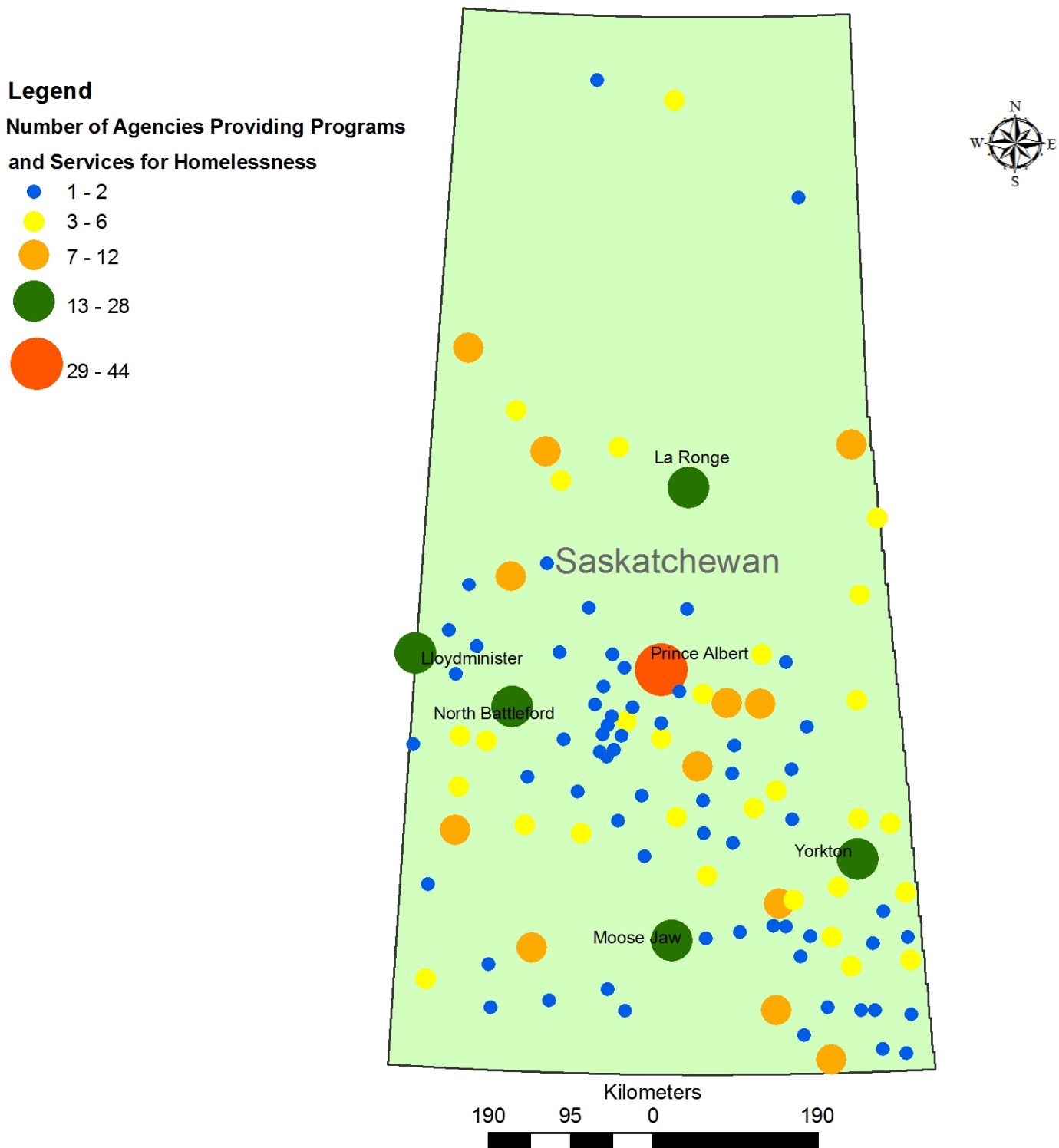
Figure 36. Map of Provincial Distribution of Agencies Providing Services for Homelessness, Saskatchewan
Date: March 27, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

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Aboriginal Housing Authorities in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan

Meadow Lake

Lloydminster

Prince Albert

North Battleford

Saskatoon

Yorkton

Regina

Kilometers

190   95   0   190
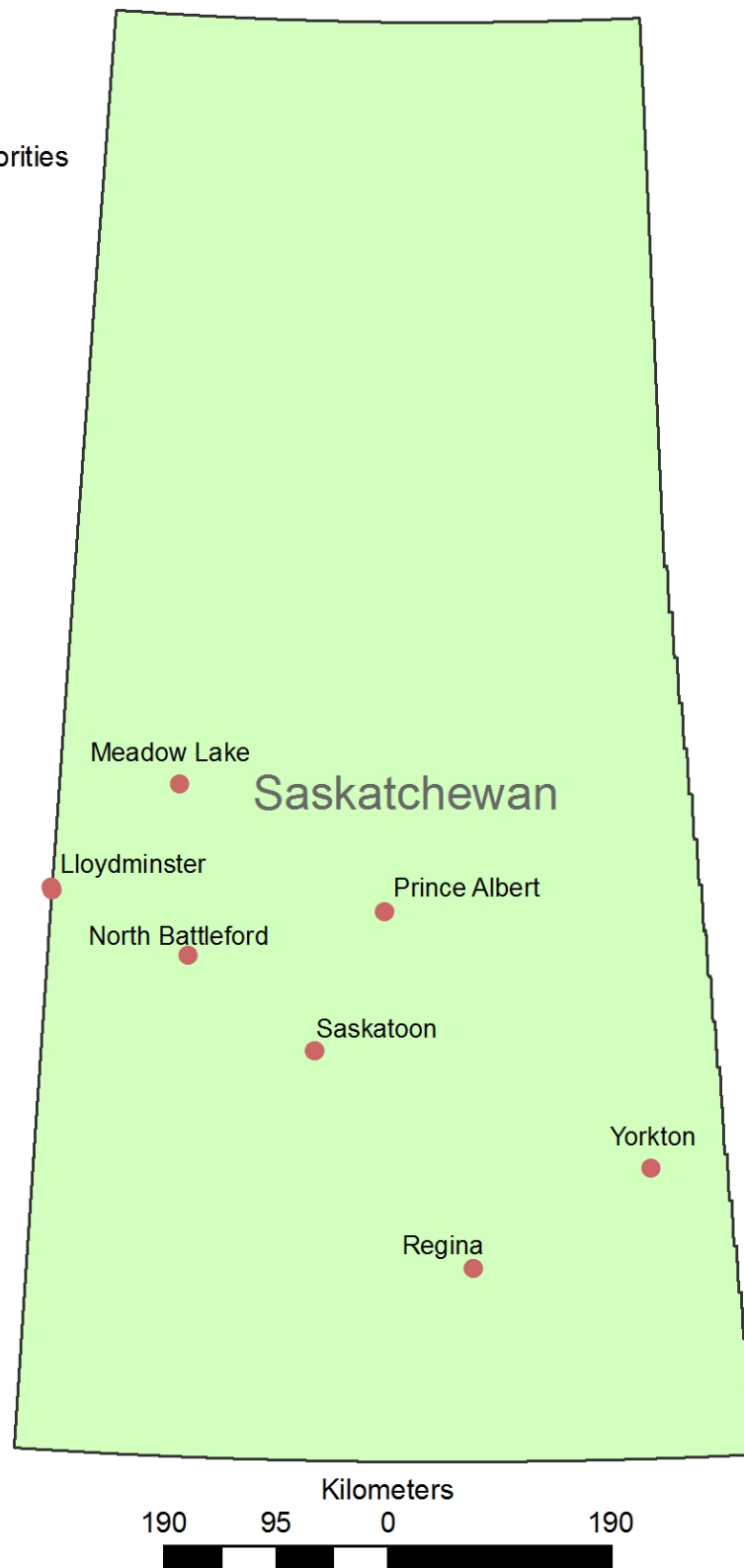
Figure 37. Map of Aboriginal Housing Authorities in Saskatchewan
Date: March 28, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

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Aboriginal Friendship Centres in Saskatchewan

La Loche

Buffalo Narrows

Île-à-la-Crosse

Beauval

La Ronge

Meadow Lake

Saskatchewan

Lloydminster

Prince Albert

North Battleford

Saskatoon

Yorkton

Fort Qu'Appelle

Regina

Swift Current

Carlyle

Kilometers

190   95   0   190
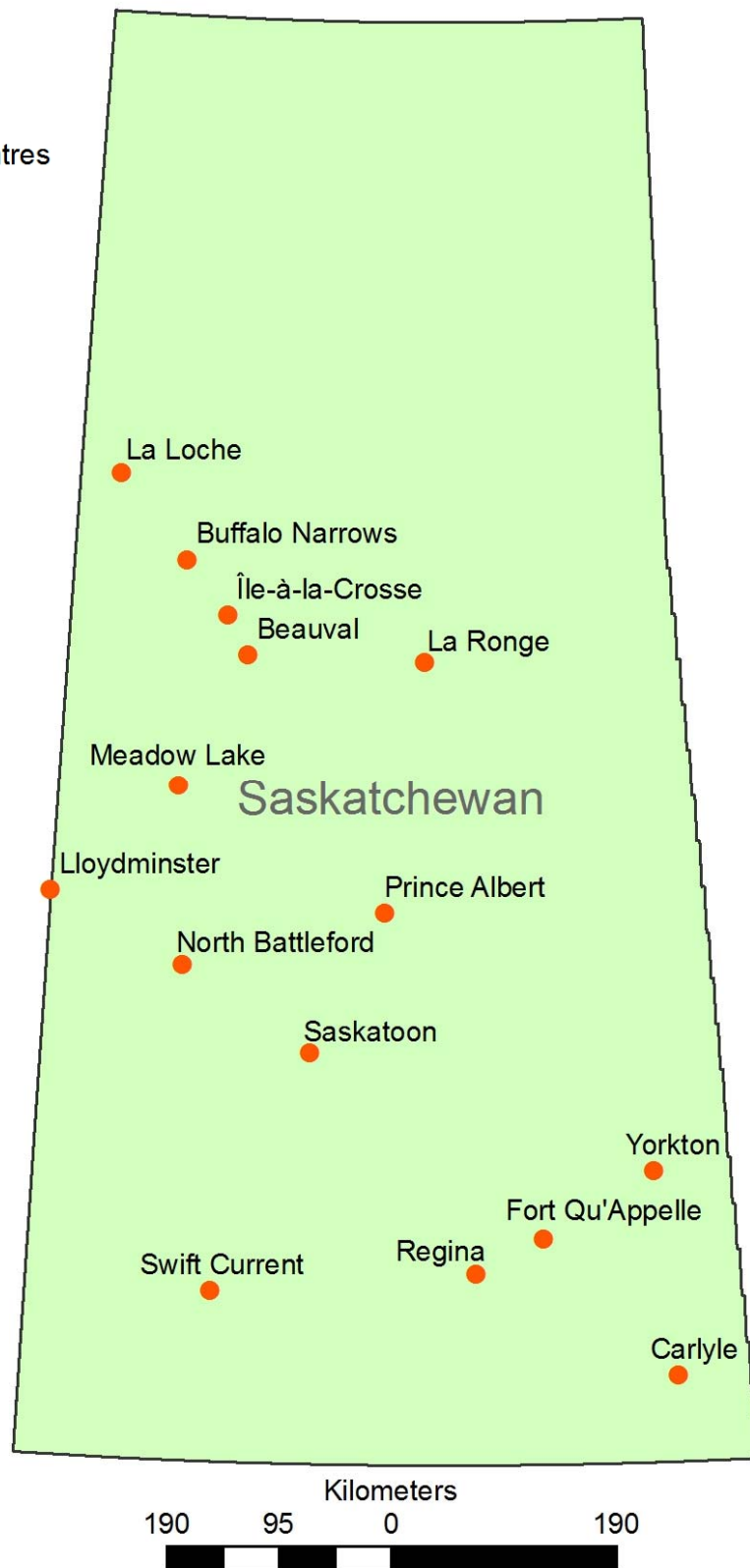
Figure 38. Map of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in Saskatchewan
Date: March 28, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

PrairieWild
CONSULTING

Preparing Communities for the Future

Salvation Army Corps in Saskatchewan

Legend
- Salvation Army Corps

Saskatchewan

Meadow Lake

Lloydminster

Prince Albert

Nipawin

Melfort   Tisdale

Saskatoon

Yorkton

Swift Current

Moose Jaw   Regina

Maple Creek

Assiniboia   Weyburn

Estevan

Kilometers

190   95   0   190
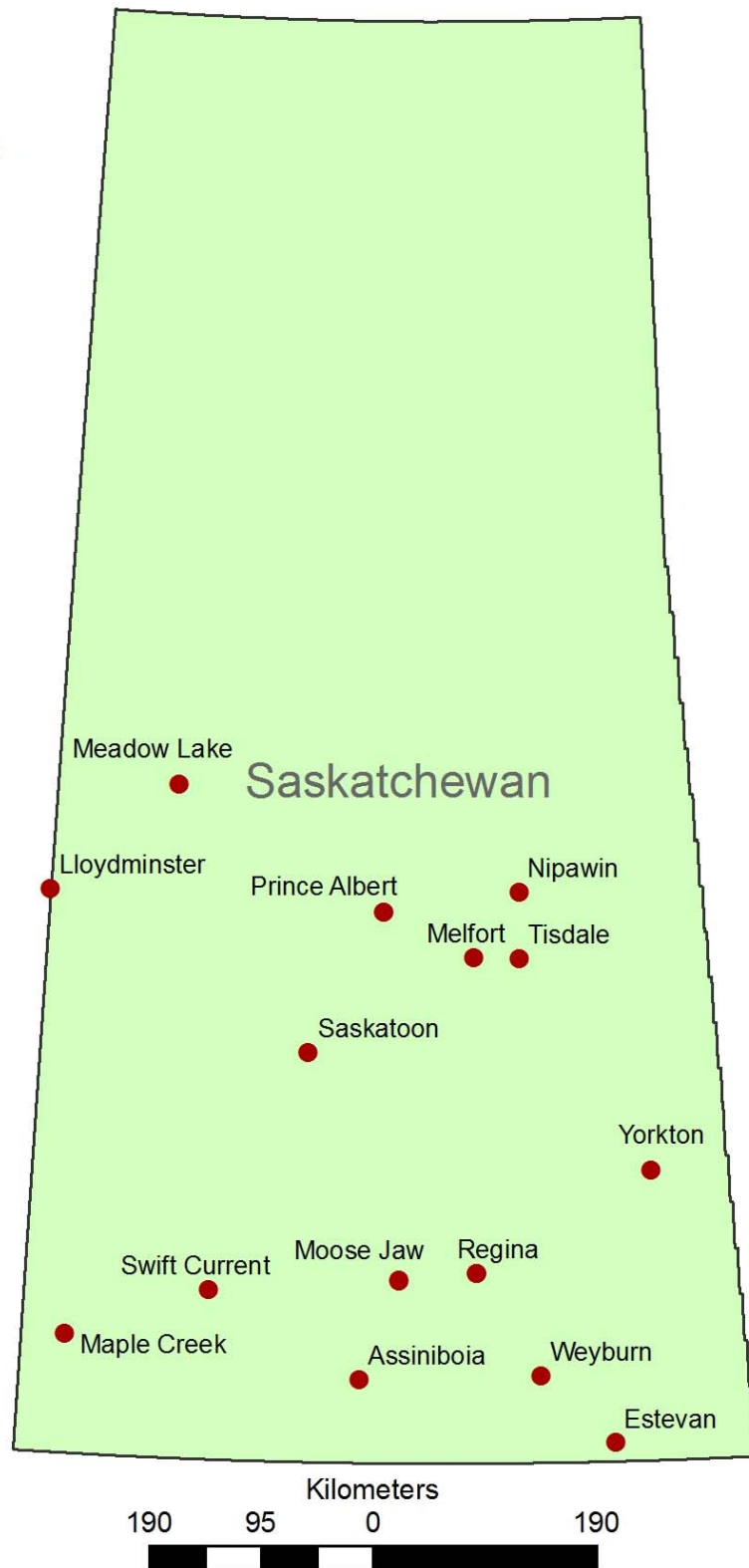
Figure 39. Map of Salvation Army Corps in Saskatchewan
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

Transitional Homes Off-Reserve and Outside Saskatoon and Regina, Saskatchewan

Legend

● Transitional Homes

Community	Number of Agencies Providing Transitional Homes
Estevan	1
La Loche	1
Lloydminster	1
Swift Current	1
Weyburn	1
Meadow Lake	1
Moose Jaw	2
North Battleford	2
Yorkton	2
Prince Albert	6

La Loche

Saskatchewan

Meadow Lake

Lloydminster

Prince Albert

North Battleford

Yorkton

Swift Current

Moose Jaw

Estevan

Kilometers

190   95   0   190

Figure 40. Map of Transitional Homes Off-Reserve and Outside Saskatoon and Regina, Saskatchewan
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services

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Emergency Shelters in Saskatchewan
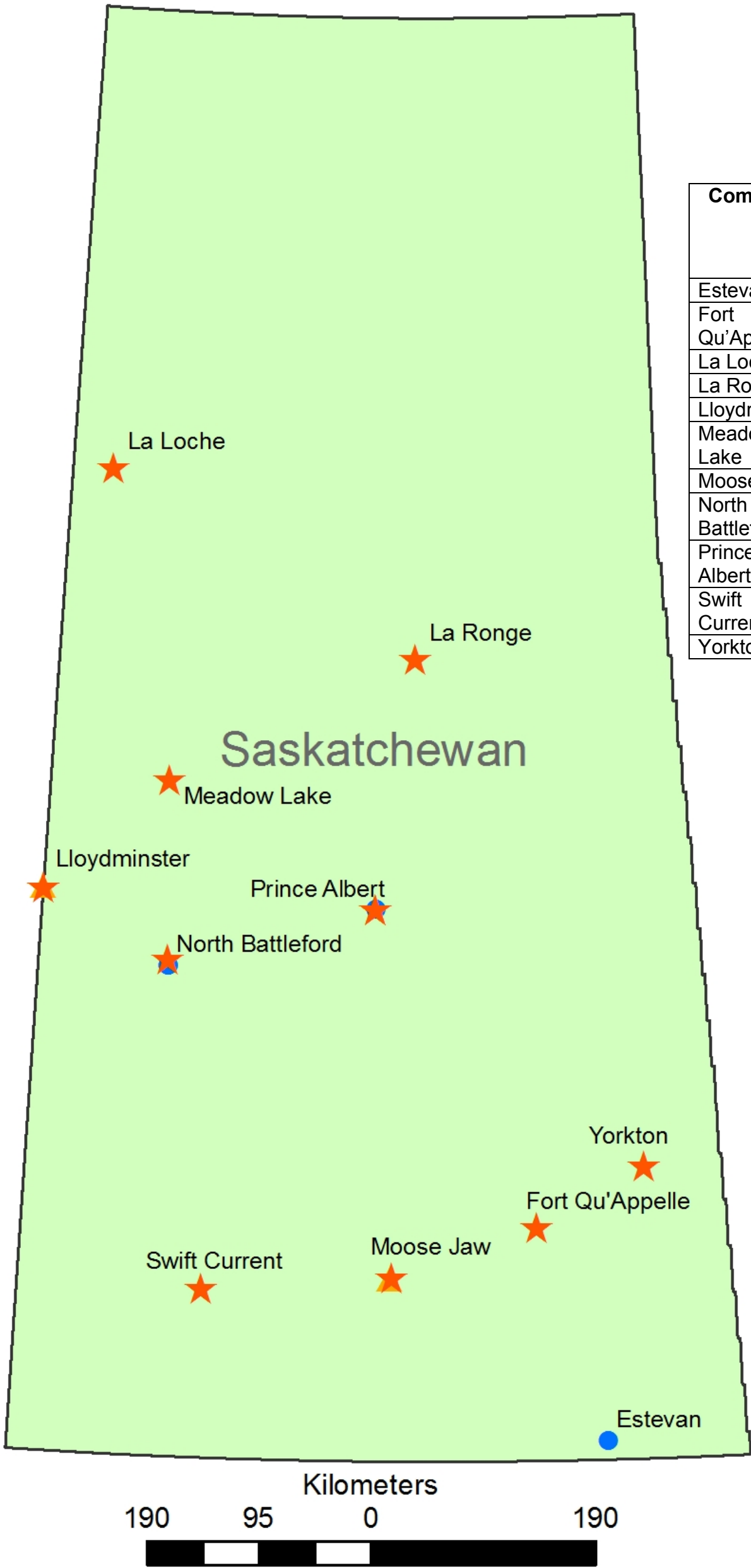
Community	Number of Agencies Providing Emergency Shelter			
	Cold Weather	Men	Under 18	Women
Estevan	1	-	-	-
Fort Qu'Appelle	-	-	-	1
La Loche	-	-	-	1
La Ronge	-	-	-	1
Lloydminster	-	1	-	1
Meadow Lake	-	-	-	1
Moose Jaw	-	1	-	1
North Battleford	2	-	-	1
Prince Albert	1	-	2	2
Swift Current	-	-	-	1
Yorkton	-	-	-	1

Legend

Emergency Shelters

- ● Cold Weather Shelter*
- ▲ Men's Shelter**
- ⬠ Under 18 Shelter***
- ★ Women's Shelter (fleeing from violence)****

La Loche

La Ronge

Saskatchewan

Meadow Lake

Lloydminster

Prince Albert

North Battleford

Yorkton

Fort Qu'Appelle

Moose Jaw

Swift Current

Estevan

Kilometers

190   95   0   190

Figure 41. Map of Emergency Shelters in Saskatchewan
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services
Definitions: *Cold Weather Shelters refer to shelter that operate during the coldest months of the year.
                    **Men's Shelters refer to shelters that only accept male clients.
                    ***Under 18 Shelters refer to shelters that only accept clients who are under the age of 18 years old.
                    ****Women's Shelters refer to shelter that only accept female clients. This includes shelter for women and children fleeing from family violence

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Harm Reduction Services in Saskatchewan
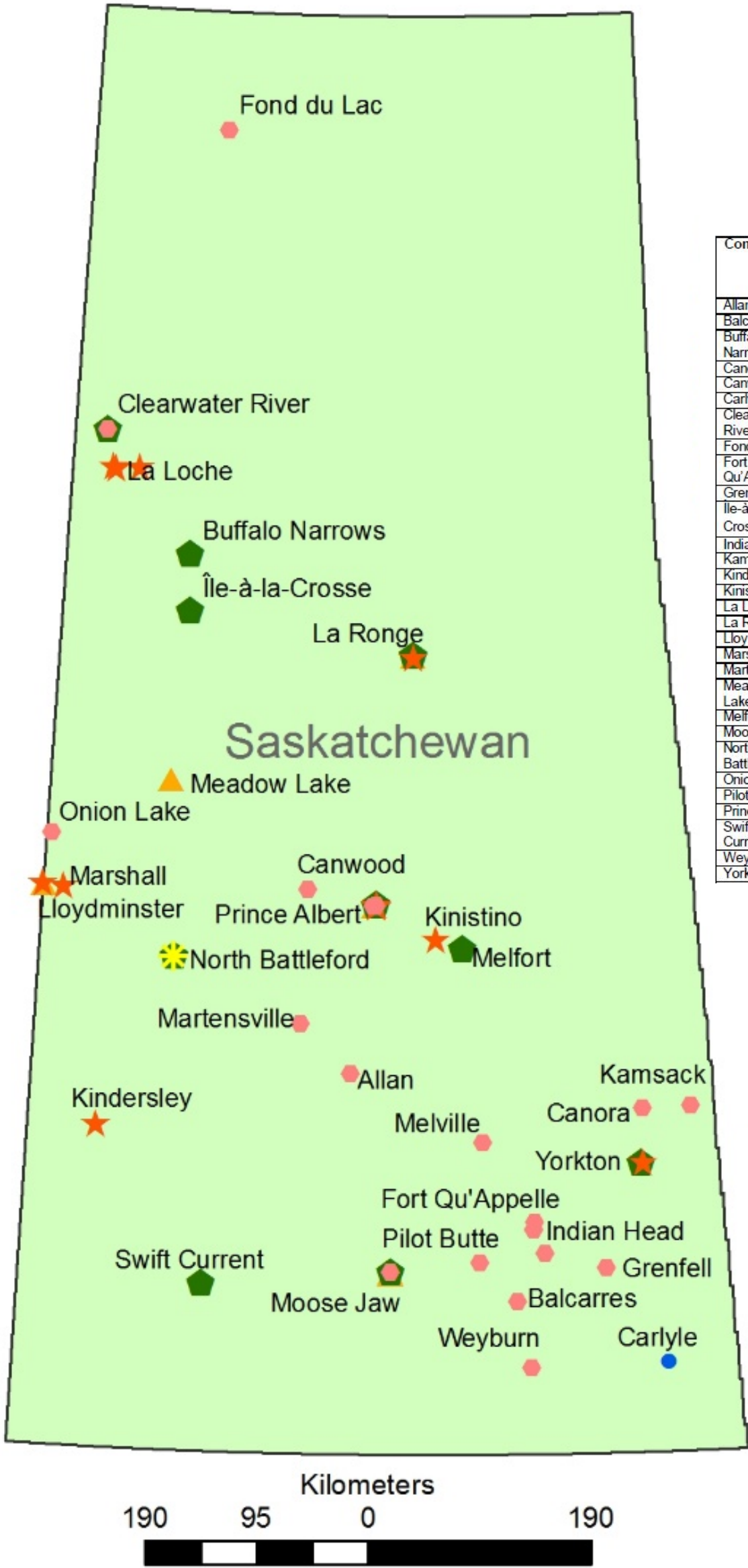
Community	Number of Agencies Providing Harm Reduction Services					
	Crisis Line	Detoxification	Multiple Services	Outreach	Sexual Health Clinic	Substance Abuse Program
Allan	-	-	-	-	-	1
Balcarres	-	-	-	-	-	1
Buffalo Narrows	-	-	1	-	-	-
Canora	-	-	-	-	-	1
Canwood	-	-	-	-	-	1
Carlyle	1	-	-	-	-	
Clearwater River	-	-	1	-	-	1
Fond du Lac	-	-	-	-	-	1
Fort Qu'Appelle	-	-	-	-	-	3
Grenfell	-	-	-	-	-	1
Île-à-la-Crosse	-	-	1	-	-	-
Indian Head	-	-	-	-	-	1
Kamsack	-	-	-	-	-	1
Kindersley	-	-	-	1	-	-
Kinistino	-	-	-	1	-	-
La Loche	-	-	-	3	-	-
La Ronge	-	-	2	1	-	-
Lloydminster	-	1	-	1	-	-
Marshall	-	-	-	1	-	-
Martensville	-	-	-	-	-	1
Meadow Lake	-	1	-	-	-	-
Melfort	-	-	1	-	-	-
Moose Jaw	-	2	1	-	-	1
North Battleford	1	-	2	-	1	-
Onion Lake	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pilot Butte	-	-	-	-	-	1
Prince Albert	1	1	2	5	-	4
Swift Current	-	-	1	-	-	-
Weyburn	1	-	-	-	-	1
Yorkton	1	-	1	1	-	-

Legend

- ● Crisis Line (Hotline)*
- ▲ Detoxification (Emergency)**
- ⬟ Multiple Services***
- ★ Outreach****
- ✳ Sexual Health Clinic*****
- ⬡ Substance Abuse Program******

Figure 42. Map of Harm Reduction Services
Date: March 30, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services
Definitions: *Crisis Line (Hotline): A phone number people can call to get immediate emergency over-the-phone counseling.
**Detoxification: consisting of both social detox and brief detox. Social detox is over 24 hours rehabilitation and recovery programs. Brief detox is 24 hours or less of emergency shelter to rest and recover from alcohol or drug abuse.
*** Multiple Services: organizations or communities that offer two or more services.
****Outreach: community services that come to you.
*****Sexual Health Clinic: A health clinic specializing in the treatment and prevention of sexually transmitted infections.
******Substance Abuse Program – An organized program that focuses on treating substance abuse disorders. This includes alcohol, prescription medication and illegal drugs.

