



FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE

Support for Carole Anne's Place

Submission to Emergency and Community Services
Committee – City of Hamilton

November 7, 2019

NO PLACE TO CALL HOME – A CRISIS IN HAMILTON

Women are turned away from shelters over 300 times every month.

But all they want tonight is a safe place.

YWCA Hamilton's Carole Anne's Place keeps women who are homeless warm and safe during Canada's coldest winter months.

Every day over the winter, YWCA opens the MacNab Street site at 10pm where staff from St. Joseph Healthcare Centre and YWCA provide overnight space for 10 - 20 women.

Carole Anne's Place closes at 8am and women are given bus tickets to go to Willow's Place. Mission Services extends the hours of Willow's Place, so that women have a place to go when Carole Anne's Place is closed.

A request to fund Carole Anne's Place has been submitted to the Housing Services Department for future years (April 2020 – 2023).

There is no funding for this Winter.



CAROLE ANNE'S PLACE

Carole Anne's Place offers women a safe, warm place to rest overnight during winter's coldest months. And, our partners at Willow's Place offer daytime drop-in and support until doors open at Carole Anne's Place.

Carole Anne's Place and Willow's Place provides access to hot meals, housing assistance, and winter clothing for women struggling to cope with homelessness or precarious housing situations.

2018/2019:

4583
visits

December 1st, to March 31st, 2019

260
women

accessed safe space at Carole Anne's & Willow's Place

79%
overnight guests

required substance use monitoring (March 2019)

33
days

that were below -10 degrees

A LACK OF FUNDING FOR CAROLE ANNE'S PLACE

Without access to emergency shelter, women in Hamilton risk death and injury this winter.

Since 2016, Carole Anne's Place has evolved to create a service that is responsive and helps keep women safe in the winter. Carole Anne's Place relies on the coordination of services between YWCA Hamilton, Mission Services, and St. Joseph Healthcare Centre to respond when the shelters are full or cannot support the women who require a low-barrier option.

The funding gap is **\$228,000**, which supports opening Carole Anne's Place and extending hours at Willow's Place. Contributions of **\$30,000** have already been committed to Carole Anne's Place from St. Joe's, Out of the Cold, and Sisters of Charity.

The Women's Housing Planning Collaborative (WHPC) endorses Carole Anne's Place as a necessary response until other permanent solutions can be established.

Overflow shelter Carole Anne's Place will not be able to open this winter without new funding

The YWCA-run program provided a warm place to sleep for dozens of women turned away from full shelters last winter — but funding for the pilot project has run out.

NEWS 07:50 AM by [Matthew Van Dongen](#) The Hamilton Spectator



Carole Anne's Place has run the overflow shelter out of the downtown YWCA for three years between December and March. - The Hamilton Spectator file photo

An emergency overnight stay program for homeless women turned away from full shelters will not be able to open this winter without new funding, says the Hamilton YWCA.

FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE: ONE WOMAN'S STORY

Cathy found a protected alcove near the GO Station, where she and her partner Lindsey could take shelter from the cold for the night. As she settled in and waited for Lindsey to join her, two men entered the small alcove and started using intravenous drugs.

“And here I am, freezing, almost in tears. Don’t know what to do, don’t know where to go. No money, no food, no drinks, no nothing. Absolutely nothing,” says Cathy. “And I sat there and I watched it because I did not want to get beaten up, killed, robbed, raped, or anything. I didn’t want any of that happening because that already happened to me before, years ago. But I was scared for my life.”

A few weeks later, Cathy and Lindsey would find Carole Anne’s Place, where they slept every night from December to March. With support from YWCA Hamilton staff, they were eventually set up with a permanent apartment, a safe place they could finally call home.



“I’m starting to get our life back together. And you know, if it wasn’t for Carole Anne’s Place pushing us and giving us that support and all the positivity that they have, I honestly don’t believe that I would be here.”

Carole Anne’s Place evolved from the Women’s Housing Planning Collaborative (WHPC) in 2016 and has relied on contributions from Out of the Cold, a non-profit, and the LHIN to operate. Out of the Cold has had to reduce the amount of donated dollars they can contribute and the LHIN has not been able to re-fund the program in 2019/20. To date, the City of Hamilton has not contributed any funding to this crisis response for women.