

**Needs Analysis
For Transitional Housing
with an Employment Component
for Men Who Have Been Homeless
Aged 40-55**

September 2004

Prepared for:
Steering Committee of the Corktown Community Centre Residences

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Steering Committee of the Corktown Community Centre Residences came together in the summer 2003 to develop the idea of transitional housing with an employment component for men who have been homeless, aged 40-55. The idea for the project was based on the principles of the *Emmaus Communities* in the United Kingdom. In *Emmaus Communities*, men who have been homeless live together in a communal, cooperative environment and work at a revenue generating business (bicycle repair, recycling, furniture reconditioning) where people can build and expand skills. The average stay for men in *Emmaus Communities* is between 3-6 months for the first stay, and longer on return stays. Literature available from Emmaus identifies a high success rate at helping men become self-sufficient and at making the transition from the streets to more permanent housing.

The Steering Committee received a grant from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to carry out a Needs Assessment for this project in Hamilton as well as develop a Business Plan.

The Steering Committee approached the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton in the winter 2003 to carry out the Needs Assessment. The primary question for the Needs Assessment was: Is there a demand for transitional housing with an employment component for men with a history of homelessness, aged 40-55, in Hamilton? After a series of discussions, the following method for gathering information was agreed upon:

- ⇒ A review of local literature describing conditions of homelessness in Hamilton;
- ⇒ A series of 9 key informant interviews with service providers and experts in the fields of homelessness, transitional housing, and employment programs for men who have been homeless;
- ⇒ A focus group with 10 men who are currently homeless and may be interested in living at the Corktown Community Centre Residences.

This research was carried out between April and July 2004. This report represents the findings of that research.

There were several key findings of this research:

- 1) There is a clear need and high demand for the transitional housing component of Corktown.
- 2) There is clear support for linking people who have been homeless with employment. However, the findings were mixed about the best way to deliver employment services and supports.

- 3) There are a range of additional issues that must be considered in order to determine the need for a program like Corktown. These issues are: the range of barriers facing the men, preferences for privacy in living arrangements, the level and type of supports that will be available, linkages with other community organizations, possible funding arrangements and by-law issues.

The format of this report is divided into sections based on the above three key findings. More detailed information about how this information was collected is included as an appendix.

2.0 NEED AND DEMAND FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

The Emmaus Model as described above is a type of transitional housing. Transitional housing has been defined by the National Homelessness Initiative as follows:

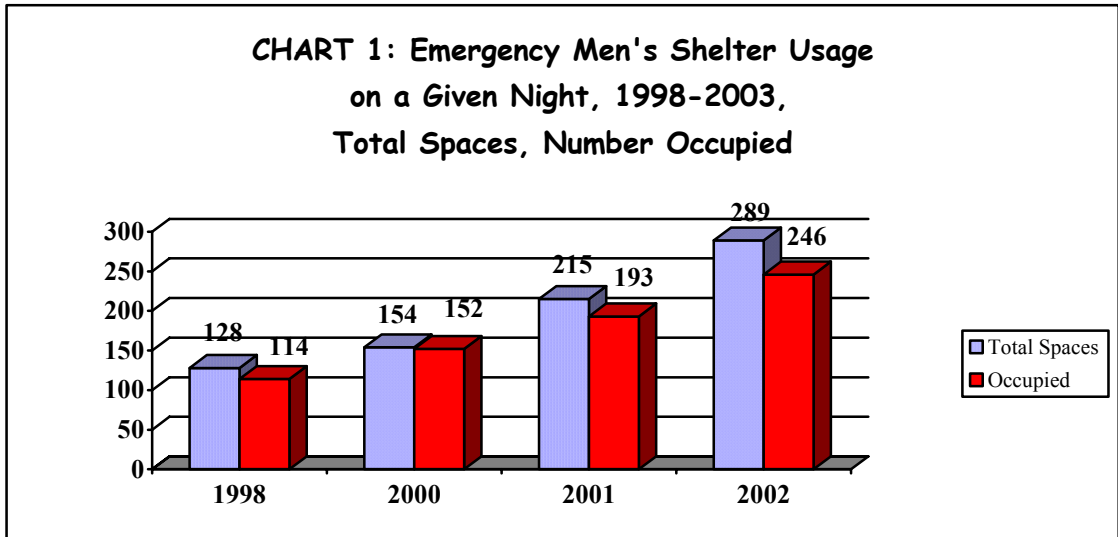
...temporary of interim accommodation (in the form of multi-unit apartments, single room occupancies, scattered site apartments, etc.) to homeless or at-risk of homelessness individuals and/or families that is combined with case managed support services, aimed at helping these individuals to transition to long-term and permanent housing, self-sufficiency and independence. Transitional housing programs normally range from weeks in duration up until three years.

With transitional housing clients receive housing and services designed to help them live independently and become self-sufficient. Transitional housing normally provides clients with structure, support, supervision, and skill building so that they can move from homelessness into stable, permanent housing and to prevent them from returning to homelessness. Generally, transitional housing addresses long-term needs rather than emergency needs and there is usually more emphasis on participation and independence.

The research conducted for this report identified a clear need in Hamilton for transitional housing for men, aged 40 -55, who have a history of homelessness. The need is based on *both* a high demand for transitional housing from men in emergency shelters and a shortage of supply of transitional housing.