Emergency Food Services in Saskatchewan

Legend

- 🔵 Food Bank*
- 🔺 Good Food Box**
- 🟢 Meal Program***
- ⭐ Multiple Services****
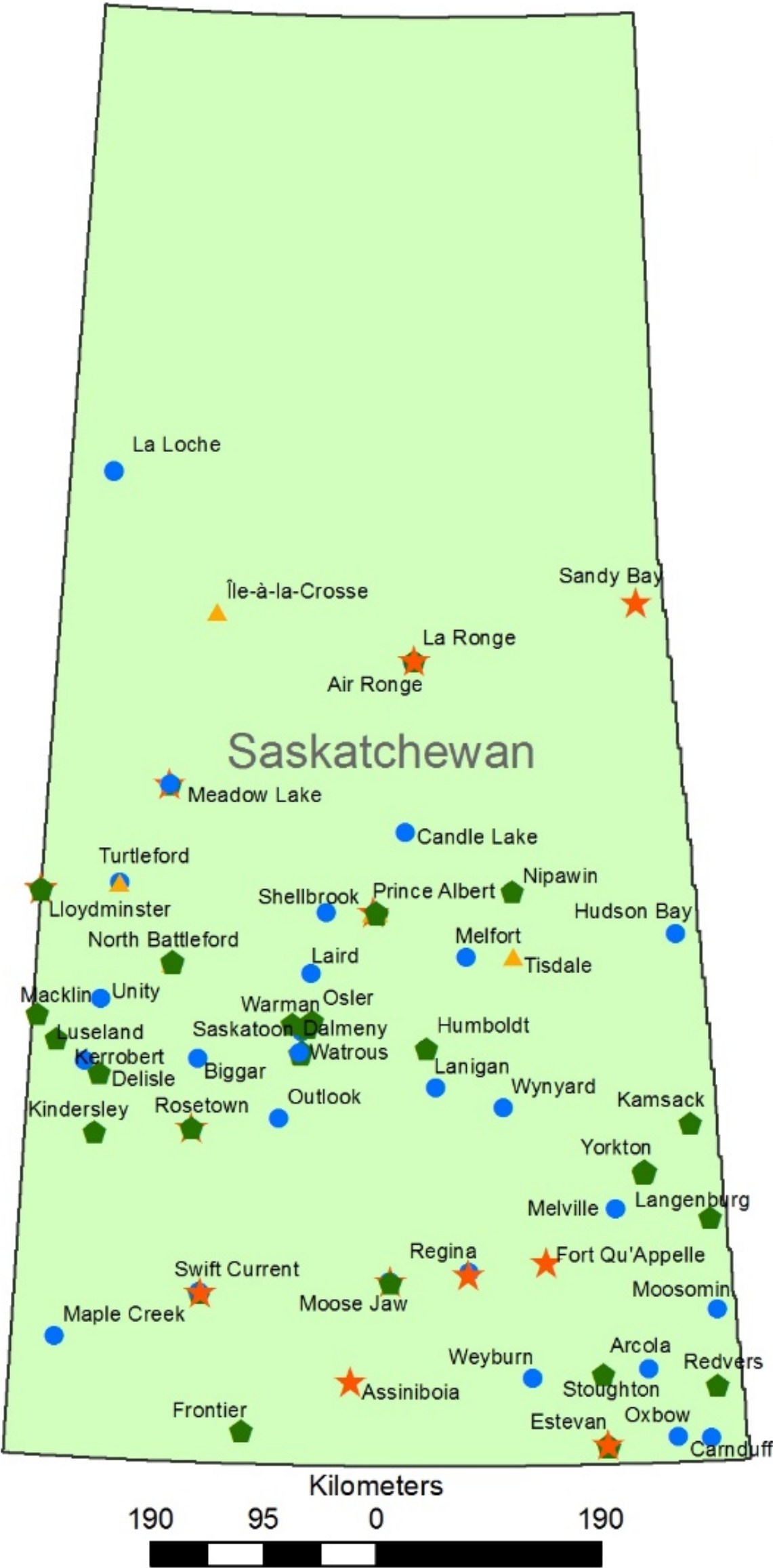
Community	Number of Agencies Providing Emergency Food Services			
	Food Bank	Good Food Box	Meal Program	Multiple Services
Air Ronge	1	-	-	-
Arcola	1	-	-	-
Assiniboia	-	-	-	1
Biggar	1	-	-	-
Candle Lake	1	-	-	-
Carnduff	1	-	-	-
Dalmeny	-	-	1	-
Delisle	-	-	1	-
Estevan	-	-	3	1
Fort Qu'Appelle	-	-	-	1
Frontier	-	-	2	-
Hudson Bay	1	-	-	-
Humboldt	1	-	1	-
Île-à-la-Crosse	-	1	-	-
Kamsack	-	-	1	-
Kerrobert	1	-	-	-
Kindersley	1	-	1	-
La Loche	2	-	-	-
La Ronge	-	-	1	1
Laird	1	-	-	-
Langenburg	-	-	1	-
Lanigan	1	-	-	-
Lloydminster	1	-	3	2
Luseland	-	-	1	-
Macklin	-	-	1	-
Maple Creek	1	-	-	-
Meadow Lake	1	-	1	1
Melfort	1	-	-	-
Melville	2	-	-	-
Moose Jaw	2	-	1	1
Moosomin	1	-	-	-
Nipawin	1	-	1	-
North Battleford	1	1	3	-
Osler	-	-	1	-
Outlook	1	-	-	-
Oxbow	1	-	-	-
Prince Albert	3	3	3	1
Redvers	-	-	1	-
Rosetown	1	-	1	1
Sandy Bay	-	-	-	1
Shellbrook	1	-	-	-
Stoughton	-	-	1	-
Swift Current	1	-	1	1
Tisdale	-	1	-	-
Turtleford	1	1	-	-
Unity	1	-	-	-
Warman	-	-	1	-
Watrous	1	-	-	-
Weyburn	2	-	-	-
Wynyard	1	-	-	-
Yorkton	1	-	5	-

Figure 43. Map of Emergency Food Services
Date: March 29, 2015
Source: Online Scan of Programs and Services
Definitions: *Food Bank refers to agencies that provide emergency food.
                 **Good Food Box refers to an alternative food distribution system that provides
                 nutritious foods at affordable prices. Food is ordered and paid for ahead of time.
                 ***Meal Program refers to agencies that provide meal free of charge or at small costs.
                 ****Multiple Services refers to agencies that offer two or more services.

5.2   Concluding Summary: Homelessness across Saskatchewan

Using a regional approach, we examined existing knowledge about homelessness, the results of the online inventory of programs and services, and learnings from communities to understand the picture of homelessness across the province.

Individuals spoken to*:

Unsheltered Homeless:	**2**
Emergency Sheltered:	**7**
Provisionally Accommodated:	**11**
At Risk of Homelessness:	**15**

Agencies spoken to:

83

*Determination of homeless typology based on information provided by participants.

Summary of Province-Wide Findings

Over the course of the project, the following themes were noticed:

1. Saskatchewan is filled with hardworking service providers who are dedicated to the communities they serve.

Service providers use partnerships, both formal and informal, to make the most of what are often limited resources.

> *"What's the best thing? There are partnerships, people work together, there is a strong sense of community, [and a] respect for each other's mandates."*

> *"In terms of net-working, we check around, are flexible, see who has the skills to help."*

2. Definitions of homelessness can be a barrier to addressing real needs in communities.

Across Saskatchewan, people expressed homelessness as a spectrum of situations that can change quickly. From people living in culverts, to people staying with friends and family (including those in overcrowded housing, or housing in poor condition) to people with varying degrees of housing instability or vulnerability – all are experiencing the adverse impacts of homelessness.

The people we spoke to defined homelessness in a way that fits with the current Canadian definition of homelessness (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness 2012), which is as follows:

> *Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or*

physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing.

*Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end, and being insecurely housed at the other. That is, homelessness encompasses a range of physical living situations, organized here in a **typology** that includes 1) **Unsheltered**, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation; 2) **Emergency Sheltered**, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence; 3) **Provisionally Accommodated**, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, and finally, 4) **At Risk of Homelessness**, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one's shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.*

"Another challenge is the definition of homelessness…People are homeless some days, then have a home for really cold days. So in some communities, even though there is lots of overcrowding, by some definitions, there is no homelessness."

"With homeless people…it's hard to fit them within parameters…you need to be thinking outside the box".

"Yes there is homelessness, but no one is on the street."

"Couchsurfing or no residence is generally how we describe homelessness."

"There is no option to go somewhere else. So you take in whoever needs housing."

The target population for the Housing First approach under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is chronic and episodic homelessness, which is defined as follows:

Chronically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the

past year (i.e., have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation).

Episodically homeless refers to individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (of note, episodes are defined as periods when a person would be in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation, and after at least 30 days, would be back in the shelter or inhabitable location) (Employment and Social Development Canada 2015).

As one moves into the more remote areas of Northern Saskatchewan, numbers of unsheltered homeless become smaller. This has to do in large part with a sense of community obligation to shelter people in need. This sense of community is present throughout the province, but is particularly pronounced in northern Aboriginal communities where there are few agencies formally offering services for homelessness.

"In the north, there is not a lot of visible homeless. There is a big Aboriginal population with the dynamics of survival being through kinship. Couchsurfing is like the community looking after that person."

"Nobody will freeze in La Loche…we won't allow it…the community will take people in, families take people in…so people have roofs over their heads, but are in crowded or risky housing situations."

"…strong beliefs, rooted in culture, about family and taking care of others: someone will always open their doors to a homeless person in dire need, and indeed, families often see it as their responsibility to house relations who might otherwise not have a home."

In terms of formal data and programs, this may mean that there is a gap in resources for homelessness in rural and remote Aboriginal communities.

"This can be a disadvantage to Aboriginal people – because their kinship and community system means their ways of supporting community members at risk of homelessness don't get counted...In the North lots of communities are small and don't have major supports for homelessness, like official shelters, etc. So data-wise, it looks like there aren't any homeless there. This can be a big road block. Meaningful supports being given [by the community], but they don't show up in the data."

This learning is echoed by existing research, which has noted the need for more flexible definitions of homelessness in rural and remote areas. (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.; Peters Vallancourt and Hemingway 2006; Happy Valley-Goose Bay 2007; National Council of Welfare 2007).

3. An adequate supply of safe housing is universally reported as a gap and the root cause of many challenges relating to homelessness.

During the creation of the Constitution Act 1982 which includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, adequate housing as a human right was not included. This may be because, at the time, homelessness was virtually unheard of in Canada (Porter, 2004). The Federal government had been building up Canada's affordable and social housing stock significantly since the Second World War. Many people believe that the current situation of unsheltered homelessness and the need for organizations like Food Banks relates to the reduction and then cessation of direct Federal funding for new housing in the 1980's and early 90's (Gaetz, 2014).

> *"From 1977 to 1990, [we] didn't have Food Banks. In the last 25 years homelessness has risen as a major issue."*
>
> *"With rent increases, people who had homes are now back in shelters."*
>
> *"Rents are sky-high!"*
>
> *"Social Housing is hard to come by. Rental housing is available but is incredibly expensive – landlords often ask first, last month's rent and damage – it can cost 3000 just to get moved in – it's hard for people to get that kind of cash."*
>
> *"I am an Elder and I currently have 8 people living with me. I live in a 2 bedroom house, and am also a foster parent. I grew up with my mother helping people in the same way. Would I feel lonely if they all left? Yes. Many Elders take in family members."*
>
> *"When kids are not in stable housing, it affects them in school. They don't get enough to eat or haven't slept – so they act out. There's no quiet place for them [to sleep]."*

4. More understanding of culturally appropriate housing is needed.

Current housing across Saskatchewan, including social housing, is designed for the needs of single families or individuals. Cultural traditions of generosity, openness to sharing homes, and a high emphasis on family and kinship exist in Aboriginal communities, as noted above. As such, there is a need to consider alternative forms of housing, such as multi-generational housing or housing that can accommodate short term stays by family or other guests.

5. Cultural competence and Aboriginal-run organizations are important in providing supports for homelessness.

Friendship centres are found across the province (the exception being the Athabasca region) and, in many communities, provide a focus for Aboriginal-run supports, including

shelters, help with housing, or other services. These organizations, however, can be under-resourced and in some cases are run entirely by dedicated volunteers in the community.

Many people spoke to the need for organizations with cultural competence – that is, organizations that understand and have a sensitivity to Aboriginal culture; with a preference for organizations run by Aboriginal people themselves.

> *"Aboriginal people need their own place that is culturally appropriate…Their needs are more sacred to them, a place where they feel safe, a place where they can teach and practice their traditions, and not step on other people's toes."*

> *"Aboriginal people need access to their cultural needs, [to] have safe places to go and just hang out."*

> *"Aboriginal run programs are better."*

> *"Would like an open environment shelter, run by Aboriginal people."*

6. Mental health and addictions are key factors in homelessness.

Across the province, service providers drew a link between homelessness, mental health, and addictions. Mental health and addiction challenges often go hand in hand. A greater understanding is needed of how to address mental health and addiction issues, particularly in terms of the ways they relate to challenges such as a lack of adequate housing, the cycle of poverty, and intergenerational trauma.

There is a need for housing strategies to go hand in hand with healing strategies. In many other jurisdictions, it has been shown that Housing First programs are most successful when they are combined with key supports (including healing supports), often provided collaboratively through a variety of organizations. In addition, culturally-relevant healing supports are critical.

> *"Main reason for homelessness? Addiction and mental health, both seem to coincide."*

> *"Mental health and addictions is the number one problem."*

> *"Housing is inseparable from mental health and addictions."*

7. Determining the extent of homeless populations is a challenge in many parts of the province, particularly the North.
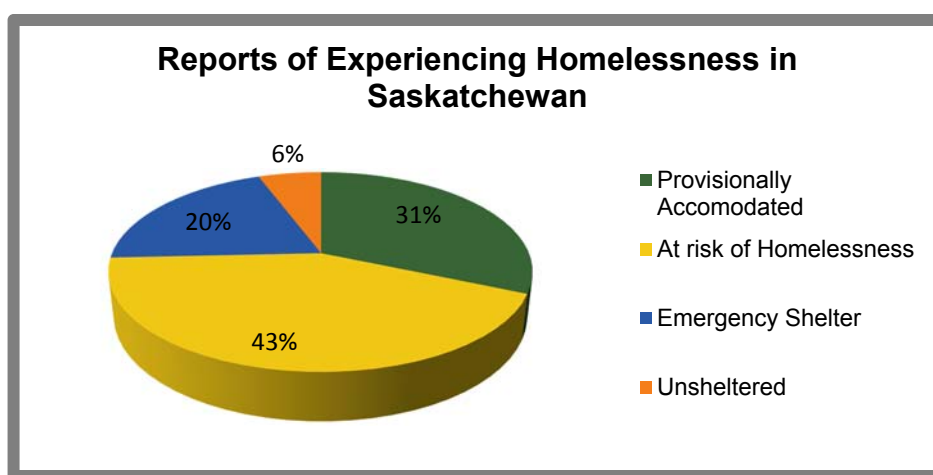
Due to a lack of formal organizations targeted towards homelessness (usually shelters), Northern Saskatchewan has little data to enumerate homelessness. Most data that exists relates to the health effects of crowding and poor housing.

Communities we spoke to in Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle also had little data for enumerating homelessness, with the exception of a 2006 study on youth homelessness.

Larger centres such as Lloydminster had some data in the form of homeless counts and other studies. Prince Albert has data from existing shelters and is currently working on a homeless count.

The Figure below is based on the numbers of people experiencing homelessness interviewed as part of this project.

8. Determining the extent of hidden homeless populations is a challenge. Qualitative studies with community-based organizations are needed.

There were no formal counts or methods for understanding the extent of hidden homelessness. Several service providers suggested that the best way to do this, and to understand visible homelessness as well, is to rely on established service providers and agencies in the community. These front-line workers get to know the local people and get an understanding of who is homeless – whether on the street, provisionally sheltered, or at risk.

"To get data on the extent of homelessness you have to use CBOs [Community Based Organizations] somehow to survey…use the services going on formally…[these agencies] actually can assess if their programs are being accessed by homeless people."

9. Housing First may require tailored approaches in rural and remote areas.

Many of the learnings from this project shed light on potential approaches for Housing First in rural and remote areas. For example, there may not, as yet, be sufficient capacity, resources, and supports, particularly in northern regions, to successfully implement Housing First using the models of larger centres across Canada. There is also a lack of sufficient housing, as mentioned above.

This is not to say that communities should not strive to implement Housing First, but successful Housing First projects may require creative thinking along with tailored and region-specific approaches.

Some existing studies have made a start at understanding the way Housing First can work in rural and remote areas (Schiff, Turner and Schiff n.d is a good example).

In some places, Housing First ideas have started to take local form in a recognition that strict shelter rules may be counter-productive. Some communities have noted that wet shelters may be helpful, or have relaxed rules to allow intoxication (while still insisting on good behavior). Others have noted that strict rules about leaving during the day and being back at a certain time of night aren't helpful for people trying to work, particularly if they work night shifts.

10. The geography of Saskatchewan can be a factor in homelessness.

The sheer distance between communities in Saskatchewan, particularly in the North, can exacerbate the conditions for homelessness. People who travel south looking for work, or who have recently been released from jail or court appearances, can become "stranded" with no way to get back home, and have to rely on shelters or other means to stay housed until they can find transportation back to their community.

11. More research is needed to understand patterns of mobility.

Many people who work to understand Aboriginal homelessness (Schiff, Turner, and Schiff n.d.) have noted the role that mobility plays in understanding how best to provide supports and services. Many community members noted this as well.

People experiencing homelessness may adaptively move from place to place using an in-depth knowledge of their environment - what resources are available where, and when; who they can stay with at a given time and place; knowing when they may have "worn out their welcome"; and how they can survive outside when there is no place to stay. There is a seasonality to mobility as well, with some seasons amenable to camping or staying "in the bush."

A better understanding of how people move around, making use of their knowledge of their environment and the resources available to them, would help to understand how to offer supports and services.

There are many other reasons people may move around – to pursue jobs, education, or services. However, what keeps people from moving permanently to larger centres is connections to the supports of family, friends, and culture.

> *"Will go home to PA for Christmas – I have a place there – but I would rather be here [Flin Flon], all my family is here. I've tried to find housing but it is difficult."*

> *"I've lived in Calgary, Saskatoon, Vegas, Phoenix, BC, PA. I love it here, it's my home. Always get brought back for some reason."*

> *"People also go to major centres, like Saskatoon, because it is easier to get by with more services. But, they come back because this is home and there is family here."*

12. Jurisdictional issues are a factor in homelessness.

Jurisdictional issues were mentioned as a theme frequently by the people we spoke to.

> *"In north – homeless partnerships funds are a significant challenge – On and Off-Reserve are often across the street- and people access services in both."*

> *"Run into large jurisdiction issues – huge population going between Reserve, the Village of Air Ronge and Town of La Ronge. Lots of boundary issues when it comes to finding funding or assistance for many people. For housing, it's just as simple as someone couchsurfing from house to house – just across the street the jurisdiction is different going from Municipal (Town) to federal (Reserve)."*

> *"This really limits the partnerships we can do because of the eligibility of grants available, through federal or provincial funding."*

> *"Best practice is to remove jurisdictional barriers - don't care where you are from, we will still help. It is a constant battle if your mandate means you can't help some people."*

This relates to both service provision, and Federal and Provincial roles:

> *"First Nations get Federal funding while Métis have Provincial funding only."*

13. There is a gap in emergency shelters specifically for men.

All of the study regions of Saskatchewan had at least one women's shelter for domestic violence. However, only two regions had a specific adult men's shelter (Lloydminster Men's Shelter and Riverside Mission in Moose Jaw). There are emergency shelters that

serve both men and women in Prince Albert, North Battleford, and Estevan, though some of these are cold-weather only.

> *"People are often drawn here because there are lots of jobs…Or they get here and realize they don't have the proper tickets (safety, etc) and stay at Men's shelter until they can get them. Or until they can save enough, once working, to pay the first/last month rent etc.*

14. There is a gap in transitional housing.

Overall, opportunities to access transitional housing are low. Transitional housing tends to be targeted for domestic violence, youth, and people recovering from addictions.

> *"Want to do a short term transitional housing. In 3 months you can get them into a training program but the transition period now is not enough."*

> *"Need a transitional housing that is stable enough for people to stay because their need is continual."*

> *"Need for transitional housing."*

15. There is a gap in in housing for single people.

Since social housing priorities are geared predominantly towards families and children, it can be difficult for single people to find housing.

> *"Need housing for single people and couples or small families."*

> *"Can't find a place because houses go to families over singles."*

> *"Single young men need help."*

16. There are gaps in supports for youth, especially in the southern parts of the province.

Many service providers saw a need for more formal supports for youth. Young Aboriginal males were mentioned, particularly since they often can't stay in domestic violence shelters once they are over 15. Related to this is the fact that priorities in social housing tend to favor families and children as opposed to single people. The south most regions of the province in particular noted a need for youth shelters or supports.

Conclusions

This project took a regional approach to scanning the province to provide a picture of homelessness for Saskatchewan. It was found that the different areas of the province are all unique, and strategies to combat homelessness must be tailored to the local context. "One-size-fits-all" approaches are likely to be less effective.

That being said, there were several themes that emerged through the process. These are described in detail above and can be summarized as follows:

1. *Saskatchewan is filled with hardworking service providers.*

2. *Definitions of homelessness can be a barrier to addressing real needs in communities.*

3. *An adequate supply of safe housing is universally reported as a gap.*

4. *More understanding of culturally appropriate housing is needed.*

5. *Cultural competence and Aboriginal-run organizations are important.*

6. *Mental health and addictions are key factors in homelessness.*

7. *Determining the extent of homeless populations is a challenge in many parts of the province.*

9. *Housing First may require tailored approaches in rural and remote areas.*

10. *The geography of Saskatchewan can be a factor in homelessness.*

11. *More research is needed to understand patterns of mobility.*

12. *Jurisdictional issues are a factor in homelessness.*

13. *There is a gap in emergency shelters specifically for men.*

14. *There is a gap in transitional housing.*

15. *There is a gap in in housing for single people.*

Housing and Healing First

One of the most prominent of the themes listed above is the topic of mental health and addictions. Service providers pointed to the fact that poor mental health and addictions (and low levels of wellness in general) can be linked to a host of other factors that also influence homelessness. These include a lack of housing, housing in poor condition, and overcrowded housing; intergenerational trauma; and the cycle of poverty.

In terms of housing, mental health, addictions, and wellness in general, an example of policy to consider for the HPS Non-Designated funding stream would be to support initiatives that promote a "housing and healing first" model, as shown here:

The Saskatchewan Non-Designated Aboriginal Homelessness funding stream supports initiatives that provide both housing and wellness, with the goal of ensuring housing solutions work in tandem with culturally relevant healing and wellness supports.

The term "wellness" is used here because it can represent a variety of healing supports, including mental health and addictions.

Related areas of funding support could include:

❖ Initiatives that partner housing development with service providers, including wellness agencies that are able to access external sources of funding (i.e. collaborations with Ministries such as Social Services or Justice); and

❖ Initiatives that support capacity-building for wellness supports in communities (such as ensuring agencies and trained workers exist that can partner and provide culturally relevant wellness supports)

Governance to Support "Housing and Healing First" models: Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board

In light of the goals for combining housing and wellness supports, shown above, it is recommended that AHAB consider seeking out board members with service provision and wellness experience, in addition to those with expertise in housing development.

Report Distribution

This report will be made publicly available to benefit all the communities and organizations that contributed to its creation.

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Appendices

a. List of Agencies Consulted
b. Community Case Studies
c. Questionnaires
d. Database Matrix

- ∞ Aboriginal Friendship Centres of Saskatchewan
- ∞ Aboriginal Housing Advisory Board (AHAB)
- ∞ All Nations Healing Hospital Fort Qu'Appelle
- ∞ Athabasca Health Authority Black Lake Clinic
- ∞ Battleford Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
- ∞ Battlefords District Food and Resource Centre
- ∞ Beaver River Regional Housing Authority Beauval
- ∞ Breaking Trails Family Place Sandy Bay
- ∞ Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre
- ∞ Carleton Housing Lloydminster
- ∞ Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI)
- ∞ City of Saskatoon (Housing)
- ∞ Community – University Institute for Social Research (CUISR)
- ∞ Community Outreach Management Centre Fort Qu'Appelle
- ∞ Cypress Regional Health Authority
- ∞ Family Resource Centre (Flin Flon)
- ∞ Federation of Saskatchewan Indians Nations
- ∞ Flin Flon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre
- ∞ Food Banks of Canada
- ∞ Food Banks of Saskatchewan
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Community Outreach Management Centre
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Housing Authority
- ∞ Hector Thiboutot Community School Sandy Bay
- ∞ Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority
- ∞ Kids First North La Ronge
- ∞ Kikinahk Friendship Centre La Ronge
- ∞ La Loche Community School
- ∞ La Loche Friendship Centre
- ∞ La Ronge Medical Clinic
- ∞ La Ronge Northwest Community Initiative
- ∞ Lac La Ronge Indian Band Health Services
- ∞ Lloydminster & District Co-op Ltd.
- ∞ Lloydminster Housing Authority

- ∞ Lloydminster Men's Shelter
- ∞ Lloydminster Métis Housing Group Inc.
- ∞ Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre
- ∞ Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority
- ∞ Meadow Lake Tribal Council
- ∞ Métis Local 123 Prairie Dog Swift Current
- ∞ Ministry of Education - Northern Education Office
- ∞ Ministry of Government Relations - Northern Engagement Branch
- ∞ Ministry of Justice - Custody, Supervision and Rehabilitation La Ronge
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Cognitive Disability Strategy La Ronge
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Community Living Service Delivery
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Housing Programs and Finance
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Housing Programs and Service Design
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Income Assistance Saskatoon and Area
- ∞ Ministry of Social Services - Meadow Lake Child and Family Services
- ∞ New North – SANC Services Inc.
- ∞ Northeast Regional Housing Authority Creighton
- ∞ Northeast Regional Housing Authority Sandy Bay
- ∞ Northern Human Services Partnership (NHSP) - Central
- ∞ Northern Human Services Partnership (NHSP) - West
- ∞ Northern Lights School Division
- ∞ Northern Village of Sandy Bay
- ∞ Our House YWCA Prince Albert
- ∞ Partners in Employment Swift Current
- ∞ Piwapan Women's Shelter La Ronge
- ∞ Population Health Unit Northern Saskatchewan
- ∞ Prince Albert Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
- ∞ Prince Albert Share-a-Meal Food Bank
- ∞ Prince Albert Youth Outreach Program
- ∞ Provincial Métis Housing Corporation Saskatchewan
- ∞ Qu'Appelle Valley Housing Authority
- ∞ Royal Canadian Mounted Police La Loche Detachment
- ∞ Royal Canadian Mounted Police Sandy Bay Detachment
- ∞ Salvation Army Maple Creek
- ∞ Salvation Army Saskatoon
- ∞ Salvation Army Swift Current

- ∞ Sandy Bay Health Centre
- ∞ Sask Trends Monitor
- ∞ Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
- ∞ Scattered Sites La Ronge
- ∞ Silver Sage Housing Corporation
- ∞ St. John's Anglican Church Lloydminster
- ∞ Swift Current Friendship Centre
- ∞ Swift Current Welcome Centre
- ∞ United Way of Saskatoon & Area - 211 Saskatchewan
- ∞ Victim Services Sandy Bay
- ∞ Yorkton Friendship Centre
- ∞ Youth Homelessness Initiative of Swift Current
- ∞ YWCA Prince Albert

Appendix B: Community Case Studies: Background Information and Field Notes

Buffalo Narrows Case Study

Date: November 3, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 8

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Buffalo Narrows?

