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homelessness  

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# Housing & Homelessness in Greater Victoria

Presentation by  
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Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness

# Presentation Outline

- Homelessness Definition
- Drivers of Homelessness
- Number of People Experiencing Homelessness
- Housing Solutions
  - Supportive Housing
  - Affordable Housing
- Municipal Role in Solutions
- Conclusion

## Definition of Homelessness

- **Unsheltered** Absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not for habitation.
- **Emergency Sheltered** Overnight shelters for the homeless as well as those impacted by family violence.
- **Provisionally Accommodated** Referring to those whose accommodation is temporary.
- **At Risk** Housed precariously or unsafely.

# Spectrum of Housing and Supports

- **Emergency Shelter** – mats on floors for temporary stay.
- **Transitional Housing** – provide services beyond basic needs, while not permanent allows for long stay.
- **Supportive Housing** – Housing for individuals and families that includes supports and services integrated into the housing.
- **Affordable Housing** – includes public housing or other housing which has been built under a government program, non-profit housing, co-op housing and rent supplement units in the private rental sector.
- **Market Housing**

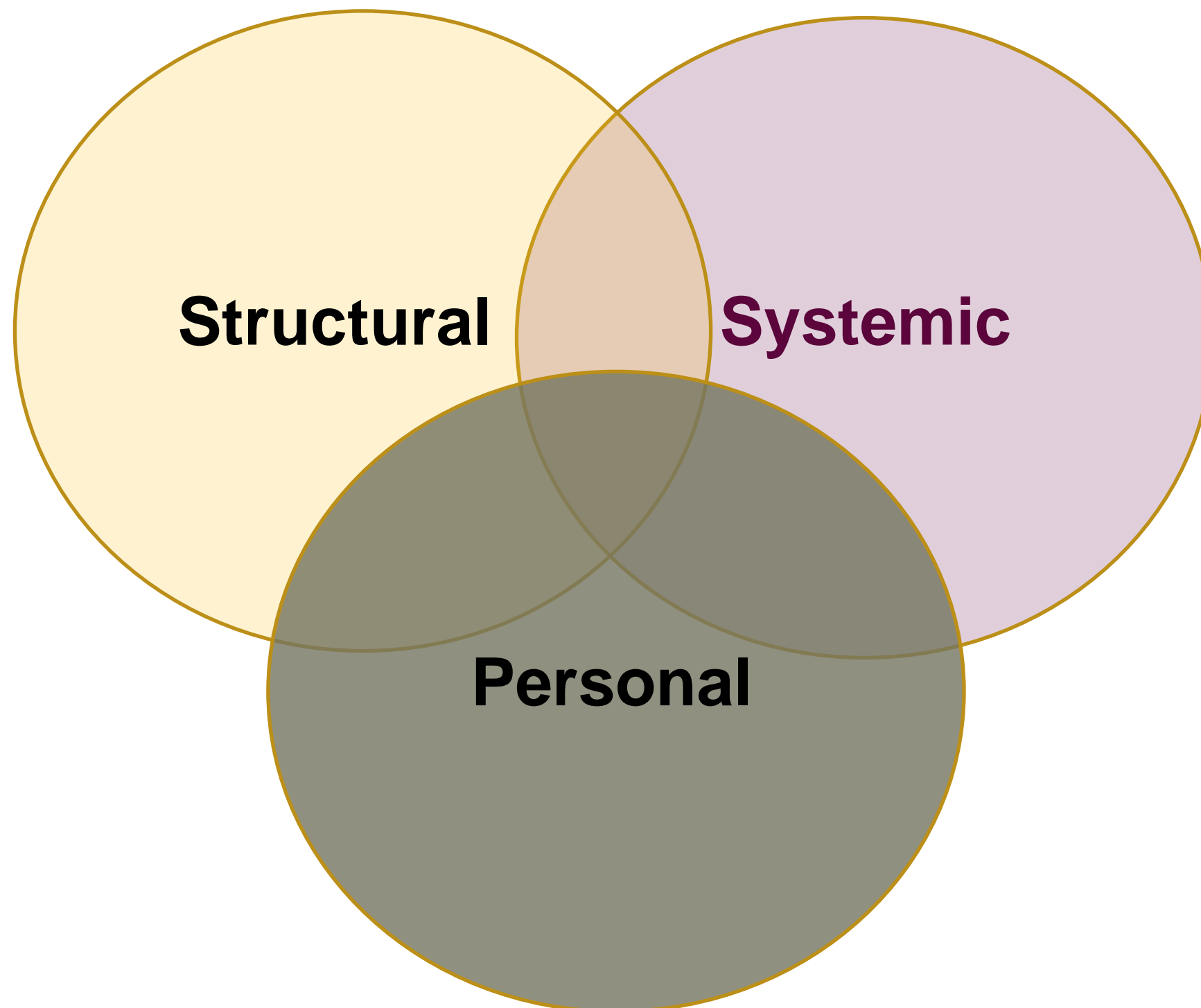
# Housing Spectrum

Non-Market Temporary		Non-Market Permanent		Market Permanent	
Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Supportive Housing	Non-Market Rental Housing	Market Rental Housing	Home Ownership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overnight shelter</li> <li>Crash beds</li> <li>Short-term stay shelter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-barrier housing</li> <li>Supportive housing</li> <li>Transition house</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group homes (long-term)</li> <li>Residential care (public)</li> <li>Assisted living (public)</li> <li>Supported housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social housing</li> <li>Co-op housing</li> <li>RGI housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market rental</li> <li>Boarding house</li> <li>Assisted living (private)</li> <li>Long-term residential care (private)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strata housing</li> <li>Fee simple</li> <li>Co-housing</li> </ul>