Emergency shelter usage has risen dramatically in Hamilton over the last 5 years. To accommodate the growing demand, the total spaces available for men increased from 128 in 1998 to 289 in 2002. These shelter beds are provided by 3 emergency shelters and one drop-in: the Salvation Army Booth Centre, the Good Shepherd Men's Centre, and Mission Services, and the Wesley Centre - a drop-in that offers 50 mats on a nightly basis to both men and women¹. These figures do not include overflow, seasonal accommodation at the Out of the Cold program that runs November through March and offers between 20-25 mats, of which about 2/3rds of which are for men. Graph 1 shows the rise in emergency shelter beds and usage over this time period.

¹ Approximately 2/3 of these 50 mats are used for men.



Source: Progress Report on Homelessness in Hamilton, 2003. Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton. Author's calculation.

Statistics from the Social Planning and Research Council show that on a given night in 2002, the occupancy rates for these spaces was approximately 85% (289 spaces available, 246 spaces filled).

Information from the literature review, key informants, and focus group all indicated that increased transitional housing options could relieve some of the pressure on the emergency shelter system.

In a 2001 review of Hamilton's emergency shelter system for the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness, George McGibbon observed,

Staff from all the shelters feel that successful transition toward permanent housing would be enhanced by provision of transitional housing with individualized supports for special client needs...some single men and women would benefit from assisted living for a short or long time (1-2 years) period of sheltered living where life and social skills are taught and health care and counseling are provided in a structured or semi-structured program before moving to independent living.

Similarly, the City of Hamilton in its 2004 *Keys to the Home* draft, commented "...it is apparent that there are few housing choices for households with special needs between emergency homeless shelters and permanent housing. Outside of

Toronto, there is little formal supply of transitional housing programs in Ontario" (p. 106). The City's report goes on to identify only 2 transitional housing programs in Hamilton: a 14-bed youth program, and a 10-bed program for women. Another City of Hamilton report on homelessness, *The Homelessness Continuum* (2003), identified a need of between 700 and 3,000 transitional and supported housing units.

Men who are homeless have also noticed the lack of transitional housing options. As one man in the focus group stated: "...there is a limited system right now, you have the street, then the shelters, then long term housing after a long wait. In the shelters, you have 30 days to get your shit together, it's often not enough".

All of key informants strongly agreed that there was a need for the transitional housing component of the proposed Corktown project. In addition, most key informants talked about the necessary link between housing and employment. Specifically, they identified the need for stabilizing someone's housing before employment or re-training issues could be addressed.

Key informants identified the need for flexibility around the length of stay and emphasized the possibility of longer term, open-ended placements.

The Steering Committee had proposed a two year maximum for the length of stay at Corktown. While key informants generally agreed that this was a good target, many of them emphasized the need for flexibility around length of stay. Several key informants raised concerns about viewing Corktown as a transitional project, when what the men may need is long term, supportive housing. The potential disruption to the men's lives when asked to "move on" after two years needed to be treated with caution.

3.0 NEED FOR SKILLS TRAINING & RE-TRAINING

The research conducted for this report revealed support from the literature, key informants, and people experiencing homelessness for skills training and employment as a method to prevent homelessness and help the move to permanent housing. There was, however, no consensus on the best way to deliver these services.

In Hamilton, there are over 70 agencies that provide programs related to employment. When discussing options for employment programs and supports, it is useful to distinguish between three types (based on the recent Housing Trust Fund Working Group report):

- 1) *Pre-employment, job search, and job readiness support programs* are the most common type of program and focus on basic job search strategies, resume preparation, internet access, career interest counseling, and some case management support;
- 2) *Employment linkage programs* function as a system to link people with barriers to employment with employers with job vacancies. This differs from the first type of program in that there is a direct link to an actual job. There are usually some kind of supports to help the client make the transition into the new job (see Appendix B for more detail).
- 3) *A social enterprise* is a business that also achieves a social purpose. As described by the Housing Trust Fund Working Group: "...they offer a service or manufacture some product while providing jobs to individuals with significant barriers to employment...while they adopt business approaches and seek to compete in the market place, social enterprises often require various forms of financial support or preferential purchasing to make ends meet...in particular...there is a need for parallel support services as well as for extensive training, supervision and case management" (p.12 - see Appendix B for more detail).

The employment model used in Emmaus communities is a social enterprise. Literature from Emmaus communities gives examples of enterprises such as recycling or refinishing furniture. These programs report success in helping clients maintain permanent housing. Appendix B includes information from the Housing Trust Fund Working Group's report about very successful examples of both social enterprises and employment linkage programs in finding employment for people who have been homeless.

One of the challenges of a social enterprise program is that it offers only one type of employment opportunity. The men we talked to in the focus group indicated a wide variety of career interests. We asked men to identify what kind of employment they would like to find. There were ten men at the focus group, and we received 10 different responses, included here:

- ⇒ Bricklayer
- ⇒ Delivering pizzas (needs a driver's license)
- ⇒ Food packaging
- ⇒ Trade apprenticeship
- ⇒ Retail sales
- ⇒ Computer skills
- ⇒ Updating a welding certificate
- ⇒ Truck driving
- ⇒ Warehousing
- ⇒ Janitor.