In Buffalo Narrows, we set up a meeting with the Northern Human Service Partnership (NHSP West) and a community come and go meeting at the Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre.

In the NHSP West meeting, there were only three service providers that attended the meeting. As an interagency partnership, more service providers were scheduled to be there, but unfortunately due to a snow storm the night before, many were unable to attend. Those that did attend included the Community Outreach & Education Worker, the Regional Intersectoral Committee coordinator, and the First Nations and Métis Services Consultant.

Figure 2: Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre

We had a number of participants speak with us at the Friendship Centre in Buffalo Narrows. Some of these people included various community members that use the drop in services at the Friendship Centre and some were staff of the Friendship Centre.

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Buffalo Narrows. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always included the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

As a part of the northwest region, Buffalo Narrows was chosen as one of the communities to visit in Saskatchewan for a number of reasons. The first reason was the population; almost 1200 people live in Buffalo Narrows, with the majority (about 86%) being people of aboriginal descent (Statistics Canada 2012 and 2013). These population numbers may be low owing to challenges with statistical data for small communities, particularly in the 2011 National Household Survey. Local community data has the population at about 1400 (Buffalo Narrows Economic Development Corporation, 2015). The population also fluctuates as people leave and come back for education, employment or other reasons.

The following charts show the mobility in Buffalo Narrows over one year and over five years. Consistently residents of Buffalo Narrows stay in at the same home or in the same town for long periods of time.

Buffalo Narrows Mobilty Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (880)
- Lived with the same census subdivision (75)
- Lived within the same province (55)
- Lived in a different province (50)

Buffalo Narrows Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (575)
- Lived within the same census subdivision (205)
- Lived within the same province (115)
- Lived in a different province (90)
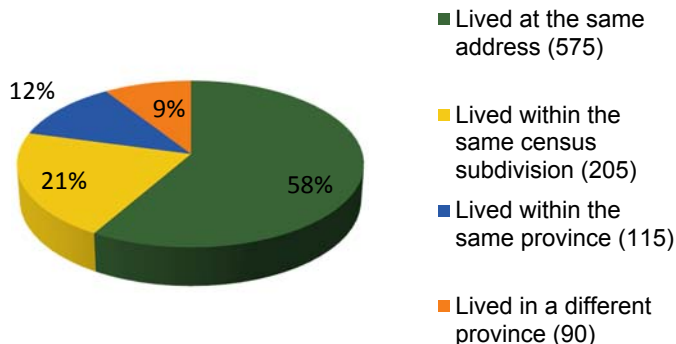
Buffalo Narrows is also a community that has several First Nation Reserves in the area. These include Buffalo River Dené Nation, Clearwater River Dené Nation, Birch Narrows First Nation, English River First Nation, and Canoe Lake First Nation.

Major languages in Buffalo Narrows are Cree, Dené, Michif, and English (Buffalo Narrows 2012).

Although there are a number of entry level jobs and government positions, the job market is otherwise minimal. The unemployment rate in 2006 was 20% (Buffalo Narrows 2012). Saskatchewan overall in 2006 was 5.6%, and Aboriginal unemployment in Saskatchewan overall was 18.2% (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics 2008).

Major employers are Cameco, AREVA, Province of Saskatchewan, Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority, Northern Lights School Division #113, and Northlands College – Western Region (Buffalo Narrows 2012).

Buffalo Narrows also has services that smaller communities may not have, including Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre, Buffalo Narrows Health Centre and Buffalo Narrows Service Centre. Because we had a contact that we had previously met from Buffalo Narrows from the Northern Human Service Partnership, we were able to attend their monthly meeting.

Key Outcomes

Buffalo Narrows is a major hub for the northwest region, drawing in communities such as Turnor Lake, Michel Village, St. George Hill, Beauval, Bear Creek, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Green Lake, and La Loche. All of your basic services are available; this draws people from the surrounding communities to Buffalo Narrows for services like a grocery store, overnight accommodations and post-secondary education. Although the basic services for the working class are available, emergency shelters are limited. The community also faces lateral violence that seems to be inter-generational. Some of the violence has been associated with the lack of healing of residential schools, mental illness, addictions, and isolation. This can be multiplied by the fact that a number of generations stay in one home. Counselling services are needed before the community can start to heal as a whole.

What is there for services?

A variety of services to help the homeless are available from organizations in Buffalo Narrows. These include mental health services, health education, needle exchange, addictions counselling, anger management, assistance with the completion of forms, family support programming, child and youth programming, career and vocational counselling, and computer access.

There are no formal services to help homeless persons locate housing, although some service providers help informally. There are no formal services, outside the Office of Residential Tenancies, to help people mediate disputes with landlords or neighbors. There is no Food Bank or emergency shelter and there is a great need for counselling services (personal and employment). There was a shelter for a time in the past, but it has closed down. A local church does provide food hampers at Christmas. There are no formal places to access traditional cultural healing. People who were interviewed also noted a need for grief/loss counselling and support for people who attended residential schools. There is nothing for transitional supports to help people make the move from detox to a sober life.

Buffalo has held interagency meetings for about the past half year (at the time of this study). Held once a month, these meetings are attended by a variety of service providers including the health region and RCMP. Service providers would like to have the capacity to meet more frequently.

Below is a list of organizations in Buffalo Narrows that deal directly or indirectly with homelessness.

- ❖ Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre
- ❖ Buffalo Narrows Health Centre
- ❖ Government of Canada – Service Canada – Buffalo Narrows
- ❖ Government of Saskatchewan – Ministry of Social Services – Buffalo Narrows Service Centre
- ❖ Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority

- ❖ Kids First North
- ❖ North Sask Victim Services
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Buffalo Narrows Detachment

What is housing like in Buffalo Narrows?

Housing is needed across the board; the majority of people stay with family members or friends and are in crowded conditions. This combats high rental costs, high costs of living, and adds support for family members, but on the other hand is stressful for all those involved, is a cause for poor living conditions and sometimes contributes to substance abuse and addictions. It is estimated that the vast majority of homelessness is comprised of the hidden homeless. No one we spoke to could provide a good estimate of how many of these might be present, except to say it was likely a large number.

There is currently not enough information to create a picture of the demographics of homelessness - the age, gender, and other characteristics of the homeless- in Buffalo Narrows. Anecdotally, many people who are visibly homeless are male, middle aged, and suffering under a combination of addictions and mental illness. As with other Northern communities, the vast majority of homelessness is hidden – people couchsurfing or living in crowded or inadequate housing.
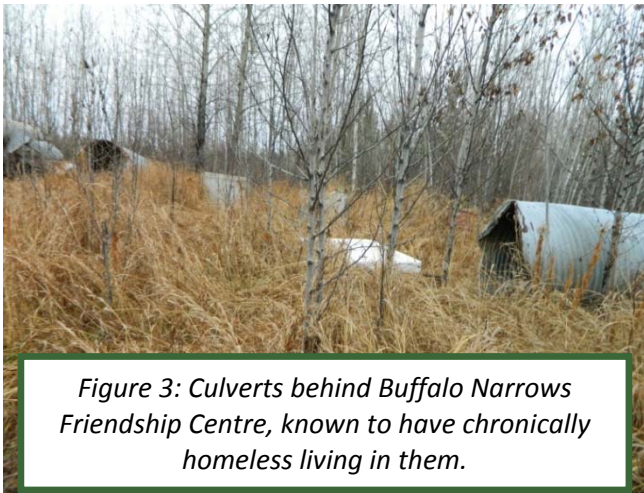
Figure 3: Culverts behind Buffalo Narrows Friendship Centre, known to have chronically homeless living in them.

Those family members and friends that have worn out all welcomes and have burned all ties to family are chronically homeless. People we spoke to reported between 5 and 8 such people in Buffalo at the time of the interviews. These people usually choose one of two options: sleep in culverts behind the Friendship Centre or intentionally go to jail so that they would have a safe, warm place to stay the winter. The chronically homeless are all known to be heavily addicted to alcohol and spend the day panhandling near the liquor store, and warming up in the Friendship Centre. There is a high correlation between mental illness and addictions and the chronic homelessness.

There is seasonality to homelessness in Saskatchewan. Winter is much harsher and the community will not let anyone freeze to death. In some circumstances there is intentional incarceration and couchsurfing. Instead of weathering the cold in culverts (as some people do), people would rather go to jail, or detox treatment centres.

Where can you go for services that are not provided here?

The geographical location plays a major role. Isolation and transportation go hand in hand. The lack of transportation and the

fact that Buffalo Narrows is an hour away from the next community and over 6 hours to the nearest major centre, being Saskatoon, causes issues for a number of reasons. Many people either are stranded in communities when there is transportation to a court house or a police station, but no way is provided to return. Hitchhiking becomes a regular occurrence.

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Buffalo Narrows?

The culture in Buffalo Narrows, like many other parts of the province, is family and community based. This reliance on family has grown to a lack of self sufficiency. Children are more reliant on parents and grandparents, which also means that unless life skills are taught, children grow up without basic life skills such as budgeting, employment skills and so on. This lack of education then contributes to the lack of employment in the region, where minimum wage jobs are more readily available. With the lack of income comes the lack of housing, this goes to say that income directly relates to affordability of housing, and without income, housing is simply a dream.

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Buffalo Narrows**
> Total Private Households by Size: 410
> 1 person: 90
> 2 persons: 125
> 3 persons: 80
> 4 persons: 65
> 5 persons: 25
> 6 or more persons: 30

The condition of housing in the area if able to find because of the scarcity of housing, is inadequate at best. Some homes are in major need of repair and are unsafe and inhabitable by any standards. Instability of housing is another major concern on everyone's mind. Fear of eviction from allowing family or friends to stay and fear of eviction from wearing out welcomes is all too real in Buffalo Narrows.

Health is another factor contributing to homelessness. It is well known in the community that those that are chronically homeless are suffering from addictions as well as mental health problems. The people have more than likely chosen to spend their days outside, because the strain on family and friends is too great. The stigma that also goes along with mental illness and addictions only adds to discrimination.

Buffalo Narrows is community with many services that are not available in other communities, so transients are well known to pass through Buffalo Narrows. This mobility causes temporary homelessness in the fact that there is no emergency shelter or hostel in the area.

Has there been other research done in this area?

Out of the literature relating to homelessness reviewed for this project, only two articles came up with the northwest as a focal point. The first document was the "Northern Saskatchewan Health Indicators Report 2011" written by Dr. James Irvine, Brian Quinn and Donna Stockdale. The second document that was relevant to Buffalo Narrows and area was "Northern Housing in Saskatchewan: A Discussion Paper April 2011" written by Michael Quennell. Both reports contained information on the health effects of housing.

Buffalo Narrows currently does not have any formal planning documents to address homelessness.

As mentioned above, no formal data has been collected by community organizations that would help characterize the homeless population.

Community Strengths

Buffalo Narrows is a beautiful, small northern community that is the centre of the northwest region. The community is strong and prospering. Buffalo Narrows' service industry is beginning to boom, as seen in Figure 5, the small community has some big brand names. Another strength is the dedication of service providers. There is staff turnover in people who come from outside, but people who live and make their home in Buffalo tend to stay in community jobs for a very long time because this is their home and they are dedicated to the community here.

Figure 4: Buffalo Narrow's Tim Horton's

Other strengths mentioned by the people we spoke to included:

- ❖ High graduation rate from high school
- ❖ All high school graduates applied for post-secondary schooling
- ❖ Local decision makers
- ❖ More education compared to 20 years ago
- ❖ Being local makes a difference
- ❖ Growing community
- ❖ Community comes together to help in a crisis, no matter what
- ❖ Beautiful
- ❖ Sand dunes
- ❖ The people
- ❖ Fishing
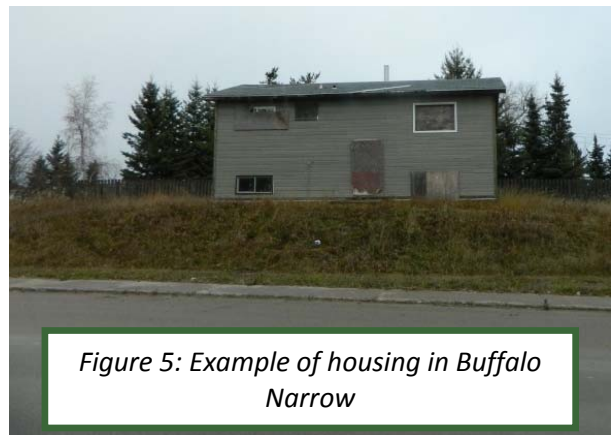
Figure 5: Example of housing in Buffalo Narrow

Causes of Homelessness in Buffalo Narrows

Isolation, mental illness, addictions, and lack of housing are among the principal causes of homelessness in this community. Homelessness is composed of a small number of people living outside and a larger population of hidden homeless.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Buffalo Narrows said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, four words stand out: "Need", "Housing", "People" and "Homeless."

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pd/aprof/index.cfm?Lang=E (accessed January 20, 2015).

Creighton and area Case Study

Date: December 08, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 10

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Creighton?

The Prairie Wild Team made a trip to Crieghton and area, we say this because Creighton is a small community that is on the Saskatchewan side of the border while being a stone's throw from Flin Flon, a larger centre on the Manitoba side. We discovered early on that Creighton and other smaller communities on the Saskatchewan side of the border travel to Flin Flon for the majority of their services. Although there is a border that clearly defines which province you're in, there is no difference to service provided wherever you are.

Figure 2: Manitoba/Saskatchewan Border

Two meetings were schedule to attend. The first was a visit to the Flin Flon Friendship Centre in which we had a come and go engagement session as well as a tour of their hostel. The next meeting was at the Northeast Regional Housing Authority.

We were able to speak to many different members of the community including people that are experiencing homelessness, service providers, volunteers, and people just coming for lunch at the Flin Flon Friendship Centre Restaurant.

Figure 3: Northeast Regional Housing Authority

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Figure 4: Flin Flon Friendship Centre

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Creighton and Flin Flon. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration

- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always included the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Creighton is a wonderful small town with beautiful views and vistas with a large centre feel, partially because of the mining industry and the close proximity to Flin Flon and the Manitoba boarder. The boarder may divide residence addresses and postal codes, but it doesn't mean much past that. The whole community is seen as one community and the services reflect this. Jobs are minimal, unless you are willing to work in mining or the service sector. In small town Saskatchewan there is another issue of small town talk, which tends to work against you.

Creighton has a population of 1495 and of that 360 are Aboriginal. Being within driving distance to Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and located in the Eastern Region I of the Métis Nation, Creighton and Flin Flon are seen as the hub of the northeast. Reflecting the population dynamics, languages most often spoken are English, Cree, Ukrainian and German (Statistics Canada, 2011).

On the Manitoba side of the border, Flin Flon's population is 5520 and of that 915 are Aboriginal. English, French Cree and Ukrainian are most of spoken in Flin Flon. Opaskwayak First Nation located south of Flin Flon, and Mathias Colomb First Nation located North of Flin Flon are the two closest to the City (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Below is two charts showing Creighton's mobility over one and five years. Considering that they are so close to the Manitoba boarder it is suprising that permanent residents stay at the same address for the most part. The second highest number of people move in and out of provinces, making it more understandable as they are a border community.

Creighton Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)
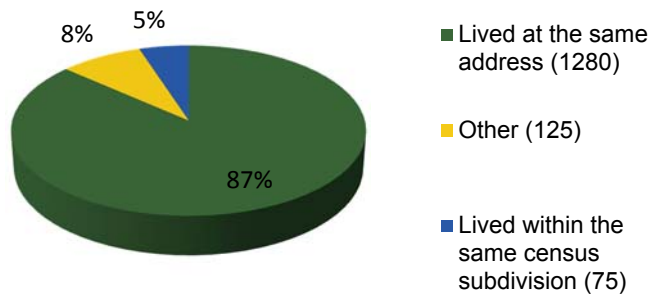
- ■ Lived at the same address (1280)
- ■ Other (125)
- ■ Lived within the same census subdivision (75)

87%
8%
5%

Creighton Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- ■ Lived at the same address (950)
- ■ Lived in a different province (175)
- ■ Lived within the same census subdivision (165)
- ■ Lived within the same province (125)

9%
12%
12%
67%
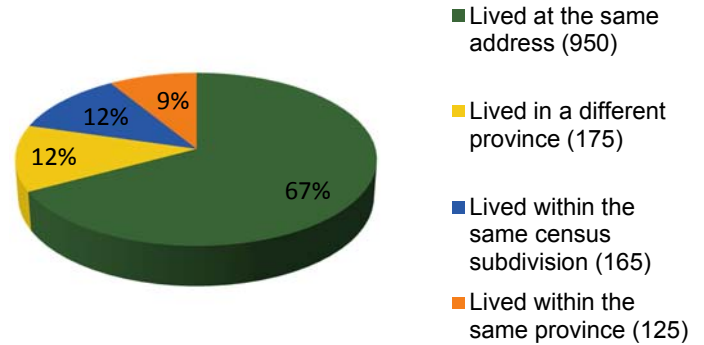
Key Outcomes

What is there for services?

Services in Creighton therefore in northeastern Saskatchewan are limited because of the close proximity to Flin Flon and Manitoba services. Some jurisdictional issues come up, for instance if there is an emergency where the police are called RCMP on that specific side of the province need to attend the call. Another example of jurisdictional issues is that in order to receive social housing, the only one in the area being Northeast Regional Housing Authority in Creighton, you need to have a Saskatchewan residence. Below is a list of organizations that deal either directly or indirectly with homelessness in Creighton and Flin Flon. As you can see, the gaps in housing are met from either side of the boarder, but Saskatchewan is lacking in services in general.

Creighton Services

- ❖ Creighton Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council
- ❖ Creighton Community Health Services
- ❖ Creighton Community School
- ❖ Northeast Regional Housing Authority
- ❖ Northlands College
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Creighton Detachment

Flin Flon Services

- ❖ Community Futures Greenstone
- ❖ Family Service and Housing
- ❖ Flin Flon & District Assessment and Referral Service
- ❖ Flin Flon Community Youth Resource Centre
- ❖ Flin Flon Family Services
- ❖ Flin Flon General Hospital
- ❖ Flin Flon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre
- ❖ Lord's Bounty Food Bank
- ❖ Norman Community Services Inc.
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Flin Flon Detachment
- ❖ Women's Resource Centre

Services that are provided include healthcare, counselling, youth outreach, referrals, hostel, support groups, clothing depots, meal programs, food hampers, fine option programs, drop-in-centre, document assistance preparation, advocacy, education for employment and training.

What is housing like in Creighton?

Once again, like the rest of Saskatchewan, the definition of homelessness is different than the rest of the country. Overcrowding and inadequate housing is at the forefront, while people who are visibly homeless are the ones black listed from the community and have nowhere else to turn. We heard that people don't actually live on the streets in this area because of the typography, so they sleep in the rock walls that make up the landscape.

Because this area is so remote, people come from all over the surrounding area, which is the cause for temporary homelessness as well. One man we spoke to came up to visit family which ended up being much longer than expected. People come from Denare Beach, Pukatawagan, Sandy Bay, Dechambeault Lake, Pelican Narrows and so on. These communities may be hours apart in some cases, but the fact that the remoteness of each community ties them together.

Figure 5: Rock Walls in Flin Flon

Housing being overcrowded is more than normal in the area. Mining and industry creates money in the region that both Creighton and Flin Flon benefit from. Homes are not in disrepair like other northern communities.

Lack of housing is everywhere in the area. Student housing and affordable housing are virtually impossible to get. Social housing on the Saskatchewan side helps to alleviate the issue, but there are only so many units. While high crime rates including property damage add to the resistance of renting to Aboriginal people in the area.

High rents and other high costs of living contribute to housing issues in the area. This goes without saying that isolation and transport costs of goods are included in the costs of everyday life.

Figure 6: Rock Walls in Creighton

Where can you go for services that are not provided here?

Services that are not provided in Creighton are provided in Flin Flon. Service providers do not refuse services to those people coming from opposite sides of

"There are not a lot of visible homeless, and those that are find places in rocks to make somewhere to sleep."

Quote from a service provider

the border, unless they are social housing on the Saskatchewan side, education from Northlands College on the Saskatchewan side and division of police services on both sides of the border.

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Creighton?

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Creighton**
> Total Private Dwellings: 611
> Occupied Private Dwellings: 600
> Single-detached houses: 485
> Semi-detached houses: 60
> Row houses: 5
> Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 50
> Single-attached houses: 5

Creighton and the rest of the Saskatchewan side of the border have factors that may not be visible even to residents. No emergency services for healthcare are on the Saskatchewan side. Saskatchewan residents pay the price in regards to taxes, for example provincial taxes in Manitoba a 7%, and in Saskatchewan they are 5%.

Isolation and remoteness are factors for the area although not necessarily for Creighton and Flin Flon. Places like Pelican Narrows, Denare Beach and Dechambeault Lake are far more remote and isolated and need to travel to centres like Creighton and Flin Flon for basic needs.

Another factor contributing to homelessness is that of addictions. Substance abuse and alcoholism are causes of blacklisting individuals for rental units because of partying and potential property damage associated with addictions. Mental Illness goes hand in hand with addictions and seeing the remote communities, isolation and feelings of loneliness often appear.

The lack of jobs available and lack of education including literacy, employment, and basic life skills are all factors of homelessness. Applying for social housing can be difficult at the best of times, and applying for social housing with a learning disability can be multiplied tenfold.

Discrimination and bias of renters also becomes a factor. Many people including service providers are known to be prejudice against Aboriginal people. This can be difficult for people looking for help and

Figure 7: Objection to the Nuclear Industry in Flin Flon

ause they would feel more comfortable going to programs and services This is clear at the Flin Flon Friendship Centre; many Aboriginal people riginal based organizations even if it is just for lunch at the restaurant.
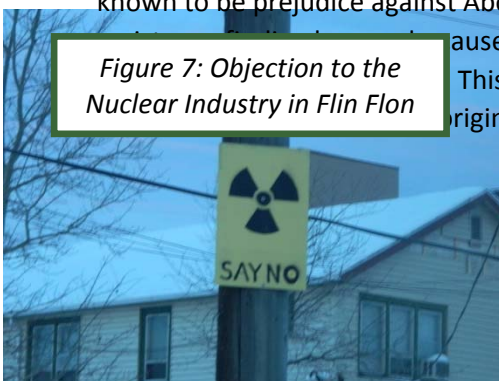
Lastly a major concern for the community is the threat of the nuclear industry. Although jobs would be created, this is a concern because of the environmental impacts. The area has already been known for contamination and radioactive emissions because of the mining.

Has there been other research done in this area?

Although no research has been done for northeastern Saskatchewan, Flin Flon has had research done by the University of Winnipeg called *Aboriginal Homelessness in Flin Flon, Manitoba.*

No formal community plans or housing plans are in Creighton.

Community Strengths

The geography and remote communities of Creighton and area, only strengthen the community ties of the region. They are surrounded with beautiful views and vistas from their unique rockey terrain. Other outdoor attractions like the Hapnot Lake Wildlife Sanctuary, great canoeing, hiking trails, and snow trails make the area a great place for the perfect northern quiet getaway.

Causes of Homelessness in Creighton

High rents and costs of living, lack of housing, lack of basic skills and education, mental illness and addictions, discrimination, overcrowding, lack of emergency services on the Saskatchewan side and isolation are the major factors in homelessness in Creighton.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Creighton and Flin Flon said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, three words stand out: "Get", "People" and "Housing."

Figure 8: Wordle of Creighton and area's Community Voice

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La Loche Case Study

Date: November 4, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 39

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methodology

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with?

In La Loche, 2 community engagements were set up and one drop in meeting. The first was an invitation for Prairie Wild to attend La Loche's monthly interagency meeting located at the community school and the second was a come and go community engagement at the friendship centre. In total the number of participants was 39, 11 attendees at the interagency meeting and 27 community members at the friendship centre. We also stopped in at the RCMP detachment and spoke with a constable.

Figure 2: La Loche Community School – High School

The interagency partnership in La Loche is very successful, programs and support systems are never overlapped and many changes have happened for the good in the community, because of the good communication and strong relationships. Below is a list of the organizations represented in the partnership:

❖ La Loche Community School
❖ Town Council
❖ Community Outreach
❖ Mental Health
❖ Ministry of Social Services
❖ Northern Lights School Division
❖ La Loche Friendship Centre

Figure 3: La Loche Friendship Centre

The community engagement session that took place in the Friendship Centre was held more like that of a focus group. Many people were able to speak and comments and ideas were bounced off each other. This also was helpful because there was a language barrier in that some residents do not speak English and other participants could translate. Members of the community that showed up included:

❖ Students
❖ Nurses
❖ Elders
❖ Traditional trappers

How was information gathered?

Both methods of data collection were very informal and were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. In La Loche there is a great amount of need and the community wants to express this. Open and honest stories were told in hopes of help. These conversations, although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind, were structured with questions that were prepared earlier and topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in the community. This included a thorough conversation regards these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always included the question "who else should we be talking to?" After all the topic areas were covered we would make sure that any questions the participant had was answered, we gathered other contact information that the participant recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

La Loche was chosen to be one of the communities taken as a sample for a number of reasons. According to Statistics Canada, 2011 census data, there are 2625 people in La Loche, with the Aboriginal population being 2530 people. Adding to the Aboriginal population is the close proximity of the Clearwater River Dené First Nation, Birch Narrows First Nation and Buffalo River Dené Nation. La Loche is located in the Northern Region II of the Métis Nation. These population numbers may be low owing to challenges with statistical data for small communities, particularly in the 2011 Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, the population was 2611. The population also fluctuates as people leave and come back for education, employment or other reasons. For example employment in Alberta is far easier than employment in the community.

La Loche's mobility rate is shown below. The first is over one year and the second is over five years. We heard from the community that permanent residency is usually only for mailing and contact information. This permanent contact information is clearly shown.