Adapted from: City of Victoria Planning and Development Department (2012) Official Community Plan.  
City of Victoria



# Drivers of Homelessness



## Drivers of Homelessness Vacancy Rate (2013)

Unit Type	Overall	Lower than \$700
All Types	2.8%	NA
Bachelor	1.3%	0.9%
1 Bedroom	2.9%	1%



## **Drivers of Homelessness**

### **Average Rent**

- Average rent for a Bachelor - \$695.
- Increased 24% since 2006.
- 7<sup>th</sup> most expensive place to rent in Canada.
- Income Assistance Shelter rate – \$375.



## Drivers of Homelessness

### Income

- Living Wage - \$18.93 per hour.
- 2 parent, 2 child family.
- Doesn't include holidays, saving for children's education, loan servicing, retirement.
- Conference board of Canada found 23% of households in poverty had 2 income earners.



Single Individual	Income Assistance	IA Disability	Minimum Wage
Income	\$662.79	\$963.72	\$1,525.90
Bachelor median rent	\$695.00	\$695.00	\$695.00
Nutritious food costs (VIHA)	\$305.92	\$305.92	\$305.92
Remainder for monthly expenses	<b>\$-337.55</b>	<b>\$-37.06</b>	\$524.98

## How Many People Experiencing Homelessness in Greater Victoria

- **Unsheltered - ???**
- **Emergency Sheltered** – 1,780 unique individuals accessed a shelter (112% - over 5,400 turn-aways) up 8%.
- **Provisionally Accommodated** – 1,089 people were in temporary accommodation on Feb 5, 2014 (78 turn-aways).

## How Many At Risk of Homelessness in Greater Victoria

- 20,524 individuals accessed a food bank in March, 2012.
- 1,381 households on BC Housing Registry (2014).
- 14,308 renter households in the Capital Region were in core housing need in 2011. (BCNPHA)
- Core Housing Need projected to increase between 110 and 154 renter households annually over the next 25 years. (BCNPHA – 2012)

## Housing Solutions

- **Supportive Housing** – Housing with on-site health and other services for individuals and families with more complex needs.
- **Affordable Housing** – Housing for individuals facing financial challenges.
- **Rent supplements** that are portable and go with the tenant can be a solution for supportive and affordable options.