Some of the men had some of the necessary skills already and required some support to help link with job vacancies, others required more intensive re-training. There were several others who indicated very little interest in full-time permanent work for health reasons.

Key informants identified three primary issues regarding the employment component:

- 1) **They stressed the program should build on, rather than duplicate, existing services.** There were many successful employment readiness and several employment linkage programs that were identified. Employment readiness programs at Wesley Centre, Mission Services, and through Ontario Works as well as employment linkage programs like the Tri-Rock program for youth at Living Rock Ministries and the Community Employment Advocate Alliance (a partnership of the Marty Karl Centre, March of Dimes, and GoodWill Industries) are all active programs helping people who are homeless link with employment. Several of these programs (Community Employment Advocate Alliance and Mission Services) offered to partner on the employment component. Some of these programs have been highly successful: in Mission Services off site apartment program, 80% of the men are either working or back to school.

- 2) Any employment program needs to address the full range of barriers the person has to employment.** Key informants felt strongly that men who are homeless and aged 40-55 are likely to face a number of very serious and difficult barriers to employment. Key informants all agreed that there needed to be some time allowed to stabilize housing before expecting a person to find or participate in regular work. As one key informant said, "You can't rush into work, you have to have housing and meals before starting the job search. Otherwise, the first little problem leads to losing the job".

A variety of personal barriers were also identified: substance misuse and addictions, health and mental health issues, experiences of trauma, financial management, lack of social networks, language barriers, literacy, etc. Key informants were optimistic about the ability of a peer support, community program like Corktown to provide the range of skills necessary for long-term re-integration into the labour force.

Finally, the importance of social networks was identified as a key factor in determining success in an employment setting. As one key informant stated:

... we are not only talking about employment supports, we are talking about how they connect and form social networks. This is the role of Corktown; helping to network with churches, join a bowling league, places where they can integrate with people who haven't been homeless. This will take some money. Gym memberships, bowling league, rec centers, karate class...

- 3) Most key informants cautioned against a social enterprise model.** There were several reservations about this type of model particularly in a transitional housing program. The most common concern was having a group of men who were trying to make a life change live in the same space day in and day out as well as go to work together. As one key informant stated: "living together and working together 24 hours a day probably won't work when trying to make life changes".

This sentiment was universally repeated by focus group participants. All expressed reservations about living and working with the same group of people. As several men stated, "too many people in one unit is trouble, boy", and "you're going to have Survivor after a while".

4.0 OTHER ISSUES TO CONSIDER

There were a number of other issues that this research elicited that should be considered when evaluating the need for a program like Corktown. These issues are: the complexity of issues facing men who are homeless, preferences for living arrangements, the level of support necessary, linkages with community organizations, opportunities for funding, and by-law issues.

4.1 The Complexity of Issues Facing Men who are Homeless

Men who are experiencing homelessness are not a homogenous group. The pathways, causes, and processes that have resulted in someone ending up on the streets are numerous, complex, and overlapping. There is also evidence that the complexity of issues facing men who are homeless is increasing. McGibbon's Emergency Shelter study of 2001 found that "people have greater and more complex needs such as physical and emotional abuse coupled with addiction issues, mental health concerns, chronic health conditions and eating disorders"(p.30). He concluded that these changes will require more skilled staff with experience working with complex and varied situations, as well as toward long term, individualized goals.

In spite of the differences that exist between men that are homeless, there are some factors that key informants identified that are over-represented among men who are homeless, aged 40-55. These issues were:

- ⇒ Substance abuse (particularly alcohol)
- ⇒ Health issues
- ⇒ Mental health issues and mental illness
- ⇒ Trauma
- ⇒ Life skills
- ⇒ Financial management skills
- ⇒ Extreme poverty.

Aboriginal men are also highly over-represented among people experiencing absolute homelessness. The most recent *Progress Report on Homelessness in Hamilton* from the Social Planning and Research Council identified that while Aboriginal people make up 2% of the population of Hamilton, they make up an estimated 20% of the absolute homeless population.

Men who are homeless are also likely to have been in contact with Ontario Works: a recent survey of over 150 men who were homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness

found that, in the past year, 86% had received income from Ontario Works. The same survey found that 86% of the men also reported some employment earnings in the past year.

McGibbon also asked emergency shelter providers who makes up their clients. The responses were as follows:

- ⇒ Refugees and recent immigrants
- ⇒ People with severe mental illness
- ⇒ People with substance abuse issues
- ⇒ People with concurrent disorders (substance abuse & mental illness)
- ⇒ People with jobs, but unable to maintain their own independent accommodation (the working poor)
- ⇒ People with medical conditions
- ⇒ People with poor life or social skills including money management problems
- ⇒ Older people
- ⇒ Younger people
- ⇒ Newcomers to the community.

These findings pose a challenge for any services helping men who are homeless. Services must be able to provide a high degree of specialized service - as many issues above require particular knowledge and expertise (*depth of services*); while at the same time being able to offer these services to a broad range of people (*breadth of services*). The needs of the men for both housing and employment are likely to vary widely, and will require equally varying levels and kinds of support.