La Loche Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

7% 3%
90%

■ Lived at the same address (2065)

■ Lived within the same census subdivision (155)

■ Other (65)

La Loche Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

6%
22%
72%

■ Lived at the same address (1505)

■ Lived within the same census subdivision (470)

■ Other (120)
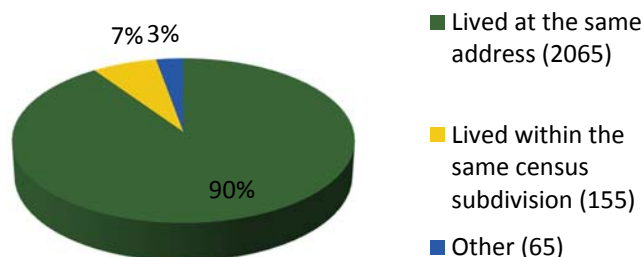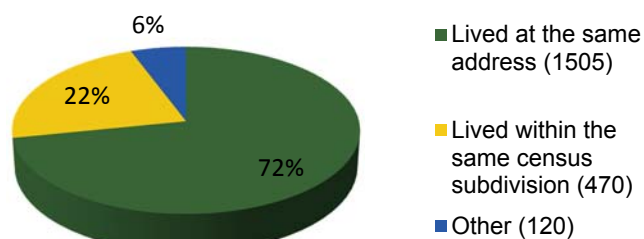
La Loche is known for many people speaking English as a second language, the primary language spoken is Dené. This was not an issue for researchers, because the community members were more than willing to translate Dené into English.

According to The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan provided by the University of Regina, the unemployment rate is about 50%. This is staggering compared to Saskatchewan overall in 2006 was 5.6%, and Aboriginal unemployment in Saskatchewan overall was 18.2% (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics 2008).

Key Outcomes

What is there for services?

Service providers we spoke with wanted to reiterate the lack of services that exists in La Loche, and how the community growth is significant but development is not at the same pace. Housing and business are being built, but not at the rate that the community needs. The service providers in La Loche see that similar communities, although smaller in population like Buffalo Narrows and Ile-a-la-Crosse, are gaining more resources and services than La Loche has. Yet smaller communities like Decharme Lake are even more isolated and travel to La Loche for services, for instance health services or schooling for children. Many challenges were identified in the interagency meeting and other service providers we spoke with, but also some benefits.

Below is a list of the program and services offered in La Loche that deal directly or indirectly with homelessness.

- Dené Empowerment Centre
- La Loche Community Development Corporation
- La Loche Community School
- La Loche Friendship Centre
- La Loche Health Centre and Hospital
- La Loche Non-Profit Housing Corporation
- La Loche Recreation Centre
- Methy Construction and Maintenance Corporation
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police – La Loche Detachment

Figure 4: Parents and children walking back to school after their lunch break

What is housing like in La Loche?

At-a-glance: Housing in La Loche
Total Private Dwellings: 700
Occupied Private Dwellings: 635
Single-detached houses: 380
Movable dwellings: 5
Semi-detached houses: 150
Row houses: 70
Duplexes: 15
Apartment with less than 5 storeys: 10
Other single-attached houses: 10

Community members in La Loche have a bit of a different story to tell. Because of the lack of infrastructure and housing, many people are living in overcrowded conditions. Members of the community couch surf night to night, trying to find a friend or a relative to stay with. Although the community is more than willing to help each other out, some people end up intentionally in jail or in the hospital on extreme cold weather nights.

Housing rental market and home ownership is slim to none, the only way to own a home is if it is inherited. While the rental market is solely dominated by Sask Housing, which long waitlists and housing for singles is minimal. Teen pregnancy rates are high in La Loche because the criterion for getting a home faster is if there are children involved. But from observation the entire community raises the children, only fortifying a stronger sense of community ties.

The generation that finishes high school and wants to further their education, fears leaving. Once you leave you give up the rental unit to go elsewhere for education, you give up your home. When those people that want to return, come back to the community, they do so with no homes to go back to.

Another issue that has come from overcrowding is that people are living in shacks or sheds in their relatives yard, heated by a fire and power by extension cords running from the main house. Damages and overcrowding conditions are always a concern and is reason for immediate evictions, which people live in fear of daily.

Lastly another major issue with no rental market is that people need references and referrals to be able to qualify for Sask Housing. Waiting lists are long and some people can end up waiting years for a home. Even with referrals there is no one to advocate on anyone's behalf except your family members. Support systems are limited and the strain on the families only causes more strain between service providers and community members.

> *At-a-glance: Housing in La Loche*
> Total Private Households by Size: 635
> 1 person: 95
> 2 persons: 100
> 3 persons: 85
> 4 persons: 115
> 5 persons: 95
> 6 or more persons: 155

Where can you go for services that are not provided here?

The geographical location plays a major role. Isolation and transportation go hand in hand. The lack of transportation and the fact that La Loche is an hour away from the next community and over 7 hours to the nearest major centre, being Saskatoon, causes issues for a number of reasons. Many people either are stranded in communities when there is transportation to a court house or a police station, but no way is provided to return. Hitchhiking becomes just another mode of transportation in La Loche.

> *Distance in km from La Loche to...*
> Buffalo Narrows: 101
> La Ronge: 436
> Prince Albert: 507
> Meadow Lake: 347
> Saskatoon: 605

What factors contribute to homelessness in La Loche?

Already mentioned is the lack of services, jobs, and overall housing in La Loche, but other key factors that the community spoke about are as equally contributing to homelessness.

Violence and high crime rates have plagued La Loche, the reputation is known for property damage, assaults and much more. This violence sometimes stems from intergenerational issues, like trauma from attending residential schools. The violence also sees another side to the causes of death in La Loche: suicide. Many people in the community are faced with so many challenges that some just feel overwhelmed and beaten down and feelings of giving up surface.

Mental Illness and addictions supports, like other services in La Loche are minimal. Isolation also leads to addictions and mental illness because it leaves little for recreation. Friendships thrive on shared addictions. With little education for the public on resources they can access, this remains one of the major factors of homelessness.

Figure 5: La Loche Liquor Store

Has there been research done in this area?

Out of the extensive literature review done for this project, only two articles had came up with the northwest as a focal point. The first document was the "Northern Saskatchewan Health Indicators Report 2011" written by Dr. James Irvine, Brian Quinn and Donna Stockdale. The second document that was relevant to La Loche and area was "Northern Housing in Saskatchewan: A Discussion Paper April 2011" written by Michael Quennell.

La Loche is in the editing phase of updating their Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaws (Planning for Growth 2014). Even with this progress, they have no formal documentation to address homelessness.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

La Loche is a remote, large community with many needs, but yet the pride and sense of community is always top priority. Everyone in the community is taken care of, even in the most critical of situations.

Other strengths in the community that was heard were the people. People in the community are the greatest assests the community has. Kinship and unity is very apparent in the community, and we heard that family always comes first in situations were someone needs a place to stay, or something to eat.

Another major strength the community has is the interagency partnerships. One of the strongest in the province, service providers makes it a priority to some together to help improve their services and programs and the community as a whole.

Causes of Homelessness in La Loche

Homelessness is devised into the hidden and the chronic. The majority of the population is in the hidden homeless part, while a small number sleep outside. Isolation, mental illness, addictions, violence, lack of housing and inadequate housing were the causes most often spoke of in La Loche.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a wordle of what the community members of La Loche said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the information that was gathered in a program and that program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequent the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, three words that stand out: "House", "Housing" and "People."

> The cause of homelessness is "mental health and addictions, there is a difference between north and other places. Nobody will starve in La Loche…we won't allow it…the community will take people in, families take people in so people have roofs over their heads, but are in crowded or risky housing situations."
>
> Quote from a service provider.

Figure 6: Wordle from La Loche's Community Voice
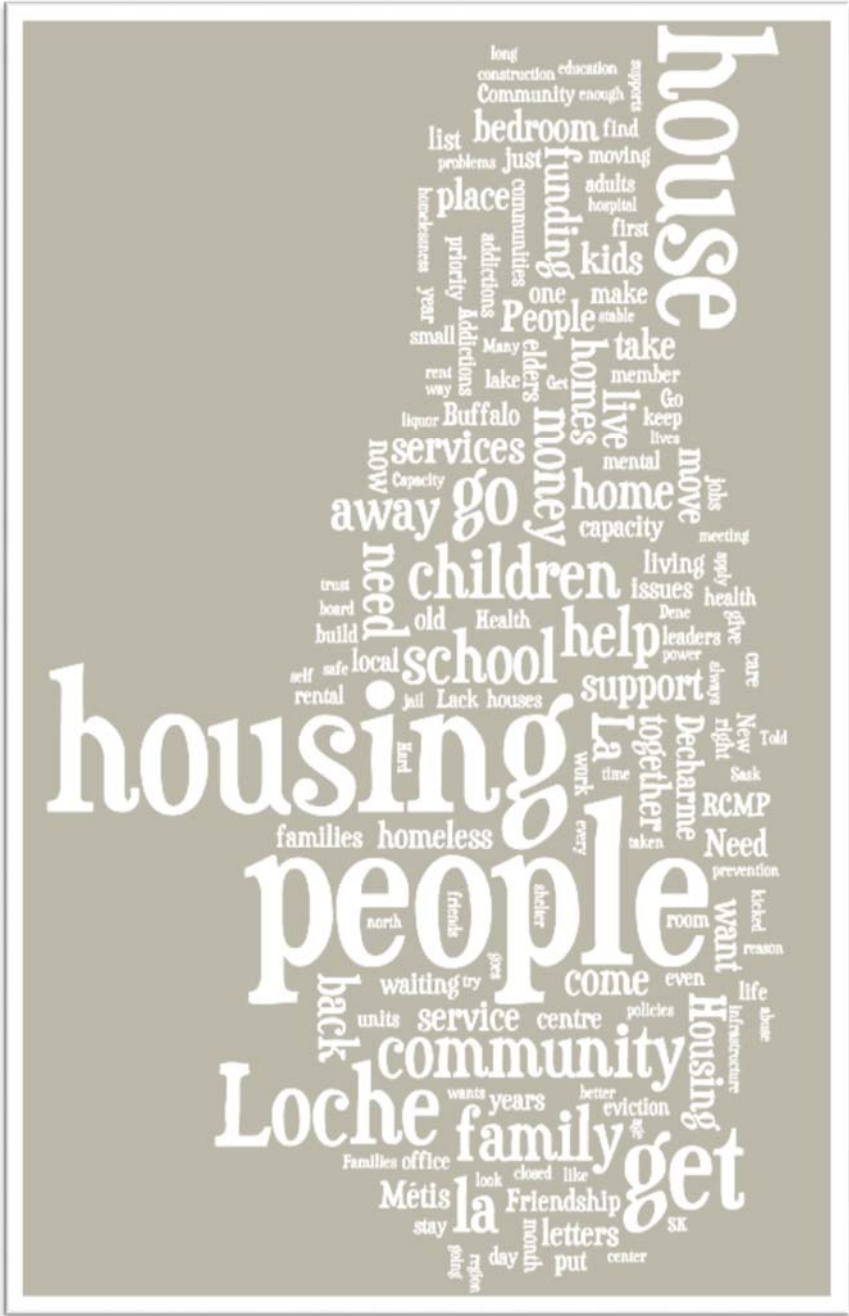
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La Ronge Case Study

Date: December 5, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Danny Roy
Total Number of Participants: 14

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in La Ronge?

While in La Ronge, the Prairie Wild Team had three scheduled meetings and then a tour of Scattered Sites; the first meeting was with a practicing physician at the La Ronge Medical Clinic, the next meeting was set up by the Regional Intersectoral Committee Coordinator in La Ronge inviting service providers to join in a focus group and lastly a meeting with the director of the Ministry of Justice.

In total the focus group had nine participants, while we spoke with two people from Scattered Sites, a physician from the clinic and two people from the Ministry of Justice. The organizations that were represented at the focus group were as follows:

Figure 2: La Ronge Medical Clinic

Figure 3: Mistasinihk Place

Figure 4: Scattered Sites Outreach

- ❖ Lac La Ronge Indian Band Health Services
- ❖ Ministry of Social Services
- ❖ Kidsfirst North
- ❖ Piwapan Women's Shelter
- ❖ La Ronge Northwest Community Initiative
- ❖ Ministry of Education
- ❖ Government Relations Northern Engagement Branch
- ❖ Cognitive Disability Strategy

Our tour at Scattered Sites was very informative. After our tour we sat down with a staff member and briefly interviewed him. We were also invited to tour the area with a probation officer who was very helpful and knowledgeable.

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in La Ronge and area. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

La Ronge is a remote northern community that has many challenges and many benefits. Some of the benefits we heard were the beauty of the landscape, opportunities for education and employment, and of course living right on the lake.

Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Air Ronge, and La Ronge are communities living as one. The Town of La Ronge has a population of approximately 2304, 58.3% being of Aboriginal decent (Statistics Canada, 2011) (City Data, 2015). The Village of Air Ronge has a population of approximately 1035 with 54.4% being of Aboriginal decent (City Data, 2015). Lac La Ronge Indian Band has a population of approximately 1910 with 99% being Aboriginal decent (Statistics Canada, 2011). The populations are all approximate, due to errors in census data and the fact that mobility plays a major role in population fluctuations.
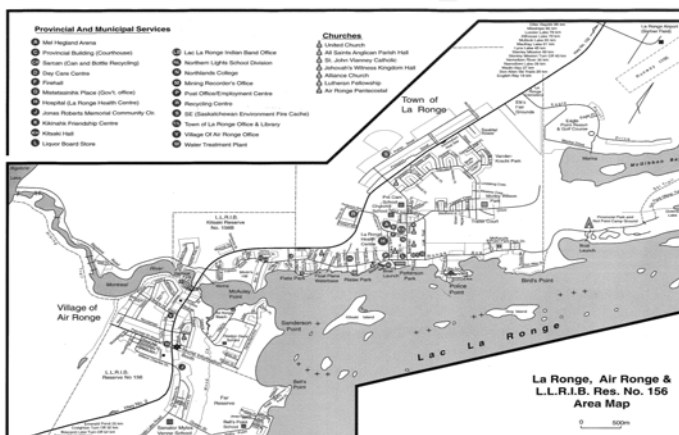
Figure 5: La Ronge and Area

La Ronge has interesting mobility, over the last year most people lived in the same home. In five years many new faces were seen in the community, and people moved quite frequently. This is all shown in the charts below.

La Ronge Moblity Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (1885) — 71%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (450) — 17%
- Lived within the same province (280) — 10%
- Lived in a different province (50) — 2%
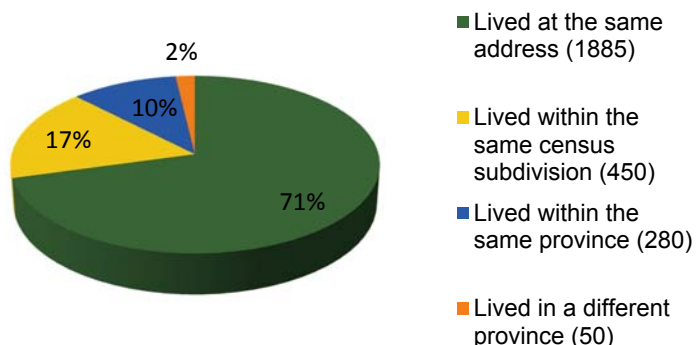
La Ronge Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (1035) — 42%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (735) — 29%
- Lived within the same province (525) — 21%
- Other (195) — 8%
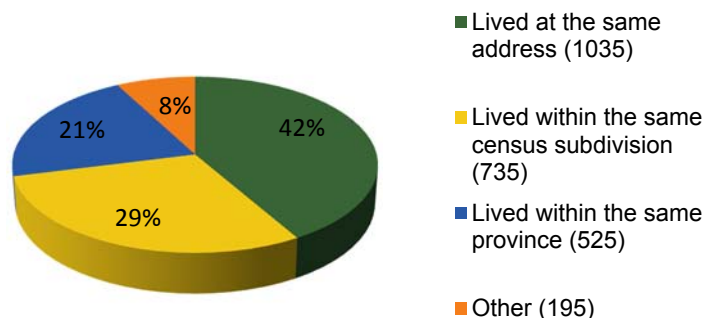
The languages that are most often spoken other than English is Cree, Dené, and French respectively (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Lands of Lac La Ronge First Nation are dispersed throughout the community, making boarders indistinguishable.

Tourism, retail, primary resources, government services and healthcare are the top industries in the job market for the area.

Key Outcomes

La Ronge is a community that is near isolation in Saskatchewan's North. This town has many amenities that other northern communities do not have. People from all over the north come to La Ronge for basic services like healthcare, food and government services.

What is there for services?

Service providers in La Ronge are very dedicated to the community. They offer services like family counselling and education, women's shelter, meal programs, laundry services, social services, income assistance, and rehabilitation services for recently incarcerated persons to name a few.

Distance in km from La Ronge to…
Prince Albert: 241
Saskatoon: 380
Buffalo Narrows: 335
Meadow Lake: 373
Creighton: 397

At-a-glance: Housing in La Ronge
Total Private Households by Size: 840
1 person: 185
2 persons: 270
3 persons: 150
4 persons: 130
5 persons: 65
6 or more persons: 40

Below is a list of organizations that deal directly or indirectly with homelessness.

- ❖ Cognitive Disability Strategy
- ❖ Keewatin Career Development Corporation
- ❖ Kids First North
- ❖ Kikinahk Friendship Centre
- ❖ Northern Education Office – Ministry of Education
- ❖ La Ronge Community Corrections – Ministry of Justice
- ❖ La Ronge Health Centre
- ❖ La Ronge Income Assistance – Ministry of Social Services
- ❖ La Ronge Medical Clinic
- ❖ Lac La Ronge Indian Band Health Services
- ❖ Mamawetan Churchill River Regional Health Authority
- ❖ New North
- ❖ NORTEP-NORPAC Inc
- ❖ Northern Engagement – Ministry of Government Relations
- ❖ Northern Human Services Partnership
- ❖ Piwapan Women's Shelter
- ❖ Population Health Unit Northern Saskatchewan
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – La Ronge Detachment
- ❖ Scattered Sites Outreach

At-a-glance: Housing in La Ronge
Total Private Dwellings: 960
Occupied Private Dwellings: 840
Single-detached houses: 515
Movable dwellings: 40
Semi-detached houses: 35
Row houses: 15
Duplexes: 10
Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 215
Single-attached houses: 10

What is housing like in La Ronge?

The lack of housing in La Ronge is one of their biggest challenges. Many homes are unsafe and overcrowded and people are forced to live in sheds and trailers in the backyards of their friends and family. La Ronge has seen deaths related to freezing, damage from fires and illness related to overcrowding conditions. Scattered Sites is trying to help by creating a cold weather shelter, unfortunately the building they have is not equipped to house people.

Mobility and transiency is another major issue. La Ronge, other than Prince Albert is the last bigger centre northwards. This makes temporary homelessness a big factor. People are brought to La Ronge for court, healthcare and so much more, and then have no way of getting back to the community they are from. Some communities have shuttles for healthcare, but many people either 'catch-rides' or hitchhike. With the high number of people who are experiencing temporary homelessness, people are brought to the hospital or to the RCMP depot to spend the night depending on where they are best suited or their current situation.

Figure 6-8: Examples of inadequate and unsafe housing in La Ronge and area

What other factors contribute to homelessness in La Ronge?

La Ronge is a unique community in that a number of communities have melded together, making jurisdictional boundaries almost impossible to locate. To put this into context, one building can be on Reserve while the building directly beside it is Off-Reserve. This applies to both services and housing and creates a major barrier for service providers. It was discussed in a number of meetings the need to blur lines between federal and provincial boundaries, which includes On and Off-Reserve and policy and legislative boundaries.

Figure 9: Example of blurred jurisdictional lines in La Ronge

Figure 10: Lac La Ronge

Living on the lake creates access for residents that may not otherwise have transportation; this includes boating in the summer and walking across the ice and snowmobiling in the winter. Many people in La Ronge can't afford transportation, so many people walk, this is very difficult all year round because walking in the summer can sometimes triple the length of your destination by walking around lakes in the summer and the risk of freezing is too great in the winter. As seen in the picture to the right, trails have been created for snowmobiles and walking across the frozen lake from nearby Reserve housing to the town of La Ronge seen across the lake.
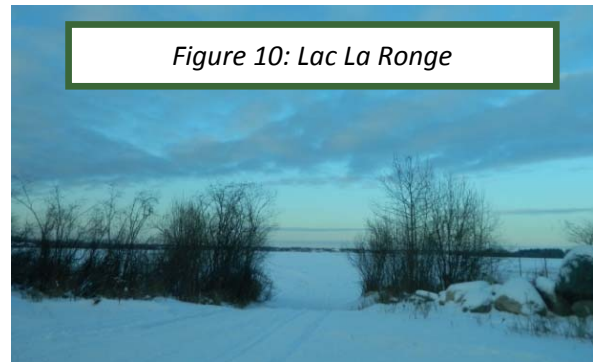
Addiction is one of the biggest problems for La Ronge and the north. We heard a new term in La Ronge, 'house surfing', unlike moving from couch to couch looking for a place to spend the night, people are moving from house to house looking for the next house party. 'House surfing' enables people to find a place to stay for the night but only adds to addictions, especially alcoholism.

Goods like food and fuel are more expensive in northern communities. Transportation costs along with isolation makes the costs of living higher. The isolation and high costs also make the lack of housing greater, because the costs to bring workers and materials is far higher than other communities in the southern half of the province. Lack of infrastructure is also

Figure 11: La Ronge Liquor Store

contributed to this.

Health and illness are factors seen in La Ronge. Tuberculosis (TB) is directly related to inadequate housing. This disease for the most part has been eradicated in the rest of the province, but poverty is multiplied in the north. Other illnesses that can be related to homelessness and poverty are HIV and Aids, women and men share addictions and sexual relations, sometimes just for a place to stay a night. Mental illness is another factor that contributes to homelessness and the stigma around mental health.

Lack of literacy and education, including language barriers are also seen as contributing factors of homelessness. Filling out forms for social housing can be made several times more difficult because English being a second language to some causes a language barrier. A lack of literacy and understanding words or phrases that are more academic or colonial also contributes to difficulties.

Service providers go above and beyond their job descriptions and organizational mandates, but programs and services are in need of funding. Programs and services are hurting and service providers do what they can to provide the best service they can with what little funding they have. More programs are needed to help the community, but limited funding is available.

Has there been other research done in this area?

Out of the literature relating to homelessness reviewed for this project, only two articles came up with the north as a focal point. The first document was the "Northern Saskatchewan Health Indicators Report 2011" written by Dr. James Irvine, Brian Quinn and Donna Stockdale. The second document that was relevant to La Ronge and area was "Northern Housing in Saskatchewan: A Discussion Paper April 2011" written by Michael Quennell. Both reports contained information on the health effects of housing.

La Ronge currently does not have any formal planning documents to address homelessness, but some data is being provided by community based organizations to help start the process.

Summary of Observations

Figure 12: Lac La Ronge

La Ronge's service providers are in a continuous partnership to help alleviate the challenges in the community and this partnership is very successful. Although La Ronge is successful and has many benefits, its challenges seem to be outweighed. There are many job opportunities and educational opportunities in La Ronge, but the farther north you go the fewer and fewer opportunities and services are available. This goes to show that La Ronge being the last community to have full services is hub for the north.

Community Strengths

La Ronge is a beautiful community surrounded by lakes and forest. Tourism thrives all year round. People in the community, even people not native to the area have fallen in love with the community. Children are accepting and are seen playing together all around town. While community members are blessed to be able to end work at 5 o'clock and be fishing and boating at 5:10. The incredible scenery and some lavish cabins and homes are considered a paradise to visitors.

Causes of Homelessness in La Ronge

The major issues that La Ronge faces are the lack of housing, addictions and health problems and jurisdictional barriers that service providers run into far too often. Low literacy, language barriers and lack of funding make providing services difficult at the best of times.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of La Ronge said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used.

If you look at the Wordle in a first glance many words 'pop out': "north", "place", "housing", "health", "need" and "people."

Figure 5: La Ronge community voice
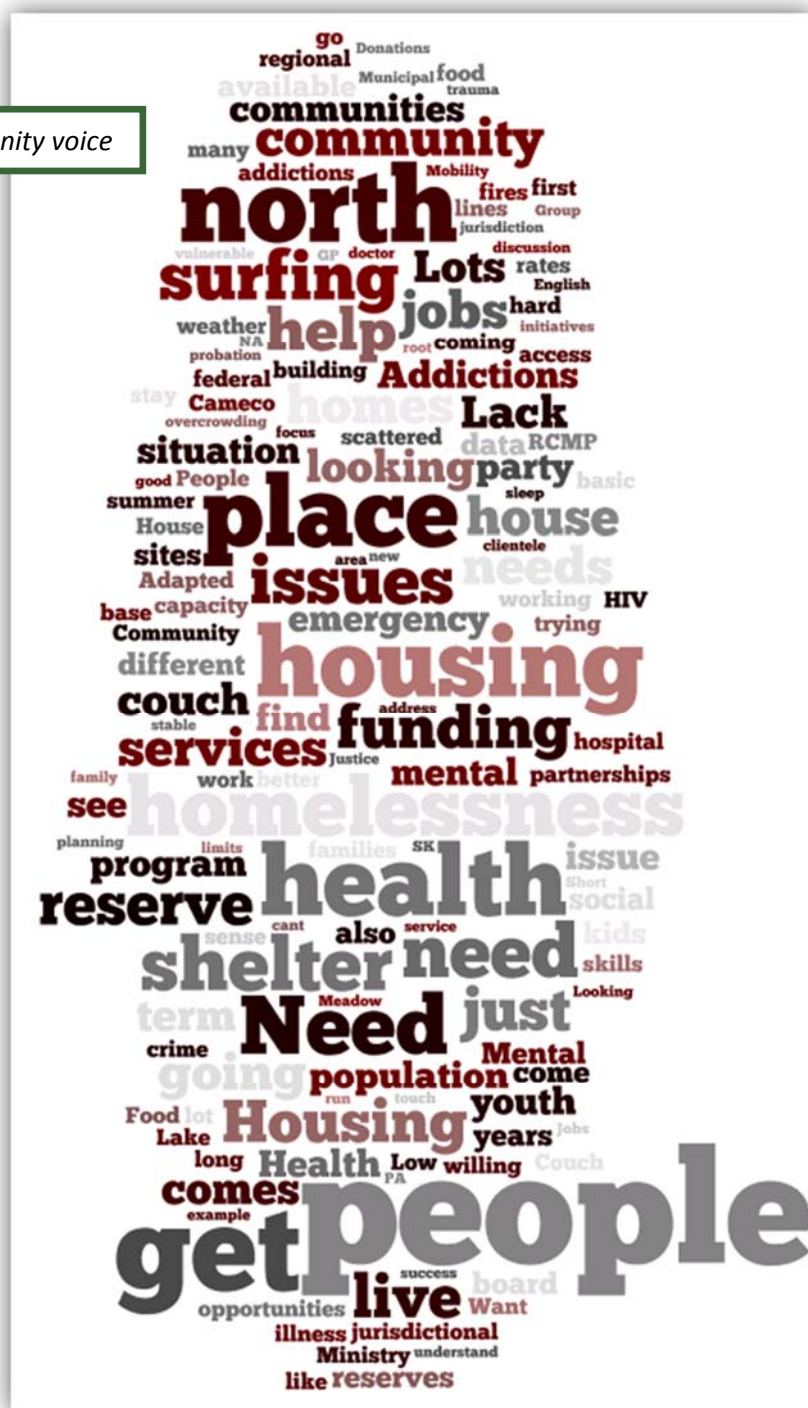
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Lloydminster Case Study

Date: November 12, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 12

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methodology

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Lloydminster?

