

**Request for Information**  
**Pregnancy Pathways Leadership, Housing and Services**  
**February 26, 2015**

**1. Introduction and Purpose of the RFI**

There has been identified a population of homeless women for whom a targeted housing initiative with support services is desirable. The Steering Committee of Pregnancy Pathways includes representatives of key governmental and non-governmental agencies. The intent is to secure a safe and stable housing option that provides, in addition to housing, health and social support services for women during their pregnancy and postpartum period. This is an opportunity to significantly impact the lives of disadvantaged women and children for this generation and subsequent ones.

The RFI process is being used to gather information about the specific interest and ability of agencies to take a lead in this initiative. This includes a single organization to provide leadership, governance and serve as fiscal agent (lead organization), and may include one or more additional agencies to provide housing and/or health/social support services. The specific operating model will be developed by the lead agency in collaboration with the Steering Committee and may include: partnerships, direct operations for some aspects, and contractual agreements.

**2. Confidentiality**

The submissions in response to the RFI will be treated confidentially and be used solely for the purpose of selecting agencies to support Pregnancy Pathways. The submissions for the housing and services may be shared with the selected lead agency.

**3. Scope**

The specific information requested is outlined in the Requirements section of this RFI and in the attached form. The same information will be gathered from a number of agencies and will be used to select the agency to lead this initiative. The lead organization, once selected, will work with a selection committee to identify the primary housing and service partners.

**4. RFI Procedure**

To respond to this RFI, please complete the attached form and email to <mailto:lindamccconnan@icloud.com>

The contact person is Linda McConnan to assist as needed. Linda can be contacted via email or phone: 780-466-9812 or 78-965-8021 (cell).

The responses will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Steering Committee (selection committee).

Timelines

Request for Information sent out	February 27, 2015
Information session for interested agencies*	March 13, 2015
Responses submitted	April 30, 2015
Review Committee meets *	May 8, 2015
Reply to successful agency	May 29, 2015
Reply to all agencies that submitted	June 12, 2015

- The selection committee may request a meeting with applicants for clarification, as needed.
- Contact Linda McConnan at 780-466-9812 or 780-965-8021 or [lindamcconnan@icloud.com](mailto:lindamcconnan@icloud.com) for the location and time of the information session or any other questions.

## **5. Background Description of What is Needed**

Each year in Edmonton, it is estimated that there are approximately 100 homeless, pregnant women in need of housing, health and social support services during pregnancy and following birth of their infant. These women experience recurring and concurrent patterns of homelessness, addiction, family violence, exploitation, and intergenerational poverty. To interrupt this cyclical pattern, improve the quality of life for vulnerable women and their children and reduce system costs, a Working Group consisting of representatives from more than 35 agencies in Edmonton is implementing the Pregnancy Pathways Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to create a targeted housing program that provides safe accommodation and comprehensive health and social support services for homeless women during pregnancy and in the postpartum period. As a result of the meetings, a business case (attached) was developed by Charis Management Consulting in late 2014. These documents provided information related to the need, potential solutions and costing for the preferred model. It also outlines the critical elements for success and potential outcome measures.

## **6. The Context**

While there are a number of agencies in Edmonton that are currently providing social, health and/or housing services to the homeless, the population of pregnant and homeless women is not specifically a focus at present. It is hoped that the RFI process will assist in agencies identifying the commitments that can be made for the entire initiative, or some component parts. Agencies can also identify partnerships that they propose making to achieve the goals.

A Steering Committee of Pregnancy Pathways was formed in November 2014. A strategic planning workshop in December 2014 helped to establish the next steps that included the need to identify an agency willing and able to lead this initiative. This committee, while not a funder, 1) represents a broad partnership of agencies that operate housing, and provide social and health services (including Alberta Health Services); 2) is committed to supporting the lead agency in realizing the implementation of this initiative. The lead agency would assume a lead role of the Steering Committee. The role of the Committee may change over time e.g. to advisory.

## **7. Statement of Need**

The identified need is to select an agency to lead the implementation of this initiative. This includes leadership, governance and role as fiscal agent. The agency will indicate which of the desired services it can provide and which will require partnerships.

In turn, the lead agency will be responsible for providing or partnering with other agencies to address differentiated housing and intensive, specialized programming for the estimated population of 100 pregnant and parenting women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (See Business Case Table 3, pp. 29-30).

Development of new housing or reallocation of existing housing:

- 30 interim housing spaces and 2 emergency shelter spaces with intensive wrap-around supports for 30 (out of the 100) most unstable and highest priority women. This housing should be dispersed geographically across the city; and,

- Integration with existing *Housing First* team(s) to find appropriate permanent housing and provide follow up support for the other 70 (out of 100) women annually.