4.2 Living Arrangements

There were a number of key findings related to living arrangements that arose from the focus group, literature review, and key informants.

Privacy: Men in the focus group all expressed a desire and need for privacy in any living arrangements. This included aspects of physical privacy such as locking doors, having one's own bathroom and kitchenette. All of the men agreed this was a very important feature of any housing that was to be offered. Also important was interpersonal privacy - the need for personal space when making a life change. Most focus group participants (as well as key informants) had reservations about living and working together. These findings are consistent with a 2001 report by the Hamilton District Health Council that talked with mental health consumers about their preferences for living in supported housing.

One of the most common complaints about their current living arrangements was a lack of locking doors and private space.

Rules: Another important consideration raised by the focus group was how and what rules would be established. There was an in-depth discussion of the need for some rules and common understanding about alcohol use, curfews, and visitation by partners. While there was no consensus among group members about what the rules should be, there was agreement that some kind of rules and expectations should be established, and that these rules should have some kind of flexibility.

Mutual Responsibilities: All of the men stated they were willing to take some part in responsibilities of communal living. Particular tasks identified were: lawn maintenance, garbage removal, landscaping. The men also identified that some components would require some additional support: particularly cooking and convening weekly meetings. There were also suggestions that there be optional programs available to help people build skills in other areas: cooking, life skills, budgeting, or anger management.

4.3 Level of Support

There was a strong consensus among focus group participants, key informants, and the literature reviewed that some kind of staff support or supervision will be necessary. The actual amount required will depend on several factors: the needs and requirements of the men who enter the Corktown program (admission requirements/screening), the physical space of Corktown (scattered apartments vs. one location), the type of employment program that the Steering Committee decides to implement (social enterprise vs. employment linkage), and the kind of partnerships that are developed with other organizations.

Similar programs run by Mission Services and St Matthew's House offer between several hours per day and several hours per week for the housing component alone, but have staff available 24 hours per day if needed (these staff are working at emergency shelters or at other sites).

The staff support requirements of the employment component, similarly, will depend on the type of program offered. The Tri-Rock program, offered through Living Rock Ministries, is an employment linkage program with intensive case management supports. For a 30-week program that employs 30 youth, they have 3 Full Time positions, and 3 part time positions. A key informant from the Community Employment Advocate Alliance

suggested that for 8 men, one or two full time case managers would be adequate, and would be able to address both employment and social support needs.

4.4 Linkages with Community Organizations

Key informants strongly advised partnering with existing community organizations and/or government in the development and delivery of Corktown's programs.

As identified above, there are over 70 agencies that provide employment assistance in Hamilton. While the bulk of these are employment support agencies, there are some employment linkage programs that could provide on site employment supports. Most key informants reported that if Corktown were to try and develop its own employment linkage program, it would be resource intensive and not as effective as if it formed partnerships.

Support for forming partnerships was also true in the transitional housing component of the program. Several key informants suggested that Corktown explore partnerships in terms of property management, or leasing apartment space from an agency that already provides supported or transitional housing.

Finally, there was strong support for forming direct relationships with potential employers. Appendix B contains more detailed information and research about employment programs and the benefits of relationships with employers. Strong relationships with employers have been shown to increase linkages to jobs and job placements.

4.5 Funding

Among similar community services, there are a wide variety of funding strategies:

- ⇒ Government grants for staff costs (Human Resources Development Canada, Trillium Foundation, Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative, etc.)
- ⇒ Rental income from tenants
- ⇒ Private sector fundraising
- ⇒ City of Hamilton "per diem"² funding.

While these are the most common sources of funding, key informants all expressed that lack of funding is the key issue that is limiting the expansion of transitional housing services. Key informants all expressed that sources of ongoing funding to support staff and operations was very difficult to find and secure over the long term.

² Under this per diem funding, a hostel receives approximately \$40/day for each full bed. This is the current funding in place for the youth and the women's transitional housing facilities.

There were also suggestions by several key informants that a relationship with the Ontario Works department be formed, as they are currently restructuring their employment programs, and they have some resources to help fund re-training of people who are on Ontario Works.

4.6 By-Law Issues

Key informants identified a number of by-law issues that will be relevant to the project as it develops. While a comprehensive review of by-laws is beyond the scope of this paper, it is apparent that zoning and by-laws could impact the type and location of services Corktown is able to offer. Appendix C lists definitions of several classifications of dwellings from the City of Hamilton Planning and Development Department. The following is offered to give a brief background, but as the project develops the Steering Committee should consult with the City about the particular zoning arrangements³.

For example, if a dwelling offers support for residents and provides lodging for more than 3 people, and does not have separate bathrooms and/or kitchen facilities for each tenant, the dwelling is a "residential care facility", and is governed by a set of by-laws about residential care facilities. This example without the provision of supports will fall into the category of a "lodging house". If each tenant has his own bathroom and kitchenette, the zoning becomes a "multiple dwelling"⁴.

Finally, if the project includes an on-site social enterprise, as is the case with most Emmaus Communities, the zoning falls into a combination of uses including commercial, residential care facility, and a multiple dwelling, and will require site specific zoning.

³ The source of this information is the City of Hamilton, Planning and Development Department. Personal communication September 1, 2004.

