York Region Homelessness Community Board (YRHCB)

Terms of Reference

1. Mandate of YRHCB

The York Region Homelessness Community Advisory is a local organizing/planning body that provides a venue for community stakeholders to work collaboratively in identifying and addressing systemic barriers and setting priorities to prevent, reduce and end homelessness in communities across York Region

2. SCOPE

2.1 Key Functions

1. Build government, business, and public support for ending homelessness in the region by providing a forum for networking among and between government and community representatives engaged in issues of homelessness and through public education and advocacy.
2. Ensure an inclusive community planning process in which the diverse voices and experience of people with lived experience of homelessness are embedded.
3. Work collaboratively with the Regional Municipality of York and partners to implement Coordinated Access[i] and identify Community -Wide Outcomes.
4. Monitor and analyze the status of homelessness in York Region and report to the community on an annual basis, the progress towards ending homelessness. In reporting to the community, YRHCB will respect any data sharing agreements in place with the Regional Municipality of York in reporting on data obtained from the Regional Municipality of York
5. Provide advice to The Regional Municipality of York (The Region), the Service System Manager and other funders in the coordination and allocation of homelessness funding.
6. In collaboration with United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT), the Community Entity for the Reaching Strategy (RH), plan and develop a process and framework for decision making for RH funding and make recommendations on RH funding allocations to ensure Community Plan priorities align with Service Canada guidelines.
7. Review the function and activities of the YRHCB on a bi-annual basis to ensure the mandate is being achieved.

2.2 Time Frame

The YRHCB will remain active throughout the period of April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024, or until the YRHCB members decide to disband. As a living document, the Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually or as needed at the discretion of the YRHCB.

3. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Responsive – decisions regarding community priorities and related activities respond to real and relevant needs, typically identified through Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) data, point-in-time counts, project results, etc.

Representative and inclusive – decisions are community-driven and represent the collective interest of community stakeholders where Indigenous sovereignty is honoured; where persons with lived

experience and people's unique identities, experiences, and voices are valued, celebrated, and protected.

Connected – decisions and activities are integrated within the broader scope of housing and homelessness initiatives (e.g. Enumeration reports, The Region's 10-Year Housing Plan, and UWGT's Community Impact Strategy) in the community through relationship building.

Results-based – programs and/or projects implemented demonstrate results based on RH's community-wide outcomes and evaluation of programs and/or projects.

Professionalism – By seeking participation on YRHCB, members are making a general commitment to:

1. Work together in an effective and professional manner.
2. Use a level of reasonable care to fulfill their duties effectively.
3. Avoid conflicts of interest.
4. Consider the views of others equally.
5. Maintain confidentiality.
6. Adhere to a high standard of diligence and care in carrying out duties.

4. STRUCTURE

The YRHCB structure is illustrated in Figure 1. A Terms of Reference will be developed for each YRHCB Committee.

