

City of Melbourne
Draft Homelessness Framework
2006-2009

Action Plan

September 2006

City of Melbourne Homelessness Action Plan

THEME A – SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND PLACE

Council's work will be evidence based, assessing needs, identifying gaps and developing appropriate models for action.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthen information provision and service responses to homeless and vulnerable people in the City of Melbourne.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME: Provision of more appropriate, effective, coordinated and timely support and information services will lead to improved pathways out of homelessness

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme A Strategy 1. Needs Assessment, Gaps and Model Development				
A1.1	Consider undertaking a bi-annual (2007, 2009, etc) count of primary homelessness to complement the ABS Census, using trained homelessness consumers to conduct data collection.	Community Services City Research	Research and Planning	2 4
A1.2	Explore the possibility of conducting and/or sponsoring quantitative and qualitative research on the needs of different groups (including young people and people from Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, focussing on their health and social support needs, to inform the implementation of this Action Plan; and the development of a Central Business District (CBD) community health service and other future services.	Community Services	Research and Planning	1 2 3 4
A1.3	Explore the feasibility of developing social enterprise program/seeding grants program to support initiatives run by homeless people (e.g. nursery, café) to provide income and skills development and foster implementation of recommendations.	Community Services	Research, Planning and Support	1 2 3 4
A1.4	Facilitate development and implementation of a food collection/donation program in the city, collecting food from markets, cafes, retailers, for distribution in rooming houses and to people sleeping out.	Community Services	Support Coordination	1 2 3 4

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
A1.5	In partnership with key stakeholders, consider developing specific initiatives to respond to Indigenous homelessness in the City, including recognition of the different cultural definition of homelessness for Indigenous people with relevant partners.	Community Services	Research and Planning Coordination	1 2 3 4
Theme A Strategy 1.2. Support for Services				
A1.2.1	Continue financial support for homelessness support services for example Melbourne Youth Support Service, Frontyard, and the Lion Garden project, Café Meals Program, Living Room's Indigenous Public Space Officer and Travellers' Aid.	Community Services	Support	1 2 3 4
A1.2.2	In partnership with services, conduct a comprehensive service mapping of services used by people experiencing homelessness in the City of Melbourne with a focus on geographic coverage, target groups and service hours.	Community Services	Research and Planning Coordination	1
A1.2.3	Support evaluation and promotion of the Lion Garden Youth Transitions Model and explore opportunities for replicating this model.	Community Services	Research and Planning	1 2
A1.2.4	Promote available City of Melbourne grants programs to agencies working with homeless and vulnerable people.	Community Services Arts and Culture	Advocacy Coordination	1 2 3 4
A1.2.5	Advocate for resources from philanthropic groups such as the Lord Mayor's Fund to fund sustainable projects to address homelessness	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2 3 4

Theme A Strategy 1.3 Information Provision		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
A1.3.1	Explore the possible establishment of an integrated 'one-stop-shop' information service within the City for people experiencing homelessness (similar to the Frontyard model for young people).	Community Services	Research and Planning	1 2
A1.3.2	Consider developing a community education and awareness resource for local residents and traders about homelessness (e.g. 'Myths and Facts' booklet produced by City of Adelaide). This should include case studies from a range of people who have experienced homelessness in the City of Melbourne, possibly collected by trained homelessness consumers.	Community Services Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	2 3
A1.3.3	Continue to produce the <i>Helping Out</i> booklet, using a reference group of consumers and service providers to ensure that the information is comprehensive and current.	Community Services Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	1 2 3 4
A1.3.4	Develop a targeted information distribution strategy to ensure access to Council information for homeless people and residents in low-cost or temporary accommodation.	Community Services Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	1 2
A1.3.5	Review and redevelop existing electronic information resources (such as the Community Services Directory) in collaboration with community agencies to ensure information provision is relevant and useful.	Community Services Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	1

A1.3.6	Provide information about services and resources for homeless people on City electronic <i>information hubs</i> .	Community Services Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	1 2 3 4
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THEME A – SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND PLACE

STRATEGY 2: Develop integrated place-based responses to specific neighbourhood needs and locational issues.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME: Improved understanding of homelessness at the neighbourhood level by all stakeholders including people experiencing homelessness, service providers, traders and residents will ensure better integration of the needs of people experiencing homelessness into neighbourhood-based planning.