⁴ These are examples only. Full definitions are attached as Appendix D.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this needs analysis was to determine the level of need for transitional housing with an employment component for men who are homeless, aged 40-55 in Hamilton.

The findings of this research indicate the following:

- 1) There is a clear need in Hamilton for transitional housing for men, aged 40 -55, who have a history of homelessness. The need is based on *both* a high demand for transitional housing from men in emergency shelters and a shortage of supply of transitional housing.
- 2) There is support from the literature, key informants, and people experiencing homelessness for skills training and employment as a method to prevent homelessness and help the move to permanent housing. There was, however, no consensus on the best way to deliver these services. There are numerous examples of highly successful employment linkage and social enterprise programs from the United States: Appendix B contains additional information on these programs.
- 3) Finally, there are a range of additional issues that will impact on the need for services like the Corktown Community Centre Residences and the interest of men who are homeless in living in such a community. These issues are: the complexity of issues facing men who are homeless, preferences for living arrangements, the level of support necessary, linkages with community organizations, opportunities for funding, and by-law issues.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A - METHODOLOGY

The primary question for the Needs Assessment was: Is there a demand for transitional housing with an employment component for men with a history of homelessness, aged 40-55, in Hamilton? After a series of discussions, the following method for gathering information was agreed upon:

- ⇒ A review of local literature describing conditions of homelessness in Hamilton;
- ⇒ A series of 9 key informant interviews with service providers and experts in the fields of homelessness, transitional housing, and employment programs for men who have been homeless;
- ⇒ A focus group with 10 men who are currently homeless and may be interested in living at the Corktown Community Centre Residences.

Literature Review:

Local literature related to homelessness and employment programs was reviewed. These reports are identified in the References section.

Key Informant Interviews:

Key informants and the questions to be asked were identified in consultation with the Steering Committee of the Corktown Community Centre Residences.

Key informants were:

- ⇒ Ron Crawford, The Bridge
- ⇒ Regan Anderson, Wayside House
- ⇒ Kathy Rennick
- ⇒ Wendy Roy, St. Matthew's House
- ⇒ Tom Heeney, Mission Services
- ⇒ Carmen Salciccioli, City of Hamilton, Public Health and Community Services
- ⇒ Jen Haanstra, Living Rock Ministries
- ⇒ Paul Johnson, Wesley Urban Ministries
- ⇒ Michael Poworoznyk, Community Employment Advocate Alliance

Key informants were contacted by phone and given a brief overview of the project. They were asked to participate in a 20-minute interview. All key informants that were asked to participate agreed. Key informants were asked a series of questions, and their answers were then analyzed for common themes and key findings.

Key Informant Questions:

[Project Overview Given]

1. Do you think there is a need for this kind of service? I.e. would you have clients to refer? Are there waiting lists for similar programs?
2. The Steering Committee is considering targeting 40-55 year old men who have an interest in retraining and skills development. Are there specific issues with this target population we should be aware of?
3. What kind of supports would be necessary for a project of this nature? For the transitional housing piece? For the skills development piece?
4. Are there programs or partnerships that would be useful in the development of this project? (Do you know of similar programs or others based on peer support in Hamilton?)
5. We are considering a 2-year time frame for this program. Based on your experiences, how appropriate is this time frame?
6. In your opinion, what kind of resources would it take to provide this service? The housing portion? The skills development portion? Do you know of funding sources?

Focus Group:

A focus group was held at the Salvation Army Booth Centre on June 17, 2004. There were ten men who were staying at the emergency shelter (and thus met the definition of "currently experiencing homelessness" for the research) who participated in the focus group. To begin the session, there was a round of introductions and a project overview was given. A one-page summary of the Emmaus Community was given out. At the completion of the session, each participant received a \$10 honorarium for his time. Responses to the focus group questions were noted and analyzed for themes and key findings.

Focus Group Questions:

1. What parts of the program sound good to you?
2. What parts of the program do not sound good to you?
3. What kind of re-training or job skills would you like to get if you lived here?
4. Does this sound like a place you would like to live for a couple of years?
 - a. Would you pay rent to live here?
5. What kind of responsibilities would you be willing to be part of if you lived here?
 - a. Chores? Weekly meetings? Grounds keeping?
6. What else would it take for you to succeed in a program like this?

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from *Strategic Approaches to the Challenges of Homelessness and the Provision of Affordable Housing in Hamilton*
Housing Trust Fund Working Group, 2004
(Pp. 12-13 & Appendix C)

Employment programs for the homeless

At first blush, the idea of promoting employment programs for the homeless may appear somewhat naïve - individuals who are homeless are often overwhelmed by very immediate needs (finding shelter, food, securing the bare necessities of life) and by difficult personal challenges (possible mental health issues, substance abuse problems, health difficulties, personal/domestic crises). The thought of placing such individuals into jobs can appear to be a daunting task.

A number of initiatives, particularly in the United States, suggest that difficult as this prospect is, the idea is not overly far-fetched. In general terms, two options present themselves:

- (1) social enterprises;
- (2) employment linkage programs.

Social enterprises. Social enterprises are businesses that also achieve a social purpose. More often than not, they offer a service or manufacture some product while providing jobs to individuals with significant barriers to employment (consumer survivors, the disabled, the homeless). While they adopt business approaches and seek to compete in the marketplace, social enterprises often require various forms of financial support or preferential purchasing in order to make ends meet. In particular, because they hire a harder-to-serve population, there is need for parallel support services as well as for extensive training, supervision and case management.

