

2020 to 2023 Strategic Plan



Introduction to Inn from the Cold



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We have been transforming families' lives in the Calgary region since 1997. We have provided emergency shelter since the late 1990s, initially through a network of community inns, most of which were located in the basements of places of worship. Later, a permanent and centralized shelter was created when we bought our building on 11th Avenue in 2008. Since then

we have provided emergency shelter to more than 3,240 families, an average of 270 families every year. More than 55 per cent of the people who stay at IFTC's shelter are children and most of them are under the age of 12. Today, we are the largest organization in the Calgary region that's dedicated exclusively to families that are or may become homeless.

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we have provided
emergency shelter
for more than
3,240 families*

*More than
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of the family
members
are children*



Vision, mission and values



Vision A community where no child or family is homeless

Mission We offer shelter, housing, and coordinated supports to help children and their families achieve independence

Values **Compassionate**
We demonstrate kindness, caring, and a genuine motivation to help

Courageous
We are brave and bold and stand strong in our representation for families


Inclusive
We value the rich diversity of people and the right of all to participate fully, without fear or discrimination

Respectful
We hold ourselves and others in high regard and demonstrate this through our attitudes and behaviors


Accountable
We do what we say and conduct ourselves with integrity and openness

Innovative
We strive to achieve positive and impactful change by building knowledge, pursuing new ideas, collaborating with others, and learning from our efforts

The need in the Calgary region



We are the largest organization in the region that's dedicated exclusively to families experiencing homelessness



While Inn from the Cold isn't the only organization that serves families who are homeless, **we are the largest organization in the region that serves families exclusively.**

The need for providing support to families in crisis is greater in Calgary than elsewhere in the province for the following reasons:

- Calgary has more than 50 per cent of Alberta's visible homeless population
- The average number of Calgary families staying in an emergency shelter on any given night has been close to 200 since 2008, with the numbers increasing during economic downturns
- The Calgary region is experiencing severe economic challenges due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, on top of the energy sector recession and a lack of economic diversification
- Based on historical recessions in Canada, Calgary can expect a lag effect on the rate of homelessness, leading to a protracted demand for housing and social services support
- Rates of unemployment and eviction continue to be higher than the national average
- The city also has a significant shortage of available affordable housing units, and for families with more than two children, the shortage is especially acute

A close-up photograph of two young children, likely of East Asian descent, smiling warmly at the camera. They are positioned very close together, with their heads touching. The child on the left is wearing a light blue denim shirt, and the child on the right is wearing a red sweater with a white ruffled collar. The background is dark and out of focus.

Our strategic
alignment

Background on our strategic alignment

Inn from the Cold **collaborates** with various organizations to ensure every Calgary family has a safe place to call home.

Our work aligns with and contributes to the priorities of various local, provincial, and federal entities.

Our strategic partners

1 Local Sector

- *Plan to End Homelessness: People First in Housing First (2015)*
- *Enough for All 2.0 (2019)*

3 Provincial Government

- Community and Social Services Ministry
- Children's Services Ministry
- Seniors and Housing Ministry

2 Municipal Government

- *White Goose Flying: Calls to Action (2016)*
- *One Calgary: 2019-2022*
- Foundations for Home: Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy (2016-2025)

4 Federal Government

- *A Place to Call Home: National Housing Strategy (2017-2027)*
- *Recovery for All (2020)*

1 Local Sector

We support the **Calgary Homeless Foundation's Plan to End Homelessness: People First in Housing First**, which recognizes:

- the family segment of the homeless sector continues to grow and
- families experience homelessness much differently than individuals, requiring a different approach

We endorse **Enough for All 2.0**, Vibrant Communities Calgary's community-driven poverty reduction strategy. IFTC's work specifically supports housing, food security, early learning and care, income support, and physical and mental health

2 Municipal Government

We recognize the **Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee's (CAUAC) White Goose Flying Report**, which calls on the City of Calgary to advance various Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Report. IFTC's efforts support municipal priorities around basic needs for Indigenous Peoples, including housing, health care, education, and parenting supports