# Overview of Shelter Users

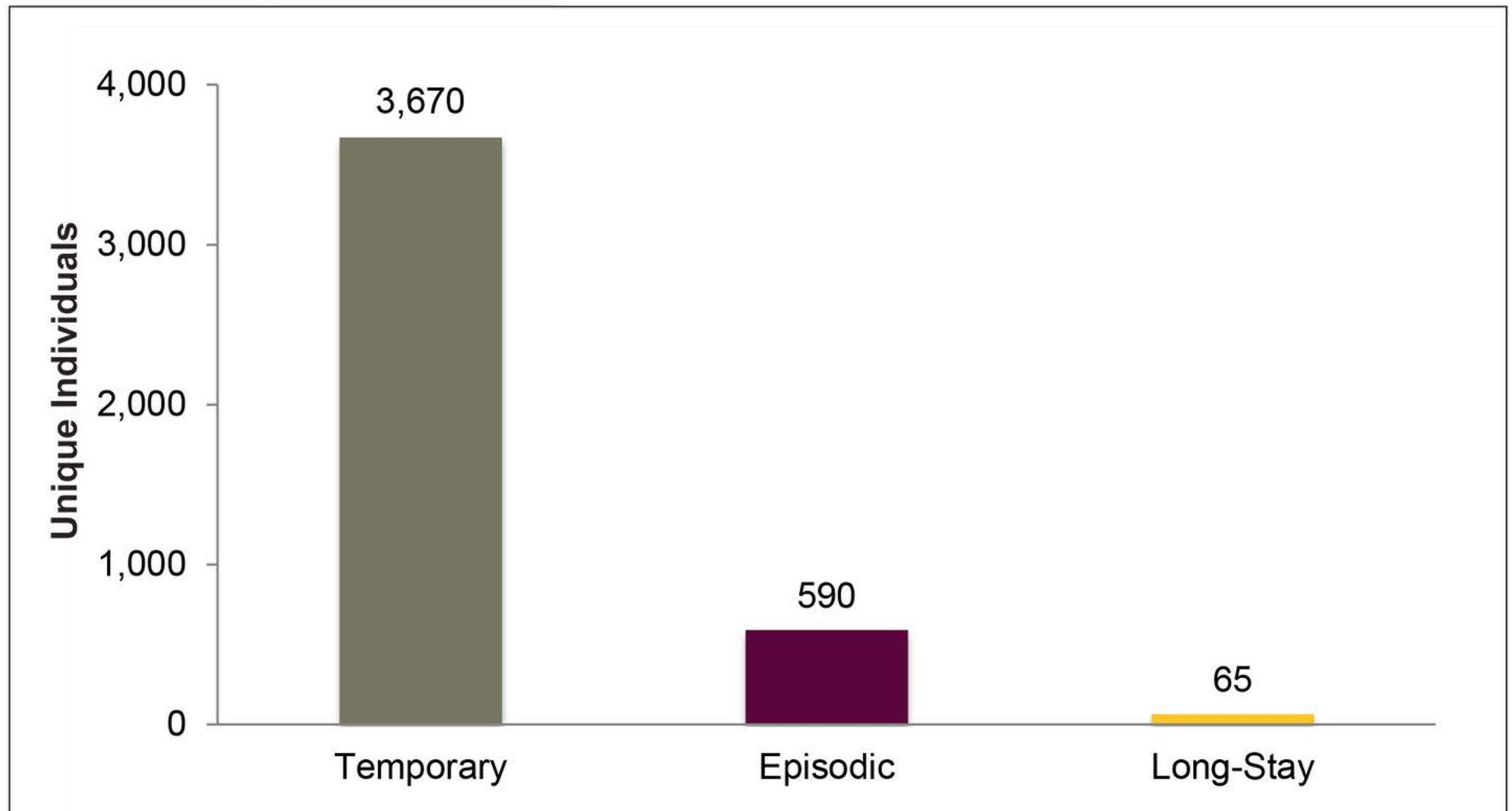
## Shelter User Classifications\*

Temporary	Episodic	Long Stay
Small number of shelter episodes and small total number of days in shelter.	Large number of shelter episodes and small total number of days in shelter.	Small number of shelter episodes and large total number of days in shelter.
*Aubrey et al, 2013, p. 6		
(Affordable housing most likely solution)	(Supportive housing most likely solution)	



