Appendices

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Appendix A: Bed nights from YWCA-Mary's Place, Charles Street Men's Hostel, Salvation Army Booth Centre, and Cambridge and Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold 1999-2005

	Bed Nights	Total Bed Nights
1999		38,408
YWCA-Mary's Place	17,232	
Charles Street	15,344	
Salvation Army Booth	1,233	
Cambridge OOTC	1,639	
K-W OOTC	2,960	
2000		50,116
YWCA-Mary's Place	23,669	
Charles Street	15,360	
Salvation Army Booth	2,340	
Cambridge OOTC	3,059	
K-W OOTC	5,688	
2001		48,537
YWCA-Mary's Place	24,595	
Charles Street	13,672	
Salvation Army Booth	1,576	
Cambridge OOTC	2,094	
K-W OOTC	6,600	
2002		47,370
YWCA-Mary's Place	20,792	
Charles Street	16,098	
Salvation Army Booth	375	
Cambridge OOTC	2,683	
K-W OOTC	7,422	
2003		52,989
YWCA-Mary's Place	23,767	
Charles Street	17,097	
Cambridge OOTC	3,567	
K-W OOTC	8,558	
2004		50,579
YWCA-Mary's Place	21,393	
Charles Street	15,796	
Cambridge OOTC	3,490	
K-W OOTC	9,900	
2005		50,937
YWCA-Mary's Place	22,267	
Charles Street	14,663	
Cambridge Shelter (Nov-Mar)	5,080	
K-W OOTC	8,927	

Note: Argus Residence for Young People was not included as it is a youth-specific shelter, but all other shelters in this table serve age 16 and over so youth are included within the numbers presented.

What Was Happening Between 1995 and 1999?

Very few new rental units were built in Waterloo Region through the mid to late 1990s. Major housing ownership turnaround, with renters and first time home buyers becoming owners, began in 1996 (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 2005a). The new *Residential Tenancies Act* was proclaimed in June 1998 which allowed for rental rate increases when someone moves out (called "vacancy decontrol"). Social assistance rates were cut by 22% in 1995. In 1998, the Cambridge Out of the Cold program operated three days a week and Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold piloted one night a week. In 1999, both Out of the Cold programs operated five nights a week (expanding to seven nights a week the following years).

What was happening in 2000?

Shelter usage increased 30% from 1999 to 2000, just as the Out of the Cold programs were opening. The majority of this increase came from YWCA-Mary's Place. Charles Street Men's Hostel saw virtually no increase in bed nights during this period.

There was a 90% increase in bed nights at Out of the Cold between 1999 and 2000 with Cambridge Out of the Cold experiencing an 87% increase and Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold experiencing a 92% increase. Two partial explanations for these large increases is that the programs were relatively new, but becoming better known in the community, and that both programs increased nights of operation (seven nights a week from five nights a week the previous year with three sites from Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold operating until the end of April).

During this same period, apartment vacancy rates were at an all time low of 0.7%. Bachelor apartments faired a bit better at 2.6% but their monthly rental rates were on average $483 (an increase of 11% from the year before); whereas, one, two and three-bedroom apartment monthly rental rates increased but not to the same degree (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2000).

What was happening in 2001?

From 2000 to 2001, there was a slight decrease in bed nights. YWCA-Mary's Place saw an increase in bed nights during this time, but Charles Street Men's Hostel had a seven year low for bed nights netting an overall decrease for formal emergency shelters.

Cambridge Out of the Cold may have experienced a decrease in bed nights as Argus piloted a seasonal youth shelter for ages 18 and under during this year in response to Cambridge Out of the Cold's announcement that they would not serve youth under the age of 18. YWCA-Mary's Place may have experienced their increase as they moved from fifty-three beds to sixty beds plus one additional family unit. During the same time as Charles Street Men's Hostel was experiencing a bed day decrease, Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold experienced a 16% increase in number of bed nights.

In 2001/2002 Waterloo Region saw the opening of new rental buildings both through the Region's Affordable Housing Strategy and private builders. Although it is not believed that those using Charles Street Men's Hostel moved directly into these units, it is possible that those who moved into these units freed up some additional rental space for those who had used the shelter.

What was happening in 2002?

From 2001 to 2002 there was an overall 4% decrease in bed nights in the formal emergency shelters, bringing their usage to its lowest level to date since 1999. In terms of bed nights during this time, there was a significant decrease at YWCA-Mary's Place and an increase at Charles Street Men's Hostel. Part of the explanation for these changes at YWCA-Mary's Place is that a number of long-term residents left for new YWCA supportive housing units.

