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<i>COUNCIL AGENDA</i>	
Date: <u>February 14, 2022</u>	Item: <u>11.2</u>



11.2

DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
750 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER BC V7V 3T3

COUNCIL REPORT

Date:	January 26, 2022
From:	Arleta Beckett, Community Services & Community Development Manager
Subject:	UBCM Tri-Municipal Poverty Reduction Strategy Grant Application: Stream 2 Actions
File:	2620-01

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

1. staff be directed to work with the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver to submit a joint regional application for the North Shore under Stream 2 of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program;
2. the District of West Vancouver act as the primary applicant for the North Shore application to apply for, receive, and manage the 2022 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program grant funding under Stream 2 on behalf of the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver; and
3. subject to confirmation that full funding is available, the project be authorized to proceed.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program (UBCM Program) and on the work being done through the UBCM Program Stream 1. Council's approval to submit a grant application to UBCM Program Stream 2 is also being sought so that the District of West Vancouver (District) can work with the City of North Vancouver (CNV) and the District of North Vancouver (DNV) on a poverty reduction program for the North Shore. The grant application will be for \$150,000 for the North Shore as a region and the District will be the primary applicant.

The primary applicant is required to submit a Council resolution authorizing the identified project to proceed under the District's administration. Each partnering applicant is required to submit a Council resolution that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf. The UBCM Program Stream 2 grant application (**Appendix A**) is due February 11, 2022 and staff will submit by deadline. Should Council not authorize

the application to go forward at the February 14, 2022 Council meeting, the application will be rescinded on February 15, 2022.

2.0 Legislation/Bylaw/Policy

Addressing Homelessness in Metro Vancouver (2017) uses a conceptual framework to develop recommendations and strategies to prevent region-wide homelessness, to serve people who are homeless, and to create pathways out of homelessness. In 2019, the Province of British Columbia (BC) introduced *TogetherBC*, BC's first poverty reduction strategy which aims to make life more affordable for people struggling to get by through reducing costs and increasing incomes.

Strategies in the *Blueprint for Social Responsibility and Change (2017)* help support the District to anticipate and meet community needs as demographic changes occur. These strategies include participation in regional and tri-municipal planning tables and joint funding initiatives to share knowledge and implement sustainable strategies for addressing priority issues.

3.0 Council Strategic Objective(s)/Official Community Plan

Council Strategic Objective

The District Council's Strategic Goals support housing by setting objectives to fulfill the goal to significantly expand the diversity and supply of housing including housing that is more affordable.

Official Community Plan

The District's Official Community Plan (OCP) recognizes community health and social sustainability as critical tenets of the overall social fabric of a community. Housing is central to social and community health. The OCP provides Council with a range of policies to provide greater housing options including the creation of new market and non-market rental, seniors, and supportive housing.

4.0 Financial Implications

The proposed activities for the UBCM Program Stream 2 grant have a \$150,000 potential budget. The UBCM Program Stream 2 grant activities will build on the work that was already funded by UBCM Program Stream 1 and will address the four guiding principles of the *TogetherBC* poverty reduction strategy of affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion.

Additionally, the District has agreed to continue to serve as the project lead for UBCM Program Stream 2 which involves submitting the application, monitoring the budget, coordinating approved purchases, maintaining communication with the UBCM project officer, and completing the final report. The Community Services & Community Development

Manager will be the lead staff for the District and will coordinate with other District departments as required.

5.0 Background

5.1 Previous Decisions

West Vancouver Housing Needs Report

The District's *Housing Needs Report* received by Council on January 25, 2021 focuses on current and projected needs in West Vancouver, and meeting the need for market and non-market rental housing; seniors housing; special needs and/or accessibility designed housing; and more diverse and affordable ownership options. The report highlights the divide between incomes and housing costs which is evident in the number of households in core and extreme core housing need, and the lack of housing diversity that impacts options available to various demographics.

UBCM Poverty Reduction Strategy: Stream 1 - Action

Council, at its February 22, 2021 regular meeting, passed resolutions to direct staff to work with the CNV and DNV and submit a joint regional grant application for the North Shore under Stream 1 of the UBCM Program and have the District act as the primary applicant for the North Shore application.

5.2 History

Federal Poverty Reduction Strategy

In August 2018, the Government of Canada released *Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy* which targeted a 20% reduction in poverty by 2020 and a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030, relative to 2015 levels. The strategy brings together investments that the Federal Government has already made in the social and economic well-being of Canadians.

Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy

In March 2019, BC released their poverty reduction strategy, *TogetherBC*. Mandated through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Act, the strategy set targets to reduce the overall poverty rate in BC by at least 25% and the child poverty rate by at least 50% by 2024.

TogetherBC is based on four principles: affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion. These principles guide the priority action areas that form the core of the strategy.

TogetherBC identifies six priority action areas and includes policy initiatives and investments designed to break the cycle of poverty. The six priority action areas are:

- making housing more affordable
- supporting families, children, and youth

- expanding access to education and training
- providing more opportunities, more jobs
- improving affordability
- investing in social inclusion

West Vancouver Housing Needs Report

The *Housing Needs Report* (November 2020) received by Council on January 25, 2021 identifies a priority need for supportive and affordable seniors housing and anticipates that future special needs units will grow in demand. It also identifies that in 2016, 14.4% of households were in core-housing need (30.7% of renter households and 8.9% of owner households). Among the renter households, 19.3% were found to be in extreme core housing need, spending more than 50% of their income on shelter.

North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative

The North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI) is a cross-jurisdictional committee formed in 2020 to address homelessness on the North Shore. NSHAI provides a forum for coordination amongst governments and agencies with direct and indirect authority for homelessness initiatives, supportive policies, funding, and capital investments. On July 6, 2020, District Council adopted a resolution to participate on the NSHAI's Steering Committee (elected and appointed officials) and Working Group (staff).

North Shore Homelessness Task Force

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF) was formed in 1998 in response to reports of people living on the street. The NSHTF utilizes a partnership-based approach to address the issues related to eliminating and preventing homelessness on the North Shore. Through the Parks, Culture & Community Services and the Planning & Development Services Divisions, the District, along with CNV, DNV, and Vancouver Coastal Health provide leadership and support to the NSHTF Coordinator and to the NSHTF membership.

In 2021, the NSHTF developed a new 10-year Community Action Strategy (2022-2032) (**Appendix B**) and a Situation Analysis Report (**Appendix C**). The strategy was informed by research; local service providers; and members of the community, including residents who are currently street-entrenched, accessing shelters, in precarious housing, or at risk of being homeless.

6.0 Analysis

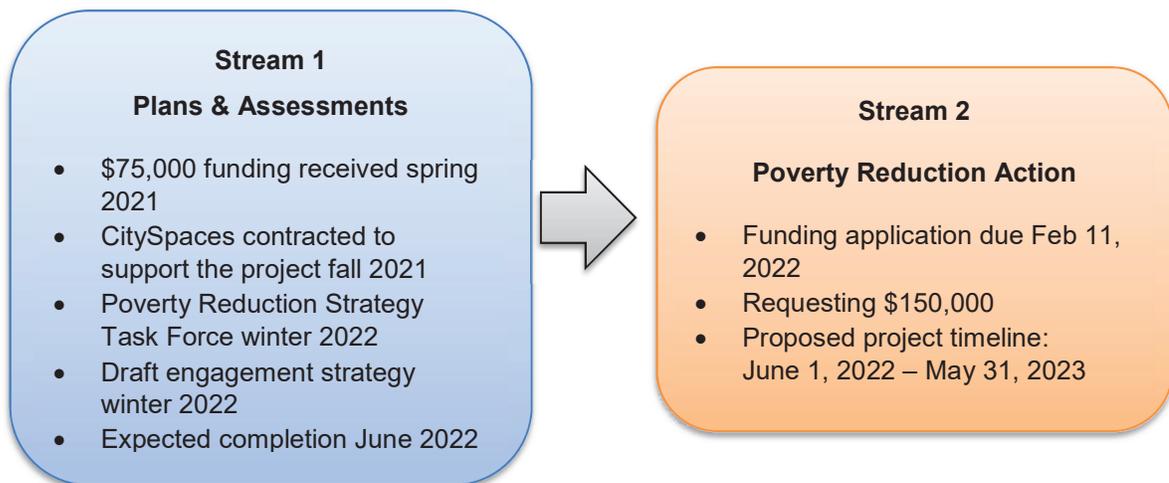
6.1 Discussion

At the provincial level, *TogetherBC* sets a path towards reducing overall poverty in British Columbia by 25 percent. The intent of the UBCM

Program is to support local governments in reducing poverty at the local level and to support *TogetherBC*, BC's poverty reduction strategy. In 2020, BC provided \$5 million over three years to be administered through the UBCM Program.

The UBCM Program includes two funding streams:

- Stream 1: "Plans & Assessments" is designed to support communities to develop or update plans to reduce poverty at the local level.
- Stream 2: "Actions" is designed to support communities to undertake projects to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 2 is \$50,000 per single applicant and up to \$150,000 for a regional application.



On the North Shore, some examples of groups that are struggling are single-parent families; people with disabilities; recent immigrants and refugees; First Nations; and other equity priority groups.

The NSHTF's recently completed 10-year Community Action Strategy (2022-2032) and Situation Analysis Report point to a need to support capacity building and to provide coordinated leadership. The Community Action Strategy is grounded by the principle that work on homelessness and poverty must be relationship based, centre on the most impacted, and seek to address the root causes.

UBCM Program Stream 2 eligibility requirements call for either a completed poverty reduction plan or demonstration that official community plans are inclusive of poverty reduction principles such as affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion. While work on the North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan (UBCM Program Stream 1) is underway, all three North Shore municipalities are committed to poverty reduction through their official community plans.

The District's OCP outlines how housing needs can be met through reducing the pressure of constrained supply and enabling the

development of desired forms of housing to increase housing options, and supporting those who need assistance such as tenant assistance. Additionally, supporting diversity and providing services to remove potential barriers and support barrier-free access enables users of all ages and abilities to belong in West Vancouver.

A North Shore application for UBCM Program Stream 2 will focus on assisting those in the community facing or at risk of facing conditions of poverty to access programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances. The UBCM Program Stream 2 application proposes that this work will be done through a Community Solutions Navigator service.

Navigator roles have been increasingly considered and adopted over the last 20 years throughout Canada and were first used in cancer care in the early 1990s. Since then, the navigator role has been adapted for varied settings including homelessness and housing.

The North Shore Community Solutions Navigators will work directly with people at risk and are able to support increased access and coordination within the system. They will also be able to provide support, advocacy, referrals, and education. The navigator model provides a client-centred and collaborative approach but because it uses a somewhat less professionalized model, it is more financially feasible to take to scale. This low-barrier approach is distinctly different from the majority of existing support programs available as most require individuals to meet certain criteria to be able to access services (e.g. a certain age, family status, type of issue).

The North Shore Community Solutions Navigator Program will focus on providing a relationship-based service that is welcoming, supportive, and personal.

In order to act on the work in progress with funding from UBCM Program Stream 1, further funding is required. This report seeks approval to apply for UBCM Program Stream 2 on behalf of all three North Shore municipalities.

A North Shore tri-municipal coordinated approach is supported through the results of the NSHTF Situation Analysis Report (November 2021). Several key takeaways include advocating for a continuum of support services and maintaining linkages to related initiatives and work.

All three municipalities have clearly expressed housing and homelessness as a priority. There is a growing shift towards more community-based, client-centred, and coordinated care which emphasizes the need for increased integration of services. The opportunity to apply for funding to cover the costs for a trial program that breaks down barriers for traditionally underserved populations is a positive first step forward in assisting people into long-term stable housing.

UBCM Program Stream 1: Plans & Assessments

Presently, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan work is in Stage 2 of the UBCM Program Stream 1 grant:

- December 2021 – Project kick-off
- Stage 1 – Strategic documents, information map, handout series, and engagement strategy
- ➔ Stage 2 – Engagement summary report and process mapping
- Stage 3 – Draft Poverty Reduction Strategy and draft implementation plan, monitoring framework, and evaluation tool
- Stage 4 – Public communications materials and strategy summary, video, final strategy, implementation plan, monitoring framework, and evaluation tool

UBCM Program Stream 2: Actions

The proposed activity of UBCM Program Stream 2 will see funding used to hire a North Shore Solutions Navigator(s) to assist residents facing or at risk of facing conditions of poverty with learning about accessing the programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances.

One full-time equivalent position will be hired and consideration will be made to have multiple part-time persons if better representation can be achieved (e.g. having multiple languages, cultural diversity, etc.).

The term for this project is June 1, 2022 to May 31, 2023.

Proposed Outcomes from the North Shore Solutions Navigators Program

The service-specific intentions are to:

- assist those on the North Shore facing or at risk of facing, conditions of poverty with learning how to access the programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances
- provide face-to-face or on-line services that are free and accessible in a manner that is welcoming, supportive, and personal

The overall program intentions are to:

- learn about the barriers people facing conditions of poverty experience in trying to improve their circumstances
- use the information collected to both inform future activities and strategies and to educate stakeholders and the community about the real causes and costs of poverty
- help North Shore residents disrupt or break the cycle of poverty and live healthier lives

North Shore Solutions Navigators Program Timeline

Upon approval of the UBCM Program Stream 2 grant (estimated to be in June 2022), all activities associated with the development of the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy must be completed within 12 months.

North Shore Neighbourhood House has been preselected to host the North Shore Solutions Navigator position(s). This organization works across the North Shore; holds strong relationships with members of the community especially people living in poverty; collaborates with other not-for-profit organizations; and has experience delivering support services for individuals of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, and cultures.