Prairie Wild's visit to Lloydminster had 2 scheduled stops. The morning and over the lunch hour was spent at the Lloydminster Friendship Centre. This was an ideal place to start because of the come and go atmosphere, bread basket and weekly soup and bannock lunch. We had 11 participants that actively spoke with us and provided valuable information. The next scheduled meeting was at St. John's Anglican Church, where we spoke with the reverend that plays an instrumental part in the community providing services like a youth centre, soup kitchen, resource fairs and a men's shelter.

Figure 2: Lloydminster Friendship Centre, Bread and Baked Goods Give Away

How was information gathered?

By having semi-structured interviews, we were able to speak to more people at the friendship centre and gain trust in the beginning of each conversation. Data that was gathered was qualitative through the conversation, and some quantitative data was given to us by the church for the men's shelter and for Métis Housing.

Figure 3: St. John's Anglican Church

These conversations, although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind, were structured with questions that were prepared earlier and topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Lloydminster. This included a thorough conversation regards these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness

❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to?" After all the topic areas were covered we would make sure that any questions the participant had was answered, we gathered other contact information that the participant recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Lloydminster is a unique community in that it straddles the Saskatchewan/Alberta border therefore there are two sets of census data. On the Saskatchewan side, the total population is 9772, with 1075 self identifying as Aboriginal equal to 11%. On the Alberta side, the total population is 18032, with 1520 self identifying as Aboriginal equal to .08%. The challenge with census data is that numbers may be lower due to difficulties getting statistical data for small communities. Another reason for skewed numbers is that the population fluctuates with people coming and going on and off Reserves, for education, employment or other reasons.

Lloydminster's situation for mobility is ever changing. Below are two charts that display mobility over one year and over five years. Most people stay in their homes for a year, but move every five years into a new census area or across the boarder.

Lloydminster Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (8745) — 80%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (1075) — 10%
- Lived within the same province (680) — 6%
- Other (380) — 4%

Lloydminster Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (4865) — 48%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (2475) — 24%
- Lived within the same province (1770) — 17%
- Lived in a different province (1085) — 11%
- 0%
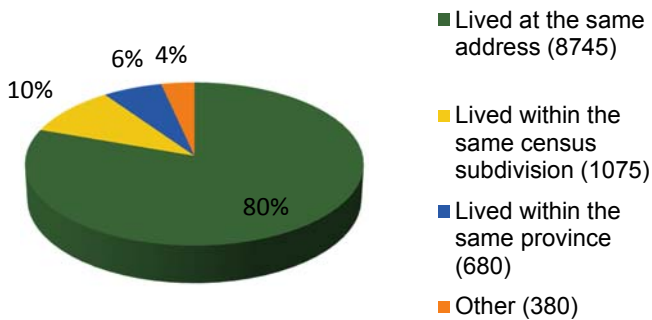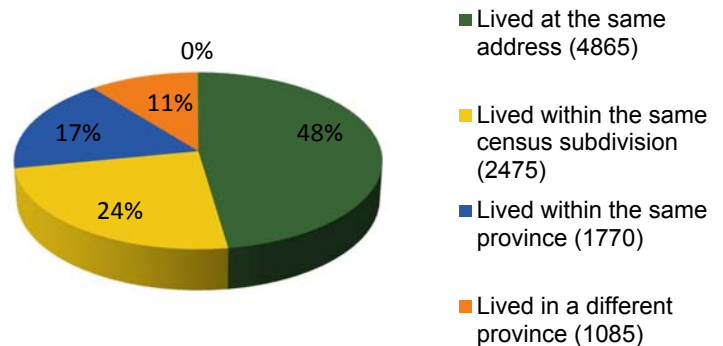
Being a part of the central west region there are a number of First Nations Reserves surrounding Lloydminster: Little Pine First Nation, Poundmaker First Nation, Island Lake First Nation, Thunderchild First Nation and Onion Lake First Nation. In addition to the First Nation Reserves Lloydminster sits in the Western Region Ia in the Métis Nation, with two locals: #18 and #76.

English is most often spoken in Lloydminster but of course other languages are heard around the city like Cree, Tagalog (Philipino), and Urdu (Statistics Canada, 2011).

The key sectors in Lloydminster are: agriculture, oil and gas, retail and service industry (Lloydminster Economic Development, 2014). Because the job market is so open, many people commute to Lloydminster for work. There are even shuttles from surrounding First Nations, like Onion Lake, to Lloydminster in the morning and from Lloydminster in the evening. Because Lloydminster is known as a 'oil town'. The job market has a surplus of work, many employers have trouble retaining employees, and many people end up leaving for Fort McMurray or Edmonton.

Key Outcomes

The border dissects the city and there are challenges that go along with provincial jurisdiction. Challenges include housing, education and health care for the public. For example if you live on the Alberta side of the border you can not apply for SK Housing or Métis Housing but you could access the care homes and the doctor that provides the referrals to care homes on the Alberta side. To clarify, a table is provided outlining which services are available on either side of the border.

Alberta	Saskatchewan
❖ Care homes	❖ Social housing
❖ Doctor for referrals	➢ SK Housing
❖ Home care	➢ Métis Housing
❖ Time zone	❖ Public and Catholic schools
	❖ Public health care

What is there for services?

Lloydminster has many services and supports for people experiencing homelessness, but because of the higher population and booming economy capacity is always at its maximum. This is especially true for the Men's Shelter.

Challenges that were mentioned, especially in winter, are places to go during the day to stay warm. The men's shelter is at capacity every night and detox centres are more utilized as a safe and warm place to spend 21 days. During the day people will go to places like the library, the hockey arena or the friendship centre.

Some services have come to a halt, like the Salvation Army Family Care Centre and Food Bank. But some other services are arising, like the Lloydminster Transition Home now in the process of coming to fruition.

Figure 4: Lloydminster Hockey Arena
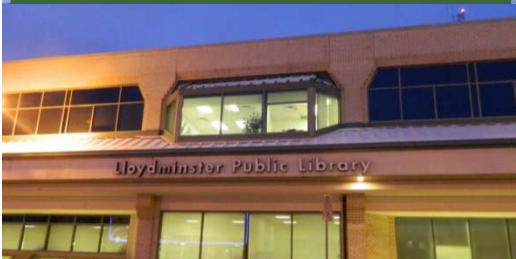
Figure 5: Lloydminster Public Library

Below is a list of organizations that deal directly or indirectly with homelessness.

❖ Carleton Housing
❖ Family & Community Support Services – Lloydminster

- ❖ Lloyd Housing Authority
- ❖ Lloydminster and District Co-op Ltd. (Public Health Services)
- ❖ Lloydminster Area Drug Strategy
- ❖ Lloydminster Community Youth Centre
- ❖ Lloydminster Interval Home
- ❖ Lloydminster Men's Shelter
- ❖ Lloydminster Métis Housing Group Inc.
- ❖ Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre
- ❖ Lloydminster Region Housing Group
- ❖ Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan Inc. (aka MUHAS) – Lloydminster
- ❖ Native Counselling Services of Alberta
- ❖ Olive Tree
- ❖ Prairie North Health Region
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Lloydminster Detachment
- ❖ Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services – Lloydminster
- ❖ St. John's Anglican Church

What is housing like in Lloydminster?

When people who are experiencing homelessness cannot find places to stay with family or friends or go to the men's shelter will usually go to a place called 'coyote flats', which are shelters built around the railroad tracks. Some of these shelters are made of cardboard and others are small shacks that have been abandoned. The people that take shelter in 'coyote flats' are the chronically homeless in Lloydminster. Some face mental illness and some face addictions, some just have nowhere else to turn.

Figure 6: Coyote Flats

Housing is available in Lloydminster, but only if you can afford it. People are living in unsafe conditions and overcrowding conditions because of the lack of affordable housing. This not only includes social housing and subsidized housing but also the lack of transitional housing and group homes. Many single persons are forced to couch surf because of the lack of housing that one person could afford.
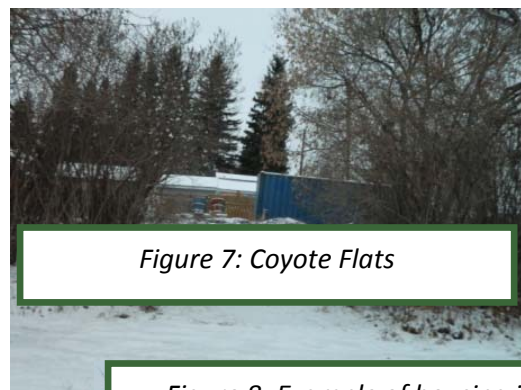
Figure 7: Coyote Flats

What factors contribute to homelessness in Lloydminster?
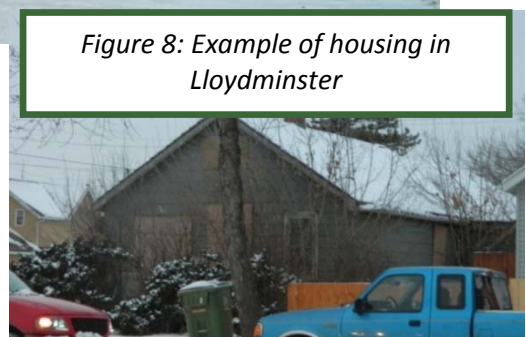
Figure 8: Example of housing in Lloydminster

Other factors of homelessness that the community mentioned were the expensive costs of living, other than housing. Transportation seems so out of reach for some people. Food needs also go unmet, but thankfully the Lloydminster Friendship Centre, Olive Tree and St. John's Anglican Church take on the role of serving hot meals during the week.

Another major issue that Lloydminster has that can be a direct result from homelessness and cold weather are fires. Many people will live in sheds or houses that have been boarded up and condemned. Fires are simply a necessity to stay survive and are used because of no heat and no electricity. Fires can easily get out of hand and become dangerous when they go unwatched.

Health is another factor that contributes to homelessness. Physical or mental disabilties can sometimes become barriers to work, therefore incomes are much less. Mental illness and addictions adds to the stigma of persons that are not suitable for housing because of property damage. One option that was mentioned by the community was to bring a wet shelter, a place where someone could stay regardless of intoxication.

Other than the Office of Residential Tenancies, advocacy is very limited. This lack of advocacy only adds to the homelessness that Lloydminster faces.

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Lloydminster**
> Total Private Dwellings: 4002
> Occupied Private Dwellings: 3680
> Single-detached houses: 2455
> Apartments with more than 5 storeys: 70
> Movable dwellings: 80
> Semi-detached houses: 140
> Row houses: 250
> Duplexes: 35
> Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 650

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Lloydminster**
> Total Private Households by Size: 3685
> 1 person: 880
> 2 persons: 1150
> 3 persons: 700
> 4 persons: 550
> 5 persons: 260
> 6 or more persons: 140

Has there been other research done in this area?

Although no formal research has been done in Lloydminster, the service providers such as St. John's Anglican Church are striving to change that. They have done their own research and statistical data and are urging the City of Lloydminster to join in their pursuit of ending homelessness. Other data that has been collected for research purposes comes from the housing corporations.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

Lloydminster is a community with many benefits, because they are situated on the border of two provinces, they are able to forgo paying provincial taxes. They also have a great downtown filled with historic and beautiful buildings. They have a strong

Figure 9: Lloydminster Fire Hall

economy which can be seen through the wide array of services and jobs available.

Service providers are community members and they strive to do the best they can to help the community in any way they can.

Causes of Homelessness in Lloydminster

Lloydminster is accustom to boom and bust economies and some challenges and benefits have come from this economic fluctuation. In Lloydminster the unique case of a community straddling two provinces make for more challenges for services and basic accommodations are meeting the needs of the high population and high transiency rates. Many service providers are doing their best providing for people in need, but when it comes down to it, there just isn't enough in the way of capacity to provide for everyone needing a place to stay. Mental health and addictions was again are a major player in homelessness in Lloydminster. The homelessness community in Lloydminster is a close community that looks after each other and enjoys each other's company, this observation was clear when Lloydminster Friendship Centre held their weekly soup and bannock lunch and coffee throughout the day.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. To the right is a wordle of what the community members of Lloydminster said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the information that was gathered in a program and that program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequent the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, three words that stand out: "Shelter", "Housing" and "People."

Figure 10: Wordle of Lloydminster's community voice

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North Battleford Case Study

Date: November 13, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 8

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in North Battleford?

The first community engagment that was scheduled was at the North Battleford Aboriginal Friendship Centre. This was a great place to start our information collection because the friendship centre not only acts as a drop-in centre during the day providing coffee and snacks, but in the evening they open their doors for a cold weather shelter and provide breakfast in the morning. We were able to speak with eight people that are experiencing homelessness right now or people that directly deal with homelessness.

Figure 2: Battlefords Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

The second scheduled meeting was at the Battlefords District Food and Resource Centre. This is where we were not only able to interview the manager, but also get some quantitative data. This is very helpful and wood be in the future because food banks started to do a hunger count in 2005 and continue to do so every year, providing valuable data and statistics across the province and the country.

Figure 3: Battlefords District Food and Resource Centre

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in North Battleford. This included a thorough conversation regards these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)

- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to?" After all the topic areas were covered we would make sure that any questions the participant had was answered, we gathered other contact information that the participant recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

North Battleford is a unique heritage filled community in that there are two municipalities joined by a bridge and separated only by the river, one being the City of North Battleford and the other being the Town of Battleford. Having historic attractions like Fort Battleford, this makes the community a place for learning and visiting.

Situated in the Central West part of the province, North Battleford has a unique aspect in that its close proximity to other major centres, that being Saskatoon and Lloydminster.

North Battleford located in the Métis Nation Region Ia and has a number of First Nations Reserves surrounding it, below is a list.

- ❖ Moosomin First Nation
- ❖ Sweetgrass First Nation
- ❖ Sualteaux First Nation
- ❖ Poundmaker First Nation
- ❖ Lean Man First Nation
- ❖ Red Pheasant First Nation
- ❖ Little Pine First Nation
- ❖ Lucky Man First Nation
- ❖ Thunderchild First Nation
- ❖ Muskeg Lake First Nation

Distance in km from North Battleford to...
Town of Battleford: 6
Saskatoon: 137
Lloydminster: 139
Prince Albert: 207
Meadow Lake: 158

Mobility for this area is not unlike other communities. For the most part people try to stay in the same home for at least one year. Movement in the community usually is seen around the five year mark. This is shown in the charts below.

North Battleford Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (13705): 80%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (2040): 12%
- Lived within the same province (1045): 6%
- Other (285): 2%
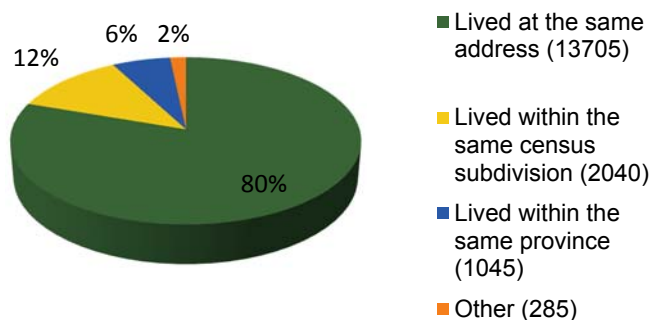
North Battleford Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (91200): 57%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (3820): 24%
- Lived within the same province (2255): 14%
- Other (900): 5%
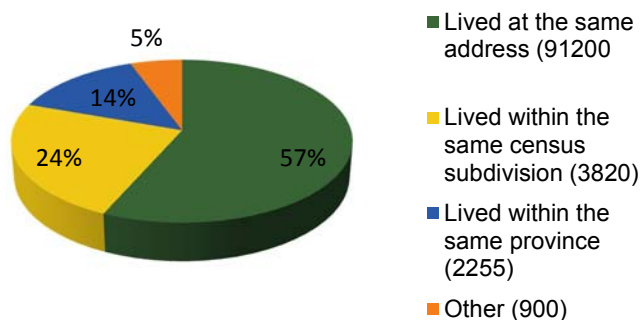
The City of North Battleford's total population is 13,888 and of that 3,255 are Aboriginal (Statistics Canada 2011). On the other side of the North Saskatchewan River, the Town's population is 4,065 and of that 950 are Aboriginal (Statistics Canada 2011). The diversity of North Battleford can also be seen through the major languages spoken: English, Cree, Ukrainian, Tagalog (Philipino), and German Statistics Canada 2011). Populations can fluctuate with the mobility of people coming On and Off-Reserve and because data may vary depending on accuracy of the census.

North Battleford's job market is very broad, some of the largest established businesses are: Kindersley Transport, EnviroSafe Chemicals, Grit Industries, G & C Asphalt, Anderson Pumphouse, Unicon Pipeline, and major grain handling companies like Cargill Ltd (City of North Battleford, 2011). Outside of industry, the next major employer in North Battleford is the Gold Eagle Casino.

Figure 4: Gold Eagle Casino – North Battleford

Key Outcomes

Dedication is prevalent in North Battleford, service providers not only provide services that many people need, they also provide someone to turn to for help, friendship and so much more. For example the food bank is known to help surrounding communities, like Turtleford, who are in need of food and clothing.

Due to the location of North Battleford and the close proximity to other communities, transients are common. The means that the population who migrate need shelter for short term stays, although this is not to say that North Battleford doesn't have people that are from the community or surrounding areas experiencing homelessness.

At-a-glance: Housing in North Battleford
Total Private Dweillings: 6195
Occupied Dwellings: 5770
Single-detached: 3975
Apartment with 5 or more storeys: 220
Movable dwellings: 40
Semi-detached houses: 185
Row houses: 220
Duplexes: 90
Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 1045
Single-attached houses: 5

What is there for services?

A variety of services to help the homeless are available from organizations in North Battleford. These include mental health services, health education, needle exchange, addictions counselling, anger management, assistance with the completion of forms, family support programming, child and youth programming, career and vocational counselling, and computer access.

The partnerships of service providers in North Battleford are strong, although communication could be better, referrals to and from the food bank are available and services go above and beyond organizational mandates, like the food bank helping with income tax. This goes without saying that service providers are more than willing to help where ever they can. The Friendship Centre provides advocacy for people and other organizations provide sexual health clinics, needle changes, community gardens, mental health and addictions education and support, youth outreach and wellness programs, and counselling. Below is a list of organizations that deal either directly or indirectly with homelessness.

- ❖ Battleford Family Health Centre
- ❖ Battleford Indian and Métis Friendship Centre
- ❖ Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs
- ❖ Battlefords and Area Sexual Assault Centre
- ❖ Battlefords District Food and Resource Centre
- ❖ Battlefords Residential Services Inc.
- ❖ Battlfords Trade and Education Centre
- ❖ Battlefords Tribal Council
- ❖ BTC Indian Health Services
- ❖ Catholic Family Services of the Battlefords
- ❖ Eagle's Nest Youth Ranch
- ❖ Fort Battleford Urban Métis Development Inc.
- ❖ Government of Saskatchewan
- ❖ Hopeview Recovery Centre
- ❖ Jedidiah Home
- ❖ Kanaweyimik Child and Family Services Inc.

- ❖ Métis Urban Housing Association of Saskatchewan
- ❖ Midwest Food Resources
- ❖ North Battleford Housing Authority
- ❖ North Battleford Transitional Living
- ❖ Pah-ta-Pun First Nations Preschool
- ❖ Prairie Employment Program
- ❖ Prairie North Health Region
- ❖ Prairie North Regional Health Authority
- ❖ Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan
- ❖ Reclaim Outreach Centre
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police- North Battleford Detachment
- ❖ Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

North Battleford is in the process of building a Light House, like the one in Saskatoon. This is more what North Battleford needs according to the community members that spoke with us but service providers at the friendship centre worry because the funding that they receive for their cold weather shelter will be discontinued and given to the Light House.

> **At-a-glance: Housing in North Battleford**
> Total Private households by size: 5770
> 1 person: 1935
> 2 persons: 1870
> 3 persons: 795
> 4 persons: 685
> 5 persons: 285
> 6 or more persons: 200

What is housing like in North Battleford?

Figure 5: Elaborate Period Home – Town of Battleford

Once again we hear of seasonal homelessness, this is where one struggles finding a place to stay during the winter, and usually ends up going 'home' to resort villages, like Cochin during the summer because it is easier to live outside. The friendship centre recognized the amount of people that needed somewhere to stay in the winter, and set up a cold weather shelter six months out of the year. The cold weather shelter is so recognized that RCMP and paramedics are known to drop people off at the friendship centre.

Figure 6: Trailer Park – City of North Battleford

Housing costs are high; many people will live in overcrowded situations just to be able to afford rent collectively. Social housing is limited and waiting times can take years. Low income jobs and social assistants just don't provide enough income for housing and other costs of living, like food, transportation and utilities.

Violence becomes another major factor in housing. One place in the community known for its high crime rate is the trailer park. Vandalism and home break and enters are common, which has a direct link to poverty.

On the other hand of poverty comes wealth, and some homes in the Town of Battleford and on the edge of the City of North Battleford are extravagant. This seems to add to the stratification of classes in Battleford.

What other factors contribute to homelessness in North Battleford?

Figure 7: North Battleford Liquor Store
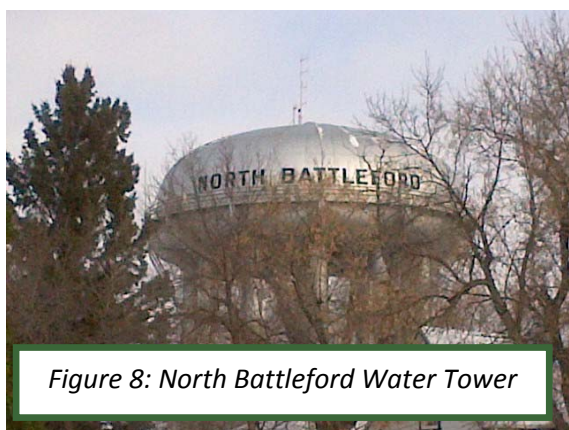
Figure 8: North Battleford Water Tower

Two other major factors in North Battleford that contribute to homelessness in one way or another are mental illness and addictions.

Addiction comes in many forms, but the most common in North Battleford are alcoholism and gambling. Because the casino in town provides many jobs, the addiction is hard to turn away from.

Mental illness is a contributing factor because of the role it plays on independency, employment and overall wellbeing. Housing is vital to a person's wellbeing and being homeless or at risk of homelessness is an added stress to one's wellbeing (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2014).

Has there been other research done in this area?

No formal research has been done for North Battleford and area; this includes any documentation on housing strategies or plans to end homelessness.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

Historic and monumental, the Battleford's have had the pleasure of being home to the Royal North West Mounted Police. Along with its historic value and tourism, recreation and community ties are strengths of the Battlefords. Being only a short distant to Table Mount Regional Park and a number of lakes, the beauty and recreation makes North Battleford and area a treasured destination.

Causes of Homelessness in North Battleford

There seems to be a booming economy in North Battleford, lots of jobs exists, lots of housing and services but the key challenges are: mental illness, addictions, rents being too high, overcrowding, inadequate housing and long waitlists for social housing.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. The next page is a Wordle of what the community members of North Battleford said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, a few words stand out: "Food Bank", "Housing", "People" and "Homeless."
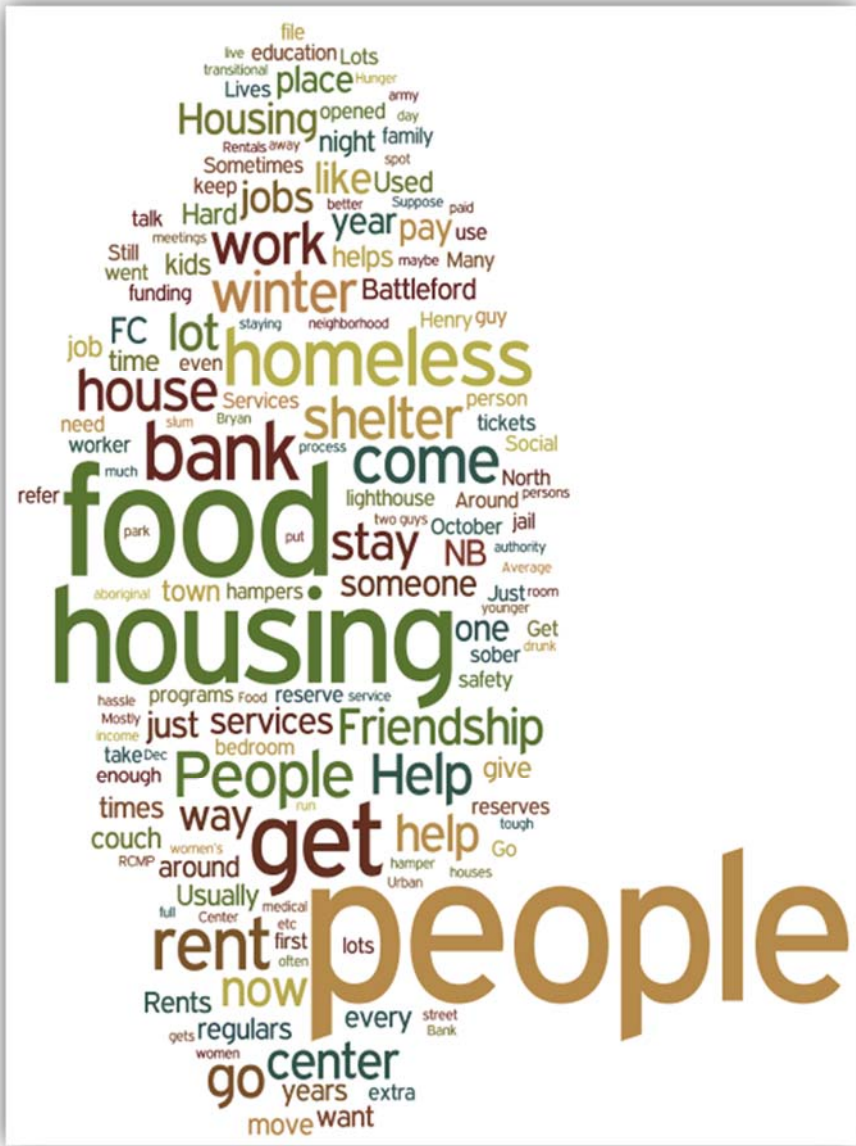
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Prince Albert Case Study

Date: December 4 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Danny Roy
Total Number of Participants: 10

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Prince Albert?

Prince Albert's visit started with three scheduled meetings and ended up with an extra recommended tour. First we met with the Director at the Prince Albert Food Bank, and then a meeting was scheduled at the YWCA to speak with their Director and the Director of the PA Outreach Program. The third meeting was at the Prince Albert Friendship Centre and had some short interviews with people experiencing homelessness. After that we were invited by the YWCA to take a tour of their shelter called Our House.

Throughout the semi-structured interviews some quantitative data was given. This helped to balance the qualitative and quantitative data. In total we were able to speak with eleven participants, one from the Food Bank, two at the YWCA, and six at the Friendship Centre, and one at Our House.

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Prince Albert. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the

Figure 2: Prince Albert Share-a-Meal Food Bank

Figure 3: YWCA Prince Albert
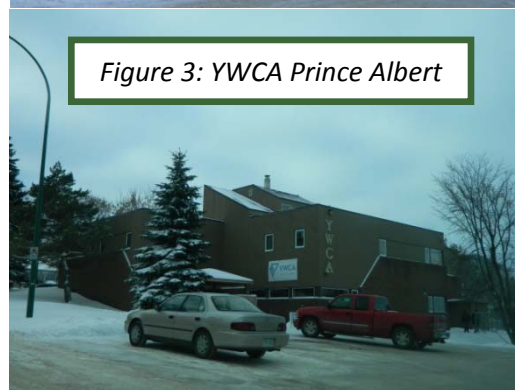
Figure 4: Prince Albert Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

Figure 5: Our House

communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other

> *"Homeless people don't vote, therefore there is no political will to make changes"*
>
> *Quote from a service provider*

contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Prince Albert is a unique city because it is considered the gateway to the north. Many people migrate to Prince Albert from parts of the north because of geographical location and because it is the last city with full services and amenities. Another unique geographical fact is that Prince Albert is centreed in the middle of the province.