Cambridge Out of the Cold experienced a 28% increase in bed nights recovering the majority of their decrease from the year before. Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold experienced a 12% increase from 2001 to 2002. In 2002, Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold added two secondary sites.

During this time there was also some shifting in housing with vacancy rates starting to climb to an overall average of 2.3% (more so for larger three-bedroom units with bachelors dropping to 1%). Kitchener-Waterloo Real Estate Board broke 5,000 in MLS sales and average 5 year mortgage rates dropped below 7% (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Kitchener Forecast Summary, Autumn 2002).

The Rent Bank and Eviction Prevention Program began operating in 2002.

What was happening in 2003?

From 2002 to 2003, there was an 11% increase in bed nights within formal emergency shelters. Both YWCA-Mary's Place and Charles Street Men's Hostel experienced increases. The increase at Charles Street Men's Hostel may have been due in small part to the closing of the Salvation Army Booth Centre. Salvation Army served a very similar population to that of Charles Street Men's Hostel (single men age 18 and over) and had seven beds, although bed nights had significantly decreased in their last two years of operation.

Cambridge Out of the Cold experienced a 33% increase in bed nights while Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold experienced a 15% increase in bed nights. A small part of the increase in Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold bed nights can be attributed to a new youth-specific site that was piloted for seven weeks.

The Region took over serving families in motels when YWCA-Mary's Place is unable to serve them beginning January 2003; therefore, these numbers are no longer reflected in YWCA-Mary's Place statistics.

The Working Centre began operating a part-time Housing Help Desk.

What was happening in 2004?

From 2003 to 2004 there was a 9% decrease in formal emergency shelter bed nights. Bed nights at Cambridge Out of the Cold decreased by 2% while bed nights at Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold increased by 16%. Again, part of increase at

Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold can be attributed to the additional youth site that operated all season and to an additional secondary site.

Average mortgage rates reached historic lows while house sales and prices increased significantly over previous years. Vacancy rates hit a long time high of 3.5% with higher vacancy for two- and three-bedroom units (4% each) than for bachelor (2.1%) and one-bedroom apartments (2.6%). Vacancy rates remained low for more affordable units (e.g., 0.9% for units renting between $450 and $500 versus 6.2% for units renting between $750 and $800) (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Kitchener CMA, 2004 Annual Rental Market Report).

Kitchener Downtown Street Outreach and the Families in Transition Program began operating in 2004. The Working Centre Help Desk began operating full-time.

What was happening in 2005?

YWCA-Mary's Place saw a slight increase in bed nights while Charles Street Men's Hostel saw a slight decrease. Cambridge Out of the Cold opened as the Cambridge Shelter in November of 2005 and saw a large increase in its numbers over this winter season. This may have been in part due to the closing of the Royal Hotel but they were already seeing increased numbers before this event occurred. For the first time ever, Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold experienced a decrease in bed nights (10%). Bed nights overall between 2004 and 2005 changed very little.

The Shelter Transition and Overflow Program began in 2005 allowing greater opportunities for YWCA-Mary's Place and Charles Street Men's Hostel to address capacity issues – both placing people in motels in times of over capacity and assisting people to move out of the shelter to free up beds for others.

Vacancy rates edged down from 3.5% in 2004 to 3.2% in 2005 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Kitchener CMA, 2004 Annual Rental Market Report). By the end of 2005, almost 900 units under the Region's Affordable Housing Strategy were either

occupied, under construction, in the detailed design stages, or constituted new rent supplement units (Region of Waterloo, Report P05-123/CR-RS05-088).

Appendix B: Formal emergency shelter policies

1. How does someone access the shelters?

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	Take intakes 24 hours a day. Call ahead or drop-in.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	Each day the names of those interested in registering in the hostel are collected. Intakes of new residents begin at 7 pm. and are normally completed by 10 pm, by the 11 pm curfew at the latest. However, if a person is seeking to register in the shelter for the first time they can access services at any point.
YWCA-Mary's Place	Take intakes 24 hours a day. Call ahead or drop-in.

2. Does it cost money to stay at the shelters?

Formal emergency shelters with a purchase of service agreement with the Region are paid a per diem for each eligible resident. Generally, 80% of emergency shelter bed nights are eligible and, as of January 1, 2006, residents will not be asked to contribute to their stay unless they have saved money in excess of $799 for a single person and $1,500 for a family (as determined by the Region of Waterloo based on amounts available under the *Ontario Works* community start-up and maintenance benefit). After this time, the Region reduces the per diem and asks the shelters to collect money from residents who have the ability to pay. Those who are ineligible for per diem and have no income may be supported by the emergency shelters through fundraised dollars for a period of time. The emergency shelters charge the following rates for room and board and services when someone has saved money in excess of the allowable amount or in the cases where someone is ineligible for funding but able to pay.