6.2 Sustainability

The anticipated \$150,000 grant from UBCM will cover the project costs for the North Shore Solutions Navigators initiative for 12 months. A tri-municipal collaboration helps to ensure that the project's goals and objectives will be implemented in a consistent manner across the North Shore.

The UBCM Program Stream 1 grant's Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force is comprised of staff from the three North Shore municipalities, the Squamish Nation, and the Tseil-Waututh Nation, with each contributing in-kind staff resources to support this project.

6.3 Public Engagement and Outreach

The UBCM Program Stream 2 grant application from the North Shore is built on the goals and objectives of the NSHTF's Community Action Strategy (2022-2032) which included outreach to, and focused interviews with people living in poverty as recorded in the NSHTF's Situation Analysis Report.

6.4 Other Communication, Consultation, and Research

Additional communication, consultation, and research will be sourced as needed. A final report will be produced to fulfil the requirements of the UBCM Program Stream 2. This report will be shared widely across the North Shore and will be posted on the NSHTF's website.

7.0 Options

7.1 Recommended Option

THAT

1. staff be directed to work with the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver to submit a joint regional application for the North Shore under Stream 2 of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program;
2. the District of West Vancouver act as the primary applicant for the North Shore application to apply for, receive, and manage the 2022

Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program grant funding on behalf of the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver; and

3. subject to confirmation that full funding is available, the project be authorized to proceed.

7.2 Considered Options

1. Council may request further information; and/or
2. not approve the recommendations.

8.0 Conclusion

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program (Stream 1) is providing an opportunity to create a North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan. This report seeks Council's approval for the District of West Vancouver to act as the primary applicant and submit a \$150,000 grant application on behalf of all three North Shore municipalities to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program (Stream 2) in order to implement the North Shore Solutions Navigators Program to increase opportunities, build social connections, and improve affordability, leading to improvements in the life circumstances of vulnerable District residents.

Author:



Arleta Beckett, Community Services & Community Development Manager

Concurrence:



Jill Lawlor, Senior Manager, Community Services

Concurrence:



Isabel Gordon, Director, Financial Services

Appendices

Appendix A: UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action: 2022 Application for Stream 2 – Action

Appendix B: North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy 2022–2032

Appendix C: 2021 North Shore Homelessness Situation Analysis Report (December 10, 2021)

Appendix D: UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program: 2020 Program & Application Guide

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Poverty Reduction Planning & Action 2022 Application Form for Stream 2 - Action

Please complete and return the application form and all required attachments by February 11, 2022. All questions are required to be answered by typing directly in this form.

If you have any questions, contact lgps@ubcm.ca or (250) 952-9177.

SECTION 1: Applicant Information	AP- <i>(for administrative use only)</i>
Name of Local Government: District of West Vancouver (primary applicant)	Complete Mailing Address: District of West Vancouver 750 17 th Street West Vancouver, BC V7V 3T3
Contact Person*: Arleta Beckett	Position: Community Services & Community Development Manager
Phone: 604.921.3404	E-mail: abeckett@westvancouver.ca

**Contact person must be an authorized representative of the applicant (i.e. staff person or elected official)*

SECTION 2: <u>For Regional Projects Only</u>
<p>1. Identification of Partnering Applicants. For all regional projects, please list all of the partnering eligible applicants included in this application. Refer to Section 5 in the <i>Program & Application Guide</i> for eligibility.</p> <p>North Shore Regional Project Partners:</p> <p>District of North Vancouver</p> <p>355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, BC V7N 4N5</p> <p>Contact: Eirikka Brandson, Community Planner</p> <p>Tel. 604.990.2274 and Email: brandsone@dnv.org</p> <p>City of North Vancouver</p> <p>141 West 14th Street. North Vancouver, BC V7M 1H9</p> <p>Contact: Cristina Rucci, Community Planner</p> <p>Tel. 604.209.8072 and Email: crucci@cnv.org</p>

2. Rationale for Regional Projects. Please provide a rationale for submitting a regional application and describe how this approach will support cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.

The North Shore is a distinct geographical region with three municipalities, on the traditional unceded territory of Squamish Nation, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh Nation. Many people who are experiencing poverty and homelessness regularly access services and programs across the North Shore municipalities. The majority of North Shore social and community service agencies deliver their services from Deep Cove to Horseshoe Bay without much concern for municipal boundaries.

The three municipalities have established working relationships, and there are several cross municipal committees and collaborative tables that focus on many of the issues relevant to action on poverty. Working together will enable the municipalities to support cost-efficiencies in project delivery and deliver a pilot project of sufficient scale to make a demonstrable impact on reducing poverty on the North Shore. The regional approach is also aligned with the preparation of the North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan, which is being guided by the North Shore Poverty Reduction Task Force.

In February 2021, the three North Shore municipalities voted to create an assembly of North Shore public officials with a mutual commitment to enhancing coordination and action to prevent and alleviate homelessness on the North Shore. This group, the North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI), includes the elected officials and staff from all three municipalities, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, North Shore MLAs and MPs, and Vancouver Coastal Health. The NSHAI met three times in 2021 and meets again in February 2022. Within this group there is a mutual commitment to enhancing coordination and action to prevent and alleviate homelessness on the North Shore.

SECTION 3: Project Information

3. Project Information

- A. Project Title: North Shore Solutions Navigator Program
- B. Proposed start and end dates. Start: June 1, 2022 End: May 31, 2023
- C. Total proposed project budget: \$150,000
- D. Total grant request: \$150,000.00

4. A. Proposed Focus Areas. Please indicate which of the six priority action areas (as identified in [TogetherBC](#)) will be the primary focus of the proposed project:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Families, children and youth | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Income supports |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education and training | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social support |

B. Please identify any other key priorities (as identified in *TogetherBC*) that your proposed activities will address:

Food security, transportation, child care, mental health and addictions, and access to health care will be explored.

5. Confirmation of Poverty Reduction Plan or Assessment. As outlined in the *Program & Application Guide*, in order to be eligible for Stream 2, applicants must have a completed Poverty Reduction plan or assessment, or demonstrate that their Official Community Plan, or an equivalent plan, is inclusive of poverty reduction principles.

Please outline how your local government meets this requirement and attach completed plans and/or assessments, or excerpts from higher-level plans, with the application form.

The Official Community Plans (OCPs) of all three municipalities are inclusive of poverty reduction principles. Additionally the municipalities have a suite of plans/strategies that support the implementation of the poverty reduction principles in their respective OCPs.

Chapter 3 'Community Wellbeing' of the City of North Vancouver's OCP includes a focus on networks of services, partnership, resources, groups and other social relationships that will collectively help people achieve their basic needs and reach their full potential. Specific areas of focus include seniors, child poverty, affordable housing, food security, social supports and cultural diversity. The OCP recognizes that certain groups are particularly vulnerable to child poverty, including recent immigrants, Aboriginal families, and female lone-parents. Related plans and strategies that implement OCP objectives related to poverty reduction include: Social Plan; Child Care Action Plan; Housing Action Plan and CNV4ME Child, Youth and Family Friendly Strategy.

Chapter 6 of The District of North Vancouver's OCP focuses on social wellbeing, with policies that strive to address the needs of all citizens, including those that are most vulnerable and marginalized. The Targeted OCP Review Action Plan: 2021-2030 includes a social equity implementing lens to guide decision-making and how the District implements all of the actions. This builds social equity considerations into District decision-making to strive for a more inclusive and equitable community. For example, the Action Plan encourages development and approval of housing designed to accommodate low-income families and seniors, and the integration of public services such as libraries and affordable child care throughout neighbourhoods in the District.

Section E of the District of West Vancouver's OCP focuses on social wellbeing, providing high level policy guidance for the specific actions that are defined and implemented through strategies including the social plans for child care, seniors and youth. The District's Blueprint for Social Responsibility and Change identifies social action plans and strategies to advance community connections and well-being in West Vancouver through innovative leadership, social responsibility and inclusion. This ensures that resources distributed through the District are meaningful and relevant to West Vancouver residents of all ages.

Building on the above, the North Shore Municipalities are currently developing a North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan, funded through the UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program (2021 Intake, Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessment). This grant was approved in June 2021, and the Plan is expected to complete by May 31, 2022. When completed the Plan will set out a common North Shore Vision for poverty reduction and focused actions for key agencies over the next 10 years.

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Task Force has been established to guide the preparation of the Plan, and the project activities proposed in this application are based on initial scoping by

the Task Force of priority projects for action aligned with the emerging Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

The recently completed Situation Analysis (2020) and 10-year North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy (led by the North Shore Homelessness Task Force, of which the three municipalities are members) is also inclusive of poverty reduction principles as they relate to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The Situation Analysis Report provides the context of homelessness on the North Shore, including the demographics of vulnerabilities and how they interact, and the Action Strategy is based on the principle that work on homelessness must be relationship based, centre on the most impacted, and seek to address the root causes of homelessness. Official Community Plan, Social Well-being strategies, DNV Social Equity Paper (OCP Action Plan), Housing Needs Reports, Child Care Plans, Poverty Reduction Plan (est. June 2022).

6. Proposed Activities. Please describe the *specific* activities you plan to undertake. Refer to Section 6 of the *Program & Application Guide* for eligible activities under Stream 2.

(A) Hire North Shore Solutions Navigator(s)* to assist residents facing or at risk of facing, conditions of poverty with learning about accessing the programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances.

*One full time position equivalent will be hired and consideration will be made to have multiple part-time persons if better representation can be achieved (e.g. having multiple languages, cultural diversity, etc.)

Levels of involvement from the North Shore Solutions Navigator:

1. Empathetic and encouraging conversation
2. Information giving and help with completing forms and referrals
3. Planning, prioritizing and problem solving
4. Assistance connecting to services and resources
5. Paperwork and applications
6. Active involvement, advocacy, acting on the client's behalf

(B) Inventory of programs and services:

As part of Stream 1, developing a North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan, a process map will be created that outlines the gaps, bottlenecks, and inefficiencies in the current North Shore system.

The project proposes to deliver a pilot North Shore Solutions Navigation Program to assist residents facing, or at risk of facing, conditions of poverty with accessing the programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances. The Program will provide individuals facing challenges one-to-one support to identify goals and strengths, create an action plan, build skills and access community resources and income-based supports. The Program is responding directly to the challenge that seeking available assistance is often a time-consuming, bureaucratic process that those facing poverty often do not have the resources to navigate successfully.

Access to Solutions Navigator services will be available to anyone living with low incomes, and is focused on working with individuals to find the needed referral, strategy or support to help them address challenges. This approach is distinctly different from the majority of support programs on the North Shore available for those experiencing the impacts of poverty, which require individuals to meet certain criteria to be able access services (for example age, family

situation, type of issue). The approach also reflects that many individuals will have been denied support in the past, and focuses on the importance of human to human support, multiple appointments and dedicated follow-up in recognition that quality of support is critical in enabling individuals to break the cycle of poverty. This is particularly critical in the context of the impacts of COVID-19.

The Navigation Program will be hosted out of the North Shore Neighbourhood House (NSNH), a welcoming, open to all community hub with a mission of working together to enhance the lives of North Shore residents, especially the most vulnerable. In addition to running a range of programs for children, youth (including young parents) and seniors, the NSNH hosts the North Shore Food Bank and the North Shore Extreme Weather Response Shelter.

The Navigation Program would be operated by one full time equivalent (35 hours per week) North Shore Solutions Navigator, with management support provided by the NSNH. Consideration will be given to a staffing model based on part-time/job share arrangements to support recruitment of diverse individuals who are representative of the community we are seeking to serve. The hours of operation will depend on the staffing model pursued, and if possible the service will be made available on a weekend day as well as during the week to enhance access.

The intent is to provide a face-to-face service that is welcoming, supportive, and personal. Meetings with the Solutions Navigator would be confidential, with no appointment necessary and individuals can meet with the Solutions Navigator as often as required to ensure continuity. While the Solutions Navigator will refer clients to additional support or services from other organizations, it is anticipated that many of the clients seeking support from the Program will be able to be assisted directly by the Solutions Navigator. As well as referring clients to community resources, North Shore social service providers (including Service BC) will be able to refer their clients to the Navigation Program.

The Navigation Program also includes a proposed budget of \$30,000 towards discretionary funds, to be used to provide supports such as reduced fare transit, recreation passes and other service opportunities to individuals accessing the program. In this way, the program will also evaluate the need for and impact of providing access to targeted service subsidies that increase the monthly income of low-income residents in ways other than through increased employment income. To ensure that this budget is used most effectively, the nature of support offered will be dependent on individual needs.

7. Intended Outcomes & Impacts. What are the specific intended outcomes and impacts of the proposed project? How will this help to reduce poverty at the local level?

A North Shore application for UBCM Program Stream 2 will focus on assisting those in the community facing or at risk of facing conditions of poverty, and to access programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances and identified needs. The UBCM Program Stream 2 application proposes that this work will be done through a Community Solutions Navigator service.

Navigator roles have been increasingly considered and adopted over the last 20 years throughout Canada, and were first used in cancer care in the early 1990s. Since then, the navigator role has been adapted for varied settings, including homelessness and housing.

The North Shore Community Solutions Navigator Program will focus on providing a relationship-based service that is welcoming, supportive and personal.

The overall Program intentions are to:

- learn about the barriers people facing conditions of poverty experience in trying to improve their circumstances.
- use the information collected to both inform future activities and strategies, and to educate stakeholders and the community about the real causes and costs of poverty.
- help North Shore residents disrupt or break the cycle of poverty and live healthier lives.

The intended outcome of the proposed project is that those facing poverty can better take advantage of the services that are available to improve their circumstances, through one-to-one support that is responsive to their individual needs/experiences and fosters an increased sense of social inclusion, feeling cared for and having something to lean on. The impact of this will be increased financial security and capability to meet basic needs, resulting in a more stable living situation as well a greater confidence in pursuing resources and opportunities in the future.