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme A Strategy 2. Integrated Place-Based Responses				
A2.1	Review and evaluate processes and outcomes of the <i>North West Melbourne Homelessness Action Plan</i>	Community Services Place Management	Research and Planning	1
A2.2	Develop local neighbourhood Homelessness Action Plans for Carlton-Parkville, Southbank, Kensington and CBD which respond to a range of needs, life stages and homelessness categories and involve all key stakeholders.	Community Services Place Management	Community Awareness and Information Provision Research and Planning Coordination	2 3 4
A2.3	Ensure that Neighbourhood Plans developed by Council include consideration of issues for people experiencing homelessness and those living in rooming/boarding houses.	Community Services Place Management	Coordination	1 2 3 4

THEME A – SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND PLACE

STRATEGY 3: Research issues related to the provision of rooming houses and the health and support needs of rooming house residents in the City of Melbourne and advocate for those needs to be met.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME: Improved housing, health and support will improve the wellbeing of people living in rooming houses.

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme A Strategy 3. Rooming House Residents				
A3.1	Develop a comprehensive, annually updated register of private and community-managed rooming houses and other low-cost private accommodation within the municipality	Community Services	Research and Planning	1 2 3 4
A3.2	Investigate the adequacy of rooming house stock in the municipality and ensure all stock meets minimum standards. This may be undertaken at a neighbourhood level.	Community Services Place Management	Research and Planning	1 2
A3.3	Establish and support a network of service providers working in rooming houses in the City to coordinate existing services, investigate service gaps and advocate for improved responses to service gaps for this group.	Community Services	Coordination	2 3 4
A3.4	Conduct qualitative and quantitative research into health and social needs, including mental health needs, of people living in rooming houses.	Community Services	Research and Planning	2 3 4
A3.5	Extend the Café Meals Program (Doutta Galla CHS) by engaging more cafes and promoting the program throughout all forms of low-cost accommodation	Community Services	Support	1 2 3 4
A3.6	Explore the feasibility of food security programs to improve the health and nutrition of rooming house residents	Community Services	Research and Planning	2 3

THEME B – PARTNERSHIPS

Council will work in partnership with a range of key stakeholders to ensure that the outcomes achieved are grounded and connected within the context of the local community, other levels of Government, business and local traders, service providers and homeless people.

STRATEGY 1: Build and strengthen robust collaborative partnerships with a range of significant stakeholders to facilitate an effective response to homelessness in the City.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

- more effective coordinated government and service responses to homelessness in the City will improve outcomes for homeless people.
- improved understanding of good practice in the development and delivery of responses will assist people experiencing homelessness
- improved community and service awareness of homelessness and related issues will increase understanding of issues underlying homelessness.
- Council is recognised as a leader among Australian local governments in addressing homelessness and ensure Council has effective ability to advocate to improve outcomes for homeless people and the community as a whole.

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme B Strategy 1. Partnerships with other levels of Government				
B1.1	Consider development of a partnership agreement with State Government to address homelessness in the Capital City (see SA model)	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2
B1.2	Work with State Government to develop a CBD community health centre, with outreach workers and after hours response to meet the needs of homeless people	Community Services	Advocacy Support Coordination	1 2
B1.3	Advocate to State Government to increase the number of Transitional Housing properties in the City.	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2
B1.4	Explore development of an <i>Inner-Urban Regional Homelessness Strategy</i> in collaboration with Yarra, Port Phillip, Stonnington	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	1 2

and Maribyrnong Councils to work in conjunction with the Inner-Urban Regional Housing Statement.			
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Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
B1.5	Advocate to the State Government to address existing service gaps in the City, particularly for people with mental illness and women escaping family violence.	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2
B1.6	Work with other Capital City Lord Mayors and Councils to ensure homelessness is addressed as a priority issue in all Australian Capital Cities.	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	1 2 3 4
B1.7	Consider submitting an application for <i>National Homelessness Strategy</i> communication activity funding to hold a forum with other Capital Cities to identify best practice and develop collaborative ways of working together.	Community Services	Research and Planning Advocacy	1
Theme B Strategy 2. Partnerships with Support Services				
B2.1	In partnership with key stakeholders establish a coordinating network of community agencies providing services to homeless people, including mainstream services such as Police, primary health, ambulances, that meets quarterly to share information and improve coordination of existing services.	Community Services	Coordination	1 2 3 4
B2.2	In partnership with key support agencies monitor the provision of outreach and material aid services to homeless people, particularly young people, within the City and work towards 24/7 accessibility.	Community Services	Coordination Support	2 3 4
B2.3	Include housing and support services in Primary Care Partnerships to facilitate improved access to services and consumer and carer initiatives	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2
B2.4	Consider establishing partnership agreements/protocols with community agencies that limit the use of exclusion practices,	Community Services	Advocacy	2 3