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	$10/night for singles. Amount for families to be determined.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	$11.90/night
YWCA-Mary's Place	$12/night for singles and range of $15-$20/night for families depending on the number of children. If a person owes money to the shelter for some reason, they are asked to commit to a repayment agreement before using the shelter again.

3. Can people stay at the shelters if using drugs/alcohol?

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	Cambridge Shelter will accept anyone, regardless of whether they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, as long as they do not pose a threat to themselves, other residents, staff and volunteers. The use of drugs or alcohol in the drop-in or the shelter will be prohibited. Every effort will be made to find suitable accommodation for those that they are unable to admit.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	If a man is intoxicated, and so might prove a disturbance or risk to the safety of others, he will not be admitted to the hostel. Under some circumstances (i.e., during cold weather alert) a man might be admitted to the hostel while intoxicated, if the risk to others in the building is low. If we are unable to accommodate such a person, hostel staff will attempt referral to the Withdrawal Management Centre. Charles St. Men's Hostel has one staff on overnight. Possession or use of drugs/alcohol on the property of Charles St. Men's Hostel is not allowed and results in a restriction of service. House of Friendship and the Region continue in dialogue about how to implement the *Shelter Guidelines* for intoxicated men in the Region.
YWCA-Mary's Place	If someone is under the influence but is not jeopardizing themselves, others or the building they are welcome to stay. They ask that people not use alcohol or drugs on YWCA property. If someone is using drugs or alcohol in their room and keeping quiet the staff would not know about it as they do not go into residents' rooms unless there is an emergency or a real need – we try to give 24 hours notice before entering a room. If someone is passed out or unable to look after themselves, staff will call ambulance or arrange have person transported to Withdrawal Management. YWCA-Mary's Place's ability to handle many people posing a disturbance to other residents is limited as have two staff on overnight for anywhere from 40-75 women and children.

4. Are people ever banned from the shelters?

According to the Region's *Emergency Shelter Guidelines*, no emergency shelter can place a life-time ban. While people may be asked to leave shelters for a period of time, it is recognized that emergency shelters are often the place of last resort. Asking someone to leave is a decision that is not made lightly and is based on an assessment of risk to the individual, other residents, staff/volunteers, and the building. During a cold weather alert (-15 with wind chill or freezing rain) or extreme heat, those who have

some type of service restriction are accommodated. Specific emergency shelter policies are listed below:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	As the Cambridge Shelter is the only shelter in Cambridge for adults, there are virtually no options in the community for someone who is temporarily banned. For those we are unable to serve, every effort will be made to find appropriate alternate accommodation. Banning is only used as a last resort in cases of concern for the safety of the individual, other residents, staff, volunteers or destruction of the building and/or its contents.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	People may be asked to leave Charles Street Men's Hostel for a period of time as a last resort to ensure safety to self, others and the building. Staff attempt to redirect dangerous behaviour before it reaches a level that asking the person to leave is required in order to ensure safety. The average amount of time someone is asked to take a break is one month.
YWCA-Mary's Place	No one is barred or banned, there is a planned intake where a person must meet certain conditions to be readmitted. YWCA-Mary's Place may also do a gradual intake with someone who has a planned intake where the woman begins by joining meals at the shelter and works towards being able to stay overnight. Asking someone to leave a shelter is the last resort. Planned intake cards are checked and reviewed every six months and residents are aware of the details.

5. Is there a curfew?

Curfews may be set for a variety of reasons including: 1) to ensure beds are available for those who need them, 2) to ensure per diem payment from Region (bed must be occupied at least between 2am-6am, and 3) so other residents who are trying to sleep are not disturbed.

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	Open 24 hours a day. Curfew is 11:00 p.m. unless permission is given for exceptions such as work, visiting family, etc.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	Open 24 hours (residents are asked to leave the building on Monday-Friday between 9:00-11:00 a.m.). Curfew is 11:00 p.m. An exception to curfew for reasons such as work can be made and the person would be admitted whenever they got off work. Residents may also request in advance a late pass until 1:00 am on weekends.