We are aligned with the City of Calgary's directives in **One Calgary**, which aims to provide easy access to immediate, inclusive and safe supports to Calgarians struggling with housing, income and food instability

We support **Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy**. As an owner and program partner in several affordable and supportive housing programs, we contribute to the city's goal of ensuring all Calgarians — including vulnerable families — have access to housing choices

3 Provincial Government

Inn from the Cold's Strategic Plan (2020 to 2023) aligns with the objectives for three Government of Alberta ministries' business plans:

Community and Social Services Ministry

- Partner with civil society organizations and municipalities to provide emergency shelter for vulnerable Albertans

At Inn from the Cold: We have provided emergency shelter for families in the Calgary region since 1997

- Partner with civil society organizations, municipalities and other ministries to improve housing stability through programs such as Housing First and provide appropriate supports for Albertans affected by homelessness

At Inn from the Cold: On any given night, more than 65 families sleep under an Inn from the Cold roof

- Collaborate with civil society organizations to identify and implement actions to make program and service delivery more efficient and effective in supporting the stability, participation, and inclusion of Albertans

At Inn from the Cold: By providing emergency shelter and supportive housing to families in crisis, IFTC contributes to a safer and more stable community for all

Seniors and Housing Ministry

- Develop approaches that explore partnerships between the orders of government, housing providers, and private sector to deliver affordable and mixed-income housing

At Inn from the Cold: Housing affordability continues to be a barrier for the families we serve. We are committed to partnerships to find innovative and cost-effective solutions to family homelessness

Children's Services Ministry

- Develop strategies to support safe, healthy and resilient children and families, including mentoring opportunities for children and youth who have experienced trauma

At Inn from the Cold: Our work has a dual purpose of prevention and intervention. By supporting children through their experiences of homelessness, we are helping to facilitate intergenerational change

4 Federal Government

The Government of Canada's **National Housing Strategy 2017-2027** commits to prioritizing housing for those in greatest need, including women and children fleeing violence, Indigenous peoples and recent immigrants and specifically calls for the sustainability of community housing efforts to support the most vulnerable

At Inn from the Cold: Many families at IFTC have experienced family or domestic violence. More than half of the families we support in our shelter and housing programs are female single parents

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness' (CAEH) Recovery for All is a national campaign calling for urgent policy change to end homelessness. The plan prioritizes the recognition of the unique experiences of homelessness for Indigenous peoples, women, children, and racialized people.

At Inn from the Cold: Each year about 55 per cent of the families IFTC serves are Indigenous, and more than half of the individuals in our shelter are children

What ending family homelessness requires

All families supported by Inn from the Cold are unique in their circumstances. However, we know that factors such as poverty, lack of affordable housing, discrimination, lack of childcare, mental health, physical health and domestic violence contribute to family homelessness.

Homelessness also affects some families more than others, such as single mothers and families that are Indigenous, racialized or newcomers. We also know that children who experience homelessness often lag developmentally, socially and academically, and experience poorer outcomes as adults.

Adults who experience homelessness were often homeless as children. Providing services to vulnerable families is both intervention (the immediate crisis) and prevention in action (supporting children to a better future).

At a systems level, ending family homelessness requires:

- Coordinated assessment and intake
- Targeted prevention and diversion
- Short and temporary stay in an emergency shelter
- Rapid re-housing programs for families that are ready for independence
- Transitional housing options for families requiring more intensive supports for up to 24 months
- Affordable housing in community

Also, families experiencing homelessness can benefit from access to individualized supports, such as housing-first programs, trauma-informed practices, just-in-time intervention, specialized safety protocols for families experiencing violence and home-based early childhood and parenting supports.