# Patterns of Homelessness in Greater Victoria

Number of Unique Individuals





## Patterns of Homelessness in Greater Victoria

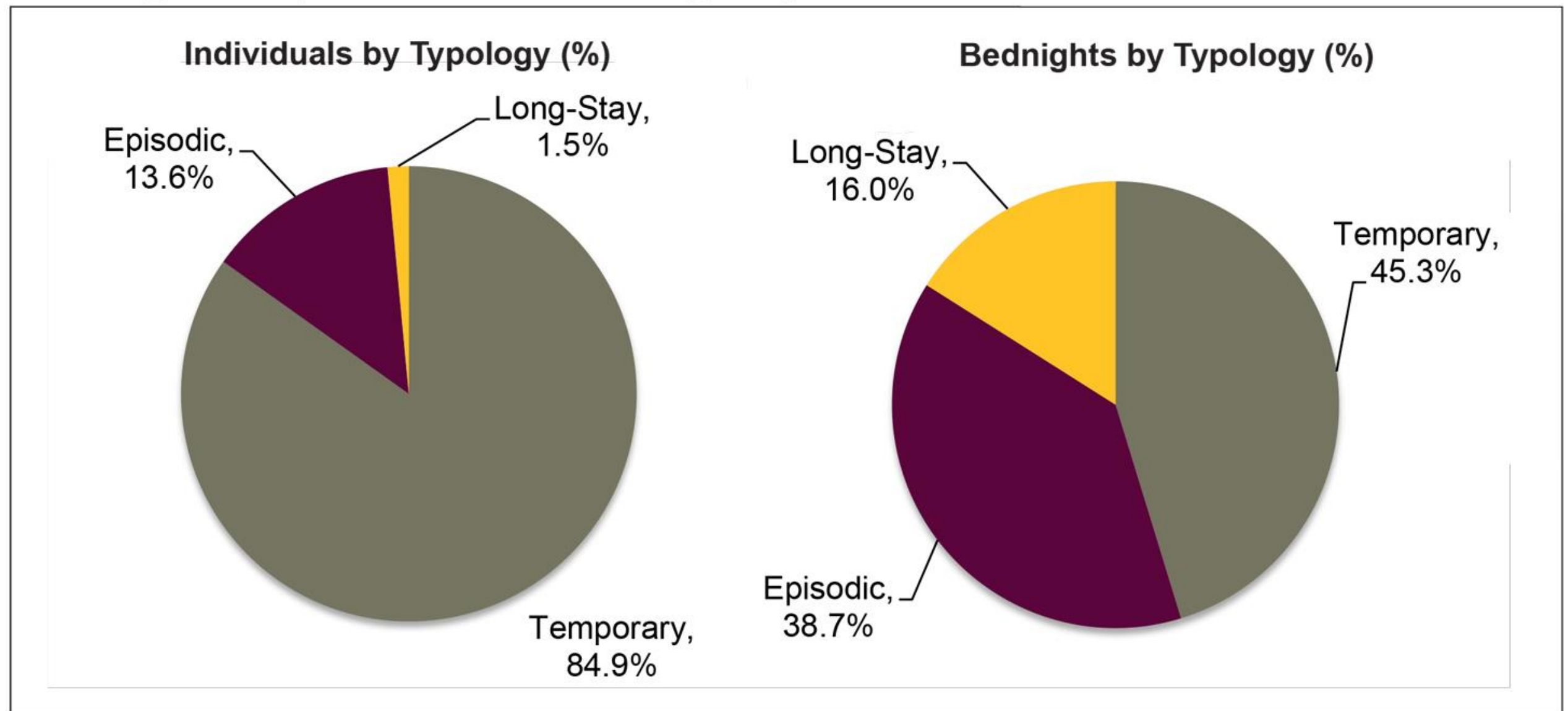
- 4,325 unique users April 2010 to March 2014.
- 590 episodic and 65 long-stay.
- 3,670 (85%) temporary.
- Similar to studies in New York (20% chronic) and Ontario (13% chronic).