Provision of health and social support services, including:

- Basic necessities (i.e., food, clothing and shelter);
- Safe and secure housing;
- Crisis intervention;
- Pre and post-natal services, as well as general health supports;
- Social support services (e.g., to access identification and income and disability supports, life skills);
- Detoxification and/or addictions treatment and counselling;
- Individual and family counselling;
- Cultural programs; and,
- Child care and parenting supports.

## 8. Requirements

The following information is requested to facilitate agency identification related to goal alignment and capacity to deliver the Pregnancy Pathways Initiative. Each agency should clearly declare their interest in providing one or more of three components of the Pregnancy Pathway model: 1) Leadership and Governance; 2) Health and Social Support Delivery; and 3) Housing. For each component of expressed interest, you are asked to provide information about your agency's current and proposed experience and capacity. An important consideration is that "no woman is left behind", meaning any plan must include options for all pregnant, homeless women who require service, i.e. an inclusive model.

Regardless of component(s) selected, you *must* provide a letter of commitment, signed by both the Board Chair and CEO (or Executive Director) to declare your interest in the component or components in which your agency is interested, as well as confirmation of current or proposed alignment between your agency's priorities with the Pregnancy Pathways Initiative.

If you are proposing a partnership venture in your Expression of Interest, you *must* provide a letter of support, signed by the Board Chair and CEO (or Executive Director) of each partner agency included in your submission. The letter must also clearly state the partner agency's role in providing Pregnancy Pathways housing and/or services. If the partner is to be the lead provider of either the housing or services component, the information provided in your submission must reflect that agency's experience and capacity.

Please place a check next to the area of interest (under A, B and C below). For each component checked, requested information is specified.

### A. Leadership and Governance of Pregnancy Pathways Initiative

\_\_\_\_\_ (check if you declare your interest to provide this component)

If you checked A, please respond to the following questions in the order outlined below:

- Why is your agency best positioned to take the leadership/governance role for this initiative?
- How does this initiative align with your agency's mission/vision and strategic priorities?
- Would you need to modify your agency's mission/vision/strategic priorities to accommodate this initiative, considering the clientele, housing and services, as well as

the stated principles (pp. 31-32 Business Case)? If yes, explain what you would change and how you would change your current agency policies, clientele or service offerings.

- Describe (a) your agency's track record in acquiring funding for initiatives similar to Pregnancy Pathways, and (b) your proposed approach to accessing funding for this initiative.
- The success of the Pregnancy Pathways initiative is, to large extent, dependent on the ability of the lead organization to develop and maintain critical partnerships.
  - (a) Describe your proposed approach to establishing such partnerships for Pregnancy Pathways.
  - (b) By completing the table below, indicate your agency's track record in demonstrating leadership and partnership in community programming in Edmonton. Please complete this table indicating the most relevant coalitions or partnerships you have been engaged in within the last 3 years; list the other organizations involved in these coalitions and partnerships; indicate whether your agency's role was as leader or partner. If your agency's role was as leader, did the agency have a formal, written partnership agreement with any of the partners? Provide as many examples as you believe will demonstrate your agency's ability to manage a complex partnership.

Name of Coalition or Partnership	Organizations/Agencies Involved (list all agencies in partnership for each coalition/partnership)	Served as: (check one)		If leader, did agency establish & manage a formal partnership agreement? (Y/N)
		Leader	Partner	

- Carefully review the principles section of the attached Business Case. Indicate your *current* alignment with each of the following principles by checking the appropriate column (please be honest!)

Principle	Fully aligned	Partially aligned	Not aligned
Personal choice			
Culturally relevant			
Harm reduction approach			
Respectful			
Trauma informed			
Women-centred			
Child safe & protected			
Community-based & least intrusive			



- What approach would you use to ensure that a comprehensive, integrated, wrap-around service model is implemented, and that incorporates the full range of perinatal health, addictions and social support services, as envisioned for Pregnancy Pathways?
- What barriers and challenges do you envisage in implementing Pregnancy Pathways services, and how would you address each barrier/challenge?
- Carefully review the principles section of the attached Business Case. Indicate your *current* alignment with each of the following principles by checking the appropriate column (please be honest!). If you completed this under A, do not repeat.