The holistic and action orientated approach taken by the Solutions Navigator, for example support could be with access to additional subsidies/income tax, connections to skills development/employment opportunities and/or resolution of tenancy issues that could have otherwise led to eviction, will have a direct and lasting impact in reducing poverty at the local level as individuals will be able to receive the one-to-one, in person support over an extended period to tackle their most pressing issues. The quality and stability of support received is key to an individual's wellbeing, and having a sense of instability can create vulnerability in one's sense of safety and mental health. This is why consistency in services and positive interactions while accessing services is important.

This approach is particularly important in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as in-person support with multiple, often interrelated issues is needed more than ever for marginalized individuals who have faced increasing social isolation and a reduction in service levels during the pandemic. Addressing urgent and immediate needs in a comprehensive way from the first appointment with the Solutions Navigator onwards will open up dialogue and paths into addressing more complex needs. For example, a newcomer that is having problems navigating employment services could have the Navigator accompany them to appointments and complete necessary steps until they feel confident going alone.

An additional outcome of the pilot program will be a more comprehensive understanding of the barriers people facing conditions of poverty experience in improving their circumstances, and this information will be used to inform future activities and also more broadly to educate stakeholders and the public about the causes of poverty on the North Shore. In particular, the structure of the Program will provide a much clearer understanding of the nature of support services required to break the cycle of poverty. For example, the proportion of clients who require brief services, versus the proportion of clients who require multiple appointments to problem solve, prioritize concerns, complete paperwork and communicate on the client's behalf with local and government services.

A central point for referring clients between services will impact positively on service delivery, supporting a more efficient distribution of clients between local services providers by eliminating duplication or overlap. This will enable individual services to be more effective in delivering on their specific mandate, and to increased collaboration with and between North Shore service providers. Service providers will also be able to draw on the knowledge gathered through the Program to better target their service provision. For example, the feasibility/desirability of clients being able to increase their monthly income through work, the types of jobs/sectors that create a wage gap on the North Shore and the local demographics of impact.

8. Proposed Deliverables. What will be the specific deliverables of the proposed project? List any policies, practices, plans, or documents that will be developed or amended as a result of your project.

The North Shore Solutions Navigators will work directly with people at-risk and are able to support increased access and coordination within the system. They will also be able to provide support, advocacy, referrals and education. The navigator model provides a client-centred and collaborative approach, but because it uses a somewhat less professionalized model, it is more financially feasible to take to scale. This low-barrier approach is distinctly different from the majority of existing support programs available as most require individuals to meet certain criteria to be able to access services (for example be a certain age, family status, type of issue).

The service specific intentions are to:

- assist those on the North Shore facing or at risk of facing, conditions of poverty with learning about how to access the programs and services that are both available to them and designed to improve their circumstances.
- provide face-to-face or on-line services that are free and accessible in a manner that is welcoming, supportive, and personal.

North Shore Solutions Navigation Program activities, as follows:

1. Recruitment and management of one fulltime equivalent (35 hours per week) North Shore Solutions Navigator to deliver the North Shore Solutions Navigation Program.
2. Disbursement of discretionary funds to clients accessing the Solutions Navigation Program, to be used for specific financial or other supports for individuals.
3. End of Project Evaluation Report

9. Community Partners & Participation by People with Lived Experience. To be eligible for funding, all projects must involve key sectors of the community including community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations, and/or Indigenous organizations.

A. List all confirmed partners that will directly participate in the proposed project and the specific role they will play. *Please note: up to three letters of support from partnering organizations may be submitted with the application*

Canadian Mental Health Association (North Shore)

Impact North Shore

North Shore Neighbourhood House

Lookout Emergency Shelter

West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre

Silver Harbour Seniors' Centre

North and West Vancouver School Districts

Staff from the above organizations (and others) will help with referrals to the North Shore Solutions Navigator and assist in promoting the Program amongst their clients. North Shore Neighbourhood House has been identified as a potential lead organization to host the North Shore Solutions Navigators in their location. The Greater Vancouver Food Bank operates

out of the North Shore Neighbourhood House twice monthly, and will be an ideal service to offer navigation services.

The Program is also supported by the North Shore Poverty Reduction Task Force, who will collaborate with the North Shore Neighbourhood House as needed to ensure that individuals accessing the Navigation Program have access to the full range of relevant services available on the North Shore.

- B. Describe how people living in poverty or with a lived experience of poverty will participate in the proposed project.

People living in poverty are the intended clients for the Solutions Navigation Program and will be the direct participants in the proposed project.

It is likely that the Solutions Navigator(s) may identify as having lived experience. Being able to draw on personal lived-experience, training and education would position the Peer Navigator to recognize how challenging it can be to navigate systems of support, find and access resources that meet each person's specific needs, and how hard it can feel to ask for assistance.

10. Sustainability. How will the proposed project be sustained after grant funding?

The North Shore Poverty Reduction Task Force has been established as part of developing the 10-year North Shore Poverty Reduction Plan, and the proposed pilot project, the North Shore Solutions Navigator Program is based on initial scoping by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Task Force of priority projects for action aligned with the emerging plan. The Program will have an immediate impact on reducing poverty at the local level for those individuals who access the services, while also providing much greater insight into the gaps in supports. The success of the pilot project and the ongoing need for the service will determine how the Solutions Navigation Program is continued after the grant funding concludes.

11. Evaluation. Describe how will the project be evaluated and the specific performance measures and/or benchmarks that will be used to measure outcomes. How will this information be used?

To understand how the North Shore Solutions Navigator Program contributes to increased personal support networks for clients, a short survey will be developed that considers responses to the following questions

Did you like this program? Yes No

If so what did you like about it?

To what degree did the Solutions Navigator contribute to improved personal support networks?

Not at all Somewhat Quite a lot Very much

Please describe successes you had in this regard. You are welcome to give examples of success stories.

Please describe any challenges you experienced with regard to increasing your personal support networks.

Were there any negative outcomes of the project? Yes No If yes, please describe

The information gathered through the short surveys, along with the client data that the Solutions Navigators' collect (e.g. issues/needs covered, referral organizations, # of meetings with client, pathway mapping) will help the Navigator identify new resources and successful referrals that will benefit future clients.

12. Additional Information. Please share any other information you think may help support your submission.

SECTION 4: Required Attachments

Please submit the following with the application form:

- Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee Resolution – Indicating local government support for the proposed project and a willingness to provide overall grant management;
- Detailed budget, including itemized costs/activities that will be funded by the grant and separating out any in-kind and/or cash contributions from the applicant(s) or other grant funding;
- For regional projects only:** Each partnering eligible local government must submit a Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution indicating support for the primary applicant to *apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.*

Submit the completed Application Form and all required attachments as an e-mail attachment to lgps@ubcm.ca and note “2022 Poverty Reduction” in the subject line. Submit your application as either a Word or PDF file(s).

SECTION 5: Signature

Applications are required to be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant. Please note all application materials will be shared with the Province of BC.

I certify that: (1) to the best of my knowledge, all information is accurate, (2) the area covered by the proposed project is within the applicant’s jurisdiction (or appropriate approvals are in place).

Name: Arleta Beckett

Title: Community Services & Community Development Manager

Signature*: A. Beckett

Date: February 11, 2021

**A certified electronic or original signature is required*

UBCM Poverty Reduction Planning & Action

2022 Application for Stream 2 – Action

North Shore Solutions Navigator Program Budget (January 26, 2022)

North Shore Solutions Navigator

\$40/hour x 37.5 hours/week x 52 weeks + MERCs @ 20%	\$93,600
10% Administration support for host organization (North Shore Neighbourhood House)	\$15,000
Internet, office,	\$10,000
Support for clients (e.g. travel, programs, training, food)	\$31,400

Project total	\$150,000

DRAFT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2032

North Shore Homelessness Task Force





Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Methodology	2
Gap Analysis	3
Vision, Mission, Values	4
Vision	4
Mission	4
Values	4
Who We Serve	4
Mandate of the Task Force	5
Decision Making Framework	6
Process	6
Framework	6
Goals & Objectives	7
Conclusion	9

[View & Download Plain Text Strategic Plan](#) ↓

We'd like to acknowledge the work of the Roots & Rivers and Oakunsheyld Consulting teams in designing an engaging, effective, and visionary strategic planning process and 2022-2032 Strategic Plan.



Executive Summary

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (Task Force) is an open service network on the North Shore that works together to address issues relating to homelessness and poverty on the North Shore. The Task Force focuses on areas related to support services, communications and information, and advocacy.

The following document is a resource designed to support the Task Force in strategic decision-making, planning, and execution. It aims to provide a “true north” for the Task Force and to build towards an operational resource to support planning.

This strategic planning document includes the following components:

- **Vision, Mission & Values**
Enables a shared understanding and alignment on the Task Force’s role and desired impact.
- **Mandate of the Task Force**
Defines the Task Force’s unique positioning and role in collaboration with other local partners towards addressing homelessness.
- **Decision-Making Framework**
Provides objective criteria to evaluate existing and future opportunities and initiatives against.
- **Goals & Objectives**
Outlines goals and priorities for the Task Force between 2022-2032.





Methodology

This Strategy was co-created by the Task Force with the support of external consultants. The methods for its creation include building on engagement and knowledge from the Situation Analysis Report, meetings with the Task Force Steering Committee, and community engagement. This process included:

- Engagement with 30 North Shore community members with lived experience of homelessness (connections made through 9 community organizations);
- Task Force Strategic Planning Workshop (17 participants);
- Task Force Strategic Planning Survey (10 participants); and
- Meetings with the Task Force Steering Committee, including synthesizing engagement data.

What we have heard consistently from Task Force members throughout this process is that we are ready to move forward in new, strategic, and community-led ways that serve homeless community members on the North Shore. This Strategy has been developed from our collective voices and it is now our collective responsibility to put it into action.

Gap Analysis

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force Situation Analysis Report explores the current state of homelessness on the North Shore, as well as the related gaps in homelessness work on the North Shore. For detailed information, refer to the Report. A high-level summary of these gaps includes:

- **Homelessness is a shared responsibility of local, provincial, and federal governments**, which often results in housing and homelessness falling through the cracks;
- **Data and information around homelessness is flawed** and incomplete which results in ineffective action and decision-making;
- **Systems of oppression are root causes of homelessness** and are actively embedded in all aspects of homelessness work, causing a gap between intention and impact for those looking to support homeless community members.

In this strategy, our current state and identified gaps will be complemented by our vision for what we want to accomplish and how we will address gaps to get there. As a Task Force, we have many strengths, both as individual members and as a community of practice; We are more than the sum of our parts and we are able to take collective action on homelessness in ways that none of us could do alone. By building on and growing our strengths, this strategy provides direction for us to embark on an emergent path of bold, community-led action on addressing North Shore homelessness.

Key aspects of this strategy that complete our gap analysis are the vision, mission, and mandate of the Task Force, the goals and objectives, and the operational planning spreadsheet. The operational planning spreadsheet will be managed by the Coordinator of the Task Force, and will be a live document accessible to all members. It will record progress and key milestones across the 10 years. The vision, mission, and mandate provide the Task Force with broad, overarching direction. The goals and objectives provide us with an intermediate level of direction in our focus areas. Finally, our operational planning spreadsheet helps us to mobilize and prioritize our work closest to the ground.

Truly addressing root causes of homelessness will require the Task Force to do deeply transformative work that centres anti-oppression and prioritizes community members with lived experience; it will require courageous and innovative action. The Task Force is ready for this transformation and to take a more impactful solidarity role in addressing homelessness on the North Shore.

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

A North Shore where everyone has safe, affordable access to housing options that meet their diverse needs and desires.

Mission

Advance collective action and advocacy to address root causes of homelessness on the North Shore.

Values

Relational: Maintaining relationships as our foundation and creating a sense of belonging on the North Shore.

Anti-oppression: Combating all forms of oppression in every place we find it and prioritizing safety for the most marginalized.

Action: Aligning our actions with our values and follow through on our commitments.

Solidarity: Centring the most impacted community members in our work.

Accountability: Coming from a place of service to the homeless community on the North Shore and taking responsibility for how our work impacts them.

Who We Serve

First and foremost, we serve those experiencing homelessness on the North Shore. Second, we support the Task Force members and the wider North Shore community, to best serve those experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

Mandate of the Task Force

The Task Force seeks to provide leadership on the North Shore around homelessness in order to meaningfully address its root causes. Currently, it functions as a hub and community of practice for a wide membership by facilitating information sharing, coordination, and collaboration on homelessness, with many accomplishments across these activities. Each Task Force member organization has its own mission, mandate, and priorities; This strategic plan articulates the shared work these organizations aim to champion together.

The Task Force works to nurture collective action to address homelessness on the North Shore by:

Advocating for policy and program changes to address the root causes of homelessness.