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
YWCA-Mary's Place	Open 24 hours. Doors are locked by 11:00 p.m. but women can still buzz to be let in. Curfew is 2:00 a.m. Residents who are out overnight beyond 2:00 a.m. are still allowed in but if they were out beyond 2:00 am without approval may have to arrange payment for their room for that night, regardless of where they receive their income.

6. How long can people stay at a shelter?

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	No policy in place yet.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	Length of stay on average for 50% of men is ten days or less and very few stay more than a month. The casework goal is that after two weeks a move out plan should be in place. Length of stay guideline is two-four weeks reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
YWCA-Mary's Place	Length of stay on average is twenty-eight days. Length of stay guideline is two months but is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

7. Do the shelters have room? I hear they are always full.

YWCA-Mary's Place, Charles Street Men's Hostel, and the Cambridge Shelter always have space even if the shelter is full as they have an overflow program in place.

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	Mats are available should numbers exceed shelter capacity
Charles Street Men's Hostel	With a capacity of thirty-nine beds and fifteen cots/mattresses in the building there is, on average, room. There is not an increase in occupancy when Out of the Cold ends in spring, though there is a slight decrease when Out of the Cold begins in the fall. Charles Street Men's Hostel keeps a daily list of people who have expressed interest in a bed for the night. They do not turn anyone away because the beds are full as they have the capacity to overflow. They also make special accommodations during cold alerts
YWCA-Mary's Place	Occupancy tends to be lower in June/July and picks up again in August/Sept. We do not see an increase in numbers when the Out of the Cold season ends. YWCA-Mary's Place does not turn people away; we will accommodate people in temporary cots and can arrange to overflow into motels when needed.

8. Do people have any privacy?

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	Emergency shelter consists of forty dormitory style beds with three separate family shelter units. Each bed has a unit beside it that can be locked for the safekeeping of client's belongings. Lockers are available in the drop-in centre.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	Emergency shelter consists of thirty-nine beds and fifteen cots/mattresses. Unlike YWCA-Mary's Place that has private rooms; Charles Street Men's Hostel is dorm style with rooms of various sizes. The dorm style setting means that resident's behaviour has a bigger impact on other residents. Lockers are available.
YWCA-Mary's Place	Has sixty beds in forty-seven rooms. Rooms have locks and women have their own key. There is a bed, dresser and small desk in each room and shared washroom facilities on each floor. Forty rooms are for singles and seven rooms can accommodate families of various sizes or multiple women. Also have one family unit which can accommodate families with male parent and boys over age ten. YWCA-Mary's Place has accommodated up to seventy or seventy-five people at a time with children in cribs/mattresses on the floor. Meals are provided in one large dining room.

9. Are you doing anything to help people get out of homelessness?

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	There are a variety of programs and services available at Welcome Aboard Drop-In Centre to which each person is encouraged to avail themselves. Outreach services are available to anyone accessing the building. Ongoing support is offered as part of the service.
Charles Street Men's Hostel	Everyone who enters the emergency shelter meets with a caseworker within a day or two of their arrival. The caseworker develops a case plan with each person by discussing what brought them to the shelter and what support would help them to find and keep housing. The Hostel Caseworkers assist the person in applying for Ontario Works assistance if necessary. Men may receive personal support in a housing search from the Shelter Transition and Outreach Caseworker or be referred to another service provider in the community.
YWCA-Mary's Place	Everyone has a case plan. There are four Case Coordinators – one for outreach (women who are no longer at the shelter) and three for those in residence. They meet with the women within a day or two of their arrival to assist them in developing a plan and support them to carry out the plan.

Appendix C: Emergency shelters' ability to accommodate different populations

Serving families:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ three family units ▪ at times of overflow, the Region will pay for the cost to house individuals in motels
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ no families (single adult males only) ▪ male-led families referred to the family unit at YWCA-Mary's Place
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ female-led families have always been accommodated ▪ families that include a male parent or male child over ten can be housed in their family unit ▪ at times of overflow, the Region will pay for the cost to house families in motels or part of the family may stay at YWCA-Mary's Place while the male parent or teenage boy stays at Charles Street Men's Hostel or Safe Haven ▪ renovations completed in 2007 will allow the shelter to fully accommodate all types of families throughout the shelter in twenty-one family units
Other recognized emergency shelter services	
Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold	▪ it is less common for families to be housed; if they do need shelter, they would be segregated from other guests
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region	▪ if the shelters are full, families would be referred to safe shelters at another location ▪ shelter guidelines are mandated by the Ministry of Community and Social Services