Principle	Fully Aligned	Partially aligned	Not aligned
Personal choice			
Culturally relevant			
Harm reduction approach			
Respectful			
Trauma informed			
Women-centred			
Child safe & protected			
Community-based & least intrusive			
Flexible			
Health promoting			
Recovery focused			
Relational			
Strength-based			
Supportive of parenting			
Use of disability lens			

### C. Housing

(check each type of housing that you or your declared partners are interested in providing):

Dedicated Pregnancy Pathways Emergency Housing \_\_\_\_\_

Housing First (ICM team) \_\_\_\_\_

Dedicated temporary housing \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Housing \_\_\_\_\_

- Why is your agency best positioned to take a primary role in contributing your housing experience and expertise to implementing Pregnancy Pathways?
- For each housing component checked above, describe the housing and associated services that you currently provide, or make available to (a) homeless pregnant or parenting women, and b) infants and children of vulnerable women? Be specific by detailing the number of spaces currently allocated (if applicable), estimated number of such women and children housed annually, estimated full time equivalency (FTE) staff providing services specifically to these women and children.
- Given what you know of Edmonton's current housing strategy, policies and capacity issues, how do you envisage the housing component of the Pregnancy Pathways model could feasibly, efficiently and effectively be implemented?
- What barriers and challenges do you anticipate in implementing Pregnancy Pathways housing, and how would you address each barrier/challenge?

- How would your agency enhance its housing and associated services to contribute to the comprehensive housing and wrap-around service package proposed for the Pregnancy Pathways Initiative? How would you achieve this enhancement, including a description of funding and reallocation strategies you would employ?
- In the table below, state your current housing capacity that would be made available to Pregnancy Pathways as soon as possible, as well as the additional Pregnancy Pathways capacity you would strive to provide for Pregnancy Pathways women and infants within the next 5 years, considering the funding and reallocation strategies you propose. In narrative form, following this table, please describe the current and proposed future type of accommodation as specifically as possible, e.g. women & children; wet or dry; locations; the level of need for women (see Business Case pp. 29-30)

Type	# women who can be accommodated now	Additional # of women who could be accommodated in the future
24/7 emergency accommodation		
Housing First		
Temporary housing		
Permanent housing		

- Carefully review the principles section of the attached Business Case. Indicate your *current* alignment with each of the following key principles by checking the appropriate column (please be honest!) Note, if you have completed this question under Section A or B, please do not repeat.

Principle	Fully aligned	Partially aligned	Not aligned
Personal choice			
Culturally relevant			
Harm reduction approach			
Respectful			
Trauma informed			
Women-centred			
Child safe & protected			
Community-based & least intrusive			
Flexible			
Health promoting			
Recovery focused			
Relational			
Strength-based			
Supportive of parenting			
Use of disability lens			

For each principle you have indicated partial or non-alignment, describe your perspective on that principle, and what approach and tangible actions you commit to taking in implementing that Pregnancy Pathways principle.

- Please describe how you will handle harm reduction in your proposed Pregnancy Pathways housing model.

## 9. Qualifications

The following criteria will form the basis for selection of the successful lead agency and for key partnership agencies.

For the lead agency:

- A strong interest and commitment to serving these vulnerable women, with demonstrated confidence in applying the principles proposed in the Pregnancy Pathways service model.
- Sufficient organizational size and stability to readily accommodate a program of this size, including fundraising capability.
- Strong proven governance and accountability structures in place.
- A long standing track record of providing housing and/or services to vulnerable populations in Edmonton (e.g. minimum of 10 years).
- Familiarity with Edmonton's health, housing and social support service agencies, as well as proven ability to manage partnership and integrated service delivery agreements.
- Ability to articulate and enhance the Pregnancy Pathways vision, including the principles.
- Ability to demonstrate a seamless continuum of inclusive services, i.e. that no woman will be left behind.

For partnership agency(ies) providing Pregnancy Pathways housing or health and social support services:

- A strong interest and commitment to serving these vulnerable women, with demonstrated confidence in applying the principles proposed in the Pregnancy Pathways service model.
- A long standing track record of providing housing and/or services to vulnerable populations in Edmonton (e.g. minimum of 10 years).
- Familiarity with Edmonton's health, housing and social support service agencies, as well as proven track record of providing housing or services in partnership with sister agencies.
- Ability to articulate and enhance the Pregnancy Pathways vision, including the principles.
- Ability to demonstrate a seamless continuum of inclusive services, i.e. that no woman will be left behind.

### Cover Form for completion

Question	Answer
Agency name	
Agency address	
Web page	
Agency structure	Please attach organizational chart
Number of years in operation	
Board Composition and type, e.g. management/governance	Please attach
Accreditations currently	
Quality/evaluation management system(s)	
Describe your sustainability framework	
Employees (FTE)	
Management	
Housing	
Social support	
Health services	
Financial information	
Last full year annual report	Please attach
Sources of funding, e.g. Government, agencies, fundraising	
Contact person and responsible for answering this RFI	
Telephone	
Email	