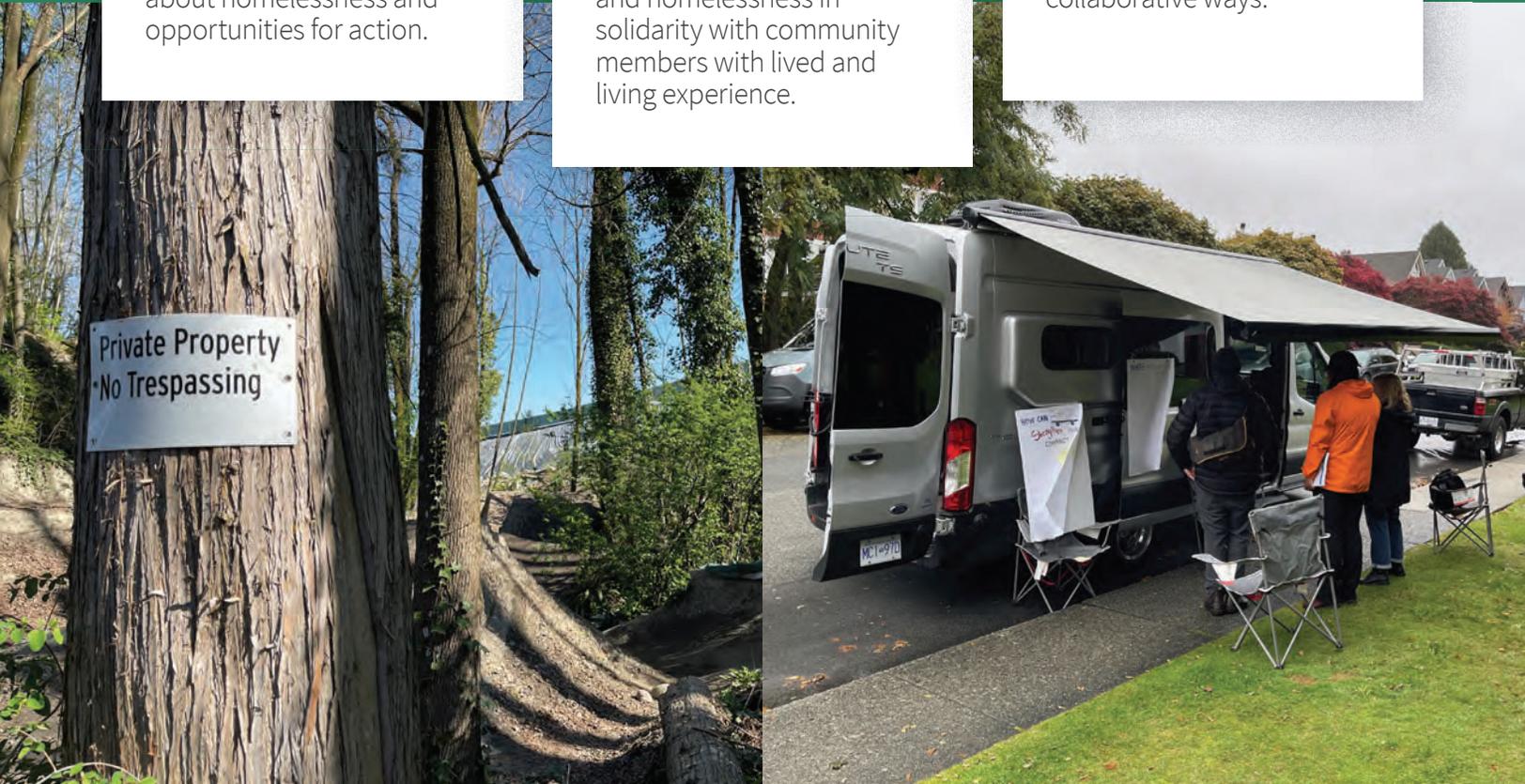
Building knowledge and capacity among task force organizations and individuals.

Serving as a community of practice for organizations and individuals.

Educating the public and decision-makers about homelessness and opportunities for action.

Taking collective action on issues related to housing and homelessness in solidarity with community members with lived and living experience.

Supporting existing work on homelessness in streamlined, collaborative ways.



Decision-Making Framework

The following process and framework supports the Task Force in evaluating existing programming and emerging opportunities. It should be reviewed regularly to keep it current and should be included into the next revision of the Task Force Terms of Reference.

Process

The framework should be used to evaluate opportunities during annual planning, quarterly reviews, or as opportunities arise. Engagement around decision-making should be undertaken by relevant stakeholders including the Coordinator, Task Force Members, key partners and community organizations.

Framework

Scoring: **1** - not at all • **2** - to minimal extent • **3** - to some extent • **4** - ideal extent • **5** - maximal extent

CRITERIA	KEY QUESTION	SCORING (1-5)
Advancement	To what extent does this opportunity advance our Mission, Vision, and Values?	/5
Focus	To what extent does this opportunity align with our unique positioning and role?	/5
Amplification	To what extent does this opportunity amplify existing Task Force work?	/5
Resources	To what extent are there adequate resources (capacity, systems, funding) currently or feasibly available?	/5
Impact	To what extent does this opportunity address homelessness or meet a need in a unique way?	/5
Anti-oppression	To what extent are we advancing equity, diversity and inclusion and creating positive systemic change?	/5
TOTAL SCORE		/30

A score of $\geq 24/30$: proceeding with this opportunity is recommended.

A score of $18-23/30$: further discussions on this opportunity should be conducted.

A score of $\leq 17/30$: proceeding with this opportunity is not recommended.

Goals & Objectives

Communication

Increase community awareness, trust, and recognition of the Task Force and its activities.

- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy to facilitate meaningful connection and engagement among task force members, partners, and North Shore community members.
- Foster a positive and engaging online presence that reaches diverse audiences.
- Capture and share stories to engage community members and share successes.
- Increase transparency, reporting, and accountability on activities and priorities.
- Maintain a positive and engaging presence at community events.

Advocacy

Advocate for program and policy changes that will address root causes of homelessness on the North Shore.

- Identify and act upon opportunities to update existing policies and bylaws that support meaningful change for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Establish and nurture partnerships with local and provincial government representatives in order to advocate for and collaborate on systemic changes in the housing sector.
- Target collaboration with local health authorities, school districts, and other key partners to explore holistic and creative solutions to homelessness.
- Create strategic, targeted campaigns that mobilize the grassroots community and relate directly to homelessness.
- Work in solidarity with frontline communities by amplifying their voices in our collective networks and positions of power.

Anti-oppression

Centre anti-oppression principles as the foundation for all Task Force initiatives.

- Lift up and support existing work and resources being undertaken and developed by impacted community members.
- Create respectful, meaningful, and consensual opportunities for homeless and otherwise marginalized community members to lead the Task Force's work.
- Honour different perspectives in program, initiative, advocacy and service design.
- Amplify marginalized voices in the Task Force's work with agencies and service providers.
- Leverage Task Force members' positions of power to effect tangible change.

Goals & Objectives

Service Coordination

Act as a community of practice that engages in constructive collaboration to meet the needs of individuals experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness.

- Identify and provide recommendations to address gaps in services in the community.
- Act as a hub and maintain a living resource to build knowledge of programs, services, and activities addressing homelessness in the community.
- Advocate for changes in program delivery among Task Force organizations/ other local organizations to address harm and barriers to systemic change.
- Take a holistic lens to safety and harm reduction to all programs and services offered.
- Explore creative models and approaches to addressing homelessness including various housing-first approaches.

Internal Operations

Invest in streamlined, engaged, and coordinated Task Force processes and operations.

- Solidify and maintain the terms of reference, structure, and objectives of the Task Force.
- Grow shared ownership on the Task Force for delivery of the vision, mission, and goals.
- Develop clear and consistent methods of reporting on Task Force impact.
- Host regular development opportunities for individuals to do meaningful learning and skill development around topics related to homelessness.
- Secure consistent and sufficient coordination and operational funding for the Task Force.



Conclusion

The Task Force is passionate about supporting tangible change for community members experiencing and at risk of homelessness. We are proud of this collective effort and will use this guiding document as a resource to help steer our direction over the next 10 years. We will leverage tools and resources to review progress on these strategic goals and hold ourselves accountable for reaching them.

We look forward to working with the community towards a North Shore where everyone has safe, affordable access to housing options that meet their diverse needs and desires.



North Shore
Homelessness Task Force
NorthShoreHomelessness.org

2021 North Shore Homelessness Situation Analysis Report

December 10, 2021

Acknowledgements

All of the work of the North Shore Homelessness Task Force and the work of the North Shore municipalities, organizations, and people that make up the task force is done on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłilwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations. These lands and waters were taken without consent.

This Situation Analysis Report has been developed to inform a Community Action Strategy for the Task Force. This report was funded by the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) and facilitated and administered by the Task Force Steering Committee.

This Report was informed by existing reports and conversations with organizations and members affiliated with the Task Force, and supported by the Task Force Steering Committee.

Thank you to the Task Force members and North Shore community members who contributed to this document. We are grateful for everyone's involvement and commitment to supporting this work.

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force is an open service network on the North Shore that works together to address issues relating to homelessness and poverty on the North Shore. The Task Force focuses on areas related to support services, communications and information, and advocacy.

Written and edited: Andrea Oakunsheyld, Austin Lui, and Annelies Tjebbes.



Table of Contents

1.0 How To Use This Document	4
2.0 Executive Summary	5-7
3.0 Graphic Summary	8-11
4.0 Context	12
4.1 Homelessness in Canada	12-13
4.2 The Housing Continuum	13-15
5.0 Worldviews in Approaching Homelessness	16-17
6.0 North Shore Homelessness Task Force	18
6.1 Approach	18-19
6.2 Value	19
6.3 Areas of Strength and Growth for the Task Force	20-22
7.0 North Shore Community Profile	23-24
7.1 Who Is Counted on the North Shore?	25-26
7.2 Income	26-28
7.3 Inequality on the North Shore	28-29
7.4 Race & Ethnicity	30-31
7.5 Language	31-32
7.6 Faith-Based Communities	32
7.7 Newcomers.....	32-33
7.8 Gender & Sexuality.....	33
7.9 Domestic and Sexual Violence	34
7.10 Disability	34-35
7.11 Trauma and Mental Health	35-36
7.12 Substance Use and Addictions	36-38
7.13 Age	38-39
7.14 Demographics Not Represented	39
7.15 Meeting the Community's Needs	40-41
7.16 North Shore Municipalities	41-42
7.17 North Shore First Nations	43
8.0 Key Takeaways	44
Appendices	
Appendix A: North Shore Homelessness Task Force Summary.....	45
Appendix B: Membership List of the North Shore Homeslessness Task Force.....	46
Appendix C: North Shore Homelessness Task Force 2008-2018 Priority Summaries	47
Appendix D: Summaries of Key North Shore Homelessness Task Force Initiatives.....	48
Appendix E: North Shore Official Community Plans and Housing Strategies.....	49-56
Appendix F: North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative	57

1.0 How To Use This Document

This Report offers a synthesized situation analysis of homelessness on the North Shore. It has been prepared to inform the preparation of the Task Force's Homelessness Community Action Strategy, and has been designed to be used by a variety of users such as:

- North Shore Homelessness Task Force and its members;
- North Shore municipal staff;
- North Shore mayors and councils;
- North Shore First Nations;
- North Shore agencies and organizations that do work related to housing and homelessness; and
- The wider North Shore community.

With such a wide intended readership, this document offers a lot of different types of information. This information has been drawn from a variety of sources including a review of key documents, supplemental research, and interviews with key stakeholders. In this way, the report brings together the multiplicity of stories and experiences around homelessness in an effort to provide an integrated and nuanced portrayal of the reality of homelessness on the North Shore that is grounded in the experiences of impacted community members.

Readers are encouraged to engage with whatever pieces of this document resonate and feel useful. The Table of Contents thoroughly outlines the topics discussed throughout this document and is numbered for easy navigation. This document is designed both to be read from start to finish and for readers to jump around to relevant sections. Subsections each end with a box outlined in vibrant green that contain core ideas. It is hoped that this document acts as a meaningful support to the North Shore community as members collectively work to address the root causes of homelessness.

2.0 Executive Summary

With funding from the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) Homelessness Community Action Grant, the North Shore Homelessness Task Force (Task Force or NSHTF) is undertaking the work to create a new North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy (Community Action Strategy) to guide their work for the next 10 years. This project includes:

- This North Shore Situation Analysis Report (December 2021);
- An engagement process with North Shore community members impacted by, or at risk of, homelessness (see Targeted Engagement Summary, October 2021); and
- The final North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy (December 2021).

This Situation Analysis Report (Report) has been developed to provide a holistic, high-level overview of the knowledge of the North Shore that the Task Force already has. The Task Force is composed of many different individuals, private organizations, not-for-profit organizations, as well as public agencies and institutions. With so many players within the Task Force, different knowledge(s) are spread out between many individuals. This Report provides a synthesized summary of the different knowledge(s) within the Task Force in order to make them accessible to all members and to the wider North Shore community. This report will also serve as a foundation from which to build the Community Action Strategy.

The scope of this Report and the Community Action Strategy is to guide the Task Force's work on the North Shore from 2022-2032. With this scope in mind, this Report is informed primarily by input offered by members of the Task Force with a focus on key members in relevant service provider positions and by the Task Force Steering Committee. The Community Action Strategy is designed on the shared input of Task Force members and North Shore community members with lived experience of homelessness (as captured in the NSHTF Community Action Strategy Engagement Summary Report) to ensure a collaborative community approach moving forward.

Methods for this Report included a review of key documents, identified by the Task Force and its Steering Committee; supplemental research about homelessness on the North Shore and in Canada more broadly; meetings with the Task Force and its Steering Committee; and interviews with key Task Force members. This process included:

- An engagement activity at the April 14, 2021 Task Force meeting;
- 7 meetings with the Task Force Steering Committee;
- 5 meetings with the Task Force Coordinator; and
- 30 interviews with 20 individuals representing the following organizations who provide services to homeless individuals:
 - Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation;
 - Harvest Project;
 - Hollyburn Family Services;
 - North Shore Community Resources (NSCR), Community Housing Action Committee (CHAC);
 - Lookout Housing + Health Society;
 - Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA);
 - North Shore Crisis Services Society (NSCSS);
 - North Shore Neighbourhood House; and
 - West Vancouver Shower Program.