# Patterns of Homelessness in Greater Victoria

Percentage of Unique Individuals and Bednights by Cluster





## Supportive Housing Needs

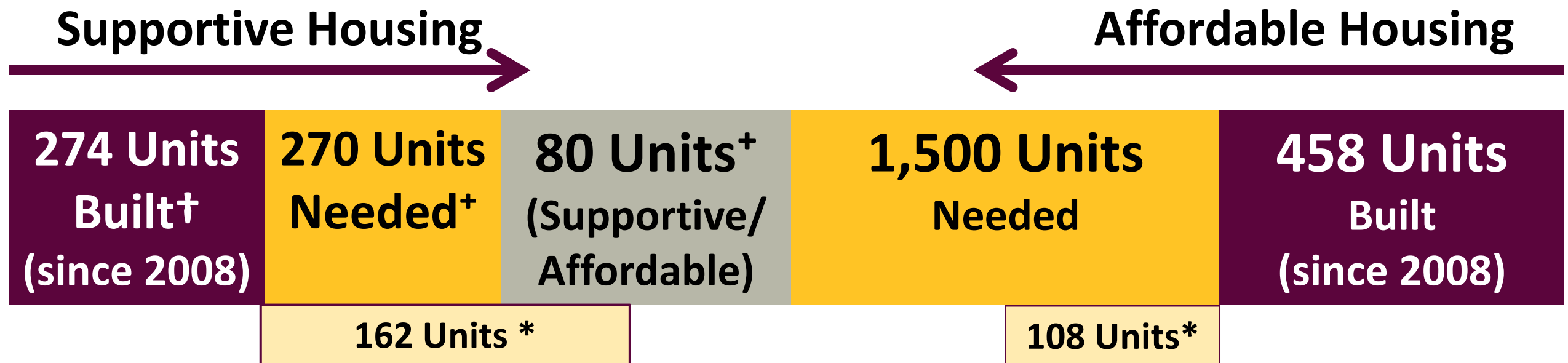
- Greater Victoria had 1,785 shelter users in 2013/14.
- $15\% \text{ of } 1,785 = 268$
- Shelter counts capture most but not all clients who require supportive housing.



## Affordable Housing Needs

- 2014 Facilities Count showed 779 people in transitional or temporary housing (hotels) on one night only.
- Does not catch those couch surfing, living in cars, insecurely housed, etc.
- BC Housing Registry included 1,381 households at March 2014.
- The Coalition estimates 1,500 affordable housing units required.

# Housing Needs



\* Priority Housing Project List - assessed by the Coalition on the criteria of project capacity, development concept, business case, development schedule and tenant support services.

† Rental supplements not included (ACT or S2H).

+ May include rental supplements.



