

Journey HOME

housing first | no wrong door | community safety

The Journey Home Task Force:

The Task Force first came together in Fall 2017 to focus on applying best practice principles in the local context to address the issue of homelessness. This includes a redesign of the functioning of the system of homeless-serving services. Collaboration and coordination of services designed to address the root causes of vulnerability is at the foundation of building a safe, healthy, and sustainable community.

The City of Kelowna supports the work of the Task Force which at its core is designed to be community-driven and inclusive with representation from organizations working to improve the lives of those most vulnerable in our community. The Task Force includes two co-chairs and 21 members including:

- *Individuals with Lived Experience*
- *BC Housing*
- *Central Okanagan Foundation*
- *Interior Health*
- *Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction*
- *Okanagan Nation Alliance*
- *Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society*
- *Westbank First Nation*
- *RCMP*
- *Citizens with a variety of skills, knowledge and expertise*

What is Journey Home?

Journey Home is the strategy to address homelessness in our community with a focus on ensuring everyone has a place to call home. The long-term goal is to ensure a coordinated and easy-to-access system of care for those in Kelowna who have lost, or are at risk of losing their home.

Background:

The City of Kelowna is currently facing challenges that many cities across the nation are experiencing related to homelessness and this is further complicated by Kelowna's .02% vacancy rate creating a lack of non-market and affordable housing to meet community needs. The City of Kelowna has responded to the community request to convene stakeholders and citizens to develop a strategy that is locally appropriate and action-focused to address the complex social issues that impact the safety, health and well-being of our community.

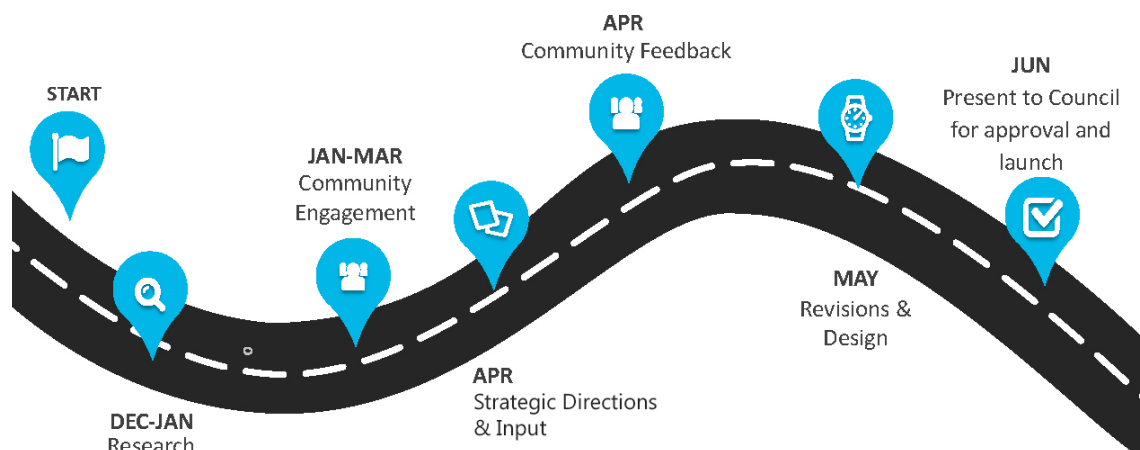
Journey Home Strategy

The Journey Home Strategy is in development and will be an action plan that focuses on:

- *Ensuring a safe and healthy community for all citizens*
- *Working toward Functional Zero - addressing homelessness; and when it occurs, ensuring it is rare, short-lived and non-reoccurring*
- *Promoting collaboration and coordination of services and resources to support those who are vulnerable*
- *Developing appropriate diverse forms of housing*
- *Developing a strategy for long-term funding*
- *Developing multi-sector partnerships so that public investment can be targeted towards the goal of reducing homelessness*

To ensure a made-in-Kelowna solution, the Journey Home workplan includes broad and inclusive community engagement.

Journey Home Strategy Workplan:



Journey Home Summits (Jan 19 & 23, 2018)

The Journey Home Community Summits brought together 178 participants from organizations and agencies that provide services to those experiencing homelessness to engage in strategic discussions to inform the Journey Home Strategy.

The goal was to bring together those who are actively involved in the homeless-serving sector as well as those with lived experience of homelessness to have a better understanding of local challenges, barriers and solutions. These summits helped to identify systemic challenges that would need to be addressed to successfully implement a centralized and coordinated system of care.

Lived Experience Circle Jan 2018 (ongoing)

Journey Home recognizes that having an ongoing advisory group of people who have experienced homelessness is essential. Those who are intimately familiar with homelessness, whether through their own experience or in supporting a loved one, hold valuable perspectives and expertise related to issues, barriers and potential solutions that are realistic for our local community.



Circle sessions include a convener and are recorded visually by a graphic facilitator capturing the conversation as it happens.

Journey Home Design Labs (23 sessions held in Feb/Mar)

Findings from the Summits helped to determine topics that needed to be further explored. Design Lab topics included:

- *Early Identification & Prevention Strategies*
- *Ending Homelessness & Reconciliation*
- *Integrating Intimate Partner Violence Responses in the Plan*
- *Linking Poverty Reduction & Homelessness Initiatives*
- *Housing First & Supportive Housing for Chronic & Episodic Homelessness*
- *Coordinated Access & Assessment*
- *Red Zone Review*
- *Developing Mental Health & Addictions Supports for People Experiencing Homelessness*
- *Community Dialogue*
- *Research Agenda to Support the Plan*
- *Public Education & Understanding*
- *Affordable (rent-geared-to-income) Housing Development*
- *Minority Populations*
- *Technology-Based Solutions*
- *Engaging the Faith Community*
- *Youth Supportive Housing*
- *Youth Housing First*
- *Upstream Kelowna*
- *Landlords, Developers and Builders: Roles in Plan Implementation*
- *Regional Partnerships*
- *Funders Forum*
- *Social Finance Innovation*
- *Backbone Organization*

The Design Labs facilitated open conversations to explore local solutions to challenges and encouraged the 'tough conversations' that need to occur to start the shift to a centralized system approach. Over 68 organizations attended the Design Labs, laying the groundwork of a collaborative and robust system of care.



Public Survey (Feb/Mar 2018)

A public survey was made available to garner feedback and input from the community and understand public perception of approaches such as Housing First and supportive housing and the impact they would have.

Journey Home – What We Heard: Strategic Directions and Input (April 10, 2018)

This summit served as a check in to ensure that what was heard through the course of the Journey Home public engagement, is represented in the strategic direction of the Journey Home strategy. The session was video recorded to ensure an open process, so those who were unable to attend still had an opportunity to review the strategic direction.

Journey Home Strategy Plan Implementation (June 2018 and onwards)

The public engagement process has guided the development of the strategy which will be presented to Kelowna City Council in June 2018.

At its core, the strategy will aim to eliminate chronic/episodic homelessness in Kelowna through the development of long-term supportive housing and centralized supports before shifting resources to prevention.