The Task Force seeks to provide leadership on the North Shore around homelessness in order to meaningfully address its root causes. Currently, it functions as a hub for its wide membership by facilitating information sharing, coordination, and collaboration on homelessness, with many accomplishments across these activities.

As the North Shore rises to the challenge of homelessness, there are incredible opportunities to lead in this area. One of the most impactful ways to lead in addressing homelessness is to acknowledge, welcome, and respect the many ways that homeless community members see the world. The Task Force recognizes homelessness as an increasing issue on the North Shore and that existing data, such as that found in homeless counts, offers only partial information about homelessness in the community.

Service providers shared that income was the most prominent factor around homelessness on the North Shore, where high median incomes skew what is considered affordable, leading to confusion between affordable and social housing, which distracts from creating either housing option. The North Shore's myth of universal affluence works to invisibilize community members at various levels of homelessness and results in fewer resources being directed to those in need.

Trends in the North Shore homeless community include an overrepresentation of racialized community members, particularly Indigenous community members. Newcomers and those who do not speak fluent English face unique challenges on the North Shore. Disability is a critical intersection with homelessness and is an intersection where resources continually fall short of supporting community members. People of marginalized genders and sexual identities are more likely to be homeless in ways that are harder to locate such as couch surfing, living in their cars, or sleeping in abandoned homes. Age is a key intersection of homelessness because it is the two ends of the age continuum, youth and seniors, that experience the greatest impacts of homelessness due to unique vulnerabilities. Demographics that are largely unrepresented in current conversations of homelessness include youth ageing out of foster care, sex workers, and those who have been formerly incarcerated.

Service providers said that nearly 100% of homeless community members were experiencing, or have experienced, trauma, which is greatly linked to substance use and addiction. Those with marginalized identities are underrepresented in data and discussion around homelessness, but are overrepresented in the homeless population itself, with many homeless community members holding multiple marginalized identities.

Truly addressing root causes of homelessness will require the Task Force to do deeply transformative work that centres anti-oppression and prioritizes community members with lived experience; it will require brave and innovative action. The Task Force is ready for this transformation and to take a more impactful solidarity role in addressing homelessness on the North Shore.

Key Takeaways

This Report explores how the Task Force can expand its worldview, where the Task Force is as an organization, and what homelessness currently looks like on the North Shore. There is necessarily a lot of information here because homelessness is highly nuanced and experiences of homelessness are unique on the North Shore. The key takeaways from this situation analysis of homelessness on the North Shore are:

- Work on homelessness must be relationship-based and centre the most impacted;
- Work on homelessness must trust the information being shared by the most impacted community members and take action without waiting for more data or research first. Community members are the experts;
- Work on addressing homelessness must make space for multiple ways of being and knowing, especially the ways of being and knowing that are specific to Skwxwú7mesh and səliilwətaʔ as host First Nations;
- The Task Force is in a unique position to follow the leadership of impacted community members and to provide coordinated leadership across the various structures to which members belong;
- Areas of growth as a Task Force include collective advocacy, collective communication, capacity-building, and anti-oppression;
- Marginalized community members are underrepresented in data and discussion around homelessness, but are overrepresented in the homeless population itself. The North Shore has an urgent need for spaces and resources that respond directly and proactively to these demographics;
- The Task Force must continue to focus on those that are already homeless as well as those who are at risk of homelessness to effectively address root causes of homelessness; and
- All actors on the North Shore (municipalities, First Nations, agencies, organizations, etc.) have a complementary set of challenges and strengths which result in collective abundance through creative collaboration.

Each member of the Task Force has a place and a role in this work and together, through these collective strengths, the Task Force can deepen coordination and advocacy work around homelessness. With all of the strengths, challenges, and perspectives that are surfaced in this Report, The Task Force can move forward in new, strategic, and community-led ways that empower and serve the homeless community on the North Shore. Next steps will include creating a North Shore Homelessness Community Action Plan that translates collective wisdoms from the North Shore community into a highly actionable strategic plan, which will be collectively implemented by Task Force members.

Homelessness on the North Shore

2021 Situation Analysis



Methods for this Report include a review of key documents; supplemental research about homelessness on the North Shore and in Canada more broadly; meetings with the Task Force and its Steering Committee; and personal interviews with key Task Force members.

As a Task Force, we are composed of many different individuals, private organizations, not-for-profit organizations, as well as public agencies and institutions. We function as a hub for our wide membership which facilitates information sharing, coordination, and collaboration on homelessness.

High median incomes skew what is considered affordable, leading to confusion between affordable and social housing.^a



Key Demographics:

- Indigenous and other racialized people
- People of marginalized genders
- 2SLGBTQIA+ people
- Farsi-speakers
- Those that are low-income or living below the poverty line
- Disabled people/people with disabilities
- Youth
- Youth ageing out of foster care
- Elders
- Sex workers
- Substance users
- Survivors of all kinds
- Formerly incarcerated people
- Immigrants and newcomers

Nearly

100%

of homeless community members were experiencing, or have experienced, trauma.^b



a: Metro Vancouver (2019). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MV_Housing_Data_Book.pdf.

b: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

Compared to white community members in Metro Van:^c

Arab community members were

1.3x

more likely to experience homelessness

Latin American community members were

1.7x

more likely to experience homelessness

Black community members were

3.7x

more likely to experience homelessness

Indigenous community members were

13.2x

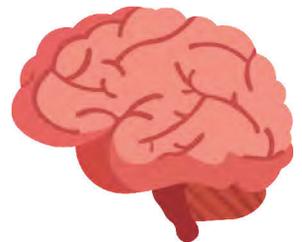
more likely to experience homelessness

Our work must honour Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliilíwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) worldviews as host Nations, and must further welcome worldviews from the many other cultures on the North Shore, such as other Indigenous cultures, Farsi-speaking cultures, Black and African cultures, Latinx cultures, and more. This will build on our capacity to create and strengthen relationships with homeless community members.

Many services related to addressing homelessness on the North Shore are offered solely or primarily in English, which can be a substantial barrier.^d

Demographics that are largely unrepresented in current conversations of homelessness include youth ageing out of foster care, sex workers, and those who have been formerly incarcerated.^e

Service providers consistently shared that **income** and **mental health** were the biggest challenge that homeless community members are facing on the North Shore.^f



c: BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf

d: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

e: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

f: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

People of marginalized genders and sexual identities are more likely to be homeless in ways that are harder to locate such as couch surfing, living in their cars, or sleeping in abandoned homes.^g



Disability assistance often isn't enough to cover rent, let alone utilities, food, and other needs.^{h,i}

The homeless community on the North Shore is primarily long-term North Shore residents who are reluctant to leave their home area.^j



In the 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot, 18% of those surveyed were **under the age of 25** and 25% were **over 55**.^k



The North Shore reached 48 illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2020. By April 2021, the North Shore reached

20 deaths.

With an average of 5 deaths/month, we may reach

60+ deaths.

by the end of 2021.^l

Many are facing a dual crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic and the opioid crisis. On average, illicit drug toxicity deaths are claiming **170** lives per month across BC compared to COVID-19's monthly average of **100**.^m



As the North Shore seeks to meaningfully address homelessness, anti-oppression must be at the centre of this work.

g: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

h: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2020). Vancouver - Rental Market Statistics Summary by Zone. <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/Table?TableId=2.1.31.3&GeographyId=2410&GeographyTypeId=3&DisplayAs=Table&GeographyName=Vancouver>.

i: Province of British Columbia. On disability assistance. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/services-for-people-with-disabilities/disability-assistance/on-disability-assistance>.

j: Interviews conducted with North Shore service providers.

k: BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). A Pilot Project of the 2020 Homeless Count In Metro Vancouver: 2020 North Shore Extended Count. https://northshorehomelessness.files.wordpress.com/2021/06/hc2020_finalreport.pdf

l: Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

m: Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

Key Takeaways

- Work on homelessness must be relationship-based and centre the most impacted;
- Work on homelessness must trust the information being shared by the most impacted community members and take action without waiting for more data or research first. Community members are the experts;
- Work on addressing homelessness must make space for multiple ways of being and knowing, especially the ways of being and knowing that are specific to Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səlililw̱ətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) as host Nations;
- We are in a particularly unique position to follow the leadership of impacted community members and to provide coordinated leadership across the various structures to which our members belong;
- Our areas of growth as a Task Force include collective advocacy, collective communication, capacity-building, and anti-oppression;
- Marginalized community members are underrepresented in data and discussion around homelessness, but are over-represented in the homeless population itself. The North Shore has an urgent need for spaces and resources that respond directly and proactively to these demographics;
- We must continue to focus on those that are already homeless as well as those who are at risk of homelessness so that we can effectively address root causes of homelessness; and
- All actors on the North Shore (municipalities, First Nations, agencies, organizations, etc.) have a complementary set of challenges and strengths which result in collective abundance through creative collaboration.

4.0 Context

4.1 Homelessness in Canada

Nestled mainly at the base of the North Shore Mountains, the North Shore is a lush, vibrant community of people with diverse identities, backgrounds, needs, contributions, and ways of being. With mountains, beaches, and forests, it is one of the most beautiful places to live in the world. Approximately 193,000 people call the North Shore home¹, although not all of these people are securely housed. The North Shore, like so many other regions in Canada, continues to grapple with affordable and accessible housing with a diversity of community members that either do not have access to adequate housing or are at risk of losing their housing amidst these challenges.

Homelessness increased in Canada in the 1980s, “following a massive disinvestment in affordable housing, structural shifts in the economy, and reduced spending on social supports”². Homelessness remains an ongoing issue that has been made increasingly worse by the COVID-19 pandemic, where those at risk of homelessness are enduring increasing financial hardships and potentially unsafe living conditions. Many community members have become homeless over the course of the pandemic, further facing complex traumas, increased risk of death related to substance use, and the COVID-19 virus.

A key barrier to addressing homelessness in Canada is that housing is not the responsibility of any one level of government but, rather, is a shared responsibility between federal, provincial, and local governments. With shared responsibility comes a lack of organizational ownership, where the focus on addressing homelessness often falls through the cracks. This makes it difficult to hold any level of government accountable.

Local Government	Provincial Government	Federal Government
Adopting growth strategies and plans that encourage affordable housing units	Addressing housing affordability through a strategic housing action plan	National Housing Strategy, 10 year commitment to reinvest in affordable/social housing
Nurturing a "housing-friendly" regulatory environment by allowing secondary suites or promoting increased density and options	Regulates real estate development / marketing, home warranty insurance, landlord-tenant relations, land use planning and development	Partners with the provincial government and invests in affordable and social housing
Providing pre-zoned land for development and higher-density transit	Provides the legislative framework for strata housing and strata developments, invests in public transit	Provides funding for affordable housing projects
Offering property tax incentives and targeted reductions to build or renovate affordable housing	Partners with local governments, non-profit agencies and housing stakeholders through BC Housing, a crown corporation.	Provides financial assistance through tax credits and exemptions
Streamlining development approval processes	Funds social housing programs and projects	Provides mortgage loan insurance
	Maintains the BC Building Code, creating efficiencies so that it's easier to approve options such as secondary suites	Researches the housing market and related topics through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
	Develop uniform technical standards that simplify building code compliance	

Table 1: Roles of Government in Housing³

1 Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0142-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710014201&utm_source=north%20shore%20news&utm_campaign=north%20shore%20news&utm_medium=referral.

2 Stephen Gaetz, Erin Dej, Tim Richter, & Melanie Redman (2016): The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/SOHC2016>.

3 Province of British Columbia (2018). Role of government. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/affordable-and-social-housing/role-of-government>.

With a lack of effective action from all levels of government, responses have been “largely based on the provision of emergency services, [which have] prevented meaningful progress”⁴. Effectively addressing homelessness will require all levels of government to proactively offer their power and resources to take action in partnership with one another and with Indigenous governments.

Effectively addressing homelessness also requires addressing its root causes. The Homeless Hub, developed by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, lists structural factors (ex. economic and societal issues), poverty, housing, system failures, personal circumstances and relational problems, and domestic violence as causes of homelessness⁵. For Indigenous people(s) in Canada

the unique experience of unresolved trauma extending from colonial land theft, broken treaties and racist policies like the Indian Act and the ongoing removal of children from Indigenous families have led to a higher rate of homelessness for Indigenous people compared to the overall population⁶.

While colonialism in Canada continues to target and impact Indigenous people(s) first and foremost, its legacy also impacts the current landscape of “economic and societal issues”⁷ that are pointed to in discussions about homelessness. In exploring homelessness on the North Shore in this Report, these overarching root causes are important to keep in mind.

Because homelessness isn’t the responsibility of any one level of government, it often falls through the cracks.

4.2 The Housing Continuum

To begin to explore housing and homelessness on the North Shore, it is first necessary to understand these terms. Housing exists on a spectrum between market housing and non-market housing. Market housing includes housing that is rented or owned where the price is dictated by the market. Market housing is generally considered affordable when it costs no more than 30% of household income. Non-market housing includes many housing options where the price is not dictated by the market. Many municipalities have a visual representation of the housing spectrum, or housing continuum, to better understand the different housing situations in which community members may be living. Below is an example that shows the broad distinctions between types of non-market housing.

When thinking about housing and homelessness, there are many housing or living options that fall outside of most housing continuum models and that can be used to support community members that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Some of the housing or living options that are often left out of housing continuums include:

- Living in a vehicle;
- Living in a trailer or mobile home;
- Couch surfing or staying with people; and
- Living in tents.

4 Stephen Gaetz, Erin Dej, Tim Richter, & Melanie Redman (2016): The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/SOHC2016>.

5 Nick Falvo (2015). Responsibility for Housing. Homeless Hub, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/responsibility-housing>.