Serving people with substance use issues:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ individuals are nearly always taken, regardless of substance use issues
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ people who are addicted and interested in getting assistance for substance use are referred to substance use treatment programs, such as the Withdrawal Management program, where they are sometimes accepted ▪ at times of overflow, people would be referred to other shelter options: Argus if the age is appropriate, the Cambridge Shelter in Cambridge, motels, or to the Out of the Cold when it is open

Serving people with substance use issues (continued):

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ being under the influence or on-site use of substances is not considered a sufficient reason to *not* provide housing; actions while under the influence would dictate how we deal with the situation ▪ in all instances, staff address issues of substance use with a resident at the next available opportunity and when the resident is no longer under the influence (i.e., if a resident is able to get safely and quietly to her room, no further action will be taken that evening/day) ▪ all new residents will be told that they may encounter people on site who may not be clean or sober; residents who request and/or need a totally alcohol and/or drug free residence will be encouraged to move to another shelter ▪ if staff believes that the resident is unable to take care of herself and be safe, the resident will be referred to Withdrawal Management ▪ if the resident's actions are such that there is serious concern about her health and safety (e.g., she is unconscious and unable to respond) an ambulance will be called ▪ if a resident's actions while under the influence becomes seriously disruptive and she appears to be unable or unwilling to control her actions, she will be asked to leave the residence until the next day ▪ if we have reasonable grounds to suspect that a mother is abusing substances while responsible for the care and protection of her children, we will report this to Family and Children's Services; as with all reporting to Family and Children's Services, we do not have to have definitive proof of neglect or abuse – if we know or have reasonable grounds to believe that a resident is trafficking in illegal or legal drugs, we will report such information to the proper authorities
Other recognized emergency shelter services	
Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold	▪ the decision of whether or not they can stay overnight is made based solely on their behaviour (i.e., if they do not pose a threat to themselves or other residents, they are welcome to stay)
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region	▪ rules stipulate that drugs and alcohol are not allowed inside the buildings and that women under the influence of drugs or alcohol are not permitted to enter the shelters

Serving people with substance use issues (continued):

Other recognized emergency shelter services	
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region (continued)	▪ women who arrive at the shelters under the influence of drugs or alcohol are provided taxi fare to a detoxification centre or to another place of their choice until the effect of the substance(s) has worn off, such as a friend or family member's house

Serving people with disabilities:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ shelter is entirely wheelchair accessible; there is a lift to assist residents or tenants to get from the first to the second and third floors ▪ persons with all disabilities are welcome
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ shelter is not wheelchair accessible; when necessary and appropriate, individuals are placed into a motel ▪ people who appear to have mental health issues and are interested in getting assistance for those issues are referred to mental health support and treatment programs ▪ at times of overflow, people would be referred to other shelter options: Argus if the age is appropriate, the Cambridge Shelter in Cambridge, motels, or to the Out of the Cold when it is open
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ shelter has an elevator; some rooms and washrooms, and all common areas are wheelchair accessible ▪ shelter has a number of donated hospital beds, which are helpful to people in some cases ▪ after renovations are completed, in addition to barrier-free shelter rooms (some rooms will be wired specifically for residents who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing depending on availability of funding), the building itself will have an assessment conducted by people with disabilities to ensure its suitability ▪ literacy or language issues are addressed by ensuring that information is shared both in writing, verbally, or through pictures ▪ translators and a customized picture dictionary are used when needed ▪ in all situations, staff work to the best of their ability, within existing resources, to meet the needs of residents with all disabilities, including those with mental health and substance use issues

Serving people with disabilities (continued):

	Other recognized emergency shelter services
Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold	▪ although some sites are wheelchair accessible, they are generally unable to support people with limited mobility ▪ decisions of whether or not people with disabilities can be accommodated are based solely on behaviour
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region	▪ if the women have mental health issues that put others at-risk, she is referred to Grand River Psychiatric Ward and staff members may call the police for assistance ▪ staff members are sensitive to the high level of anxiety that women may be experiencing as a result of the abuse they have suffered, they take this into consideration prior to making such a referral

Serving immigrants, refugees and people from various ethnic backgrounds:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ special meal and other requests are accommodated on an individual, as needed basis
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ men of various cultures, whether they are Canadian citizens, immigrants or refugees are accommodated ▪ caseworkers work closely with the residents to determine what housing resources are available to them; in some cases, this may require careful orientation to the immigration or Ontario Works system, especially for those who are unaccustomed to such social service systems ▪ referrals to agencies that work specifically with newcomers are made if they would be helpful ▪ House of Friendship hires people of various cultural backgrounds; an attempt is made to provide interpretation from within the staff of the Men's Hostel or other House of Friendship programs before seeking the assistance of an outside interpreter ▪ at times of overflow, people would be referred to other shelter options: Argus if the age is appropriate, the Cambridge Shelter in Cambridge, motels, or to the Out of the Cold when it is open
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ many steps have been taken in the last number of years to improve services for people from various cultures