## Role of Municipal Government

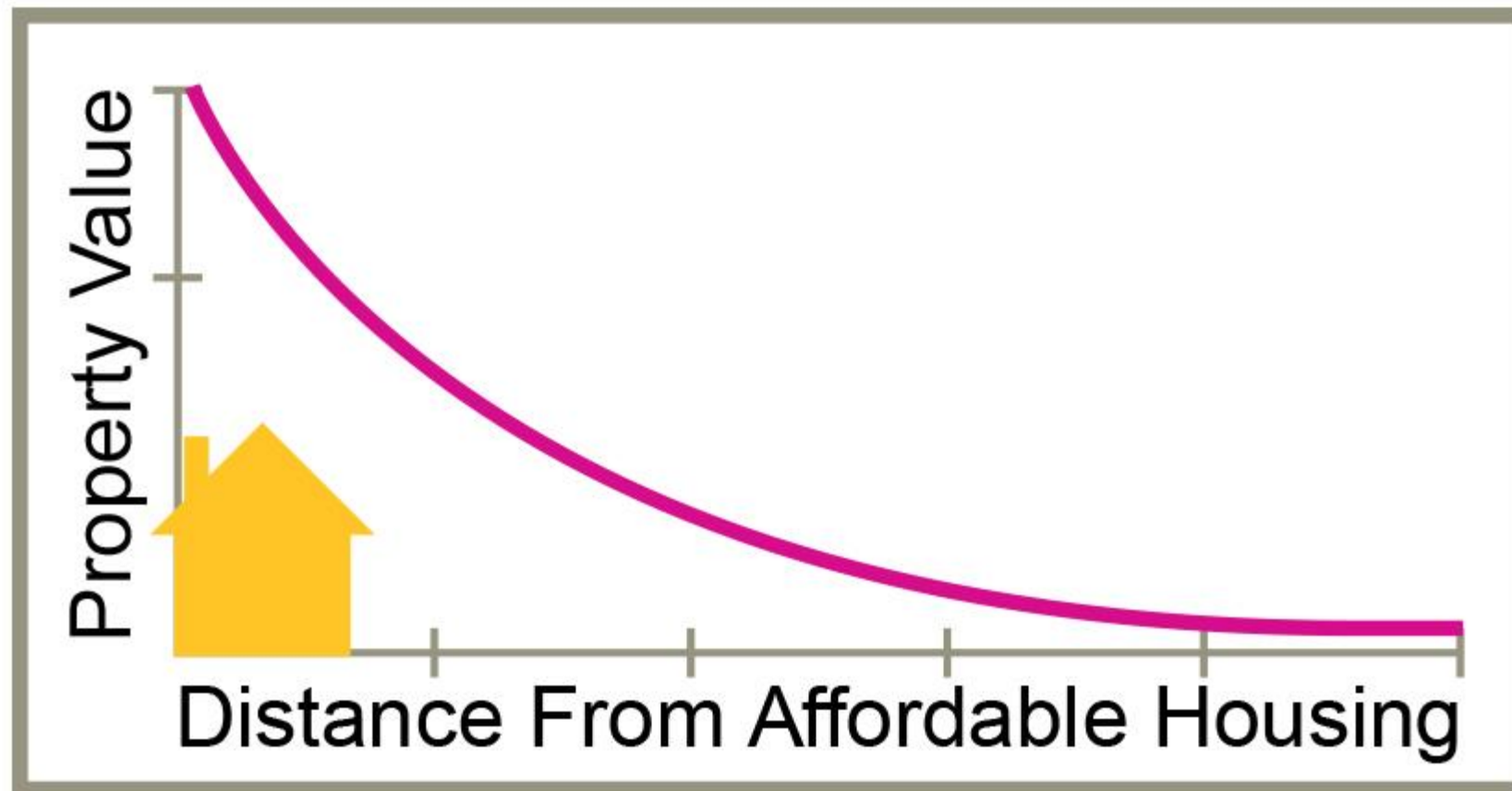
- Ease of access to land through zoning and (potentially) capital support.
- Ease of development process.
- Supportive Community Engagement – assist the proponent in dealing with NIMBY issues.

## **Role of Municipal Government - NIMBY**

- Impact on Property Values
- Crime and Safety
- Density
- Neighbourhood character
- Stigma



# Role of Municipal Government - NIMBY







## Role of Municipal Government - NIMBY

### Crime Trends Around Supportive Housing 1997 - 2006

Dispatched Calls

**27%**

Sexual Assault

**32%**

Other Assault

**12%**





## **Role of Municipal Government - NIMBY**

- Low-income households have fewer cars and drive less.
- High density reduces infrastructure costs.
- High density revitalises stagnant commercial districts and increases livability.
- Non profit housing must meet rigid standards and is often mistaken for more expensive condominium developments.

## Costs of Homelessness

Shelter	Overall
Annual per unit cost of new supportive housing, including operating and a range supports	\$16,748
Annual per unit cost of a rent supplement including supports	\$7,500
<b>Average annual cost of a shelter bed</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>



# Public Support to End Homelessness

Statement	Percentage Agreed
More affordable housing will help to end homelessness.	85.4%
Ensuring access to affordable housing is the responsibility of government.	84.5%



## Conclusions

- There is a significant housing shortage in Greater Victoria for those with lower incomes.
- This shortage is a key driver of homelessness in the region.
- The cost of providing the housing will be less than the cost of managing homelessness as a crisis.

