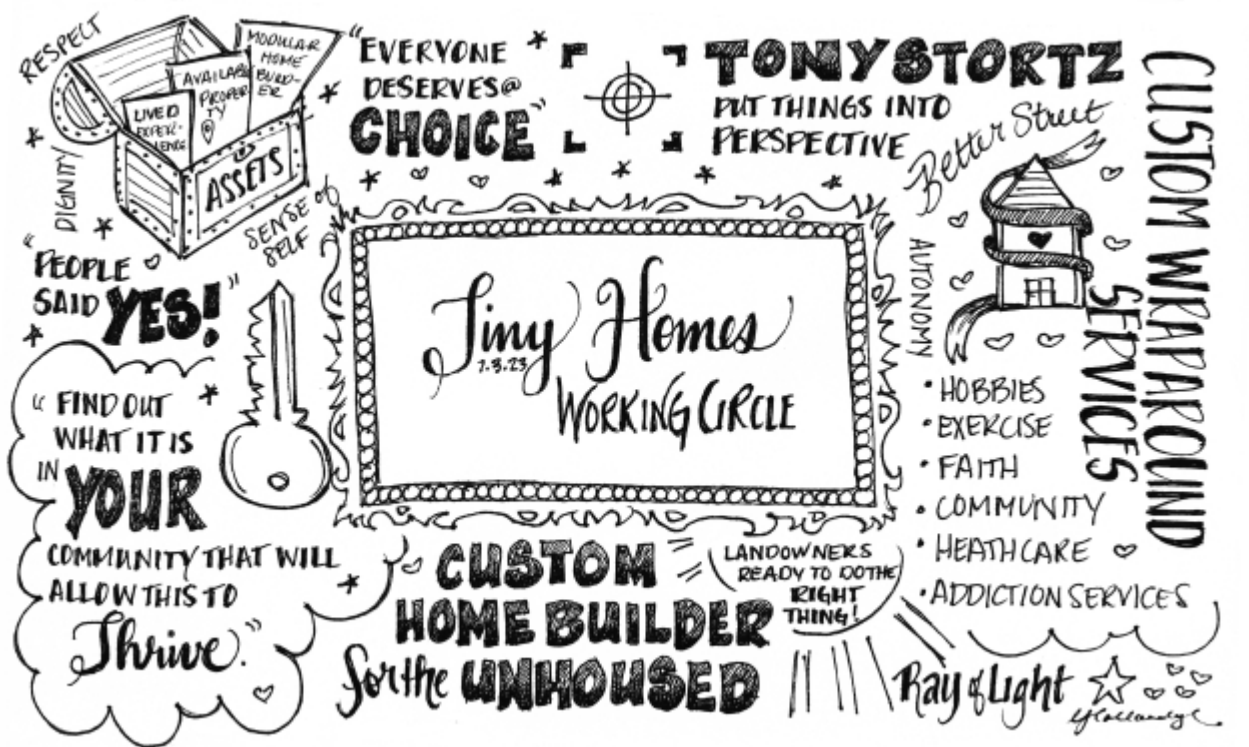


BetterStreet Founder Visits Brantford Tiny Homes Working Circle

Image



Tony D'Amato Stortz, who has a wealth of experience helping tiny-home communities thrive in Canadian cities, spent an hour with the March 7 Tiny Home Working Circle to share his insight and help the group advance their efforts to create affordable housing in the Brantford, Ontario community.

Tony combines his knowledge of social services, building management and carpentry to help guide groups looking to start tiny-home communities in their cities.

To date, Tony, who is the founder of [BetterStreet](https://axiomnews.com), an organization that develops

strategies to address homelessness, has helped launch tiny-home communities in seven Canadian cities, including Kitchener and Belleville.

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At one point during the gathering, Tony might have riffed up a tagline for the Tiny Homes Working Circle. When he mused aloud that the Brantford group is like, “a Custom Home Builder for the Unhoused,” he certainly struck a chord.

In order to make a decentralized approach viable, Tony recommends creating what he calls a “wraparound support plan.”

A wraparound support plan addresses the needs of every person living in each tiny-home, as opposed to creating a one-size-fits-all model.

For instance, if a person moving into a tiny home has an opiate addiction, there needs to be supports made available to the individual to help them beat their addiction.

In a wraparound support model, arrangements could be made with a local pharmacy or treatment centre to help the person.

One source of comfort the unhoused often have is a support network with friends who are also experiencing homelessness and addiction.

That support can be lost when a person leaves the streets.

“Coming off the streets, people are losing one support group, so there needs to be another one (to replace it),” Tony says, adding there also needs to be regular check-ins to ensure the community is functioning as intended.

Tony also underscores the importance of understanding the culture of cities when embarking upon initiatives like this.

Doing so helps identify potential obstacles as well as advantages that may present themselves.

For instance, in a large city, like Toronto, there are plenty of resources but a lack of space. In a blue-collar city like Hamilton, there might be lots of people with building and construction skills, but it’s also a city with a strong tradition of trade unionism.

There are 83 properties owned by a Brantford nonprofit affordable home provider that have been identified as spots that could be used for tiny homes. The Brantford tiny-home project will begin by building two tiny homes, a one-bed unit and a two-bed unit on the same property.

Most often land to build tiny homes is offered by private owners. If a community helps find homes for people experiencing homelessness and improves their lives, Tony says the success can be used to leverage support from municipal governments to provide funding for tiny homes.

Perhaps most importantly, tiny-homes can be a first step in helping people create better lives for themselves.

Get Involved!

If you have interest in joining this tiny home project in Brantford, Ontario, experience in building them, funds or spaces to offer or help access, or if you simply wish to know more, please contact Jocelyn at jocelynbirkes@clbrant.com.

Tiny Homes Initiative In Pictures

Follow the journey of the citizen-led Tiny Homes initiative in Brantford, Ontario via this Flickr album featuring graphic reflections from each gathering by Yvonne Hollandy.

[Click here to view the album.](#)