Serving immigrants, refugees and people from various ethnic backgrounds (continued):

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
YWCA-Mary's Place (continued)	▪ staff request information at intake regarding dietary needs and/or cultural or spiritual practices, and then work to ensure that these needs are accommodated ▪ the Chaplain also takes responsibility for following up and connecting with guests from various cultures so that they are adequately supported ▪ in the fall of 2005, a Celebrations Committee was created to recognize and offer a variety of cultural celebrations within the shelter ▪ the Multicultural Centre provides language interpreters at no cost when needed; as some challenges exist with respect to providing this service in a timely manner, YWCA-Mary's Place has developed a picture dictionary to communicate with people with little or no English until an interpreter is available ▪ a room referred to as "the quiet place" is available for use by spiritual leaders and all residents for silent prayer or meditation
Other recognized emergency shelter services	
Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold:	▪ people from all backgrounds are welcome
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region	▪ interpretation services are available at the shelters, as are information sheets that are offered in many languages ▪ food and cooking resources at the shelters are meant to accommodate residents' specific cultural, religious and allergic needs as required (e.g., Halal, vegetarian) ▪ staff members and residents have access to a communal bulletin board where information about cultural celebrations is posted

Serving gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals:

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ every effort is made to serve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals; families with these special needs may be housed one of the three family units, for example ▪ every effort is made to house individuals in a manner that is comfortable and appropriate

Serving gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals (continued):

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ serves gay/bisexual men; to date, no one has requested shelter service that is transgendered/transsexual ▪ due to the dormitory style setting of the shelter, it may be appropriate to accommodate transgendered individuals in a motel ▪ at times of overflow, people would be referred to other shelter options: Argus if the age is appropriate, the Cambridge Shelter in Cambridge, motels, or to the Out of the Cold when it is open
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ houses both transgendered residents as well as lesbian families within the main shelter ▪ gay families are served within their family unit
Other recognized emergency shelter services	
Kitchener-Waterloo Out of the Cold	▪ volunteers do not ask residents about their gender identity or sexual orientation; all are welcome
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region	▪ literature is posted in the shelters related to the lesbian population ▪ they are still working on how they would accommodate a transgendered individual; inclusiveness is their goal

Serving people during a heat wave (examples from summer of 2005):

Formal emergency shelter services for people experiencing homelessness	
The Cambridge Shelter	▪ shelter was not open during the summer of 2005 ▪ the building is air-conditioned and the drop-in centre would be open for those that need a place to cool off
Charles Street Men's Hostel	▪ shelter has air conditioning ▪ drop-in is open to non-resident males ages 16 and older until 10 pm nightly where people can cool off
YWCA-Mary's Place	▪ shelter has air conditioning in their dining room and one common area ▪ shelter purchased fans for most rooms and provided them on a rental basis (by providing loans to those without an income) so that residents would return them before they left the residence

Appendix D: Shelter guidelines focus group summary report (2004)

BACKGROUND

A total of five focus groups were held between April 15 and April 26, 2004 with people who have lived homelessness experience to gather input to be considered in the development of shelter guidelines for the Region of Waterloo. These focus groups took place at Argus Residence for Young People, Welcome Aboard Drop-In Centre, YWCA-Mary's Place, the Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre, and Charles Street Men's Hostel providing input from both youth and adults and input across the urban centres of the Region. A total of fifty-eight people participated of which thirty-eight were male and twenty were female. The participants were asked the following six questions:

1) What rules do you think a shelter should have?
2) When do you think it is fair/reasonable to not allow someone into a shelter?
3) When do you think is fair/reasonable to ask someone to leave a shelter?
4) What makes a shelter feel safe to you?
5) On what topics and in which ways should residents be able to provide input to the shelter?
6) What services should a shelter have?

The hosting organization invited people with lived experience to participate in the meeting – participation was voluntary. An open discussion was held on the questions and information was recorded from the group discussion. At the shelters this discussion occurred with the facilitator only (no staff were present). Participants were informed that they did not need to reach consensus and it was OK for people to have different opinions. Each participant present received $5 for their participation.

Notes from the meeting were typed up and sent back to the host in draft form to make available to group participants for review and if necessary corrections or additions. No further feedback was received from participants.