# Resources

## Specific

- T. Aubry, S. Farrell, S. W. Hwang & M. Calhoun (2013). Identifying the Patterns of Emergency Shelter Stays of Single Individuals in Canadian Cities of Different Sizes, Housing Studies, DOI 10.1080/2673037.2013.773585
- H. Rabinovitch, B. Pauly, J. Zhao (2014). Patterns of Homelessness in Greater Victoria

## Regional:

- [victoriahomelessness.ca/get-informed/coalition-reports](http://victoriahomelessness.ca/get-informed/coalition-reports)
- [communitycouncil.ca](http://communitycouncil.ca)
- [bcnpha.ca](http://bcnpha.ca)

## National:

- [homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca)



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# victoriahomelessness.ca

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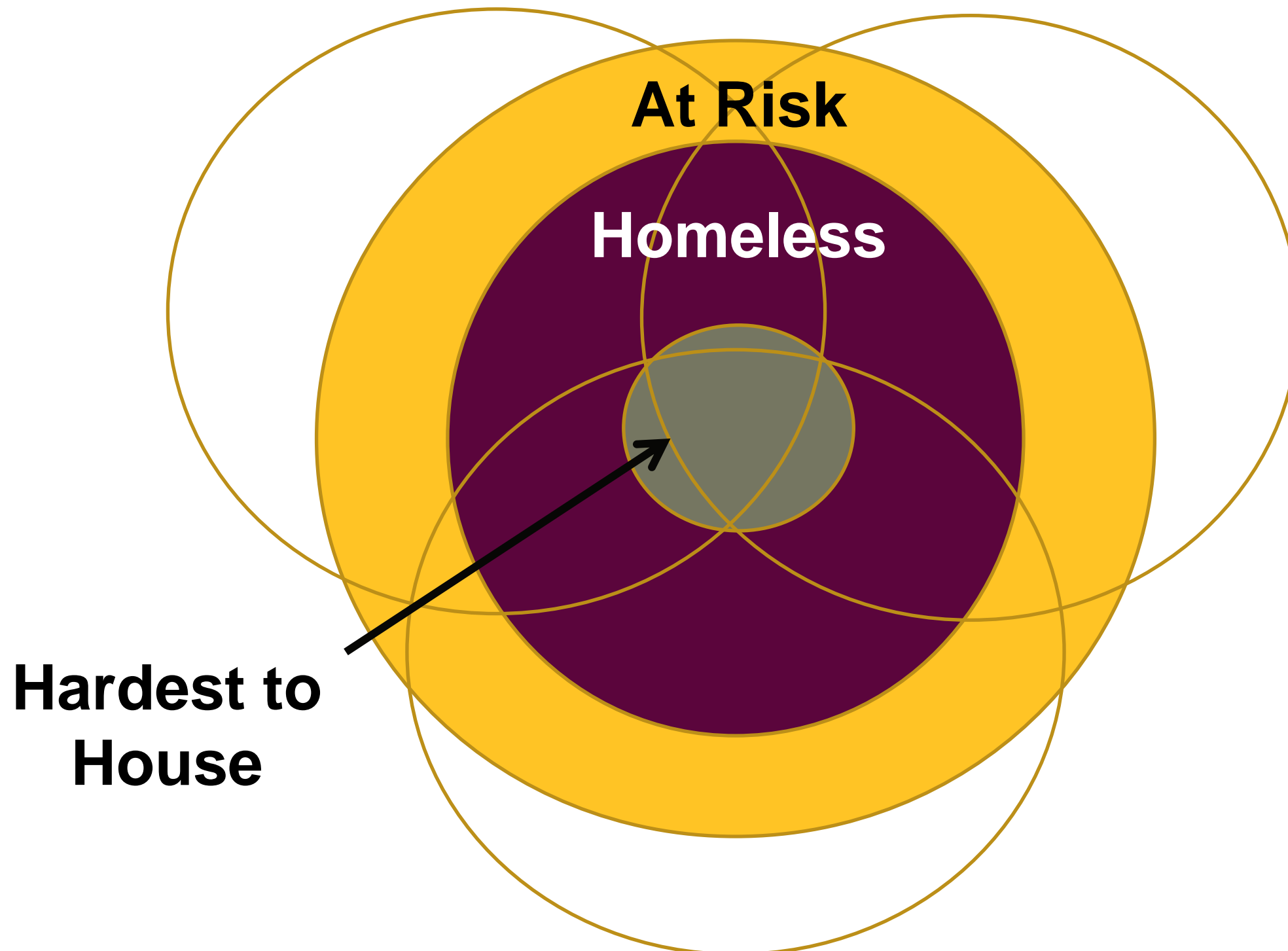
**Andrew Wynn-Williams**