Employment linkage programs. While community agencies serving marginalized populations offer a range of employment-readiness, job search and social support assistance, in most cases what they lack are paths to employment that lead to private sector companies. Even where "job developers" are employed, their primary

role is to identify current job vacancies, as opposed to something more systematic or strategic.

Employment linkage refers to a broader strategic approach to employment placement, where employers essentially become the "customers" of community-based employment agencies. The agencies act as recruiters for the private sector employers, doing the initial screening, providing necessary services and supports (including post-placement support) and sometimes providing training (even customized training) to qualify participants for the available jobs. In the United States, such employment linkage programs have assisted homeless individuals to find sustainable employment.

The connection between social enterprises and employment linkage programs. These options are not always mutually exclusive. The fact is that individuals with multiple barriers to employment will often need to acquire or re-acquire employability skills, and these ultimately can best be done in a workplace setting. Part-time placements or transitional work in a social enterprise can provide the appropriate work setting while also offering a "safe" environment with some tolerance for error/backsliding.

What an employment linkage program needs. Employment linkage programs require:

- (i) a rich understanding of the local labour market;
- (ii) strong links to and buy-in with employers;
- (iii) an attitude which treats the employer as the customer - an orientation which ultimately serves the participants.

The choice between a social enterprise initiative and an employment linkage program.

A social enterprise project is a one-off undertaking: it involves the same sort of effort as starting any business - which means A LOT, but in the end, it can guarantee jobs to a select but limited number of participants.

An employment linkage program is a *system* - it involves connecting a large number of employment service agencies to a large number of employers, and requires programs which ensure that participants are properly assessed, screened, trained and supported. Social enterprise projects may be transitional job experiences under such a system - eventually placement in other jobs means a far greater

potential to serve a larger number of individuals. However, the effort which would be involved in negotiating, designing and implementing such a system is considerable. (Appendix C provides further discussion and examples of social enterprises and employment linkage programs.)

**Appendix C [*Housing Trust Fund Working Group draft report*]: Further Elaborations
Regarding Social Enterprises and Employment Linkage Programs
for Homeless Individuals**

A. SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

The following examples illustrate the ways in which social enterprises can act as transitional job experiences for the homeless and other hard-to-employ populations.

Binding Together, Inc. (New York)

<http://www.bindingtogether.org/index.htm>

- Vocational rehab program (six months) providing job training and placement.
- Fields: printing technology; graphic communication; computer skills.
- Along with job training, the program provides vocational counseling, remedial education, workplace literacy, job placement and fifteen months of follow-up counseling support once a person achieves employment; upon job placement, graduates receive a \$2000 stipend for housing and clothing.
- 35% of their operating expenses are funded through their not-for-profit printing, copying and binding services

Esperanza Unida, Inc. (Milwaukee)

<http://www.esperanzaunida.org>

- Provides counseling, representation, job training, and job placement to minority, injured, and unemployed workers.
- Esperanza Unida has created twelve training businesses over the years including welding and metal fabrication, auto repair, construction, childcare, customer service, and printing and graphic arts. Each was created in direct response to job market opportunities and to specific community needs, focusing on skills that lead to jobs with family-supporting wages and benefits.

- Advisory committees, assembled by Esperanza Unida and composed of community volunteers familiar with the respective industry, assisted in the creation and the continual enhancement of each of these training businesses.
- Esperanza Unida is 50% to 70% self-supporting through revenues generated from training businesses.

Chrysalis (Los Angeles)

<http://www.chrysalisworks.org>

- Chrysalis began as a food and clothing center for homeless individuals.
- Two years later, it developed into a center for homeless individuals to help them to look for work, to receive mail and messages from employers, and to make phone calls.
- Counseling and employment services were then built around this core day center model, with job search classes and resume writing.
- In 1990, Chrysalis received a grant to establish a temporary employment agency with the goal of operating a self-supporting business. The initial targeted employment sector was low-skill work in light industrial warehousing.
- Based on the success of Labor Connection, StreetWorks, a street cleaning program, was added as another employment option to help meet the varying needs of the would-be employees.
- Chrysalis has evolved into a multi-track comprehensive employment program designed to meet the different employment needs and job readiness positions of the full range of would be workers who seek out Chrysalis' employment services.
- While Chrysalis does not hide the fact that its employees have had problems in the past, its customer sales approach is to emphasize that it has access to a labor pool of highly motivated job seekers with very positive attitudes who want to work. When selling its services to potential employers, Labor Connection sales representatives stress the program 's tight supervisory oversight over its workers and its employee assistance program, arguing that this sort of post-placement support creates stronger clients.

By far the best single resource for studies relating to social enterprises targeting the homeless can be found at:

Roberts Foundation

This U.S. foundation, through its Roberts Enterprise Development Fund, has funded numerous projects and studies, and made available numerous reports, on social purpose enterprises, particularly those aimed at the homeless. Their publications page can be found at http://www.redf.org/pub_intro.htm. In particular, a very useful study is *New Social Entrepreneurs: The Success, Challenge, and Lessons of Nonprofit Enterprise Creation (1996)*, which can be downloaded from the afore-mentioned link.