RESULTS

For each question, themes have been identified that emerged across two or more of the groups. These themes are listed along with any "other" identified issues that were raised by one person or group.

1. What rules do you think a shelter should have?	
Curfew	Every group raised the issue of a curfew. Participants seem to generally feel that there should be a curfew and that it should be different during the week than on the weekend. People generally seemed to feel that 11:00 p.m. to midnight was fair during the weekdays and 1:00-2:00 p.m. was fair during the weekends. Youth felt that the curfew at the youth shelter should be negotiated within reason based on age and responsibility level. All groups felt the curfew should be flexible to accommodate people for "legitimate" reasons – work, emergency etc. Some felt there should be consistency between curfew at Charles Street and YWCA-Mary's Place. Some sighted that people coming in late wakes them up and is disruptive – felt curfew is important for consistency in coming and going and establishing a routine.
Use of Drugs/Alcohol	The issue of drug and alcohol use was also raised by all groups with two distinct schools of thought. A good proportion said people should not be allowed into shelter if drunk/high and a good proportion said people should be able to use a shelter if drunk/high as long as behaviour does not pose a safety issue/does not disturb others. Almost everyone in every group felt that there should not be alcohol/drug use within the shelter itself.
Threats to Safety	Again, all groups felt that there should be no weapons, violence (physical or verbal) or threats/bullying in the shelter. However, it was mentioned in one group that horseplay – two friends joking around should not be seen as violence.
Respect to Staff, Other Residents and Facility	This issue was brought up in all groups in various ways as respect meant different things to different people. Issues raised were that people should clean up after themselves, maintain personal hygiene (mandatory showers) and treat volunteers and staff respectfully. A number of groups mentioned that stealing from other residents or the shelter should be prohibited. Some participants felt that respect included not making judgments about others and not using foul language.

1. What rules do you think a shelter should have (continued)?	
Work Towards Goals/Contribute	Four groups mentioned that residents should work towards goals while at the shelter (e.g. looking for housing, work, attending school). Some suggested that there should be regular progress reporting on these issues. Some suggested that shelter should be temporary (as long as other options are available). A number felt that residents should contribute to the shelter in some way but shouldn't always have to pay – situational.
Money Should Not be a Barrier	Three groups mentioned issues with money. Two mentioned that whether or not someone is able to pay should not be a barrier to accessing shelter. Two mentioned that the amount charged to residents should be reduced/eliminated as it makes it more difficult to save up and move out of the shelter. One group mentioned that if a resident is paying directly that they should have a guaranteed bed – can miss a night without losing space provided notice is given.
Staff to Follow Rules	Two groups mentioned that staff should have to follow the same rules that are being asked of the residents.

2. When is it fair/reasonable to not let someone into a shelter?	
Threats to Safety	Every group mentioned that a person should not be allowed access to shelter if there is a threat of violence (aggressive, threatening, intent to harm, fighting, carrying weapons etc).
Drugs/Alcohol	Every group mentioned something about drugs and alcohol. Again, there were two schools of thought – either people should not be allowed into shelter if drunk/high or people should be able to enter a shelter if drunk/high as long as behaviour does not pose a safety issue/does not disturb others. Almost everyone in every group felt that someone should not be allowed into a shelter with their alcohol/drugs.
Have Other Options	Most groups mentioned that people should not be using shelters if they have somewhere else to go.
Shelter Full/Person Doesn't Meet Mandate	Two groups mentioned that it is fair to not allow access when the shelter is already full or does not meet mandate (i.e. male seeking shelter at YWCA-Mary's Place or adult seeking shelter at Argus Residence for Young People). It was also mentioned by one group that if someone requires more care then the shelter is able to offer (i.e. medical condition, detox etc.) that it makes sense to refer somewhere else.

3. When is it fair/reasonable to ask someone to leave a shelter?	
Violence	Every group mentioned that a shelter resident should be asked to leave if they are violent. Forms of violence mentioned included fighting, verbal, physical, abusive or threatening behaviour. Some felt that verbal violence/aggression was not a reason to ask someone to leave. One group mentioned that some things warrant a warning first but actions that seriously threaten safety warrant asking someone to leave immediately.
Illegal Activities	Most groups felt that a resident should be asked to leave the shelter if they are involved in any sort of illegal activity. Three groups mentioned using or dealing drugs in the shelter, three groups mentioned stealing and two groups mentioned prostitution. It was identified by some people in one group that prostitution can be seen as substance use and shouldn't be a reason to ask someone to leave a shelter.
Not Working Towards Goals	Two groups mentioned that it was fair to ask a shelter resident to leave if they are not actively working towards some goals such as work, more permanent housing, school, treatment and are "just hanging around" or using the shelter as a "flop house".
Not Following Rules	Two groups mentioned that if someone was not following the rules and had been warned that it was then fair to ask them to leave the shelter.
Somewhere Else to Go	A couple of groups mentioned that shelter residents should be asked to leave when they have found a place to go. However, one group mentioned that people should not be pushed out and that there needs to be reasonable time frames for finding housing or getting a job.