6 Katie Hyslop (2017). The Tyee. For Indigenous People, Homelessness Is More Than Lacking a Home. <https://thetyee.ca/News/2017/10/30/Indigenous-Homeless-More-Thank-Lacking-Home/>.

7 Nick Falvo (2015). Responsibility for Housing. Homeless Hub, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/responsibility-housing>.

HOUSING CONTINUUM



Figure 1: Overview of the Housing Continuum⁸

This is a non-exhaustive list that offers a greater understanding of the way that community members may be living. These methods of living also highlight some of the complex ways that homelessness is often invisible. If a majority of homeless community members are staying on different friends' couches or tenting where they can, they are not visible the way others in shelters or on streets may be. Most individuals likely have homeless community members in their neighbourhoods and social networks.

An important note is that some community members who may be living in options like vehicles and trailers may not consider themselves homeless. What is essential to understand about housing is that a person's position can change unexpectedly and often. Many community members that are homeless or at risk of being homeless move through these options fluidly. With this understanding of housing and housing options, homelessness can be defined.

⁸ United Way of Olmsted County (2021). Housing Continuum. <https://www.uwolmsted.org/research-housing-stability>.



Figure 2: Housing options that address homelessness

As defined by the North Shore Homelessness Task Force,

[t]he term 'homelessness' is used to include the absolute homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. The absolute homeless refers to people who are living on the street, including back lanes, parks, alcoves, and so on, as well as people who do not have a place of their own and who stay with and move between friends and family "couch surfing". People at risk of becoming homeless include those living in places that are not safe, secure or affordable and further marginalized people such as those with disabilities who may lose vital services that allow them to maintain their housing and therefore become homeless⁹.

This is the working definition of homelessness that grounds the analysis of homelessness on the North Shore throughout this Report. The Task Force, along with the entire North Shore, is continuously working to address homelessness in adaptive and strategic ways. Throughout this situation analysis of homelessness on the North Shore, North Shore municipalities, organizations and agencies that serve the North Shore, and all community members of the North Shore are invited to join in ongoing learning about, and action on, homelessness. Separately, this Report is offered as a resource to the host First Nations of the North Shore, on whose lands most North Shore residents are uninvited guests.

Community members use many different housing options that are often not recognized in housing conversations. The Task Force's definition of homelessness includes the absolute homeless as well as those at risk of homelessness.

⁹ North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>.

5.0 Worldviews in Approaching Homelessness

As the North Shore rises to the challenge of homelessness, there are incredible opportunities to lead in this area. One of the most impactful ways to lead in addressing homelessness is to acknowledge, welcome, and respect the many ways that homeless community members see the world.

The North Shore is home to a diversity of community members with many different cultures and worldviews that lead them to understand homelessness in different ways. Recognizing and valuing these different worldviews offers a more collaborative and participatory approach to addressing issues like homelessness, and is part of cultural humility. Cultural humility, as defined by the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA),

is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience¹⁰.

Cultural humility in the context of homelessness and data collection around homelessness means intentionally seeking out and explicitly valuing very different ways of being and knowing.

As a region that exists on the traditional, ancestral, and unsundered lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm, S^kwxwú7mesh, and səliilwətaʔ First Nations, one of the most key considerations in work around homelessness must be centring their sovereignty, worldviews, histories, and protocols. However, much of the current work around homelessness comes from a specific settler-colonial worldview. Settler-colonialism is a “distinct type of colonialism that functions through the replacement of [I]ndigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity and sovereignty”¹¹.

This worldview has dictated many of the ways that organizations engage in work around homelessness, such as a heavy value on quantitative data. While data can be a very valuable way of understanding homelessness, it is also a flawed and incomplete way of understanding. An example of what centering the worldviews of First Nations may look like is valuing oral stories and histories as equal to statistics in information gathering, information sharing, and resulting decision-making.

Another example that would fit well with the Task Force’s holistic approach to homelessness is a ‘nested systems’ approach, which understands that each individual exists in relation to larger contexts such as their family, their community, their Nation, all the way out to the cosmos¹². A nested systems framework can be seen in FNHA’s visual of holistic wellness below. This approach may offer a more meaningful partnership with host First Nations and substantially increase the effectiveness of collective work on homelessness.

10 College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia. Cultural Safety and Humility Practice Standard: Draft Principles. <https://www.cpsbc.ca/files/pdf/Cultural-Safety-and-Humility-Practice-Standard-Draft-Principles.pdf>

11 Adam Barker and Emma Battell Lowman. Global Social Theory: Settler Colonialism. <https://globalsocialtheory.org/concepts/settler-colonialism/>

12 Alderhill Planning Inc. <https://www.alderhill.ca>.

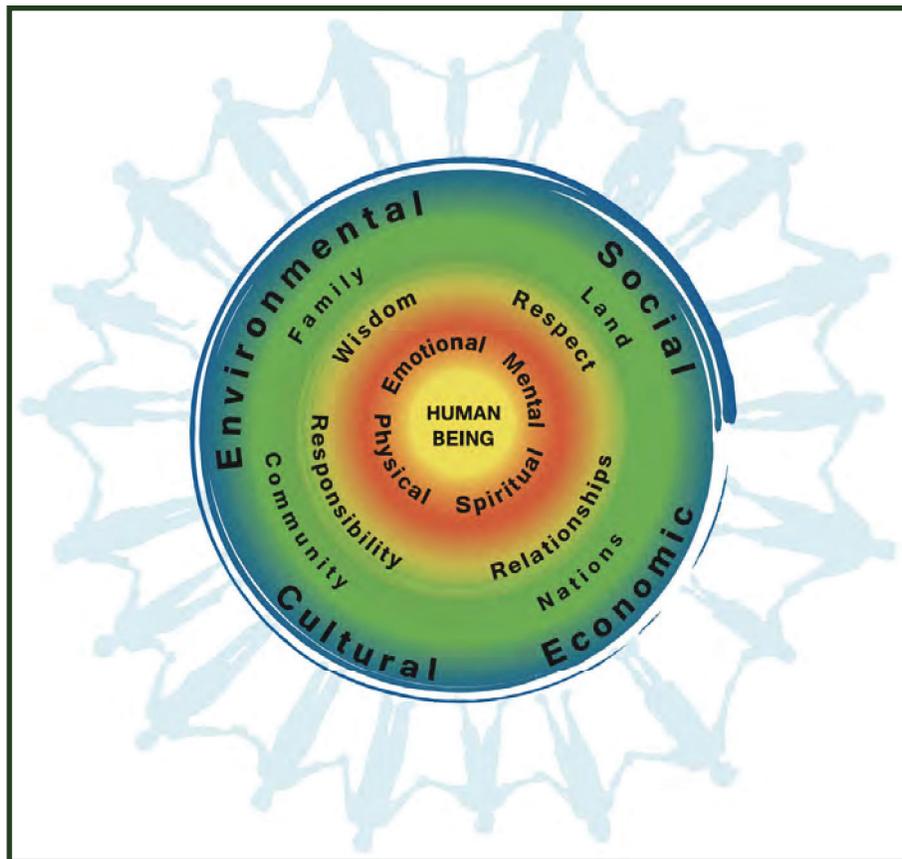


Figure 3: First Nations Health Authority perspective on health and wellness¹³

A final example of what it may look like to value different worldviews is to trust the information being shared by the most impacted community members and to take action without waiting for more data or research first. This type of work is deeply relationship-based and understands community members to be the experts of their own experiences. This way of working fits well with the Task Force’s task-oriented approach to homelessness and will help the North Shore municipalities, First Nations, organizations, agencies, and wider community to mobilize more effectively.

These are broad examples of approaches that can guide the Task Force, municipalities, organizations, and agencies to do more meaningful, ethical work on North Shore homelessness and to work in respectful partnerships with host First Nations. It is important to emphasize here that relationships with host First Nations and respect for their sovereignty must be the foundation of all of the work that organizations seek to do on their territories. This includes honouring the specific worldviews, practices, and protocols of the host First Nations consistently and on their terms. With the understanding of the host Nations as the foundation for all work, the approach can then be extended to include worldviews from the many other cultures on the North Shore, such as Farsi-speaking cultures, Black and African cultures, Latinx cultures, and so on. Intentionally including these diverse worldviews on the North Shore will build on the Task Force’s capacity to create and strengthen relationships across the region; coordinate information, communication, and advocacy; and ultimately centre the most impacted community members.

Honouring the specific worldviews, practices, and protocols of the host First Nations must be the foundation for all of the Task Force’s work. Making space for more worldviews will strengthen work being done to address homelessness on the North Shore.

13 First Nations Health Authority (2017). First Nations Regional Health Survey Phase 3, BC Provincial Report. <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-First-Nations-Regional-Health-Survey-Phase-3-2015-2017-BC-Provincial-Report.pdf>

6.0 North Shore Homelessness Task Force



Figure 4: Thematic words from Task Force documents and members

6.1 Approach

The Task Force is composed of many different individuals, private organizations, not-for-profit organizations, as well as public agencies and institutions. It functions as a hub for a wide membership which facilitates information sharing, coordination, and collaboration on homelessness. The Task Force seeks to provide leadership on the North Shore around homelessness in order to meaningfully address root causes. A question that could helpfully guide the direction of the Task Force moving forward is to who are the Task Force providing leadership?

If the Task Force is seeking to centre the most impacted and most marginalized in their work, it follows that the Task Force should take the lead from them as well. Since homelessness is a systemic issue, the Task Force is in a particularly unique position to follow the leadership of impacted community members and to provide coordinated leadership across the various structures to which members belong.

As homelessness continues to not only be present, but an increasing reality for many, on the North Shore, the Task Force remains a source of task-oriented action on homelessness and related issues. The current approach to task-oriented work is two-pronged, as set out in the Task Force's 2008-2018 Work Plan:

1. Address the root causes of homelessness
2. Establish and maintain a continuum of housing and support services for the homeless¹⁴

¹⁴ North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

The first prong of this approach recognizes the truth that homelessness is systemic, rather than an individual failing, which is a prevalent misconception. This prong of the approach seeks to locate systemic and structural causes of homelessness and identify strategic ways of addressing them. This is a long, complicated journey of work, as the systemic causes of homelessness are deeply embedded in all aspects of everyday life and difficult to shift. It is possible to shift these systems but this requires a layered approach of short-, medium-, and long-term pieces of work that further require engaging with systems and policy.

In contrast to this, the second prong of the approach is to establish and maintain a continuum of housing and support services for the homeless community on the North Shore. This prong is more immediate, emergent and on the ground. This prong can be mobilized one project, one task, and one need at a time. This prong requires short- and medium-term pieces of work. Where the first prong recognizes the systemic nature of homelessness and seeks to respond to it accordingly, the second prong also seeks to address the most immediate circumstances of homelessness by providing immediate relief and support to the homeless population on the North Shore.

Together these two prongs set the Task Force up to work in short-, medium-, and long-term contexts on both community and policy levels related to homelessness.

For more information on the Task Force:

- A summary of the Task Force can be found in Appendix A;
- Membership of the Task Force can be found in Appendix B;
- Short descriptions of the key priorities can be found in Appendix C; and
- Short descriptions of key initiatives can be found in Appendix D.

The Task Force seeks to address root causes of homelessness and support those experiencing homelessness.

6.2 Value

Task Force members are deeply embedded in the North Shore community and members' impact has been wide-reaching. Members have particular strengths in their relationships and information gathering alongside their task-oriented work. Highlights of Task Force members' projects and contributions include:

- The Keeping Safe Resource Card;
- The 2016 North Shore Homelessness Data Report;
- The 2020 North Shore Extended Homeless Count;
- North Shore Homelessness Action Week, including Connect Day;
- Housing-related advocacy, such as for Anavets Senior Housing (City of North Vancouver);
- The establishment of the West Vancouver Shower Program;
- The establishment of the Health Connections Clinic; and
- The establishment of the Youth Safe House.

More than anything, the value of the Task Force is that it is more than the sum of its parts. Many members hold multiple community-related roles and carry many relationships with them. As a Task Force, members pool their positions, relationships, knowledge(s), and resources together to take collective action on homelessness in ways that none could do alone.

6.3 Areas of Strength and Growth for the Task Force

“The Task Force has been extremely successful as a coordinated network working towards eliminating and preventing homelessness on the North Shore”¹⁵.

Over twenty-three years, the Task Force has continued to grow and develop with the North Shore. In the interviews conducted for this Report, the membership was asked about what strengths and value they see in the Task Force. Members responded:



Figure 5: Strengths as a Task Force

¹⁵ North Shore Task Force (2021). North Shore Homelessness Task Force 10 Year Work Plan Review.

The Task Force has many strengths to ground itself in and to continue to build on. Depending on these strengths will help the Task Force to navigate challenges as well as their identified areas of growth:



Figure 6: Areas of growth as a Task Force

A key element for the Task Force to consider as it continues to progress its work is that there is currently no lived experience of homelessness in the membership, as the Task Force is primarily an open service network¹⁶, meaning that it is a team of service providers who gather and collaborate in order to address issues relating to homelessness and poverty on the North Shore. This current reality brings both opportunities and challenges.

¹⁶ North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). About. <https://northshorehomelessness.org/about/>.

Opportunities:

- Quarterly meetings can focus on giving mutual updates, sharing work and initiatives, and coordinating of members;
- All members can operate within the specific realm of service providers and local government to take inventory of decision-making power and resources. Further, members can coordinate these within the power structures members have access to; and
- Opportunities to align and coordinate power structures in solidarity with community members, to amplify community members, and to shift power to community members.

Challenges:

- Missing practical, on the ground analysis for strategies and decision-making within the Task Force;
- Risk of inequitable work and saviourism;
- Risk of causing harm to community members, especially those who are multiply marginalized; and
- Cannot represent community members.