Fig. 1:
Dotted line refers to an ad-hoc committee
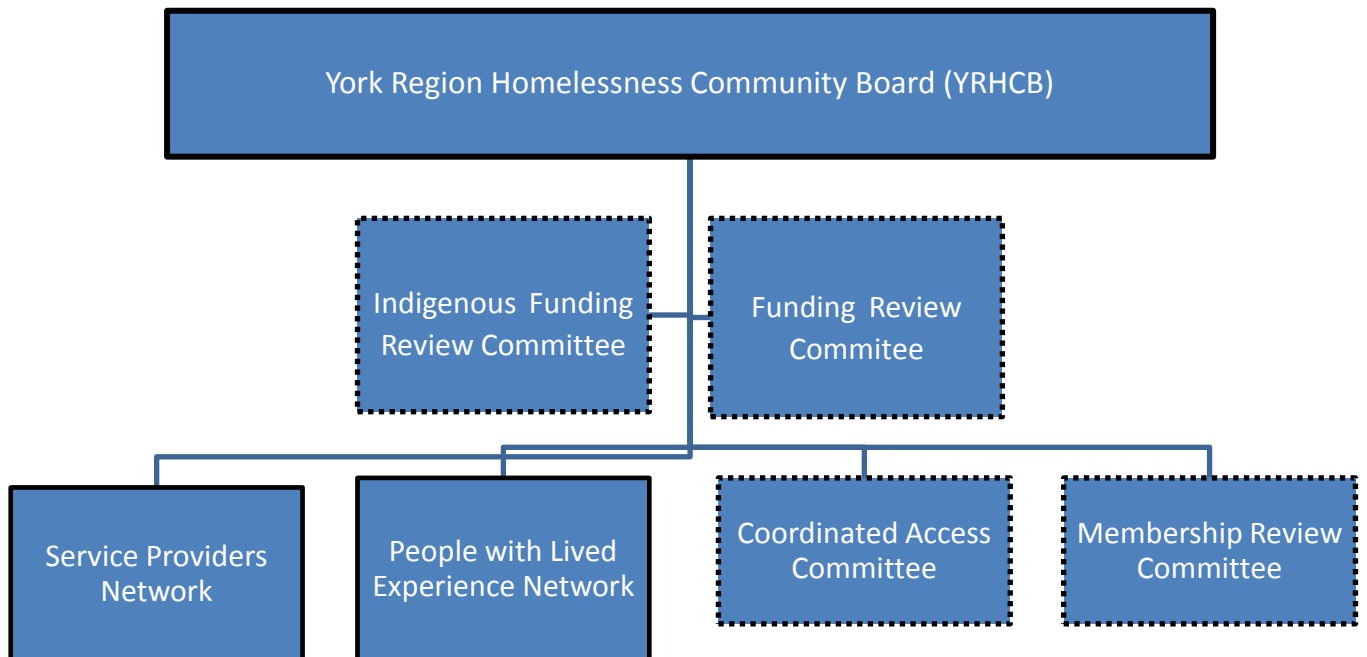
4.1 Funding Review Committees

Upon the launch of a community call for proposals, for non-Indigenous programs/projects an ad-hoc Funding Review Committee of YRHCB will be established to select Reaching Home projects and make allocation recommendations to the YRHCB and to the CE.

The Committee will consist minimally of two YRHCB members, one UWGT Community Impact volunteer, one Service Canada ex-officio representative, CE staff, and additional people with specific areas of expertise, as required.

For Indigenous programs/projects, UWGT's Indigenous Management Advisory Group will be convened to select Reaching Home projects and make allocation recommendation to YRHCB and to the CE.

The Committee will consist of minimally three Indigenous individuals with minimally one member having an understanding of the York Region landscape, CE staff.

4.2 Ad-hoc Committees

YRHCB Ad-hoc Committees will be organized around the priorities identified by YRHCB. The primary function of these committees is to carry out assigned tasks that have been identified and approved by YRHCB. These committees are time limited. Terms of reference will be developed and approved by YRHCB for these committees.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Membership Composition and Size

The YRHCB membership shall have a maximum of sixteen voting members as well as Ex-Officio and various Advisor and Resource Members.

Ensuring a broad geographical representation from across the region, the YRHCB will strive to achieve the following membership composition:

Up to Eight (8) sector members:
1. One from UWGT in its role as CE
2. One from The Regional Municipality of York in as the Service System Manager for homelessness programs.
3. Three from public institutions – health, justice, corrections, education
4. Two from Indigenous peoples
5. One from youth leaving care

Up to Eight (8) community members* who are from or who have experience or expertise in the following with priorities given to specific groups/sectors based on the community plan and findings identified through York Region homelessness data and/or research:
1. Ethno-cultural communities
2. Faith groups.
3. Service sectors which include housing and outreach, emergency shelter, intimate partner violence, drop-ins, food security, mental health, addictions, legal, youth, criminal justice, employment, and education.
4. Priority populations which include persons who experience homelessness, people with mental illness, people with addictions, people with disabilities, Indigenous, LGBTQ2S, families, veterans, francophones, youth, women, and seniors

Note: A minimum of three individuals are individuals who experience/have experienced homelessness or are directly impacted by homelessness, for example a family member.

Ex-Officio Members:
Vice President, Community Investment and Development of UWGT,
Senior Development Officer from Service Canada and Provincial government.

Advisor and Resource Members shall include key representatives from a cross section of federal, provincial and municipal ministries/offices, local funders and research institutions who will contribute to achieving the mandate of YRHCB and its identified priorities.