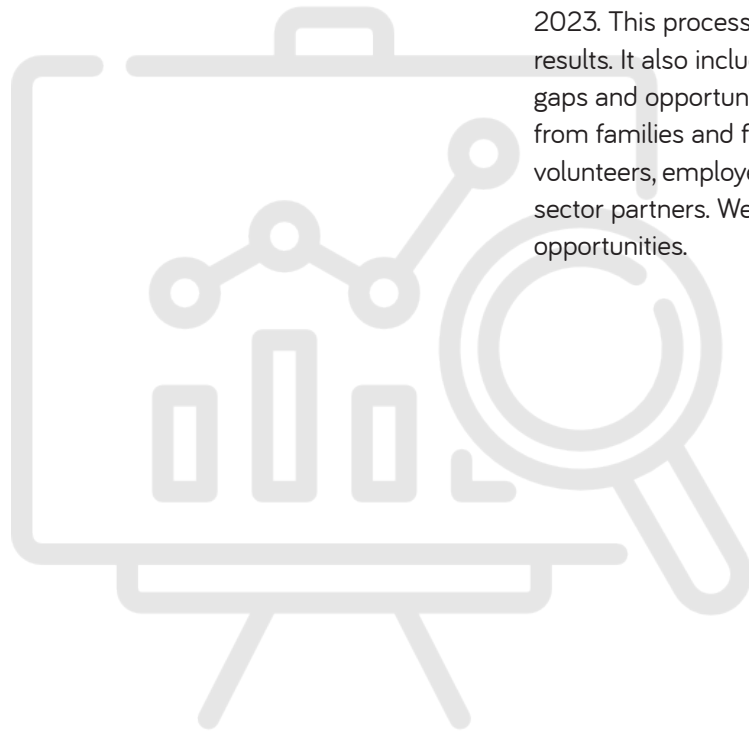
Strategic Planning



Approach to strategic planning at Inn from the Cold

Inn from the Cold undergoes a strategic planning cycle about every three years, with annual reviews and adjustments as needed.

In late 2019, we began the process to produce a strategic plan for 2020 to 2023. This process included reviewing previous organizational plans and results. It also included analyzing the regional sector, identifying significant gaps and opportunities, looking at our program outcomes and feedback from families and formally consulting with important stakeholders such as volunteers, employees, board members, donors, funders, academics, and sector partners. We wanted to hear what others see as IFTC's strengths and opportunities.



Outcomes from the consultation

Inn from the Cold is recognized for an important distinguishing strength: we help all families — particularly the most vulnerable — by offering low-barrier shelter and services. Stakeholders also noted our strong and recognizable brand and that we have the focus, credibility, and expertise to work with families experiencing homelessness.

A number of actions were identified to best help families in the coming years:

Shelter and housing

- Prioritize reducing or eliminating time in the shelter
- Keep the shelter operations available for emergencies
- Focus on housing families quickly
- Continue to develop prevention and diversion services
- Strengthen case management, offering post-shelter support for families who need it
- Explore transitional housing models for families who need more intensive supports for a longer time

Services

- Support families from crisis to independence by providing, partnering, or coordinating the delivery of integrated services to meet each family and its individual members' needs
- Strengthen program offerings for families to ensure IFTC is innovative, responsive, trauma informed, and culturally sensitive

Advocacy

- Strengthen data collection to evaluate program effectiveness, inform decision-making, and improve service delivery
- Amplify advocacy efforts with governments, non-government organizations, and the community and continue to build IFTC's reputation as a leading voice about family homelessness

Organization

- Focus on strengthening governance of the organization, creating a more diverse workforce, expanding and diversifying revenue streams, and shifting the culture of the organization to one that's responsive and agile
- Work to develop strategic partnerships to find efficiencies and maximize benefits to the community

Inn from the Cold's organizational priorities

2020 to 2023

Ensure relevance

We can realize our vision if Inn from the Cold is providing what each family and its individual members need for a healthy, safe, secure and independent home life. Everything we do must be family-driven and focused. The support we provide must be trauma-informed, individualized, flexible, responsive, and aligned with our organizational values. We are the largest organization in the Calgary region that serves families facing homelessness. Because of this, Inn from the Cold also has the responsibility to demonstrate leadership in innovative, effective, and efficient programs for families.