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 @andrewrww



# Overview of Homelessness





## Community Response

**Between March 31, 2008 and October 31, 2014:**

- **274 new units** created for individuals who are at risk of homelessness or formerly experienced homelessness (51 since April 2013 – excluding rent supplements).
- **458 new units** of subsidized, affordable housing (excluding Rental Assistance Program, SAFER, market).



## Community Response – Rent Subsidies

- BC Housing provided 794 Rental Assistance Program (RAP) supplements in Greater Victoria (March 31, 2014).
- BC Housing provided 1,584 Shelter Aid for Elderly Residents (SAFER) supplements (March 31, 2014).
- Through BC Housing's Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) and Homelessness Outreach Program (HOP) a total of 510 people were housed in 2012/2013. 80% remained housed after 6 months.



## Streets to Homes

- The Streets to Homes Pilot Program (S2H) was introduced as a collaborative pilot by the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (Coalition) and its partners in April 2010.
- Using a “Housing First” approach, S2H aimed to move 120 people experiencing homelessness directly to private market housing obtained through a comprehensive landlord support system.



## Streets to Homes

- As of October 2014 S2H was fully subscribed with 120 housed (174 housed since inception).
- Of the 54 who have left the program 23 are socially and financially independent.
- 17 have moved into a higher level of supported housing.
- 4 deceased, 9 lost contact, 1 incarcerated
- 100% landlord retention rate (35 landlords in 75 buildings).
- \$7,500 per client per year.



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# Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)



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# Integrated Case Management (ICM)

## Homelessness Prevention Fund

- One-time grant as bridge funding to those facing homelessness due to financial hardship.
- Grants for rent or utility paid directly to the landlord or utility company (e.g. hydro).
- Recipients do not have to repay the grant (which can be up to a maximum of \$500).
- Funded entirely by private donations.
- 283 individuals, 104 families between January 2011 and October 2014.
- 87 of 88 recipients still housed after 3 months.



## Costs of Homelessness

- Emergency Shelters cost between \$13,000 and \$42,000 per person per year (depending on the services) compared to supportive and transitional housing costs of \$13,000 to \$18,000 or affordable housing costs of \$5,000 to \$8,000 (without supports). (Pomeroy, 2005)
- Investments in social housing would generate per person savings of 41%. (Palermo et al, 2006)
- 22.9% of prisoners were homeless when incarcerated. (Kellen et al, 2010)



## Costs of Homelessness

- Over eleven years the City of Toronto spent \$969,019 issuing tickets under the Safe Streets Act and only \$8,086.56 in fines were paid. (O'Grady et al. 2011)
- The estimated annual hospitalization cost of a homeless person was \$2,495 compared to \$524 for a housed person. (Hwang and Henderson, 2010)
- Homeless psychiatric patients cost \$1,058 more per admission than housed patients. (Hwang, et al, 2011)





## Costs of Homelessness

- The average street homeless adult with SAMI in BC costs the public system in excess of \$55,000 per year. Provision of adequate housing and supports is estimated to reduce this cost to \$37,000 per year
- The VICOT team found a 90% decrease in acute bed care days over its first two years.