B. EMPLOYMENT LINKAGE PROGRAMS

In terms of the mechanics of an actual employment linkage program, the best report available is *Making Connections: A Study of Employment Linkage Programs (1998)* (see link below), a truly enlightening study of three employment linkage programs, in Portland, Oregon; Berkeley, California; and Minneapolis, Minnesota; -- each with a near a decade of experience and operations at a significant scale.

The annual job placements of these three programs ranged from 300 to 1700, involving mainly low-income individuals with lower levels of education - indeed, these programs managed to place 8-14% of each city's unemployed population, including large proportions of people of colour. The jobs themselves were often good quality, entry-level positions.

The cost of the programs was not easily determined (the linkage portion is one cost, the support work of community agencies another matter altogether), but the study estimates the cost per placement as between CDN \$500 and \$2200 (not counting the community sector services and supports), compared to the typical employer cost to recruit, screen and hire of CDN \$3800, with comparable retention rates. This obvious "saving" does not even include the social assistance savings. The evidence thus shows that these programs can save *employers* money, while in getting former social assistance recipients jobs these programs also save social assistance and social services program costs.

Admittedly, these are large-scale programs, but they show what ultimately can be achieved when adopting employment linkage as a labour market and poverty alleviation strategy.

(The full 75 page report is available in .pdf form at: http://www.huduser.org/publications/pdf/ccc_making.pdf; a four-page summary of the report can be found at: <http://www.communitychange.org/makcon.htm>).

To summarize this study:

Accessing employment depends on two critical elements:

- (1) skills (which in the case of individuals facing multiple barriers to employment would include life skills, employment readiness and skills upgrading); and
- (2) connections (that is, ways to access employers; for individuals in disadvantaged communities this is a significant barrier, and can include the fact that community agencies serving these populations often do not have the appropriate channels for connecting their clients to employers; obviously, such "connections" could be an important asset not only for the long-term unemployed but also for new immigrants).

While community agencies serving marginalized populations can offer a range of employment-readiness, job search and social support assistance, in most cases what they lack are paths to employment which lead to private sector companies.

Employment linkage programs in the United States have relied on either:

- (1) local government mandates such as "first choice hiring agreements" where in exchange for financial assistance or public approval of development plans, developers sign an agreement to look first to a pool of qualified workers referred by local agencies; or
- (2) voluntary agreements whereby employers facing labour shortages cooperate with local agencies that help identify candidates for jobs.

While legislatively mandated programs or even initial agreements open the door, it is the quality of the referral service and the ability of agencies to respond effectively to the information gained about employer needs which ensure the on-going strength of the programs. Indeed, even where programs have enforcement "teeth" for compliance, the preferred option is to entice employers with quality referrals.

There are two important functions of these programs:

- (1) the broker intermediary, managing the information system and brokering relationships between employers, other public institutions and private employment training and service providers; and
- (2) the referral network, composed of employment placement and training agencies, educational institutions and service providers, using the labour market information to assess, prepare and refer candidates for employment.

The one function manages the information flow about labour market demand, the other function directs the supply of candidates to employment opportunities. Clearly, to operate properly, the system must ensure (1) the quality and timeliness of the labour market information, (2) that appropriate assessment and accurate referral takes place, and (3) that the target population is given priority consideration while at the same time are being provided with the necessary employment readiness, training and other personal and social supports.

Another important feature is the degree to which the linkage program is viewed, at least in the medium term, as a systemic intervention in the labour market. Many involve a large number of partners (community organizations, placement agencies, training institutions). For example, the Berkeley linkage operation involves 20 community organizations serving low-income neighbourhoods; in Minneapolis, the system identifies close to 200 new job listings *daily*, relying on two full-time job developers calling employers; in Portland, the linkage program is staffed by 5.75 FTE persons, and is partnered with 218 educational and community organizations (of which ten are active and significant partners). On the employer side, while many smaller firms were helped, the majority of placements were to a small number of larger firms.

This systemic impact manifests itself in a number of ways:

- (1) the pressure on employment support and placement agencies now came from seeking to please employers, as opposed to being accountable to funders, resulting in a better link between activities and results;

- (2) at the same time, these agencies were able to meet these concrete expectations because they had a better sense of what was required through the labour market information coming from employers;
- (3) public agencies, including municipal governments, were able to view labour force development as a component of economic development, including tying economic development benefits and incentives to labour force development;
- (4) indeed, the existence of a labour force development strategy and linkage program contributed to the municipality's competitive advantage when seeking to attract new employers;
- (5) all this also served a poverty alleviation goal, given that the targets were marginalized neighbourhoods and populations.

The following factors affected a program's success:

- labour market conditions, including the type of growth, the dispersal of job openings (that is, one or two jobs among many small firms or many jobs among a few big firms), and the quality of entry level jobs;
- the education and skill level of the workforce (employers were particularly concerned regarding "soft" skills such as motivation, ability to communicate and dependability);
- the degree of employer engagement (at minimum, quality labour market information; beyond that, involvement in designing training programs);
- the quality of the referrals - this is what keeps employers engaged;
- the ability to overcome traditional recruitment and hiring habits;
- the capacity of the employment placement agencies to deliver quality candidates;
- the quality of coordination and information flow between the partners and with the employers.