As the Task Force continues to move forward in strategic planning, there are many opportunities to use collective strengths, imagine new futures for their work, and embark on an emergent path of bold, community-led action on North Shore homelessness.

The Task Force can use its many strengths to approach their areas of growth and overcome challenges.

7.0 North Shore Community Profile

Accurate data around homelessness is difficult to obtain. One of the biggest difficulties in collecting accurate data is that homeless community members often do not have fixed addresses. While homeless counts can offer some valuable indicators, they are widely acknowledged as significantly underestimating the number of homeless people in a community, and those reachable by a homeless count do not represent the true diversity of identities and experiences in the homeless population.

The 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count identified 121 homeless people on the North Shore, as compared to 100 in 2017¹⁷. The 2020 North Shore Extended Homelessness Count identified “a total of 212 individuals across both accounts, duplicate records accounted for”¹⁸, adding 91 unique individuals over just five additional days. Service providers consistently highlight that these numbers are not reflective of the number of community members in need of support on the North Shore.

For example, the 2016 North Shore Homelessness Services Use Data Report, which recorded homeless community members accessing services over the course of the year, found that 736 unique individuals were homeless at some point in 2016¹⁹. This account is likely the most accurate estimation of homeless community members on the North Shore from 2016, and this number has very likely increased between 2016 and 2021.

The scale of individuals experiencing homelessness can be set against the current inventory of existing housing supports on the North Shore. Table 2 shows options available regularly to anyone (dark blue), temporarily/in emergency to anyone (light blue), to youth (green), to seniors (yellow), to women (pink), and for mental health and recovery options (orange).

Emergency Shelters (nightly accommodation)	Transitional Housing (time limited accommodation)	Supportive Recovery Housing
North Shore Shelter (45 beds, co-ed)	North Shore Housing Centre (25 studios)	Dovercourt Group Home (20 beds, addiction recovery)
COVID/Temporary Shelter (24 rooms)	SAGE Transition House (18 beds, women)	North Shore Men's Recovery House (9 beds, addiction recovery)
Seasonal Emergency Weather Response (20 mats, co-ed)	SAGE Second Stage Transition (6 beds)	North Shore Women's Recovery House (9 beds, addiction recovery)
Youth Safe House (4 beds)	HOPE's Second Stage Transition (2 units)	CMHA Group Homes (6 homes)
Seniors' Safe House (5 beds)	Youth Transition Houses x 4 (12 beds)	
Mental Health Emergency (VCH House)		

Table 2: North Shore Inventory of Emergency and Transitional Housing²⁰

17 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancity-communityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf.

18 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). A Pilot Project of the 2020 Homeless Count In Metro Vancouver: 2020 North Shore Extended Count. https://northshorehomelessness.files.wordpress.com/2021/06/hc2020_finalreport.pdf.

19 North Shore Homelessness Task Force. (2017). North Shore Homelessness 2016 Services Use Data Report. <https://northshore-homelessness.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/north-shore-homelessness-data-report.pdf>.

20 City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and District of West Vancouver (2021). North Shore Inventory of Emer-

Additional community-based programs and services that are available across the housing continuum include:

- Outreach: Canadian Mental Health Association, Hollyburn Family Services, Lookout Health + Housing Society, North Shore Crisis Services Society, and faith-based organizations
- Hotlines for distress, safety, and health
- Addiction recovery
- Community Psychiatric Services
- Seniors One Stop
- Meal programs
- Food Banks
- Harvest Project rent bank
- Drop-in hygiene programs
- Vancouver Coastal Health Connections Clinic
- Household goods

This inventory of resources is a living collection and is expected to change over time²¹.

Knowing that there are likely far more homeless community members on the North Shore than any homeless count has identified, and that service providers indicate existing supports are often at capacity, the number of beds/units listed here are not enough to meet current and growing needs. These supports provide some relief to community members facing homelessness but, as stated in the 2016 State of Homelessness in Canada Report, these supports do not meaningfully address homelessness²². Compounding the shortage of emergency shelter/transitional beds available to serve community members is the lack of permanent supportive and/or affordable housing available on the North Shore, which means that many homeless individuals are unable to move on to stable housing from emergency accommodation.

Many of these supports come with further barriers such as a lack of beds that are specifically welcoming of queer and trans individuals, Indigenous individuals, and other marginalized community members. Other barriers may include specific requirements that people must meet in order to access the support as well as long wait times.

As the Task Force continues to work on homelessness on the North Shore, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of data and current emergency-based supports. As it is recognized that homelessness is as an urgent and ever increasing issue on the North Shore, in BC, in Canada, and around the world, it must also be recognized that quantitative data from homelessness counts does not provide a reliable understanding of homelessness and its root causes. In addition to the information that homeless counts tell us, more substantive questions for the the Task Force to ask are:

- How are community members experiencing homelessness on the North Shore?
- What makes the North Shore unique in its landscape related to homelessness?
- How can the Task Force create tangible change in the community for those experiencing homelessness on the North Shore?

gency and Transitional Housing.

21 City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and District of West Vancouver (2021). North Shore Inventory of Emergency and Transitional Housing.

22 Stephen Gaetz, Erin Dej, Tim Richter, & Melanie Redman (2016): The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.<https://www.homelesshub.ca/SOHC2016>.

7.1 Who Is Counted on the North Shore?

Myth: homeless community members are always visible and identifiable as homeless.

Fact: the majority of homeless community members on the North Shore are not easily visible nor findable, and a person's housing status is not made clear by looking at them.

Homelessness manifests in an endless number of ways, making quantitative data collection around homelessness very difficult. Homeless counts are primarily based on a 'point-in-time' model where folks experiencing homelessness in very specific ways, such as street-level or in shelters, are approached for the survey.

Between the 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count and the 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot, there was a 75% increase in recorded participants with an additional five days, demonstrating the scale of under count evident with point-in-time approaches.

While homeless counts may account for those that are findable at street level or accessing services like shelters, this method is only as effective as homeless people are visible to those conducting the count. A homeless count will never be able to accurately portray the homeless population of a community due to a range of factors.

Community members that are likely to be missed in the homeless count include:

- those that either refuse or remain out of the way during the count;
- those tenting in wooded areas, unlikely to be noticed;
- those living in their vehicles;
- those that are couch surfing;
- those creating hybrid living situations like living out of their offices;
- those that are homeless in other ways that a homeless count has no way of reaching;
- those that have recently experienced homelessness, potentially moving fluidly throughout the housing continuum; and
- and those that are at risk of homelessness.

In a 2014 press release, Manager of the North Shore Lookout Society, Linda Fox, shared that "[a] lot of times, 'people tend to want to be off the radar....It's a survival technique for some'"²³. This hidden nature of many homeless community members is particularly prevalent on the North Shore, with many service providers speaking to the discrepancy between those that are counted in the homelessness count and those who access services, knowing that there are also many others who are homeless and who are not accessing services in trackable ways.

This invisibility of many homeless community members is an element that many service providers pointed to as being unique in the North Shore's homelessness situation, saying that homelessness is more visible in other communities across Metro Vancouver. While there may not be a way to account for all of the community members that are missed in homeless counts, it is valuable for the Task Force to know and recognize the invisible nature of homelessness on the North Shore so that they may strategize accordingly.

In addition to the invisibility of homelessness on the North Shore, another consideration in who is being counted is the type of questions being asked around information gathering. As discussed above, it is crucial to identify the modes of homelessness (such as couch surfing) that currently have little to no

²³ Jane Seyd (2014). Homeless count wraps up, North Shore News. <https://www.nsnews.com/local-news/homeless-count-wraps-up-2973185>.

representation in homelessness work. Building on the knowledge that there are many ways of being homeless that are not identifiable in data collection methods like homeless counts, it must also be considered who is more likely to be visible to methods like homeless counts along identity lines, and who is not.

A significant misconception in conversations around homelessness is that men are the majority of homeless community members. There are a number of factors that contribute to this, the main one being that the ways in which people are homeless are heavily gendered, meaning that community members experience and navigate homelessness differently based on their gender. Those of marginalized genders like women and non-binary people are more likely to have robust strategies that make them less visible and they are more likely to be homeless in ways that are not reachable by homeless counts, such as couch surfing.

Further, when seeking to represent a diverse community, it is important for the questions to be asked in the right ways. The 2020 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count Final Data Report stated that 73% of participants were recorded as “male”, without a working framework of equitable definitions around sex and gender identity²⁴. The ways in which sex and gender were approached conflated sex with gender and offered little to no nuance. The lack of understanding in how to approach topics of sex and gender in the 2020 survey means that the data that was collected on sex and gender is unreliable.

Finally, when considering who is being counted, it is important to recognize all of the questions not being asked and who is being missed because of the questions that are not being asked. There are many marginalized groups that are underrepresented or not represented at all in discussions around homelessness. The following sections focus on providing more insight into those who are underrepresented and/or often not represented in conversations of homelessness.

If the Task Force is to be effective in taking action around homelessness, it must seek out complementary methods of knowing in order to better represent the landscape of homelessness on the North Shore.

The Task Force can strengthen its approach to addressing homelessness by recognizing existing data as imperfect and combining it with other sources of information like lived experience from community members.

7.2 Income

Metro Vancouver is an expensive region in which to live and it carries a myth that all those who live in Metro Vancouver are affluent; this is particularly true of the North Shore, where the median household incomes from 2016 were \$67,199 in the City of North Vancouver, \$89,808 in the District of West Vancouver, and \$103,981 in the District of North Vancouver, respectively²⁵. These incomes compare with the regional median household income of \$72,585²⁶.

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) considers housing to be “affordable” when a household spends no more than 30% of their gross household income on shelter costs (rent, mortgage

24 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancity-communityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf.

25 Metro Vancouver (2019). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MV_Housing_Data_Book.pdf.

26 Metro Vancouver (2019). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MV_Housing_Data_Book.pdf.

payments, property taxes, strata fees, and heating costs)²⁷. There is a particular income disparity between renters and homeowners on the North Shore (and in Metro Vancouver), leading to a significant gap for what is considered affordable for owners versus renters. As can be seen in Table 3, the divide between renter and owner household incomes is dramatic. Due to the much higher median income for owner households, owners can spend nearly double what a renter household on a median income could spend on housing costs and still be considered to be within the 30% affordability threshold. The high housing costs on the North Shore mean that housing is largely unaffordable for renters.

Municipality	Median Annual Income - All Households	Median Annual Income - Owners	Median Annual Income - Renters	Owner Affordable Monthly Housing Costs (30% Income)	Renter Affordable Monthly Housing Costs (30% Income)
City of North Vancouver	\$66,966	\$85,991	\$50,398	\$2,150	\$1,260
District of West Vancouver	\$90,016	\$112,697	\$48,392	\$2,817	\$1,210
District of North Vancouver	\$103,889	\$119,465	\$59,344	\$2,987	\$1,484
Bowen Island	\$88,540	\$97,444	\$56,791	\$2,436	\$1,420
Vancouver	\$65,423	\$88,427	\$50,251	\$2,211	\$1,256
Burnaby	\$64,899	\$80,492	\$45,839	\$2,012	\$1,146
Lions Bay	\$119,507	\$130,839	\$73,116	\$3,271	\$1,828
Metro Vancouver	\$72,585	\$90,278	\$48,959	\$2,257	\$1,224

Table 3: 2019 Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book, North Shore Median Incomes²⁸

27 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2018). About Affordable Housing in Canada. <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/professionals/industry-innovation-and-leadership/industry-expertise/affordable-housing/about-affordable-housing/affordable-housing-in-canada>.

28 Metro Vancouver (2019). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MV_Housing_Data_Book.pdf

Despite the comparatively high median income on the North Shore, 16.4% of North Shore household incomes are under \$30,000 per year; 6% of North Shore residents are unemployed; 14.4%, or 9,790 households, on the North Shore are in core housing need; and 4,905 households are spending at least half of their income on housing costs²⁹.

The data also show “[t]here is a substantial difference between the income of a family (2+ persons) and unattached individuals”³⁰ where individual households earn significantly less. The high housing costs on the North Shore mean that housing is largely unaffordable for unattached individuals.

In keeping with the Task Force’s definition of homelessness, service providers have consistently amplified the need to not only respond to community members currently experiencing homelessness but also to meaningfully focus on the large subset of community members that are at risk of becoming homeless. Based on interviews with service providers, there is a large base of residents on the North Shore who are, at best, one paycheque away from being unable to make rent, while many are even more precarious and need to utilize rent banks in order to keep their housing.

From speaking to North Shore service providers, housing prices are the single highest factor that contributes to homelessness, as incomes have not kept up with the costs of housing or living. Service providers have shared details around affordability, such as the widespread need for rent bank programs and Child Tax Benefits to get by. Families of all compositions struggle with affordability on the North Shore, where many parents depend on school to help facilitate their work-parent balancing. Service providers shared that mothers are particularly impacted and that many begin to access services when school terms finish. Service providers also shared that crisis calls notably increase in May and June of each year. This is a reminder of how precarious many community members are, where it is easy to lose housing and security but hard to gain them back.

Disparity between income and housing costs is the highest factor of homelessness on the North Shore. This means that poverty is strongly related to homelessness.

7.3 Inequality on the North Shore

Myth: most of the homeless population are people who have come from other places

Fact: the majority of the homeless population on the North Shore are long-term community members that have become homeless and are reluctant to leave their home community

Relatively high median incomes and the myth of universal affluence shape perceptions around affordability on the North Shore, with the result that the understanding of ‘affordability’ is much higher than what is actually affordable and sustainable in practice for many households. The reality is that the North Shore is home to residents from upper-, middle-, and lower-income statuses, as well as home to many living below the poverty line.

²⁹ North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2016). Housing Vulnerable Populations on the North Shore: An Inventory and Gap Analysis Summary.