The population of the city is 34,270 and of that 13,345 or 38.9% is Aboriginal (Statistics Canada, 2011). According to the City of Prince Albert the population is at 44,437. These numbers may fluctuate due mobility between communities and less accuracy in data. Mobility within the community is seen in the charts below, outlining one and five year periods.

Prince Albert Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (32075) — 82%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (4430) — 11%
- Lived within the same province (2200) — 6%
- Other (480) — 1%
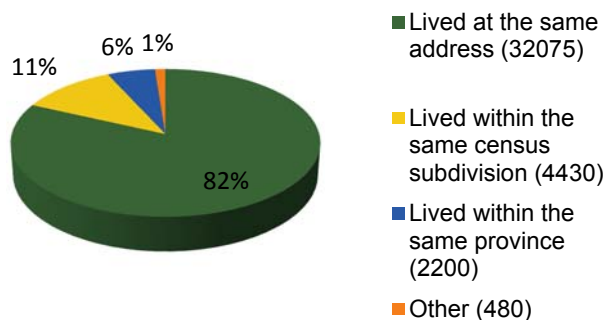
Princ Albert Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (21030) — 57%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (9690) — 26%
- Lived within the same province (4615) — 12%
- Other (1665) — 5%
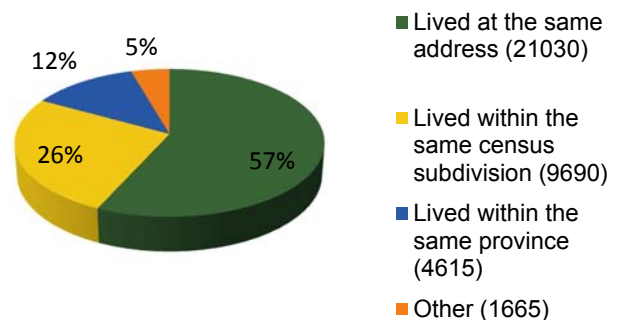
The city is surrounded by a number of First Nation Reserves:
- ❖ Wahpeton Dakota Nation
- ❖ Sturgeon Lake First Nation

- ❖ Muskoday First Nation
- ❖ Kawacatoose First Nation
- ❖ Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation
- ❖ Muskeg Lake First Nation

- ❖ Mistawasis First Nation
- ❖ Atakakoop First Nation
- ❖ Montreal Lake First Nation
- ❖ James Smith First Nation

Prince Albert's first language, that is most often spoken is English, after that some Cree and Dené is spoken as well.

The job market in Prince Albert is mainly focused on retail, health care and social assistance, public administration, education, accommodation and food services, and construction. Industries that are at the fore front in Prince Albert include transportation, technology, and forestry, agriculture, fishing and hunting. The wide spread of jobs can reflect the unemployment rate of 10.2 (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Key Outcomes

Being the gateway to the north, Prince Albert has many challenges. Having the primary highways going to the northern half of the province and one of the only ways of crossing the Northern Saskatchewan River, the bridge is on the communities mind as well as those who utilize the city as an access point.

Figure 6: Our House Cold Weather Shelter

Having the amenities that most other northern communities do not have, this adds to the population fluctuations in Prince Albert. People come and go, whether or not they have transportation to Prince Albert just for basic needs services like groceries. Some people are willing to travel upwards of five hours just to purchase groceries and fuel. This means that the entire north, or at least those with transportation, is willing to go the distance for services that they may not have in their own community.

What is there for services?

The YWCA of Prince Albert has become pivotal in the fight against homelessness. Other key players like the Prince Albert Food Bank, PA Outreach and the school board are joining in partnerships to help the success of Prince Albert.

At-a-glance: Housing in Prince Albert
Total Private Households by Size: 13635
1 person: 3875
2 persons: 4485
3 persons: 2100
4 persons: 1745
5 persons: 860
6 or more persons: 575

Little is available advocacy and changes to policies and legislation are not being made. Politics is the least of worries for people experiencing homelessness and so little voice is heard in regards to making critical changes. Service providers are experiencing volunteer burnout. This is where people that are in the front line are leaving work feeling completely

overwhelmed and inevitably need to leave their careers because the stress is too much dealing with situations and pressures of the type of work they are in. This is unfortunate because the service providers and front line workers are the unsung heroes of homelessness.

Services that are available to the public include: emergency shelters for all ages, transition homes for men and women, education for parents, education for employment, fine option programs, emergency food hampers, hot meals, education for health, youth outreach programs, youth activity centre, needle exchanges and counselling for addictions and mental health.

A list of organizations that deal either directly or indirectly with homelessness is provided below:

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Prince Albert**
> Total Private Dwellings: 14779
> Occupied Private Dwellings: 13635
> Single-detached houses: 9070
> Apartments with more than 5 storeys: 690
> Semi-detached houses: 345
> Row houses: 555
> Duplexes: 250
> Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 2725
> Single-attached houses: 10

- ❖ Canadian Red Cross – Prince Albert
- ❖ Children's Haven
- ❖ Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan – Prince Albert
- ❖ Northern Intertribal Health Authority
- ❖ Our House
- ❖ Prince Albert Corps – Salvation Army
- ❖ Prince Albert Grand Council
- ❖ Prince Albert Indian & Métis Friendship Centre
- ❖ Prince Albert Parkland Health Region

- ❖ Prince Albert Safe Shelter for Women
- ❖ Prince Albert Share-a-Meal Food Bank
- ❖ Prince Albert Youth Outreach Program
- ❖ Regional Intersectoral Committee
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police - Prince Albert Detachment
- ❖ SIIT – Prince Albert
- ❖ St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
- ❖ Wan-Ska Cultural School
- ❖ YWCA Prince Albert

What is housing like in Prince Albert?

For Prince Albert there is a major of people that transient, because people go to the city for their needs, whether that be food, family or alcohol. The number one issue we heard in Prince Albert is addictions, people go to the city to 'party' or they are court ordered because they are charged while under the influence and are left stranded once they are released. Many service providers aren't equipped to help people with addictions as mentioned at the food bank. Unlike other places where people who are under the

Figure 7: Prince Albert Train Bridge

influence and have nowhere else to go, they would rather spend the night outside, under the bridge or in the bushes along the railway than go to jail for the night. The YWCA saw the need and vividly remembers people freezing to death outside in Prince Albert, the YWCA has started a cold weather shelter at Our House which hold 10 beds and is a place to go no matter if your intoxicated or not.

In Prince Albert, along with the rest of Saskatchewan, there are more visibly homeless people in the summer. People move along the river bank and the bushes near the railway. There was even a noted family that was stealing power from a big boxed store living near the bushes around the railway.

Low incomes along with high rents are the major factors of homelessness and overcrowding in Prince Albert. Many families will rent a simple home together just to be able to afford rent. This overcrowding leads to tension and stress. Family dynamics play a role in this, multiple generations in one household, family violence is not unheard of.

Figure 8: Bushes and Railway in Prince Albert next to Box Stores

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Prince Albert?
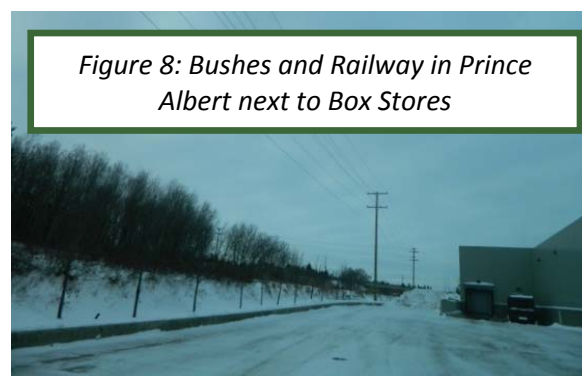
Another factor leading to homelessness and loss of services and programs is the lack of stable funding. Service providers are always looking for ways to help fund the programs they currently have and new and improved programs. Without stable funding, services like the Share-a-Meal Program at the Prince Albert Food Bank are soon to be discontinued. Funding for other programs that the community needs also goes unanswered because stable funding for existing programs is limited. For example the community mentioned warming stations and a drop in centre would be beneficial, but capacity is just not available to make it happen. Hearing from people experiencing homelessness, having a drop in centre would help the risk of danger and violence on the streets.

Service providers are also met with the challenge of space. There simply isn't enough space for programs and for storage, for example the food bank cannot take large food donations because space is limited, but if funding was available, they could afford storage off site and accept large food donations.

Mental illness, once again plays a role in homelessness. This goes on to say that addictions is closely related with mental illness and also plays a role. The stigmas and low tolerance for people with addictions only add to the numbers of people experiencing homelessness.

Challenges with the law and incarceration are another factor of homelessness. Prince Albert being a major hub for the north has people who are charged with criminal offences and are court ordered to be present at the Prince Albert Court House. Transportation provided to the Court House from the RCMP, but if charges are dropped and no conviction is made, than that person is responsible for finding their way home.

Distance in km from Prince Albert to…
La Ronge: 241
Creighton: 404
Sandy Bay: 456
Meadow Lake: 256
Saskatoon: 141

The population in Prince Albert is so split between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people that prejudice and discrimination is prevalent. These racial tensions lead to blacklisting potential renters and users of programs and services.

Has there been other research done in this area?

The City of Prince Albert has provided many forms of research of homelessness. The currently have an *Official Community Plan*, *a Homelessness Strategy 2019* and a *Community Action Plan on Homelessness and Housing*.

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies has also done research for Prince Albert in *Urban First Nations People without Homes in Saskatchewan*.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

Prince Albert is set right in the middle of the province and because of this geography many great lakes are within a short time from Prince Albert. The area is known for its agriculture but also it forest, and it beautiful landscapes and great recreational activities.

Causes of Homelessness in Prince Albert

Lack of affordable housing, lateral family violence, lack of funding for service providers, mental illness and addictions, court ordered travel, transiency, and low incomes are the major factors of homelessness in Prince Albert.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Prince Albert said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, some words stand out: "PA", "Program", "Homeless", "People", and "Get", "Funding."
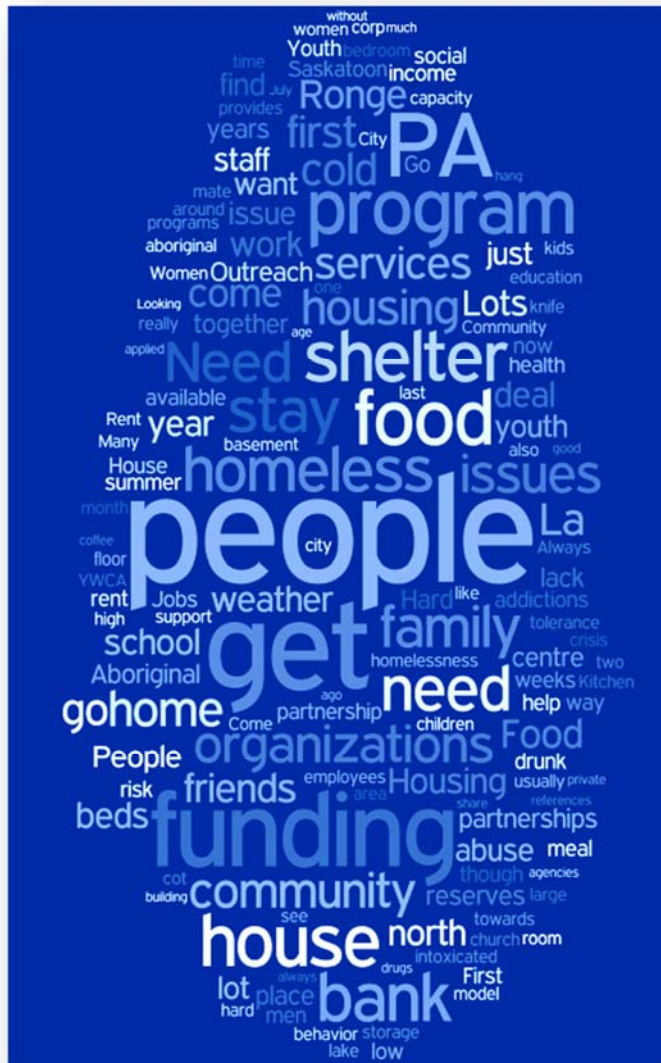
Figure 9: Wordle of Prince Albert's Community Voice

References

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Fort Qu'Appelle Case Study

Date: November 26, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 10

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methodology

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Fort Qu'Appelle?

In Fort Qu'Appelle there were 3 scheduled visits: Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre, All Nations Healing Hospital and Fort Qu'Appelle office of Sask Housing. By speaking with a wide range of community members we were able to gather a lot of quality information. Community members that shared information included: health care providers, former band chiefs, students, social housing providers and people experiencing homelessness and people who directly deal with homelessness. The friendship centre engagement was held like a come and go focus group, while the meetings at the hospital and the housing authority were semi-structured interviews with 2 participants each.

Figure 2: Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre
Figure 3: All Nations Healing Hospital

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Fort Qu'Appelle. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities

- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always included the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

The Qu'Appelle Valley is home to a number of municipalities and their job markets reflect that of a tourism economy. Although Fort Qu'Appelle's geographical location is close to Regina it is still a major hub for the south east of the province. For people looking for services dealing with homelessness there is really only two places to turn to, Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre and the Community Outreach Management Centre, both major players are strong partners always willing to find new sources of funding and new partnership to improve success. Although other partnerships exist, like with Parkland's College, Tribal Council, All Nations Healing Hospital, Métis Housing, and some churches, there is still a long way to go to improve success in the Valley.

The Town of Fort Qu'Appelle has a total population of 2230 people, of that 32% are Aboriginal. Populations tend to fluctuate because of the mobility between communities and challenges with statistical data. Mobility can also be seen in the charts below. The language that is most often spoken in English, with few speaking Cree or Dené (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Fort Qu'Appelle Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

7% 3%
12%
78%

- ■ Lived at the same address (1420)
- ■ Lived within the same province (220)
- ■ Lived within the same census subdivision (135)
- ■ Lived in a different province (45)
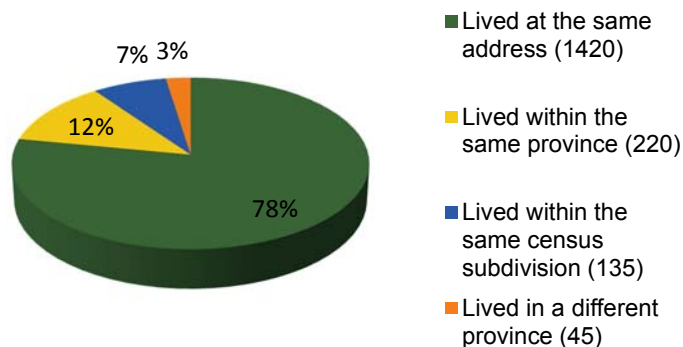
Fort Qu'Appelle Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

5%
15%
24%
56%

- ■ Lived at the same address (965)
- ■ Lived within the same province (410)
- ■ Lived within the same census subdivision (260)
- ■ Lived in a different province (95)
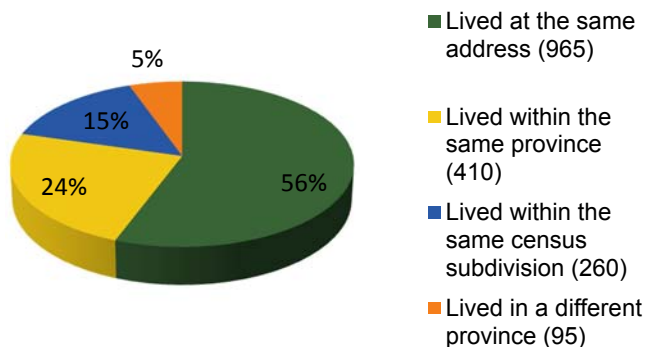
Fort Qu'Appelle is located in the Métis Eastern Region III. Surrounding First Nations Reserves include:

- ❖ Pasqua First Nation
- ❖ Muscowpetung First Nation
- ❖ Piapost First Nation
- ❖ Standing Buffalo First Nation
- ❖ Carry the Kettle First Nation

- ❖ Okanese First Nation
- ❖ Sakimay First Nation
- ❖ Star Blanket First Nation
- ❖ Little Black Bear First Nation

Fort Qu'Appelle has a number of industries thriving within the community. Healthcare, social assistance, retail and public administration take the majority of employment. Fort Qu'Appelle's unemployment rate at 4.2 compared to Saskatchewan's at 5.9 (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Key Outcomes

Qu'Appelle Valley is home to a number of municipalities. Other smaller communities may not have the amenities like that of Fort Qu'Appelle and the rest of the Valley so people tend to commute for services. Below is a list of municipalities in the Calling Lakes District:

Figure 4: Qu'Appelle Valley from Leading Thunderbird Lodge Youth Treatment Centre

- ❖ The Town of Fort Qu'Appelle
- ❖ The Village of Lebret
- ❖ The Resort Village of B Say Tah
- ❖ The Resort Village of Fort San
- ❖ Rural Municipality of North Qu'Appelle
- ❖ The Organized Hamlet of Pasqua Lake
- ❖ The Organized Hamlet of Taylor Beach
- ❖ The Village of Lipton
- ❖ District of Katepwa

What is there for services?

Services in Fort Qu'Appelle range from primary health care to drop in centres. Some service providers help with advocacy and counselling, culturally respective programming and promoting of holistic lifestyles. Other service providers help with education and transportation.

Figure 5: File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council

Below is a list of organizations that deal directly or indirectly with homelessness.

- ∞ All Nations Healing Hospital
- ∞ Community Outreach Management Centre
- ∞ File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council

- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Community Health Services Centre
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Housing Authority
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Senior Citizen Recreation Hall
- ∞ Fort Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre
- ∞ Leading Thunderbird Lodge Youth Treatment Centre
- ∞ Parkland College
- ∞ Qu'Appelle Haven Safe Shelter
- ∞ Royal Canadian Mounted Police - Fort Qu'Appelle Detachment
- ∞ Silver Sage Housing Corporation

Figure 6: Leading Thunderbird Lodge Youth Treatment Centre

What is housing like in Fort Qu'Appelle?

Fort Qu'Appelle deals with multiple housing conditions. Everything from the lack of housing, to housing that is unclean and unsafe to live in. Overcrowding and couchsurfing are regular forms of homelessness in this area.

Housing that is unsafe is major issue; the one issue we heard over and over was black mold. Blame is put on every one and little to no solutions or repairs are completed. This is caused by a number of challenges, one being that a retired elderly man owns private rentals and cannot do repairs himself, while other damages and mold are blamed on the tenant which can be a grounds for eviction.

At-a-glance: Housing in Fort Qu'Appelle
Total Private Dwellings: 926
Occupied Private Dwellings: 890
Single-detached houses: 730
Movable dwellings: 25
Semi-detached houses: 25
Row houses: 40
Duplexes: 10
Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 65

Service providers are the advocates in the community; this includes staff at the friendship centre and instructors at the college. There seems to be an influx of students, youth, and young men getting out of jail that have no place to stay. Staying in risky situations with people they don't get along with or on couches with family and friends where ever they can.

Young girls will try to get pregnant to be placed on the list for housing and be prioritised and young guys will 'hook up' with anyone they can just so they can have a place to stay the night. Service providers see the need for the younger generations and will help by lending a couch where ever they can, which also puts themselves at risk.

Single persons don't bother applying for social housing because they know someone else will be prioritized over them, like women of families with children.

Distance in km from Fort Qu'Appelle to…
Regina: 73
Saskatoon: 330
Melville: 73
Village of Fort San: 5
Village of Lebret: 7

Emergency housing or shelters don't exist in Fort Qu'Appelle, unless you are a woman fleeing from family violence. Services in the area do not provide short term housing or transitional housing. Other basic needs services that are not available include a food bank and organized programs for life skills and employment education.

Where can you go for services that are not provided here?

Fort Qu'Appelle is a short distance to Regina and although many people prefer to stay closer to home, they will travel for services that are not available in Fort Qu'Appelle.

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Fort Qu'Appelle?

Similar to other places in the province, health is a major factor of homelessness. Mental illness and Addictions add to the stigma of renting to unstable people and crime rates due to property damage.

Because there is tension around housing issues and partnerships, the Prairie Wild Team picked up on some discrimination in the region. This is prejudice on a number of levels, divisions of class, divisions of income, division of race and so much more. The tension that was observed in meetings was not only targeted inwards on community members, but also on our Team, which proves that more work is to be done to build good communication and good partnerships, letting go of discriminatory behaviors.

> ***At-a-glance: Housing in Fort Qu'Appelle***
> Total Private Households by Size: 890
> 1 person: 300
> 2 persons: 345
> 3 persons: 105
> 4 persons: 70
> 5 persons: 45
> 6 or more persons: 25

Education and understanding go hand-in-hand for people experiencing homelessness in this area. Lack of education of life skills and employment make it very difficult to find income and save it for basic needs. Closely related to education, is the job market. Finding careers that earn more than part time minimum wage is difficult. Many individuals and families cannot pay for rent along with other costs of living, like transportation, food and utilities.

Policies for social assistance and social housing are other factors of homelessness. The fact is that these need to be updated to meet current economic standards and costs of living. Families and individuals have to rent homes together in secret just to afford rent on social housing.

Winter is exceptionally hard for people looking to find housing. Students among other community members struggle to find homes, or even couches to stay in the winter. In the summer, Qu'Appelle is known for camping and outdoor activities so many sleep outdoors, or go back to home communities and First Nation Reserves.

Has there been other research done in this area?

Although no formal housing strategies or plans have been created for Fort Qu'Appelle and area, the Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre took it upon themselves to do research. In *Determining the Needs of Homeless Aboriginal Youth and Identifying Gaps in Service Delivery in Fort Qu'Appelle and Area* there is research that continues the housing and homelessness discussion for the area. This document was written in 2006 and provided by the Friendship Centre.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

Fort Qu'Appelle and the Fill Hills is a beautiful place all year round. Jobs are entry level and more adequate and safe housing is needed over all. It seems that the younger generations in the Valley are experiencing homelessness more often. Partnerships are on the verge of being successful and with the leadership of the Qu'Appelle Valley Friendship Centre and the Community Outreach Management Centre there is hope for partnerships and a shelter and so much more.

Figure 7: Example of a Heritage Building Fort Qu'Appelle

Rich history and great tourist attractions are always around the corner in Fort Qu'Appelle. Fishing, boating, camping, and beautiful landscapes are just the start of Qu'Appelle Valley's strengths.

Causes of Homelessness in Fort Qu'Appelle

Lack of housing, Lack of education, addictions, mental illness, lack of services for individuals and families, overcrowding, couchsurfing, slum lords, unstable student housing, lack of funding for service providers, unsafe and inadequate housing, lack of jobs, and lack of shelters and out of date policies conclude the factors that contribute to homelessness in Fort Qu'Appelle.

Figure 8: Fort Qu'Appelle Museum

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Fort Qu'Appelle said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and

suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, three words stand out: "Get", "People" and "Housing."

Figure 9: Fort Qu'Appelle Community Voice

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Statistics Canada. 2011. Census Profile. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4706051&Geo2=PR&Code2=12&Data=Count&SearchText=Fort%Qu%27Appelle&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=2 (accessed January 28, 2015).

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Sandy Bay Case Study

Date: December 9, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 26

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Sandy Bay?

Sandy Bay was a very welcoming community, we attended an interagency meeting, and then the town hall opened its boardroom for us to have a community engagement come and go. After the Northeast Regional Housing Authority invited us to speak with them at their office in Sandy Bay. We were able to speak with a large amount of community members and representatives from different organizations.

Figure 2: Northern Village of Sandy Bay Office

- ❖ Addictions
- ❖ Health Region

- ❖ Family Resources Centre
- ❖ Recreation Director
- ❖ Tuberculosis Outreach Nurse
- ❖ Mental Health
- ❖ RCMP
- ❖ Family Resource Centre
- ❖ Mikisew Preschool
- ❖ Victim Services
- ❖ Hector Thiboutot Community School
- ❖ Northeast Regional Housing Authority
- ❖ Administrator for the Town
- ❖ Town employees
- ❖ Elders
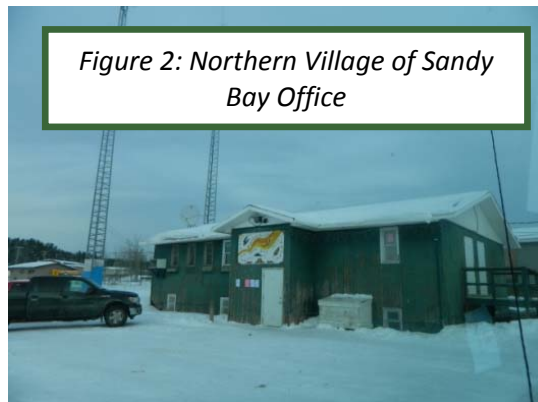
Figure 3: Northeast Regional Housing Authority
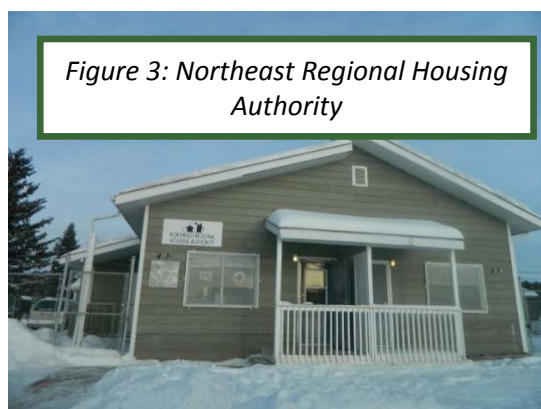
Figure 4: Sandy Bay General Store

The interagency meeting was held like a focus group and the other meetings were held as informal interviews. Everyone was eager to share their stories. The recent closer of the community store has made access to fresh healthy food limited. By bringing healthy snacks, and having the town office provide coffee, we were able to have more people open up.

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Sandy Bay. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Sandy Bay is a Northern Village on the northeastern side of the province. This community was the furthest north and east that the Prairie Wild Team traveled to. It is located in the Eastern Region I of the Métis Nation and on Treaty 10 lands. Sandy Bay has a 98.3% Aboriginal population. Statistics Canada shows the population at 1230 while the Saskatchewan's Bureau of Statistics shows the population at 1233. Little discrepancy is between the two numbers because of low accuracy in census data for small and remote communities, as well as high amounts of mobility. Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation is the only First Nation within 100 km of Sandy Bay. Mobility is also shown in the pie charts below. Over one and five year periods.

English and Cree are the main languages spoken in Sandy Bay. For some English is a second language, especially for elders and people that live in even more isolation.