The report finally makes the following suggestions for those seeking to replicate such employment linkage programs:

- Think of linkage programs as reformed workforce systems rather than simply as programs for the disadvantaged -- such programs involve a different focus, enhanced competencies and new relationships among all the players;
- Find the right balance between demand-driven and supply-driven linkage models (that means on the one hand incentives and possibly sanctions for employers, and, on the other, quality referrals);
- Seek a region-wide approach to employment linkage to reduce competition between municipalities (no mention, though, of economies of scale);

Gain broad-based political support (to ensure the role for municipal government - there is no discussion of doing this in the absence of municipal government, presumably because of the incentives and sanctions component);

- Ensure a range of staff capabilities, devoted full-time to this task (there are specific and varied skills involved, particularly, as far as community agencies go, in recruiting and understanding the needs of employers);
- Develop strong knowledge of regional labour markets (which in the first instance means one can respond to employers' needs, but in the next instance means one can build employers' confidence and trust in the service);
- Develop close relationships with employers, primarily by providing quality referrals (this will lead to employers participating in designing the training curricula as well as assisting with other issues which may arise);
- Create a market-driven service delivery system - most community agencies see themselves as serving clients, not employers, but they recognize they need to serve the labour market if they wish to help their clients attain employment; in order to do this, community agencies need:
 - Financial and technical assistance to develop and grow a linkage program;
 - Support for a network of agencies which includes strong and less experienced agencies, to ensure peer learning, together with planning funds for new initiatives;
 - Strengthening of the network through the development of materials, outreach and training to spread the learnings;
 - Seed money for start-ups and operating support for on-going programs, including support for economic development and business assistance programs to include employment linkage.

APPENDIX C

Summary of Zoning Classifications - City of Hamilton

"**Dwelling, Multiple**" shall mean a building comprising four or more self-contained Class A dwelling units, whether or not a private garage or any other accessory building is attached except a building comprising a Townhouse Dwelling or a Maisonette Dwelling; (72-239)

"**Dwelling Unit**" shall mean a Class A dwelling unit or a housekeeping dwelling unit, and shall include a single family dwelling or any other separate living quarters for one family within a building, whether detached, semi-detached or attached; but shall not include a tent, or a cabin or trailer in a tourist camp or trailer camp, or a room or suite in an apartment hotel, tourist home, lodging house or other such premises; (7085/53) (81-27)

(a) "**Class A Dwelling Unit**" shall mean a dwelling unit having a kitchen, as well as such sanitary and sleeping accommodation as is required by law; and

(b) "**Housekeeping Dwelling Unit**" shall mean a dwelling unit without a kitchen, but with an alcove or space not enclosed on all sides by walls, intended or used for culinary purposes; (7085/53)

"**Lodging House**" shall mean a dwelling or building or portion thereof in which lodging is provided for more than 3 persons for remuneration, or the provision of services or both, and the lodging rooms do not have bathrooms and/or kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of individual occupants, but shall not include the following:

(i) a hostel;

(ii) a hotel;

(iii) a public or private hospital;

(iv) a nursing home;

(v) a home for the aged or a home for elderly persons;

(vi) a tourist home;

(vii) a residential care facility; and,

(viii) a short-term care facility, where such facilities are licensed, approved or supervised under a general or special Act other than the Municipal Act. (81-27) (95-141)

“Residential Care Facility” means a group living arrangement, within a fully detached residential building occupied wholly by a minimum of four supervised residents and a maximum number of supervised residents as permitted by the district, exclusive of staff, residing on the premises because of social, emotional, mental or physical handicaps or problems or personal distress and that is developed for the well being of its residents through the provision of self-help, guidance, professional care and supervision not available in the residents own family, or in an independent living situation or if:

- (i) the resident was referred to the facility by hospital, court or government agency; or
- (ii) the facility is licensed, funded, approved or has a contract or agreement with the federal, provincial or municipal governments.

A residential care facility is not considered as an emergency shelter, lodging house, corrections residence, correctional facility or retirement home. (81-27) (95-141) (01-143)

“Emergency Shelter” means a fully detached building or portion thereof used by a minimum of four persons in a crisis situation and a maximum number of persons in a crisis situation as permitted by the district, who require shelter, protection, assistance and counselling or support which is intended to be short term accommodation of a transient nature. An emergency shelter does not include a residential care facility; a lodging home; a corrections residence; a correctional facility; or any other facility which is licensed, approved or regulated under any general or special Act. (01-143) (02-248)

Except as provided in Subsection 6, every residential care facility and retirement home shall be situated on a lot having a minimum radial separation distance of 300.0 metres from the lot line to the lot line or any other lot occupied or as may be occupied by a residential care facility, retirement home, emergency shelter, corrections residence or correctional facility. (01-143)

(6) Where the radial separation distance from the lot line of an existing residential care facility or an existing retirement home, is less than 300.0 metres to the lot line of any other lot occupied by a residential care facility, retirement home, emergency shelter, corrections residence or correctional facility, the existing residential care facility or existing retirement home may be expanded or redeveloped to accommodate not more than the permitted number of residents. (01-143)