4. What makes a shelter feel safe?	
Strong Staff	Every group mentioned something about staff at the shelter. Some mentioned that there needs to be enough staff/volunteers and one group mentioned there needs to be paid staff and not just volunteers. Feelings of security are increased when staff are trustworthy, confident ("which makes residents feel confident"), show leadership, show respect, courtesy and compassion and are involved in what is happening at the shelter. Two groups mentioned that knowing staff and seeing the same faces (consistency with volunteers and staff) was important. Lastly, one group mentioned that residents should be treated equally – no favouritism.

4. What makes a shelter feel safe (continued)?	
Security	Every group also mentioned the importance of personal safety and safety of possessions. Comments included the need for secure doors to the shelters, secure doors to rooms, privacy in bathrooms (locks and stall doors working) lockers/safety deposit boxes with own keys, and, in some cases, a security person. One group mentioned that separate sleeping areas for men and women increased feelings of safety. One group mentioned that the shelter is a residence – people should not be able to just walk in – guests should be signed in by current resident. Another group mentioned that staff should not be able to enter their rooms without first knocking and that if theft occurs that there should be some staff response - not just "too bad". One group mentioned that they are uncomfortable with drug dealers who are threatening and use the phone to make drug deals.
Rules	Two groups mentioned issues related to consistency with rules, understanding expectations and understanding the authority structure as important.
Mental Health	Two groups mentioned concerns/fear of people who have mental health issues. Unpredictable or bizarre behaviours such as yelling, biting, aggression caused concern. One group mentioned that shelters need a better relationship with mental health services and that more support and training is needed for staff around mental health issues.
Being with Peers	Two groups mentioned that being with peers and opportunities for discussion with peers was important. It was mentioned at one group that there is intimidation between older and younger residents and in another group that there needs to be some separate space for kids and adults.
Welcoming Atmosphere	Two groups mentioned the importance of a welcoming atmosphere where people say "hi", are not "high and mighty", offer coffee and a friendly face.

5. On what topics and in which ways should residents be able to provide input to the shelter?	
Topics	Topics that groups said they think shelter residents should have input on included rules, food, cleanliness, services and room and how it is organized/decorated.
Methods	▪ Suggestion box with blank paper and written survey (with easy check boxes) (reviewed by someone besides direct staff at the shelter) ▪ Speak directly with someone who is able to deal with the issue – one-on-one ▪ Connection to Board in some way

5. On what topics and in which ways should residents be able to provide input to the shelter?	
	▪ Address at group meetings (some think should be weekly and should be mandatory – others think it should be more flexible) ▪ Exit interview or survey ▪ Newsletter (monthly or twice a month) – residents give input into newsletter ▪ Need to value what people say – need to feel heard

6. What services should a shelter have?	
Services	Most often mentioned to least often mentioned services that participants felt should be offered in-house: ▪ Lockers, Showers, Laundry, Food ▪ Transportation/Bus Tickets ▪ Counselling (more counselling support – more emotional support that is more available, friendly and personable, more information about community services and options, give all information up-front) ▪ Phone (free) ▪ Support for medical issues and medication ▪ Substance use services ▪ Anger management ▪ Computers ▪ Opportunities to contribute/do chores (assist with building life-skills)

OTHER COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS

Each group was unique yet many common themes emerged.

The information that has been gathered has some limitations. While shelter staff were not present, participants answers may have been influenced by the fact that they were in a group situation rather than sharing one-on-one. Participation was voluntary so this report does not reflect input from those who would choose not to attend such a meeting for whatever reason. Further, participant's views might not necessarily reflect their actions (e.g. one participant felt adamantly that no one who is drinking should be allowed into a shelter but prior to treatment was someone who consistently used shelter services while intoxicated).

Participants identified some issues outside of the questions raised. Some groups identified issues with Ontario Works and some additional types of shelters that they felt were needed in the community including co-ed, family (don't split families up) and private rooms.