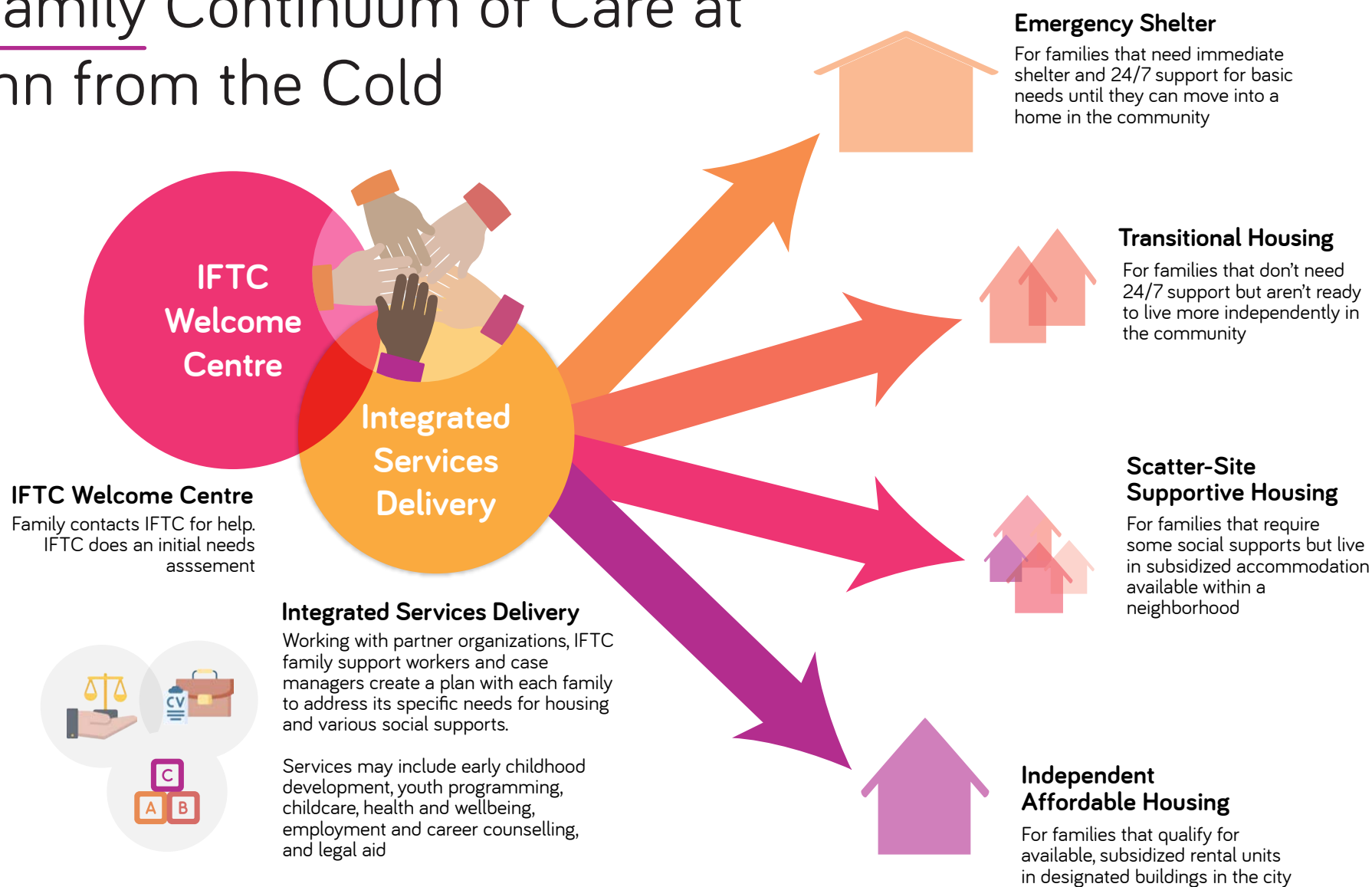
Grow reputation

We can realize our vision if Inn from the Cold's stakeholders view us as trusted, respected, and reliable. Each stakeholder group we rely on to realize our mission needs to view and continue to view our organization in this way. These groups include families, employees, volunteers, donors, government and community partners, and the general public. For families experiencing homelessness, we need to support their efforts to be seen, heard, and understood within the larger Calgary community.

Build resilience

We can realize our vision if Inn from the Cold has a solid, sustainable foundation and continues to evolve to best meet the changing and individual needs of the families we serve. The diversity of our people and the strength of our organizational practices comprise that foundation.