	particularly those that entrench chronic homelessness			
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Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme B Strategy 3. Other Partnerships				
B3.1	Work with all levels of government and stakeholders to address the structural and social causes of homelessness.	Community Services	Advocacy	1 2 3 4
B3.2	Work with local businesses and employment services to promote participation of homeless people in educational, vocational and employment opportunities.	Community Services Place Management	Advocacy	1 2 3 4
B3.3	Finalise and promote the <i>Inner City Squats Protocol</i> .	Community Services	Coordination	1
B3.4	Explore development of a <i>Council Rough Sleepers Protocol</i> to provide an improved service response from Council to people sleeping rough in the City. The <i>Protocol</i> would facilitate Council's role in linking individuals to outreach services where appropriate. This would build on the work of, and complement, the <i>Inner City Squats Protocol</i> .	Community Services	Coordination	1 2
B3.5	Consider development of an annual awards program to recognise excellence in addressing homelessness (sponsored by business) and hold an expo to showcase good practice models and innovative initiatives, and to provide an opportunity for debate and discussion about addressing homelessness in Capital Cities.	Community Services	Support Advocacy	2 3 4
B3.6	Identify opportunities to partner with businesses and traders in the City to develop positive responses to homelessness (e.g. through forums such as Melbourne Cares, Melbourne Community Foundation, etc)	Community Services	Advocacy Community Awareness and Information Provision	1 2 3 4
B3.7	In conjunction with local education and training providers and	Community Services	Support	2 3 4

philanthropic groups consider development of a scholarships/grants program to people as a pathway out of homelessness.			
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THEME C – PARTICIPATION

Council is committed to achieving an inclusive and engaging, diverse sustainable community which ensures that everyone has the opportunity to participate in community life.

STRATEGY 1: Develop inclusive and empowering participatory mechanisms for people who have experienced/or who are experiencing homelessness to contribute to Council decision-making processes related to homelessness.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

- Inclusive and participatory Council decision-making processes will result in decisions which accurately reflect the needs of consumers
- The development and implementation of best practice consumer participation mechanisms in the homelessness field ensure that Council is recognised as a leader in inclusive and participatory decision-making processes.

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme C Strategy 1. Consumer Participation				
C1.1	Explore establishment of a Consumer Advisory Group to inform Council decision-making around housing and support services – explore different models, including PILCH model and any possible ways of compensating participants.	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	1
C1.2	Convene periodic meetings of Consumer Advisory Group to inform Council’s work	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	1 2 3 4
C1.3	Explore development of a Charter of Rights for people experiencing homelessness, based on a human rights approach and embracing an “assistance first, enforcement last” principle	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	1 2
C1.4	Develop principles of consumer participation and complaint mechanisms within Council, and promote to partner organisations.	Community Services	Advocacy Coordination	2 3 4
C1.5	Foster and facilitate the inclusion of homeless consumers in the	Community Services	Research and	1 2 3 4

	conduct of research and data collection on homelessness and explore the provision of appropriate training, supervision and possible compensation.		Planning	
Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
Theme C Strategy 2. Accessibility and Inclusiveness				
C2.1	Research the usage patterns of public space by homeless and vulnerable people in the City.	Community Services Parks and Recreation/Urban Design	Research and Planning	1 2
C2.2	Consider appointing a Public Space Officer (General) to complement the work of the Indigenous Public Space Officer and to support implementation of the <i>Rough Sleepers Protocol</i>	Community Services	Support	1 2 3 4
C2.3	Promote and support positive images and representations of people experiencing homelessness (particularly young people) to demonstrate their strength and resilience and to break down stereotypes and increase community understanding of homelessness.	Community Services Arts and Culture Corporate Communications	Community Awareness and Information Provision	1 2 3 4
C2.4	Foster and support community forums to celebrate the resilience and strengths of people who have experienced homelessness. This may be held at a neighbourhood level.	Community Services Place Management	Community Awareness and Information Provision	2 4
C2.5	Explore establishment of a small grants program to support access for homeless and vulnerable people to Council's recreation facilities and activities	Community Services Parks and Recreation	Support	2 3 4
C2.6	Explore opportunities for increasing access to cultural and recreation activities and facilities for people experiencing homelessness through the <i>Active Melbourne and other Strategies</i> , and ensure inclusion of young people and people from CALD backgrounds.	Community Services Parks and Recreation/Arts and Culture	Coordination	1 2

Action		Council Responsibility	Council Role	Timeframe (Years)
C2.7	Ensure that the <i>Social Infrastructure Strategy</i> addresses improved access to community spaces and public facilities by people experiencing homelessness, including for young people and people from CALD backgrounds.	Community Services	Coordination	1
C2.8	Consider the provision of Council facilities and spaces for forums and activities related to homelessness (including ReLink activities)	Community Services	Support	1 2 3 4
C2.9	Identify opportunities for drawing on the skills/talents of homeless people to engage them in Council and community activities and events, including in both volunteering and paid capacities	Community Services	Advocacy Community Awareness and information provision	1 2 3 4
C2.10	Promote the ' <i>Victorian Protocol for People who are Homeless in Public Spaces</i> ' across all neighbourhoods.	Community Services Place Management	Advocacy	1 2 3 4