5.2 Membership Review and Selection

Should an YRHCB Member(s) resign during the term, an ad-hoc Membership Review Committee will be struck to recruit and select new Member(s) for YRHCB.

5.3 Member Participation

If an YRHCB Member misses three consecutive meetings, they or the organization they represent may be asked to reconsider his or her membership. Replacements or new applications are to be made in writing and approved by YRHCB.

Substitute or alternate individuals for Members is not permitted.

5.4 Reimbursement of Expenses

Members of YRHCB shall serve without remuneration.

Persons currently experiencing homelessness and part of the Lived Experience Committee will receive either an honorarium or be reimbursed for mileage. Reimbursement will be as per UWGT policy for mileage and honorarium.

5.5 Term

Membership will be a two-year term with the option of two additional one-year terms except for UWGT and The Regional Municipality of York sector membership.

For the role of Chair, term will be two years.

For the role of Vice Chair, term will be two years.

For the transition to the new terms of reference, we will stagger the existing community members over the next two years to ensure a smooth transition and to avoid a 100% turn over at one time. Some may have an extended two-year term and other may have an extended one-year term.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Member

Members are accountable to the community they serve and/or represent, and their general roles and responsibilities include:

- Sustain a collaborative and consultative relationship with other members of the YRHCB to advance solutions to homelessness and specific projects that address homelessness.
- Maintain an awareness of current issues and government policies impacting persons in various stages of homelessness.

- Regularly attend YRHCB meetings and actively participate in discussions and contribute to the consensus process at the meetings.
- Represent the views of their constituents and have authority to speak on their behalf, clearly distinguishing when they are speaking on behalf of their constituents, for the public, or presenting their own point of view.
- Participate in Committees when required and where possible.
- Actively share leadership, expertise, information and experience.
- Where applicable and appropriate, obtain formal endorsement from their organization/agency/network for a specific initiative/action of the YRHCB.
- Where required, assist the Staff Secretariat with communications.
- Adhere to the Confidentiality Agreement.
- Adhere to the Conflict-of-Interest Guidelines.

6.2 Vice Chair and Chair

A Vice Chair will be selected by the voting members of YRHCB. He/she will be Chair Elect and performs the following roles:

1. Assume the role of Chair when the current Chair's role is complete or the Chair steps down or resigns from YRHCB.
2. Chair the Membership Review Committee.
3. Chair the Funding Review Committee except for when in conflict as outlined in section #10. In the case of a conflict of interest, the CE organization representative will assume the role of Chair of the Funding Review Committee.
4. Attend community functions related to homelessness when appropriate and if available.
5. Attend YRHCB functions and share in the responsibility with the Chair.
6. Perform the roles of the Chair in his/her absence.

The Chair position is assumed by the Vice Chair and performs the following roles:

7. Facilitate YRHCB meetings.
8. Facilitate the Service Providers Network
9. Build group consensus around key issues and decisions.
10. Attend community functions related to homelessness when appropriate and if available.
11. Supports and mentors the Vice Chair; and
12. Represent the YRHCB where appropriate.

The process for the selection of Vice Chair is as follows:

1. Voting members of YRHCB are eligible for the role of Vice Chair.
2. Individuals can be nominated by another member or self-nominate.
3. Nominees will submit a short paragraph to the Member Review Committee outlining why he/she is interested in taking on the role of Vice Chair; and
4. Member Review Committee will review nominations for completion and present the to the YRHCAB for voting.

6.3 Advisor and Resource Members

Advisor and Resource Members are non-voting members. They generally serve in an advisory role and provide advice to YRHCB on funding opportunities and policy developments from the office, ministries and/or institutions they represent.

6.4 Community Entity (CE)

The CE is directly accountable to the Government of Canada for administering the Reaching Home Strategy. In addition to the general responsibilities as an YRHCB Member, the CE will perform the following roles specific to RH:

- Ensure implementation of the Community Plan as established by the YRHCB and approved by Service Canada.
- Provide support and guidance to the YRHCB regarding program delivery and administration and assisting to establish the terms of reference for the RH project selection and recommendation processes.
- Responsible for the management of RH sub-project funding agreements and inform the YRHCB about the status and results of the sub-projects.
- In partnership with the Regional Municipality of York, conduct point-in-time counts to assess the prevalence of homelessness in York Region as required by Service Canada.
- Implementation of the Coordinated Access system for RH in partnership with the Regional Municipality of York Region

To support the YRHCB in fulfilling their mandate, the CE will also serve as Staff Secretariat which will:

1. Provide general administrative and logistical support for the YRHCB.
2. Provide general administrative and logistical support for YRHCB Committees.
3. Coordinate media relations.