Family Continuum of Care at Inn from the Cold



Priorities

1 Prevent homelessness and divert away from shelter stays

2 House families as quickly as possible

IFTC's Strategic Plan Overview 2020 to 2023

Vision

A community where no child or family is homeless

Mission

Inn from the Cold offers shelter, housing and coordinated supports to help children and their families achieve independence

Relevant

A responsive organization that provides what each family and its individual members need

Goal 1

Develop a strong continuum of care that coordinates and streamlines services to move families from crisis to stability

(Special focus on the unique needs of Indigenous and immigrant families)

- Complete feasibility studies on IFTC properties to ensure highest and best use of these assets (trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, modernize utilization, and accessibility)
- Further develop a responsive service continuum for families with a goal to shorten the stay in emergency shelter, rapidly house families to transitional, supportive, or permanent community housing (partners) and ensure families receive the support they need, when they need it (evidence-based and effective)
- Explore opportunities for new programming, including family transitional housing and community case management (innovation, partnerships)
- Operate in a truly collaborative, coordinated model so that service delivery is streamlined to ensure improved quality of life for families (leverage strategic partnerships; refine triage, diversion, intake and referral efforts)
- Offer innovative programming for children in families experiencing homelessness to improve the mental, social, and physical wellbeing of children (advocate, cycle is broken, no one left behind)
- Apply a culturally diverse lens, including an Indigenous worldview, to all programming offered by or coordinated by IFTC to ensure that families experiencing homelessness, including Indigenous and immigrant families, see themselves in the organization and feel understood (inclusiveness)

Reputable

A trusted, respected, and reliable organization that helps families to be seen, heard, and understood

Goal 2

Advocate for families experiencing homelessness with governments, non-government organizations and the community to change policies that are creating systemic barriers and increase awareness of the issues facing families

Goal 3

Continue to grow IFTC's reputation as a leader in supporting the needs of all families experiencing homelessness, with a focus on children

- Share relevant stories and data so the community can better understand the impact IFTC is having on families who are homeless and the community (awareness)
- Develop robust and relevant data collection processes and build an evaluation framework to better measure IFTC's impact on homelessness and the community (reputation and relevance)
- Deliver on an effective government relations strategy that targets systemic issues and policy changes required to better support the needs of families experiencing homelessness (advocacy and trusted partner)
- Develop a plan to raise community awareness of the various issues faced by families experiencing homelessness
- Leverage IFTC's strong brand to position the organization as a connector in the community for families seeking services and programs (trust and collaboration)
- Establish sector partnerships to enhance strength of advocacy for additional funding, supports, programs (leader, champion)

Resilient

A solid and sustainable organization that can evolve in ways to best meet families' needs

Goal 4

Focus on strengthening governance of the organization, ensuring a diverse and engaged workforce, expanding revenue streams, and shifting the culture of the organization to be there in the long-term for all families experiencing homelessness

- Review organizational policies and practices to ensure stability and strength for the organization (stable and strong leadership)
- Build a sustainable revenue model with funding from governments, corporations, philanthropists, community, and from social enterprise initiatives (fulfill mission)
- Develop a relevant, mission-driven social enterprise framework for the organization that identifies opportunities, risks, revenue and expenses (self-sufficiency)
- Invest in our people and nurture our organizational culture so that we can more effectively deliver a new family care model (best talent, culturally and gender diverse, retention)
- Develop a strategy to recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled and diverse staff and volunteer workforce so that families see themselves reflected in the organization and feel well supported (representative, resilient, compassionate)

Measures & Outcomes

Programs data

Families experiencing homelessness find shelter, housing, supports at IFTC

Organizational results

IFTC is a respected leader and voice on the issue of family homelessness

Budgets and financial reporting

Financial and capital sustainability is achieved to support mission

Organizational statistics

IFTC workforce is diverse, engaged, and supported

Relevant

A responsive organization that provides what each family and its individual members need

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Transforming families' lives
in Calgary since 1997



Inn from the Cold
110 - 11th Avenue SE
Calgary, AB T2G 0X5

innfromthecold.org

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