Sandy Bay Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

4%

96%

■ Lived at the same address (1110)
■ Other (45)

Sandy Bay Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- 5%
- 13%
- 82%

■ Lived at the same address (800)

■ Lived within the same census subdivision (125)

■ Other (50)
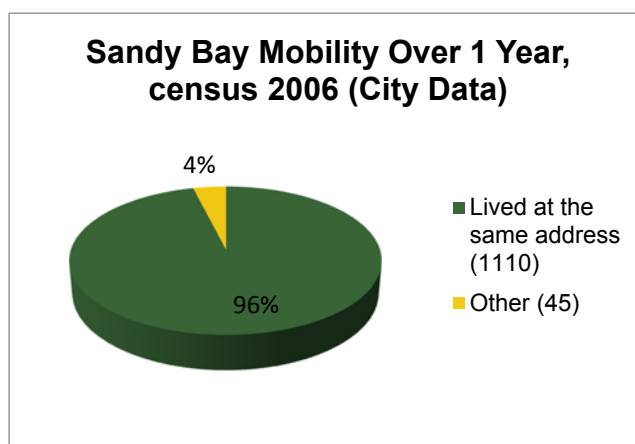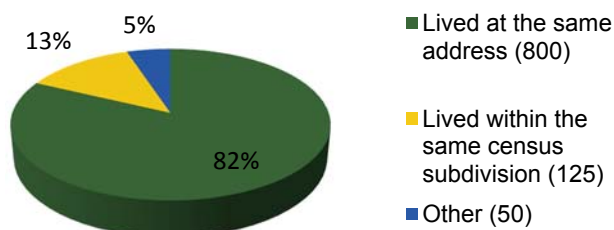
Isolation includes only one road in and out of Sandy Bay fit for vehicles on Highway 135. Other ways of transportation are boat and plane.

Jobs are scarce in Sandy Bay and with the closing of the grocery store, fewer jobs exist. Service providers are really the only ones in the area that have jobs other than traditional work like trapping. Service providers are mostly made of people that are originally from the area, which have left for educational purposes and returned to help their community with their skills and knowledge. This goes without saying that many service providers go above and beyond their duties and do anything they can to help. Service providers rely on each other because they are the only resources in the community; they are self sufficient even with what little they have. This collaboration and partnership is simply out of need.

Key Outcomes

Sandy Bay is a community with services that are slim to none, in part because of its geographical isolation. The community is strong and well connected and open to change, but they just need the guidance. Their interagency partnership is strong because the service providers are the people that are originally from the community and want the best for their community. Overcrowding and lack of housing is at the top of their priorities along with suicide prevent and healthcare.

What is there for services?

Services are scarce in Sandy Bay, mostly due to the remote geographic location. Services that are provided include a good food box, youth outreach, child education, healthcare, family planning and education programs.

Below is a list of organizations that directly deal with homelessness in Sandy Bay.

- ❖ Breaking Trails Family Place
- ❖ Hector Thiboutot Community School
- ❖ Northeast Regional Housing Authority
- ❖ Northern Village of Sandy Bay Office
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Sandy Bay Detachment
- ❖ Sandy Bay Health Centre

What is housing like in Sandy Bay?

At-a-glance: Housing in Sandy Bay
Total Private Dwellings: 299
Occupied Private Dwellings: 255
Single-detached houses: 200
Movable dwellings: 20
Semi-detached houses: 25
Duplexes: 5
Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 10

Figure 5: Example of Housing in Sandy Bay

In Sandy Bay, the housing situation is third world. People are living like its "survival of the fittest" (quote from a service provider), in unsafe and inadequate housing. Everywhere you look there are bars or plywood on windows because of property damage. Some people are living in sheds in family or friends backyards. Those people that cannot find a place to stay, usually go out to the landfill or other places in the woods and make camps.

Figure 6: Sandy Bay Landfill

Social housing is mainly the only affordable housing available. With this comes the risk of eviction. By having others staying with you or any damage to property is immediate cause for eviction. People that have no homes and rely on family and friends migrate from house to house trying not to wear out welcomes. People live in fear in Sandy Bay.

In addition to unsafe housing and housing in need of major repairs, illnesses associated with inadequate housing are prevalent in the community. Tuberculosis, an illness that for the most part is eradicated in the southern part of the province is plaguing the community. Other illnesses including mental illness, diabetes and addictions are also running ramped in the community.

Figure 7: Sandy Bay Landfill

To sum up the situation, there simply is not enough homes for people in the community which is causing more issues.

Where can you go for services that are not provided here?

Distance in km from Sandy Bay to…
Pelican Narrows: 70
Creighton: 189
La Ronge: 450
Prince Albert: 457
Saskatoon: 596

Sandy Bay's lack of services makes relying on travel extremely necessary. Pelican Narrows, Creighton and Flin Flon are the closest communities to get goods like food and clothing. Now that the grocery store has shut down, food is even scarcer. The local gas station was also closed for a short while in the fall; this caused even greater need in the community. Bartering and high costs of fuel and food sky rocketed with panic in the community.

Most people can buy a ride or pay extra for someone to pick up the goods they need, but some people are very reliant on this, like elders and people with illnesses who need medication. These people are being taken advantage of.

Many people would rather travel to Prince Albert for services than Flin Flon, just because of the wider range of services, lower costs of goods and more access places to accommodations: accommodations meaning family members couches, hotels and shelters.

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Sandy Bay?

"In 2009 – 31 people in 3 years gone to suicide."

Quote from a service provider

Sandy Bay has the major problem of isolation and with the recent closer of their grocery store and temporary closer of their gas station, people's isolation was exploited. People would bring jerry cans with gas and charge ridiculous amounts for them, while people who need groceries are faced to pay the price for not having transportation to get to the nearest community. This exploitation comes in two forms, one being charged high amounts of money to 'catch-a-ride' or the other paying for someone to bring back groceries for you, only to get the basics at a high cost.

Other challenges that the community faces are youth suicide, overcrowding and illness associated with inadequate housing, addictions and mental illness, and gang violence.

Costs of living are very high in Sandy Bay. Many people cannot afford to eat, pay rent and pay for utilities in a single month. Many people go into arrears in social housing and are evicted within a short amount of time. To put into context their high costs of living here are some costs that the community mentioned:

❖ Loaf of bread $4.00
❖ Litre of milk $7.00
❖ Litre of juice $8.00
❖ 1 month of power for a 2 bedroom bungalow $1000.00

At-a-glance: Housing in Sandy Bay
Total Private Households by Size: 255
1 person: 30
2 persons: 30
3 persons: 30
4 persons: 25
5 persons: 40
6 or more persons: 100

Lack of infrastructure is another major issue for the area. It is a challenge to bring skilled labour and materials to build more housing, but the amount of serviced lots available are slim to none. Purchasing land is difficult and the Village is trying to create a development, but the attitudes in the community are against it: too little, too late.

Education and life skills are needed in the community. The lack of literacy and employment education is overwhelming. This continues with the lack of employment opportunities available as well. Single men find small amounts of employment in the community by shoveling snow for the school in the winter and mowing lawns in the summer.

Intergenerational poverty is another factor of homelessness in Sandy Bay. This is caused by the lack of leadership the community and the First Nations Band has had in the past. Violent crimes, abuse and intergenerational violence is also contributing to the poverty faced in the area.

The population is rising rapidly. Elders and community leaders are worried that the cultures are being lost. Not only are their cultures being lost but the environment is changing and traditional ways are being lost with the extinction of native animals and plant life. For example, tanning hides outdoors over an open fire is looked down upon today and less than half a century ago it was an everyday occurrence.

This adds to the discrimination the community faces, not only from outsiders, but also within the community, family to family.

Has there been other research done in this area?

Research has not been conducted in Sandy Bay or other parts of the northeast. This includes formal housing strategies and plans. Service providers are far too busy trying to help the community than to collect data.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

Figure 8: Sandy Bay Residents Walking Home from School

Sandy Bay and its residents are resilient. They live in isolation yet they are forced to share and unite as a community. The area is beautiful and recreation is always around the corner. Fishing, skating, snowmobiling and canoeing are just the tip of the iceberg. Family ties are strong and the community is making changes for the better.

Causes of Homelessness in Sandy Bay

Isolation, lack of infrastructure and housing, inadequate and unsafe housing, overcrowding, lack of education and literacy, high costs of living, mental illness, addictions, suicides, crime and violence, discrimination, poverty, and lack of services are the main causes of homelessness.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Sandy Bay said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, some words stand out: "People" "Need", "Help", and "Get", "Community", "Housing."

Figure 9: Sandy Bay Community Voice
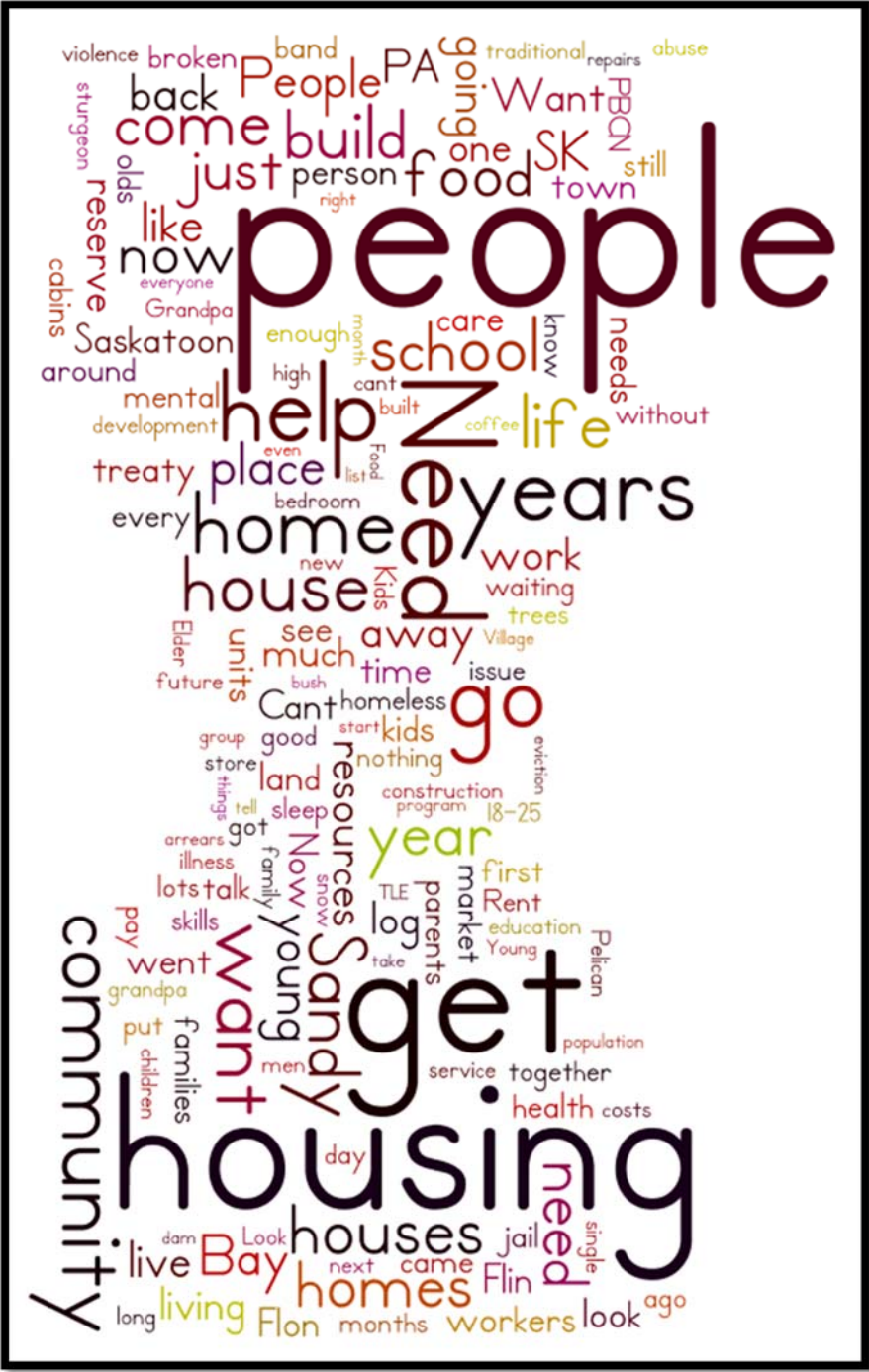
References

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Statistics Canada. 2011. Census Profiles. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4718058&Geo2=PR&Code2=12&Data=Count&SearchText=Sandy%20Bay&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=2 (accessed January 31, 2015).

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Swift Current Case Study

Date: December 18, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: John Gyepi-Garbrah, Kristin Enns-Kavanagh
Total Number of Participants: 8

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Swift Current?

Prairie Wild's visit to Swift Current had 2 stops. A meeting was held at the Swift Current Friendship Centre in the afternoon of December 18, 2014. The participants at the Friendship Centre meeting represented a range of service providers from across the community including the Youth Homelessness Initiative of Swift Current, Swift Current Friendship Centre, the Salvation Army, the Swift Current Welcome Centre, and Prairie Dog-Métis Local #123. Following that, we got a tour of the Salvation Army facility, where they had just finished a busy day of distributing Christmas Hampers.

Figure 2: Swift Current Friendship Centre

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Swift Current. This included conversations regarding these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)
- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to"? After all the topic areas were covered, we would make sure that any questions the participant had were answered. We then gathered other contact information for people that the participants recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Swift Current is a hub community for the surrounding region. It is a growing city, but is still small enough that people will take note of new faces in town. The nearest First Nation Reserve is Nekaneet, some 160 kilometers away. As a result, there is a perception that there is only a small Aboriginal population in Swift Current; 450 out of 15,155 (Statistics Canada, 2011). This perception may be false for at least two reasons. The first is frequent mobility, which affects statistical counts. The second is that many Métis people, particularly in the past, were hesitant to self-identify as Métis: Swift Current is located in the Métis Eastern Region III. This also affects statistical data. Likewise, there is a perception that there is very little homelessness in Swift Current. In fact, homelessness may be masked. One reason for this is related to the fact that Swift Current is a smaller city where there is less anonymity. People hide because they don't wish to be known as homeless or poor.

The languages most often spoken, according to Statistics Canada is Enlgish, French, Tagalog (Philipino), German, Chinese, and Spanish respectively, with very few speaking Cree.

Much migration of Aboriginal people to and from Swift Current is from places such as Maple Creek, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, or Taber, Alberta. The Casino, built in the last five years, has been a draw to bring people to Swift Current. This mobility is shown in charts below.

Figure 3: Swift Current Salvation Army

Swift Current Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (13320)
- Lived within the same census subdivision (1695)
- Other (1145)

82%
11%
7%
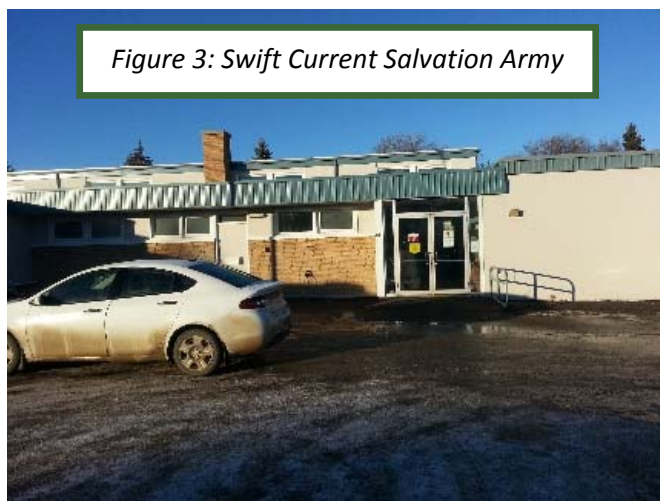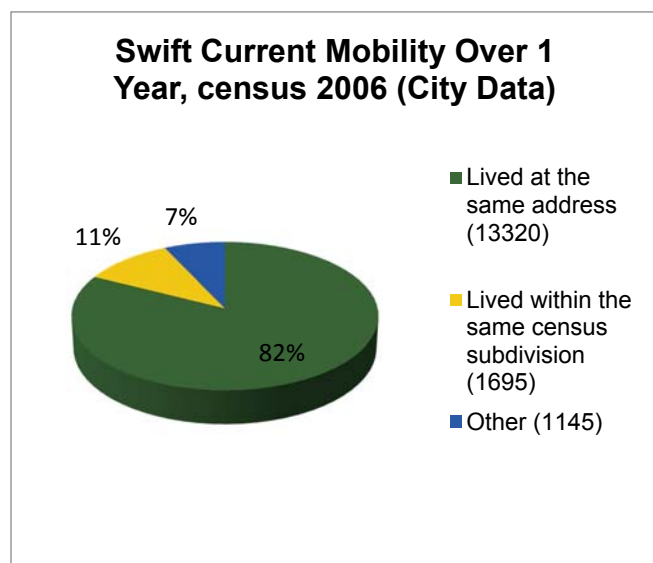
Aboriginal people who make use of community services are typically looking for help with housing and jobs. There is a desire to work, but it is difficult to obtain housing, especially when a person has just started working and may need to work for a few weeks to be able to afford to move in. As a result, many people give up and leave Swift Current. One service provider said, "I have talked to 3 Aboriginal ladies that want to work but they don't have their foot in the doorway." People are often looking for education and training services as well.

Swift Current Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

- Lived at the same address (9145) — 59%
- Lived within the same census subdivision (3515) — 23%
- Lived within the same province (1645) — 11%
- Lived in a different province (960) — 6%
- 1%

Key Outcomes

What is there for services?

Though there is currently no formal communication system to bring organizations together, service providers in Swift Current frequently refer clients to each other and work together to support people as needed. Helping people find housing is a common activity. As an example, a 67-year-old Elder was released from the hospital and had no place to live. She had no choice but to stay in a hotel for two and a half months while hospital staff worked on finding her a home. During this time, all her pension income went to paying for the hotel so the Salvation Army supplied her with food. Organizations have discussed the idea of a more formal network to help with homelessness and people in need.

Figure 4: Swift Current Friendship Centre

There is currently very little in Swift Current to help people connect with their traditional Aboriginal culture. Discussions have occurred around bringing people from Nekaneet and Beardy's to Swift Current to present on healing circles.

There has been talk about having a single, welcoming point of entry to support services for Aboriginal people. Such a place would provide an atmosphere where Aboriginal people could feel comfortable and get referrals to support services provided by a number of

organizations across the city. In addition, sometimes homeless people just need a safe, friendly place to hang out, play some cards, or have a conversation.

Figure 5: Silver Sage Housing Units in Swift Current

What is housing like in Swift Current?

There is housing available in Swift Current, but it is expensive. Rents are often too high for low-income

families. Additionally, some of the housing is in very poor repair. If people do find housing and stay in the community, their families often come to join them, eventually creating more demand for housing. Transitional housing is scarce and of too short a duration to help people really get on their feet.
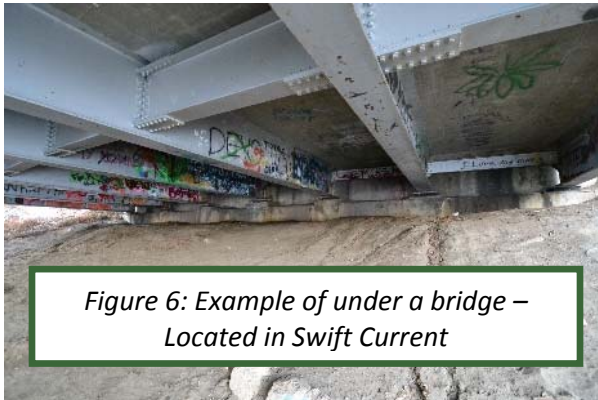
Figure 6: Example of under a bridge – Located in Swift Current

Youth homelessness is a central concern in Swift Current. A significant number of kids between the ages of 12 and 18 are known to couch surf. They also live in cars, tents, baseball dugouts and under the bridge during the summer. The community is currently working on developing a youth shelter.

As we have heard elsewhere, there are more housing subsidies for mothers with families than there are for single young people. There is also a lack of support services for single men and fathers. There is one shelter in Swift Current, and it is for women. Rules and regulations can be restrictive here as well: no males over 11 years old are allowed.

Other housing, like transitional housing is needed to help people arriving in Swift Current make it through the difficult initial period of finding a job and a permanent, affordable place to live. Along with temporary and transitional housing, affordable housing and low income housing is needed to help supplement the high costs of living.

At-a-glance: Housing in Swift Current
Total Private Dwellings: 7266
Occupied Private Dwellings: 6790
Single-detached houses: 4525
Apartments with 5 or more storeys: 60
Movable dwellings: 45
Semi-detached houses: 310
Row houses: 175
Duplexes: 180
Apartments with less than 5 storeys: 1480
Single-attached houses: 10

At-a-glance: Housing in Swift Current
Total Private Households by Size: 6785
1 person: 2220
2 persons: 2485
3 persons: 860
4 persons: 845
5 persons: 280
6 or more persons: 95

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Swift Current?

Problems of racism and discrimination still exist in Swift Current. In the words of one community member, Swift Current "hasn't been a friendly community in response to First Nations and Métis." Though this is slowly changing, there is still much work to be done: "They have changed their minds a bit but still haven't totally accepted the culture in the city." Having a welcoming, central place where Aboriginal people can feel comfortable to access services is essential. Services like referrals to supports and agencies across the city, along with programs to help people connect to Aboriginal culture are needed in the community.

Consistent, stable funding is also a need. "It's like being homeless; you don't know where your next meal will come from." Often funds are for pilot projects only; organizations don't access these if they feel they won't

be able to sustain the program after the grant is done, particularly if people will come to depend on the program.

Raising awareness about homelessness issues in Swift Current is a start to eradicating homelessness.

Has there been other research done in this area?

The City of Swift Current created a Housing Plan in 2012. In addition to the Housing Plan, Swift Current has infill guidelines.

No other research has been done for Swift Current or the southeastern part of the province.

Summary of Observations

Community Strengths

A small town feel with all the amenities of a large city, Swift Current is appealing to many. All year recreation and festivals make Swift Current a great place to live and visit. History comes alive in both the museums and the outdoor environment of the region.

Figure 7: Swift Current

Causes of Homelessness in Swift Current

Lack of affordable and low-income housing, youth struggles, lack of transitional housing, lack of Aboriginal services and cultural programs, and a lack of education of homelessness and funding for service providers are the main factors of homelessness in Swift Current. The Region is home to some of the most diverse and intriguing parts of the province: Lake Diefenbaker, Cypress Hills, Great Sandhills, Bid Muddy Badlands and Grasslands National Park are just some of the natural attractions.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Swift Current said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. If you look at the words in a simple glance, four words stand out: "Get", "Resources", "Housing", and "People."

References

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Developemt. 2010. https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020616/1100100020653 (accessed February 1, 2015).

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Statistics Canada. 2011. National Household Survey. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4708004&Geo2=PR&Code2=12&Dat9a=Count&SearchText=swift%20Current&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=2 (accessed January , 2015).

City of Swift Current Webiste. 2015. http://www.swiftcurrent.ca/home (accessed February 1, 2015).

Yorkton Case Study

Date: November 25, 2014
Prairie Wild Team Members: Alicia Buckley
Total Number of Participants: 10

Background and Context of the Project

The Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board, in collaboration with Provincial Métis Housing Corporation, has contracted Prairie Wild Consulting (Prairie Wild) to conduct an environmental scan of Aboriginal Homelessness in Saskatchewan. The study area is the entire province, excluding Reserve Lands and major centres (Saskatoon and Regina).

Methods

This data was collected online, over the phone, and in-person. The in-person research included community visits and engagement. With guidance from the steering committee, six regions across Saskatchewan were chosen. The first region was the northwest including Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. The second region was the central west part of the province including Lloydminster and the Battlefords. We then moved to a south easterly direction and visited Yorkton and Fort Qu'Appelle. The next trip was the north central location including Prince Albert and La Ronge. After that the northeast region was visited, Creighton and Sandy Bay. Finally, the south west visit was in Swift Current. The map below shows the community visits and gives a context on the wide geographic range visited.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Homelessness Environmental Scan:
Map of places we visited

Who did we speak with in Yorkton?

While visiting the Yorkton Friendship Centre, we were able to speak with the Family Service Worker, the Assistant Director and the elders circle. In total we had 10 participants that were able to provide us with information.

Lots of qualitative data came out of the visit to the friendship as well as some quantitative data for their hot lunch program which is run solely by volunteers and donations. The friendship centre shared as well that if the resources were available they would be open every day for the hot lunch program because it is so popular and needed.

Figure 2: Yorkton Friendship Centre

- ❖ The lunch program runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- ❖ From August 2014 – October 2014, with 9 lunch days cancelled, 1628 meals were served
- ❖ In November 2014 to date, with only 9 lunch days held, over 250 meals were served

How was information gathered?

Methods of data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews that were meant to feel more like a conversation than a formal interview. This allowed for trust, openness and qualitative data right off the start. These conversations although informal were delivered always with the project objective in mind and were structured around questions that were prepared earlier on topic areas that we identified.

Our process for the conversation started off with introductions. We would explain who we were, why we were there and a simple explanation of what we are asking. We then would delve deeper into the conversation asking questions about the general situation in Yorkton. This included a thorough conversation regards these topic areas:

- ❖ Housing
- ❖ Local economics
- ❖ Job market
- ❖ Existing data and data sources (service providers only)
- ❖ Existing service provider networks and collaboration
- ❖ Existing services and resources for the homeless (supports and services, but also education and training, opportunities to connect with culture)
- ❖ Estimated numbers of homeless persons in the communities
- ❖ Demographics of homeless community (age ranges, families or individuals etc)
- ❖ Local location of the homeless population - daily round of activities
- ❖ Mobility (local and regional)

- ❖ Definition of homelessness
- ❖ Causes of homelessness

Our interviews always include the question "who else should we be talking to?" After all the topic areas were covered we would make sure that any questions the participant had was answered, we gathered other contact information that the participant recommend we speak with and contact information for their organization if needed. We would then wrap up and say thank you and show our gratitude.

Background and Context of the Community

Yorkton is located in the South East region of the province, with a population of 15,669, 11.6% being Aboriginal. Other than English, the languages most often spoke are Urkranian, German and Tagalog (Philipino). Few speak Cree and Ojibway (Statistics Canada, 2011).

Yorkton's mobility is shown in charts below for one and five year periods. Most community members wish to stay in the same home for long periods of time, while some move about every so often with new faces once in a while.

The community is part of the Métis Eastern Region IIa, and has the Yorkton Tribal Council. The following First Nations are members of the Yorkton Tribal Council:

- ❖ Cote First Nation
- ❖ Kahkewistahaw First Nation
- ❖ Keeseekoose First Nation
- ❖ The Key First Nation
- ❖ Ocean Man First Nation
- ❖ Sakimay First Nation

Yorkton Mobility Over 1 Year, census 2006 (City Data)

7% 6% 1%
86%

- Lived at the same address (14620)
- Lived within the same census subdivision (1215)
- Lived within the same province (905)
- Other (220)

Yorkton Mobility Over 5 Years, census 2006 (City Data)

5% 1%
14%
20%
60%

- Lived at the same address (9700)
- Lived within the same census subdivision (3215)
- Lived within the same province (2230)
- Lived in a different province (865)
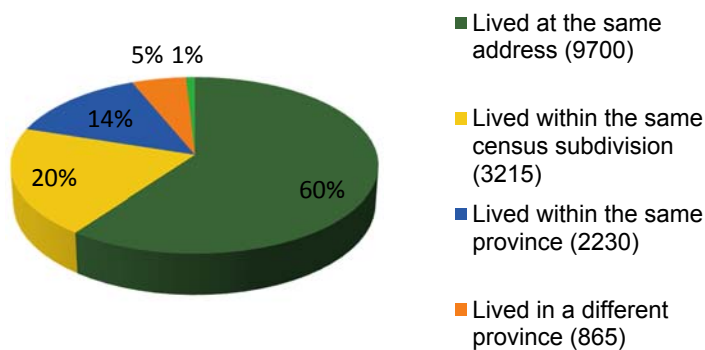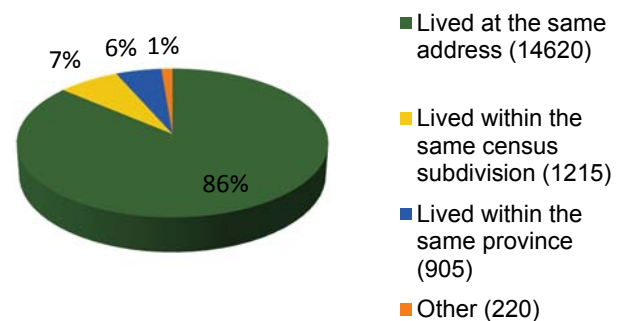
Yorkton's economy is booming right now. Manufacturing, food processing, and construction are some of the biggest industries in Yorkton. Two canola oil processing plants, along with grain and meat processing dominate the food processing industry. Being located along major highways, Yorkton is a central location for transporting goods such as potash (City of Yorkton, 2015).