7. MEETINGS

7.1 Communication

Members of the YRHCB, Advisor and Resource Members, Guests and Ex-Officio agree to follow the Rules of Engagement during their participation in YRHCB meetings. The Rules of Engagement are set out to:

1. Challenge ideas, not people, be positive, open and solution oriented.
2. Participate and listen generously, ensuring that everyone gets heard.
3. Stay focused and in the process, holding one conversation at a time.
4. Encourage new ideas and build on the ideas of others; be willing to see situations from a perspective other than your own.
5. Observe time limits; stick to the agenda.

7.2 Decision Making

Aside from approval of RH funding recommendation and where Service Canada requires approvals, decisions shall generally be made using the principles of group consensus.

If a consensus cannot be attained, the Chair, at his or her discretion, may put a question before the YRHCB to a vote, when required and if appropriate. Decisions will be reached by majority. In the case of a tie vote, the Chair of YRHCB shall have the casting vote.

Advisor and Resource Members, Guests and Ex-Officio are not entitled to vote.

7.3 Quorum

A quorum is a simple majority of total YRHCB voting members.

Advisor and Resource Members, Guests and Ex-Officio will not be counted for quorum purposes.

7.4 Frequency/Logistics

The YRHCB shall hold a minimum of four meetings per year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair in consultation with the CE.

Every effort will be made to accommodate schedules by ensuring that meetings are scheduled well in advance.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

YRHCB Members, Advisor and Resource Members, Guests and Ex-Officio agree to resolve disputes in the following manner:

- Adhere to Rules of Engagement.
- Maintain YRHCB Values and Principles.
- Keep track of issues as they arise and commit to working toward solution.
- Use empathy and genuineness.
- Seek common ground.
- Provide venue for individual members to resolve disputes away from the group.
- In the event a dispute cannot be resolved, members may agree to disagree and provide a written rationale on their viewpoint which will form part of the meeting record.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of YRHCB will not disclose any information that may cause unfair advantage to one group over another during a call for proposal process. Members shall not discuss any RH proposals or funding recommendations made by the RH Review Committee outside the YRHCB committee structure and YRHCB meetings.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any behaviour by YRHCB Members which is or could reasonably be considered as a conflict of interest is prohibited and may be subject to a request by the Chair for the YRHCB Member and/or associated organization to resign.

YRHCB Members are ultimately responsible and accountable for using good judgement in the course of exercising duties.

Members shall declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and shall excuse themselves from, and not take part in, deliberations and votes relating to any matter that gives rise to a conflict of interest.

To prevent instances of conflict of interest during a funding review process, the following guidelines will be followed:

- It is recognized that in determining the membership of the RH Review Committee there will be a need to retain expertise and reflect diversity of YRHCB while preventing instances of conflict of interest.

- The RH Review Committee is to be briefed about the potential for real, perceived, and potential future conflicts within the membership of the YRHCB and be directed to attend to any concerns raised regarding conflict of interest during the review process. YRHCB Members

may alert the CE to any situation where real, perceived, or potential future conflict of interest may occur.

- YRHCB Members are not permitted to participate in any aspect of the RH funding review and approval process in the event that the organizations which the Members are associated with have submitted a proposal for funding.

- For persons representing a coalition or network, members of the coalition could vote on the proposal only if the coalition as a whole was not benefiting. That is, if an organization on the coalition put in their own proposal, there is not a conflict for the other members. However, if the coalition puts in the proposal on behalf of the entire coalition, all members are considered to be in conflict and must abstain from voting.

Updated and Approved December 2021

Glossary of Terms

Community Entity (CE)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funds projects in 61 designated communities, primarily major urban centres, identified as having a significant problem with homelessness. HPS funds are targeted to local priorities identified by the community and must be cost-matched (directly or in-kind) by other funding partners contributing to the Community Plan. York Region is one of the 61 designated communities.