Key Outcomes

Yorkton is a city that has all the amenities of a larger city. Unlike other cities, the population of

> **Distance in km from Yorkton to…**
> Regina: 188
> Saskatoon: 330
> Fort Qu'Appelle: 114
> Melville: 42
> Manitoba Border: 85

Aboriginal people is a bit lower because of the geographic location and proximity to First Nation Reserve lands, and Métis settlements. Yorkton is a hub outside of Regina, which means people come from surrounding communities to Yorkton for services and housing, this includes Kamsack, Broadview, Little Bone and Crescent Lake.

What is there for services?

A variety of services are available in Yorkton, which includes education, supports, counselling, community food programs and meals, and much more. Speaking with the elders was very valuable. They were knowledgeable in the economy of Yorkton and were able to give quality information. This included information on the local job market, rental markets, family dynamics, mobility, and challenges every generation faces.

> **At-a-glance: Housing in Yorkton**
> Total Private Dwellings: 7175
> Occupied Private Dwellings: 6760
> Single Detached Houses: 4830
> Movable Dwellings: 95
> Semi-Detached Houses: 220
> Row Houses: 215
> Duplexes: 55
> Apartments fewer than 5 storeys: 1335
> Single Attached Houses: 5

Emergency shelter is limited. Shelter is available for victims of domestic violence and their children, but only limited to women. This is to say that there is no shelter for single people or whole families in emergency situations.

A list of organizations that deal directly or indirectly with homeless is below:

- ❖ Aids Saskatoon – Yorkton Outreach Centre
- ❖ Royal Canadian Mounted Police – Yorkton Detachment
- ❖ Safe Haven
- ❖ Saskatchewan Aboriginal Women's Circle Corporation
- ❖ Shelwin House
- ❖ Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbors
- ❖ Sunrise Health Region
- ❖ The Soup Haven
- ❖ Yorkton Community Church (Salvation Army and Food Bank)

- ❖ Yorkton Family Resource Centre
- ❖ Yorkton Friendship Centre
- ❖ Yorkton Tribal Council

Figure 3: Yorkton's Railway Tracks
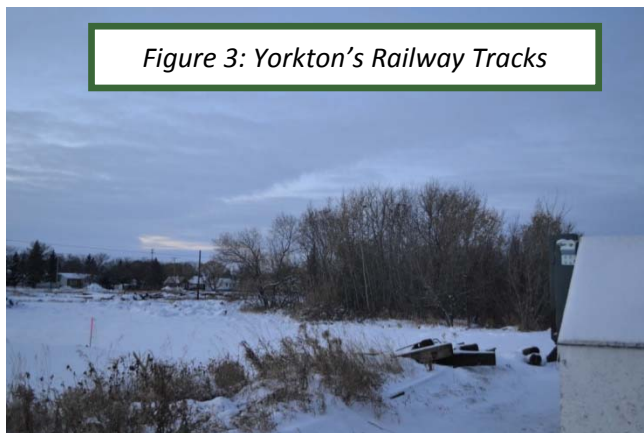
What is housing like in Yorkton?

Repeatedly the needs of the community were expressed, and the fact the partnerships are forming is a good sign that Yorkton and its friendship centre is trying to make a difference. Currently if people are

not in overcrowding and/or in inadequate and unsafe housing they are living near the railroad tracks and are visibly homeless. In the winter it is rare to see anyone living on the streets because family and friends will always help one another. The friendship centre is located very close to the railway tracks making the trek for people facing homelessness easier.

The rental market is large in Yorkton, but there is fear of renting from slumlords. Private developers and rental firms from other cities buy up the land in Yorkton and rent out properties without doing any repairs or changes to the existing infrastructure. This puts more strain on renters who are able to afford homes that are unfit to live in, while putting themselves and their families at risk. Other fears associated with rental companies and private developers taking over properties and becoming slum lords are becoming reality. People are living with infestations of beg bugs, mice and lice, and which is only adding to the illness caused by inadequate housing.

> ***At-a-glance: Housing in Yorkton***
> Total Private Households by Size: 6760
> 1 person: 2255
> 2 persons: 2425
> 3 persons: 835
> 4 persons: 795
> 5 persons: 310
> 6 or more persons: 145

"The cost of living is too high; you either pay rent or buy food, not both."

Quote from a service provider

What other factors contribute to homelessness in Yorkton?

Other than the lack of affordable and safe housing other factors were mentioned that contribute to homelessness.

"We would like to see support here; more young people involved and engaged … we want to ensure the future generations success."

Quote from a Male Elder

Jobs are available but for minimum wage and with the high costs of living other than housing, this becomes a major factor in stable housing for people. With high rents, suggestions come for rent controls and revised policies for social housing and social assistance.

Prevailing discrimination in the community along with traditions and Aboriginal culture is progressively becoming a factor in homelessness. Landlords will refuse to rent to people who self identify as Aboriginal or specific family names due to ongoing family disputes. Along with the culture being lost, the fear is that youth will not be able to continue traditions and participate and educate future generations. Aboriginal voice and input is being lost. The community is looking to the next generation to step up, but the fear of losing aboriginal cultures is prevalent.

Funding was seen as a major factor to the community's homelessness. Stability of funding is never a sure thing and causes stress for service providers but also restricts programming. With stable funding, community support comes and allows for programs and services to flourish with the aid of the volunteers and partnerships.

Another factor that is commonly seen in Yorkton is addictions. Addictions add to the stigma of housing, crime, and blacklisting individuals from gaining homes.

Has there been other research done in this area?

The City of Yorkton has been striving to make their community better with regards to homelessness. Information and research can be found through Yorkton's Housing Needs Assessment Study and the Community Housing Plan 2012-2016. Along with these homeless specific documents other information on Yorkton can be found in the Community Profile, Economic Profile, Investment Profile, Regional Airport Profile and Strategic Economic Development Plan (City of Yorkton, 2015).

Other than the cities information, no other research has been done for Yorkton or surrounding communities.

Summary of Observations

Yorkton is a community that is slow to boom, unlike that of Saskatoon or Calgary, but as it finally starts to grow some challenges are not being met with solutions and leaders are not seeing the closed minded mentality of themselves or some of the community members. Community members, like that in the friendship centre are trying to pool resources and open communications to create partnerships.

Figure 4: Memorial in Yorkton

Community Strengths

Yorkton's strengths are many, the cultural diversity and booming economy have made Yorkton a great place to live, work and play. The geographic location enables the economy because of the highways and railways. Many community members embrace their home with providing donations to causes that help others in their community.

The Elders circle is a strong and engaging force along with local companies and communities that go above and beyond.

Causes of Homelessness in Yorkton

Just to reiterate the causes of homelessness that was expressed in Yorkton; lack of affordable housing, low wage earning jobs, lack of stable funding for community based organizations, lack of resources for singles and for families, high costs of living, inadequate and overcrowding homes, discrimination and loss of culture, private developers and rental firms becoming slumlords and addictions.

Final Words

Wordles are great visual tools to express a community's voice. Below is a Wordle of what the community members of Yorkton said which was taken directly from the community engagement. In order to describe this, we put all the notes that Prairie Wild had made and a program creates word clouds that express the community's voice. The program instantly takes away prefixes and suffixes only allowing relevant words to be seen. The bigger the word, the more frequently the word is used. Looking at the words in a simple glance, some words stand out: "Family", "Rent", "Housing", "People" and "Resources."
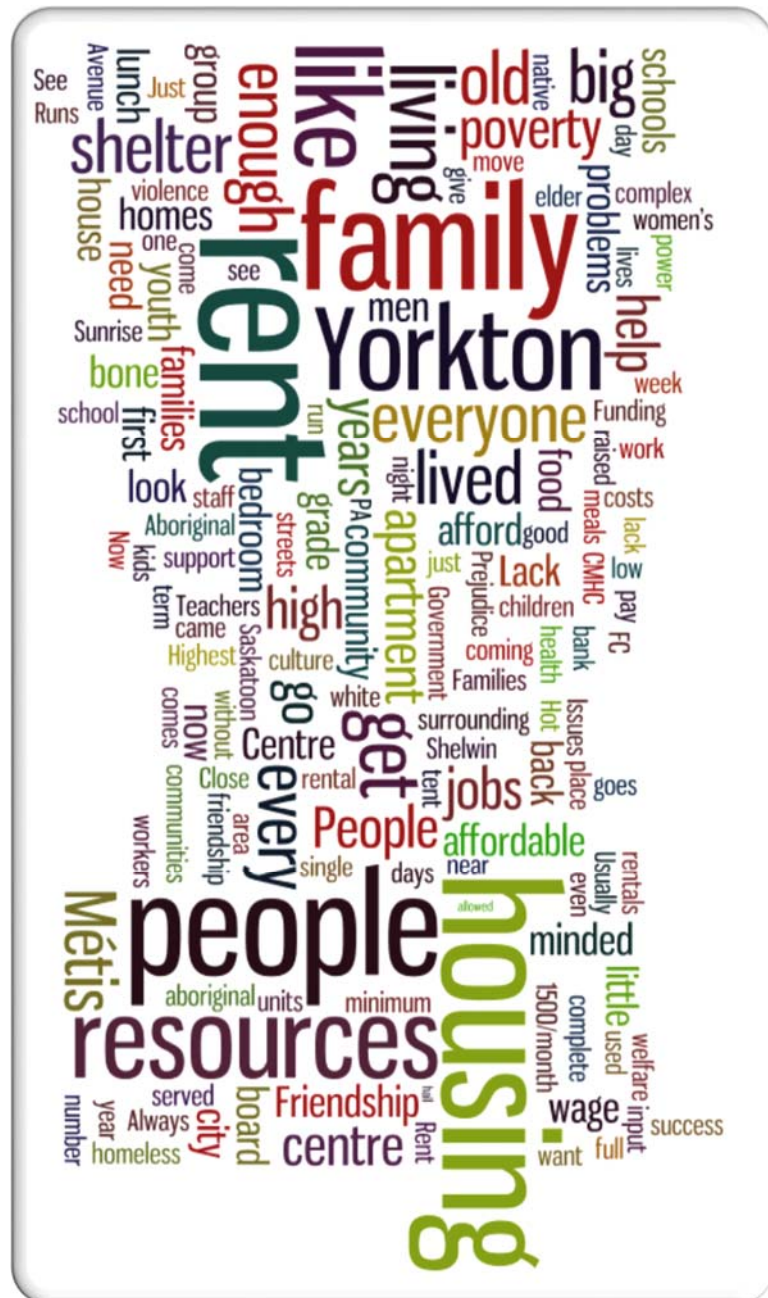
Figure 5: Wordle of Yorkton's Community Voice

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City of Yorkton. 2015. http://www.yorkton.ca/ (accessed January 27, 2015).

Statistics Canada. 2011. Census Profiles. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4709012&Geo2=PR&Code2=12&Data=Count&SearchText=yorkton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=2 (accessed January 27, 2015).

Statistics Canada. 2011. National Household Survey. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=4709012&Data=Count&SearchText=yorkton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1 (accessed January 27, 2015).

Appendix C: Questionnaires

Community Member of Person Experiencing Homelessness Question Guide
Scan on Conditions in Saskatchewan for Access to Homes and Housing

Introduce Selves. Get participants to introduce selves.	*I'm Alicia, and this is Kristin. We are here because we've been asked by Aboriginal community organizations (Provincial Métis Housing Corp and the Aboriginal Homelessness Advisory Board) to gather knowledge from the community on conditions in [Community Name] that affect people's access to homes and housing.*
Equipment: snacks, coffee, maps (community, region, and SK, six copies each), pens/markers, notebook, questionnaire, camera on phone, one-pager (25 copies), business cards. Best for maps if people all sit around a table.	*The knowledge we gather will go into a public report that will help Aboriginal organizations understand the best way to get resources into communities. You don't have to talk if you don't want to, help yourself to snacks either way… If you do want to talk, you don't have to answer anything you don't want to, and anything you share will be confidential.* *Point out Snacks.*
People's stories	
Get people to share a bit about themselves. Can be from whatever walk to life you come from – could be someone who is without a home right now, could be someone who has been without a home in the past, could be someone who has a relative or friend that stays with them sometimes or all the time…whatever your story, we'd like to hear a bit about you. Anyone can start, don't have to go around the circle. Start by telling your own story.	
Other icebreaker q's - How long have you been in [Community Name]? Where are you from originally? What brings you down to the Friendship centre today? Do you come here often? How is the coffee?	
Questions	
What are the conditions around housing and homes in [Community Name]?	
What is housing like here? Is there enough?	
What are housing costs like?	
What is the economy like here right now? OR What's bringing money into the	

community right now?	
Are there jobs? What stops people from getting the jobs, if there are jobs?	
What is your best guess on how many people in [Community Name] don't have homes right now (no place to live at all)?	
What about people who have a place to stay at least part of the time?	
What about people who are staying with friends or family?	
Out of all the people you know who don't have homes, how many would you say are youth?	
…are seniors/Elders?	
…have kids?	
Where are people staying	
If there are people who don't have homes, where are they living right now (today)? Can you show me? (Community Map)	
Where are the best places?	
Are there places people stay away from?	
Try and identify places people note – is that the friendship centre, etc	
People moving around - group	
Can we talk about how people who don't have homes move around over time?	
(Map of Saskatchewan, Map of Region. Draw and make notes on map) Do people who don't have homes move from community to community?	
Where do people who don't have homes often come here from, if they aren't from here?	
Can you show me on the map where they	

come from? (What is the region?)	
Why do they come here from there? *(Probe into different communities if people come from lots of different places)*	
When do they most often come?	
How do they get here?	
Do they go back? If yes:	
Why	
When	
How	
Do they go someplace else? If yes:	
Why	
When	
How	
Do our answers change if we are talking about people who stay with friends or family?	
People moving around – individual with no home	
(Map of Saskatchewan) (Regional map)	***note: most of the interviews did not have enough time to complete this mapping exercise***
Trace their movements as a personal narrative. 1. What community were you in when you first found yourself without a home of your own? 2. Where were you staying in that community? Did you stay in different places? What were they? 3. Why did you move from there? 4. When was that? 5. Where did you go next? 6. How did you travel? Repeat 2-7 until you come to the present day.	
How long do you think you'll stay in [Community Name]?	
Where will you go next, if you move? Why there?	

How will you get there?	
What attracts you to a community if you are thinking about moving?	
Causes of people not having homes	
What are some of the causes of people not having homes, or not having homes of their own?	
Probe: What are the causes of not having a home in people's personal lives?	
Resources in the community	
Where can you go for help around here if you don't have a home?	
What do people like about it there?	
Do they ever have to turn people away because there isn't enough room?	
Where can someone who doesn't have a home go to get a meal around here?	
If someone is sick, where can they go for help around here?	
What is around here for education and training?	
What is around here that helps Aboriginal people connect with culture and traditions?	
What is around here to help if you don't have a home and you have kids?	
Where can people who don't have homes go when they need help with the personal problems in their lives (when you're feeling sad, or need a friend)?	
Where do you go around here to meet friends?	
What are the qualities of a really good organization that serves people who don't have homes?	
Who do you feel you can trust in this community, and why?	
What are some things [Community Name] has that are a big help to people who don't have homes?	

What are some challenges to helping people who don't have homes?	
Characteristics of a homeless person	
Researchers like to "define" things, and they like to use the word "homeless." What are the characteristics of someone that you would consider to be "homeless"?	
For an individual:	
Do you have a home? If you wanted to have a home, what would help you as you worked towards having a home?	
Who else should we be talking to?	
Who else should we be talking to?	
What other questions should we be asking?	
Demographics	
What is your age?	
Gender:	
What is the highest level of school you've completed?	
Thank you	*We are Kristin and Alicia. We'll be giving a copy of the report for this work to (Friendship Centre) in the spring.*

Service Provider Question Guide
Scan on Conditions in Saskatchewan for Access to Homes and Housing

Questions	
How do you define homelessness?	
Researchers like to "define" things, and they like to use the word "homeless." What are the characteristics of someone that you would consider to be "homeless"?	
Does your agency have an official definition of homelessness, and what is it?	
Homelessness in Community	
What are the conditions around housing and homes in [Community Name]?	
What is housing like here? Is there enough?	
What are housing costs like?	
What is the economy like here right now? OR What's bringing money into the community right now?	
Are there jobs? What stops people from getting the jobs, if there are jobs?	
What are some of the causes of people not having homes, or not having homes of their own?	
Probe: What are the causes of not having a home in people's personal lives?	
Numbers of people without homes	
What is your best guess on how many people in [Community Name] don't have homes right now (no place to live at all)?	
What about people who have a place to stay at least part of the time?	
What about people who are	

staying with friends or family?	
Out of all the people you know who don't have homes, how many would you say are youth?	
…are seniors/Elders?	
…have kids?	
Where are people staying	
If there are people who don't have homes, where are they living right now (today)? Can you show me? (Community Map)	
Where are the best places?	
Are there places people stay away from?	
Try and identify places people note – is that the friendship centre, etc.	
How are people moving around?	
Can we talk about how people who don't have homes move around over time?	
(Map of Saskatchewan, Map of Region. Draw and make notes on map) Do people who don't have homes move from community to community?	
Where do people who don't have homes come here from, if they aren't from here?	
Can you show me on the map where they come from? (What is the region?)	
Why do they come here from there? *(Probe into different communities if people come from lots of different places)*	
When do they most often come?	
How do they get here?	
Do they go back? If yes:	
Why	

When	
How	
Do they go someplace else? If yes:	
Why	
When	
How	
Do our answers change if we are talking about people who stay with friends or family?	
Other Resources in the community (besides what you offer)	
Go thru list for [Community Name] found online	
What is around here for education and training?	
What is around here that helps Aboriginal people connect with culture and traditions?	
Where do you go around here to meet friends?	
What are some things [Community Name] has that are a big help to people who don't have homes?	
What are some challenges to helping people who don't have homes?	
DATA	
Does your organization do any research into homelessness? If so, what types of data do you have?	
Can we have any of it if it would contribute to a profile of the homeless community in SK?	
Does [Community Name] have any kind of written plan regarding homelessness?	
Capacity	
In the last year, have you or anyone from your agency	

attending any meetings, roundtables, or other events designed to bring service providers together around homelessness?	
Volunteers	
If yes, who organized it?	
Was the focus local, regional, provincial, or all three?	
Are there any other agencies with whom you are regularly in contact with or with whom you have partnered to provide services?	
How often do you connect, and how?	
Who else should be involved?	
Who else should we be talking to?	
Who else should we be talking to?	
What other questions should we be asking?	
Thank you	

Appendix D: Database Matrix

Database Matrix by Community

Community	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Housing Authority	Aboriginal Housing Authority	Affordable Housing	Seniors & Elders Housing	Student Housing	Brief Detox	Social Detox	Emergency Food Services - Food Banks	Emergency Food Services - Meal Programs	Emergency Food Services - Other Food	Basic Needs Services	Aboriginal Friendship Centre	Salvation Army	Aboriginal Traditional and Spiritual Healing	Other Aboriginal Culture	Aboriginal Policing	Mental Health Services Provided by Health Regions	Addiction Services Provided by Health Regions	Outreach	Needle Exchange	Employment Services	Education Services	Supports for Disabilities	Supports for Seniors/Elders	Supports for Youth	Supports for Families	Supports for Students	Other Services
Aberdeen			✓																							✓					
Air Ronge									✓															✓	✓						
Allan			✓					✓																							
Arcola									✓											✓	✓										
Assiniboia									✓		✓	✓									✓										
Balcarres																	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓				✓	✓	
Battleford			✓	✓																											
Beauval			✓													✓		✓			✓								✓	✓	
Big River			✓																										✓	✓	
Biggar									✓												✓										
Birch Hills																					✓										
Black Lake														✓							✓								✓		
Blaine Lake			✓																	✓	✓										
Broadview		✓	✓			✓																				✓		✓			
Buffalo Narrows											✓	✓						✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	
Canora			✓																	✓	✓								✓	✓	
Canwood									✓						✓																
Carlyle			✓													✓		✓													✓
Carnduff		✓							✓																	✓					✓
Caronport							✓																		✓						✓
Carrot River			✓																							✓					
Churchbridge											✓															✓					
Coronach			✓																							✓					
Creighton			✓																		✓					✓			✓		
Cudworth		✓	✓																							✓					
Cumberland House																				✓	✓									✓	
Cupar		✓				✓																				✓	✓				
Cut Knife																										✓	✓				
Dalmeny			✓									✓														✓					
Davidson			✓																												
Delisle			✓									✓														✓					
Duck Lake			✓															✓													
Edenwold																				✓											✓
Esterhazy			✓																		✓										
Estevan		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Flin Flon	✓								✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓					✓	✓	
Foam Lake			✓																		✓					✓					
Fond du lac																				✓	✓										
Fort Qu'Appelle	✓			✓					✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Frontier																										✓					

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Community	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Housing Authority	Aboriginal Housing Authority	Affordable Housing	Seniors & Elders Housing	Student Housing	Brief Detox	Social Detox	Emergency Food Services - Food Banks	Emergency Food Services - Meal Programs	Emergency Food Services - Other Food	Basic Needs Services	Aboriginal Friendship Centre	Salvation Army	Aboriginal Traditional and Spiritual Healing	Other Aboriginal Culture	Aboriginal Policing	Mental Health Services Provided by Health Regions	Addiction Services Provided by Health Regions	Outreach	Needle Exchange	Employment Services	Education Services	Supports for Disabilities	Supports for Seniors/Elders	Supports for Youth	Supports for Families	Supports for Students	Other Services
Gravelbourg			✓																								✓				
Green Lake																	✓											✓			
Grenfell			✓																	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		
Gull Lake			✓																							✓					
Hague		✓	✓																							✓					
Hanley			✓			✓																				✓					
Hepburn		✓																								✓	✓				
Herbert		✓																								✓	✓				
Hudson Bay			✓						✓		✓									✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		
Humboldt		✓	✓						✓	✓						✓						✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
Île-à-la-Crosse		✓	✓					✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	
Indian Head		✓	✓					✓												✓					✓	✓		✓			
Ituna		✓												✓									✓		✓	✓					
Kamsack		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓	✓								✓	✓				✓	✓		✓			
Kelvington			✓																							✓	✓				
Kerrobert		✓	✓						✓											✓	✓					✓					
Kindersley			✓		✓				✓	✓										✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Kinistino			✓																	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Kipling			✓						✓											✓	✓					✓	✓				
La Loche	✓		✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓				✓				
La Ronge		✓						✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Laird									✓																						
Lampman																										✓					
Langenburg		✓	✓									✓								✓				✓		✓					
Lanigan												✓								✓	✓					✓					
Lashburn																										✓					
Leader																				✓	✓					✓					
Leask																	✓				✓					✓					
Limerick													✓																		
Lloydminster	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Loon Lake									✓																						
Lumsden																										✓					
Luseland			✓									✓														✓					
Macklin		✓										✓												✓		✓					
Maidstone		✓																			✓					✓					
Maple Creek		✓							✓					✓		✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Marshall																						✓		✓							
Martensville										✓																✓					
Meadow Lake	✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓	✓
Meath Park																	✓										✓				

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Melfort	✓		✓	✓					✓			✓		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓		✓						
Melville			✓						✓											✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓			
Midale			✓																							✓					
Milden																										✓	✓				
Montmartre																				✓	✓										
Moose Jaw	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Moosomin		✓	✓			✓			✓															✓				✓			
Mossbank							✓																								
Naicam			✓																							✓					
Nipawin			✓						✓	✓								✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Nokomis																				✓	✓										
Norquay																				✓											
North Battleford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Osler			✓																												
Outlook			✓						✓												✓					✓					
Oxbow			✓										✓													✓	✓		✓		
Candle Lake													✓	✓																	
Paradise Hill																					✓										
Pense			✓																												
Pilot Butte								✓																		✓	✓	✓			
Pinehouse Lake																	✓				✓								✓		
Ponteix			✓			✓																									
Porcupine Plain		✓																		✓	✓					✓	✓				
Preeceville			✓																		✓					✓	✓				
Prince Albert	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Punnichy																													✓		
Qu'Appelle			✓																												
Radisson			✓																						✓						
Radville																										✓	✓				
Raymore						✓															✓										
Redvers		✓	✓									✓												✓		✓	✓				
Rocanville			✓	✓										✓										✓							
Rosetown			✓						✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓				✓	✓					
Rosthern		✓										✓								✓	✓			✓	✓						
Sandy Bay			✓						✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓			
Shaunavon		✓																		✓	✓			✓	✓						
Shellbrook									✓												✓										
Spritwood		✓											✓								✓			✓							✓
Stoughton			✓									✓														✓					
Strasbourg			✓			✓														✓	✓					✓					

Database Matrix by Community

Community	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Housing Authority	Aboriginal Housing Authority	Affordable Housing	Seniors & Elders Housing	Student Housing	Brief Detox	Social Detox	Emergency Food Services - Food Banks	Emergency Food Services - Meal Programs	Emergency Food Services - Other Food	Basic Needs Services	Aboriginal Friendship Centre	Salvation Army	Aboriginal Traditional and Spiritual Healing	Other Aboriginal Culture	Aboriginal Policing	Mental Health Services Provided by Health Regions	Addiction Services Provided by Health Regions	Outreach	Needle Exchange	Employment Services	Education Services	Supports for Disabilities	Supports for Seniors/Elders	Supports for Youth	Supports for Families	Supports for Students	Other Services
Sturgis																										✓					
Swift Current	✓	✓	✓						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Tisdale			✓								✓	✓		✓							✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		
Turtleford									✓	✓	✓														✓						
Unity			✓						✓												✓				✓						
Wadena		✓	✓																	✓					✓						
Wakaw																				✓					✓						
Waldheim			✓																									✓			
Warman										✓																		✓			✓
Watrous		✓	✓						✓											✓	✓				✓						
Watson			✓																	✓	✓				✓	✓					
Wawota																									✓						
Weyburn		✓	✓						✓							✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Whitewood			✓																	✓	✓										
Wilkie		✓	✓			✓		✓																	✓						
Wollaston Lake																				✓	✓										
Wolseley			✓																						✓	✓					
Wynyard		✓				✓			✓											✓	✓										
Yorkton	✓	✓								✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