Based on recommendation from the Community Board (CB), Canada entrusts a community body, often the community's municipal government or a not for profit local community organization, such as United Way, with the ability to select and manage HPS projects in their area. A CE is normally an incorporated organization that is responsible for the implementation of a community plan, in whole or in part. At a minimum the CE is responsible for implementing the HPS portion of the Community Plan. Under the CE model, all requests for funding under HPS must go through the CE, which is responsible for publishing solicitation of proposals; approving sub-projects based on recommendations by the CB; contracting and monitoring all sub-agreements; reporting on its activities and disbursements; data and information collection and sharing; and reporting on the results and outcomes for their sub-projects.

Community Board (CB)

The federal Reaching Home Strategy (RH) requires those communities receiving dollars to address the issue of homelessness to have a CB. It is the local organizing committee responsible for setting direction for addressing homelessness in the community or region. Although there are several different types of Advisory Boards, every CB has certain elements in common. It encourages partnership building. It goes beyond simply funding organizations - it is involved in aligning efforts to end and prevent homelessness throughout the community. It identifies priorities through a planning process, determines which projects should be implemented to address those priorities and reports back to the larger community on the efforts made and results achieved in preventing and reducing homelessness. During meetings, all members should have the opportunity to bring forth their views; decisions are based on the collective understanding of the best way to move forward.

Community Stakeholders

Refers to all individuals who live and/or work in York Region. Stakeholders can be residents, individuals from homelessness serving organization, public institutions and businesses.

Service System Manager (Consolidated Municipal Service System Manager – CMSM)

CMSMs were established fifteen years ago when the then provincial government decided that several programs were best funded and delivered at the local level. These included social housing, childcare, social assistance, public health, land ambulance, long term care, and homelessness prevention. It was believed the bodies best positioned to manage these programs in an organized and coordinated manner would be CMSMs. Service system management has evolved to a core function in determining, leading and organizing services and resources in local communities. Today, CMSMs plan, manage, fund, and deliver human

services including early learning and childcare, employment and income supports, affordable housing and homelessness prevention programs.

For more information on CMSMs please visit:
http://omssa.com/public-affairs/communications/position-papers-reports/defining-SSM-May2014.pdf

Coordinated Access

A coordinated access system is the process by which individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness are directed to community-level access points where trained workers use a common assessment tool to evaluate the individual or family's depth of need, prioritize them for housing support services and then help to match them to available housing focused interventions.

Quality coordinated access systems share several features, including a centralized database that collects and displays real-time data on clients and available housing and supports; clear access points of entry; common assessment; standardized protocols; and resources (for example, staff) focused on ensuring that people can connect with appropriate housing and housing supports in an efficient manner.

Definitions:

- **Access**: the engagement point for the individual or family experiencing a housing crisis. This may include emergency shelters, mobile outreach teams, day centres, other community-based organizations and hotlines.
- **Assessment**: the process of gathering information about an individual or family accessing the crisis system.
- **Prioritization**: the process of determining the individual's or family's priority for housing based on information gathered through the assessment.
- **Matching and referral**: the process whereby the individual or family is matched to and offered housing based on project-specific eligibility, needs and preferences.

Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS)

The National Homelessness Information System (NHIS) is a federal data development initiative designed to collect and analyze baseline data on the use of shelters in Canada. NHIS supports the implementation and deployment of the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) software, HIFIS training at the community level, and projects related to community shelter data coordination.

The HIFIS software is a free, community-driven application. As a client management tool, the HIFIS software enhances services providers' ability to manage their operations and collect information about the population using shelters, such as: client bookings, provision of goods and services, housing placement, and case management.

Service Providers that collect data using HIFIS also share some of their data with the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) through a Data Provision Agreement

For more information on HIFIS please visit:
http://hifis.hrsdc.gc.ca/depliant-brochure/index-eng.shtml

Point in Time Count (PiT Count)

PiT Count is a tally of who is homeless on a given night and provides a snapshot of who experiences homeless throughout the year. The PiT Count is a one-evening, statistically reliable, unduplicated count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families in a given community, city, municipality and/or region. Many PiT Counts also include a needs assessment to help identify needs and issues and inform programming and funding priorities.