³⁰ Metro Vancouver (2019). Metro Vancouver Housing Data Book. http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MV_Housing_Data_Book.pdf

Greatly connected to the North Shore's myth of affluence is the myth that homeless people on the North Shore are from somewhere else. The truth, however, is that the homeless population on the North Shore is composed primarily of long-term North Shore residents who are reluctant to leave their home area, with a minority of residents from other areas as well as newcomers. This myth likely exists partially due to fear that many carry about becoming homeless themselves; it is much easier to believe that the homeless people in their communities are from somewhere else and that they are homeless as a result of their own shortcomings, rather than to face how easily anyone can become homeless.

Most importantly in conversations relating to breakdowns of demographics within the North Shore homeless population, it is crucial to centre that all community members experiencing homelessness deserve dignity, respect, supports, and services regardless of how long they have been on the North Shore. Although universal affluence is a myth on the North Shore, there is often tension existing between securely housed and comparatively well off residents versus those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

From perspectives shared by community members and service providers, effective housing solutions are often met with opposition from local residents and businesses. Community members and service providers have shared that they witness resistance to change on the North Shore, where housing possibilities are dreamed of and proposed but many community members fear the changes proposed and prevent housing solutions from being implemented.

Additionally, residents with the most resources may be the loudest with the most access to the channels that make their voices heard, such as the time to speak at city council meetings. City council meetings are already inaccessible and unsafe environments for many marginalized community members because of factors like systemic racism and feeling outnumbered by vocal, often affluent, community members can increase the lack of safety that people feel at council meetings.

There is also confusion between what is affordable housing and what is social housing, a conversation that distracts from the work of creating either housing option on the North Shore. Even when housing options are available, many residents in supportive housing face social barriers related to attitudes and stigma. In the example of a female-focused housing development on the North Shore, residents shared that they felt the impacts of stigma in their community, specifically hearing other parents commenting that they didn't want their children to play with theirs in the park.

The myth of universal affluence on the North Shore further creates an interesting dynamic around supports and services. Communities like Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) are well-known homeless communities where the community takes up noticeable space (ex. tent cities), is quite visible, and organizes in unique ways. This visibility results in these communities receiving more attention and resources to support them. There is a feeling that when someone needs help in the DTES, they can get it because there are many services available and a strong network of community members and service providers.

In contrast to this, the North Shore's myth of universal affluence works to invisibilize community members at various levels of homelessness and results in fewer resources. This lack of visibility is often translated into policy and practice. The high visibility of homelessness in the DTES has ensured more public support, advocacy, and funds to services for that community. In contrast, the invisibility of homelessness on the North Shore creates a lack of awareness of its prevalence to both the public and decision-makers. This ultimately leads to many homeless community members interacting with police and/or emergency services in ways that are negative for them.

Because homelessness looks different on the North Shore and is often invisible, not enough resources are allocated to support homeless community members.

7.4 Race & Ethnicity

On the North Shore, service providers have confirmed that there is an overrepresentation of racialized community members experiencing homelessness and risk of homelessness. Race and ethnicity are distinct but deeply connected concepts. Race is a broad category based primarily on physical features, but may not accurately represent a person's full experience. Ethnicity is a more nuanced category of belonging based on many different features such as cultural traditions and languages. Conflating race with ethnicity in service design can further impact an individual by preventing them from accessing appropriate services.

The term 'racialized' indicates an active process where non-white people(s) are made 'other' or are treated differently than white people(s); it is connected to both race and ethnicity because people are treated differently based primarily on their immediate physical appearance but discrimination is found in many other contexts such as language, culture, religion, and much more. Most housing and homelessness data either describe race or nothing at all.

While incomplete, data from the homeless count can still be used for a high-level understanding. From the 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count, it was found that of those that participated in the count:

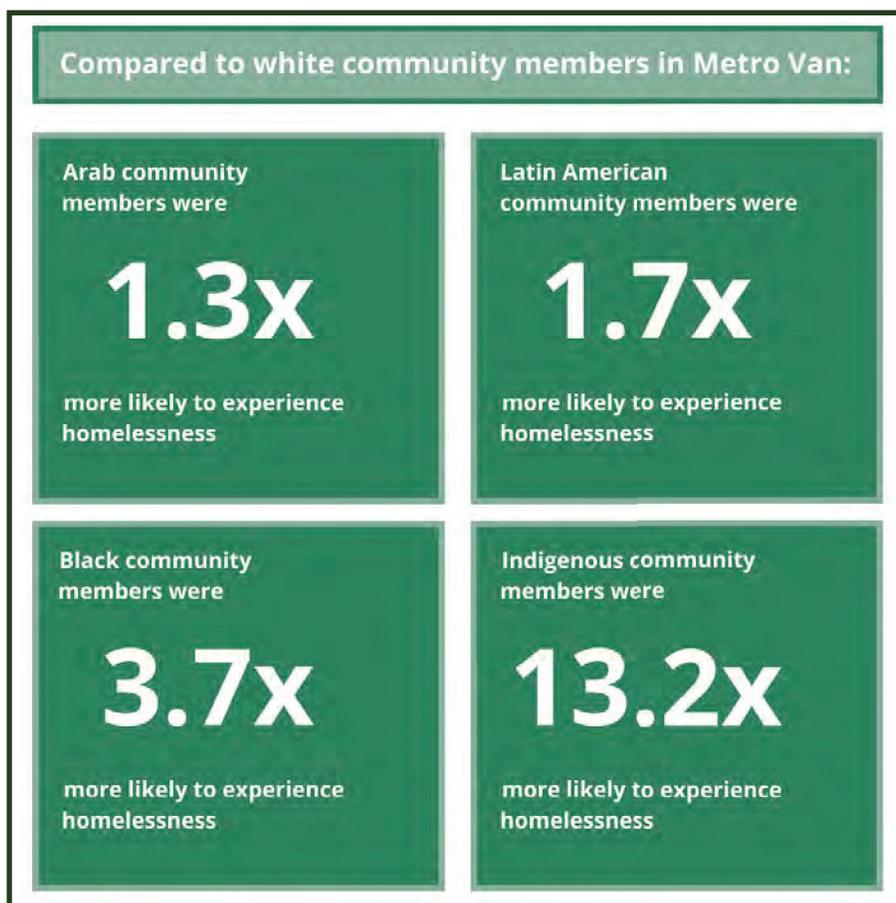


Figure 7: Metro Vancouver homeless count racial data³¹

31 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancity-communityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf

A full breakdown of racial identity can be found in the 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count in its final report. In addition, out of the 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot, 25% of those surveyed were Indigenous³². Service providers shared that they have many Indigenous women as clients who are fleeing violence and that this has highlighted the distinct lack of Indigenous resources and spaces on the North Shore. Service providers shared further that when Indigenous and other racialized clients have sought out services on the North Shore, many were met with racism, prejudice, and victim-blaming. This has led many Indigenous and other racialized community members that are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness to avoid services, for fear of further harm at the times when they most need support.

The 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot only gathered racial data on Indigenous identities, however, from perspectives shared by service providers, the racial data from the 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count can provide a relevant working understanding of how racialized community members are disproportionately impacted by homelessness.

With service providers indicating that many North Shore community organizations are governed by majority-white boards, there is important lived experience missing from the governance and decision-making tables that seek to serve largely racialized communities. While conversations about homelessness on the North Shore may often reference race and racialized community members, these community members are also likely connected to one or more ethnicities or cultures. As the Task Force works to address root causes of homelessness on the North Shore, it is important to make space for racialized community members to self-identify and to make space for the many worldviews present on the North Shore.

Racialized community members are overrepresented in the Metro Vancouver homeless population and they face racism when attempting to access services.

7.5 Language

Many services related to addressing homelessness on the North Shore are offered solely or primarily in English, which can be a substantial barrier to those seeking supports. One service provider shared that those who do not speak English fluently are unable to access online or phone services because they need to navigate multiple English questions and prompts before an alternative language is available to them, preventing them from successfully navigating services. They went on to share that the North Shore has a strong Farsi-speaking community and that Farsi-speaking community members are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and unique challenges.

As will be discussed below, service providers shared that many of their clients are seniors. Seniors are also more likely to not speak English fluently for a number of reasons, including if they are relative newcomers. This compounds the barriers that seniors face when attempting to access services.

There is a need for an increase of language supports and resources in different languages, particularly at the point of entry. Homelessness is often caused by, and causes trauma for, those experiencing it and that trauma and stress greatly affect the brain. Even if community members are relatively fluent or strong in English, times of crisis make it much harder to interact in additional languages. Offering supports in different languages may create greater access to services for community members who have English as an additional language or do not speak English.

32 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). A Pilot Project of the 2020 Homeless Count In Metro Vancouver: 2020 North Shore Extended Count. https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf

Many services related to addressing homelessness on the North Shore are offered solely or primarily in English, which can be a substantial barrier.

7.6 Faith-Based Communities

There are many different faiths present on the North Shore, including Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, and more, with gathering spaces such as mosques, temples, and churches for community members³³. Although not included in data, Indigenous spiritualities are also practiced on the North Shore. Work on homelessness is a common value for many faith-based communities and people of faith can find it supportive and comforting to access resources through their faith-based communities.

Faith-based services can also create barriers, however, for those who do not follow that same faith or who do not follow any faith. An example of this is Christianity's role in the Indian Residential School system, the trauma from which has resulted in homelessness for many Indigenous people³⁴. Another example is that some faith-based organizations actively lobby against queer and trans rights. As a result, faith-based organizations are not safe and accessible for many homeless community members, particularly knowing that many homeless community members have multiple marginalized identities.

Overall, faith-based spaces can be great sources of support and community members should have access to faith-based supports that are appropriate for them. Alongside faith-based supports, it is crucial that all of the same resources and supports are offered in secular (non-religious) spaces so that they are accessible to community members that find faith-based spaces unsafe. The Task Force should also ensure faith-based organizations who wish to join the Task Force share its principles of supporting the safety and wellbeing of all homeless community members.

All services and resources need to have secular options.

7.7 Newcomers

While the majority of homeless folks on the North Shore are long-time community members, service providers have shared that newcomers to Canada face a lot of hidden challenges, and when newcomers find themselves precarious or homeless, there is a lack of supportive programs aimed at their unique needs.

Although being a newcomer and experiencing language barriers are not mutually inclusive, many newcomers are unable to access services due to cultural and language barriers. Newcomers may need information and access to relationships in their languages, culturally appropriate support and housing, support getting their accreditations recognized, or support adjusting to their new environment. For some, being a newcomer intersects with language barriers as well as marginalized racial and/or ethnic identities which results in compounded barriers to stability and support.

33 Statistics Canada (2011). Metro Vancouver Population by Religion, 2011 National Household Survey. <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/PopulationbyReligionNHS2011.pdf>.

34 Katie Hyslop (2017). The Tyee. For Indigenous People, Homelessness Is More Than Lacking a Home. <https://thetyee.ca/News/2017/10/30/Indigenous-Homeless-More-Thank-Lacking-Home/>.

Further, newcomers may be missing the relationships and social networks that many residents depend on in their everyday lives. These relationships are often what community members depend on if they are precariously housed to ask for different kinds of support like loaned rent money or help understanding their rights as a tenant. These relationships may also support homeless community members by offering their couch or acting as a translator. Relationships help community members resist becoming homeless and also help minimize negative impacts of being homeless. If newcomers are lacking relationships and social networks they are at a greater risk of homelessness.

Newcomers face unique barriers and need supports that meet their unique needs.

7.8 Gender & Sexuality

Myth: Cisgender men make up the majority of homeless individuals

Fact: Community members experience and navigate homelessness differently based on their gender, and men tend to be more findable for homeless counts. Those of marginalized genders, such as women and non-binary people, face higher rates of homelessness but are less visible.

From the 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot, 24% of respondents identified as women and 4% of respondents identified as non-binary³⁵ (sexual identities were not recorded). Service providers have shared that homeless people of marginalized genders and sexual identities are much harder to locate for a variety of reasons, such as their unique coping and survival strategies. Further, people of marginalized genders and sexual identities have unique experiences of homelessness.

Domestic and sexual violence is a significant factor at all levels of housing for those of marginalized genders and sexual identities, whether they own property, are couch surfing, or are living unsheltered. Further, domestic and sexual violence can itself result in a community member becoming homeless. Examples of how this may happen include fleeing abusive living situations but also scenarios where people may turn to substance use to cope with their trauma, which may ultimately lead to job loss and homelessness. An important intersection here is that many 2SLGBTQIA+ youth become homeless due to conflict with their families and potential violence for their identities at home. While cisgender men can and do face domestic and sexual violence, the rates are very low for them, as opposed to those of marginalized genders.

Because people of marginalized genders and sexual identities are at greater risk of violence, they are more likely to be homeless in ways that are harder to locate such as couch surfing, living in their cars, or sleeping in abandoned homes. A service provider shared a story that in 2017, many of the women they were serving were sleeping in their cars behind their organization's building.

People of marginalized genders and sexualities have unique coping skills when homeless which make them less visible.

35 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). A Pilot Project of the 2020 Homeless Count In Metro Vancouver: 2020 North Shore Extended Count. https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf

7.9 Domestic and Sexual Violence

Deeply connected to the different ways that people of marginalized genders and sexual identities experience homelessness, those of marginalized genders and sexualities are also far more likely to face domestic violence. Much of the literature and data around domestic violence is specific to cisgender women, however, transgender people of all identities often experience amplified gender-based violence. Therefore, the Task Force must continue to ensure these identities are included and their stories are not erased.

Due to factors like income disparities, many women and other marginalized genders, as well as disabled community members, seniors, and youth, are financially precarious or dependent in some way, opening up increased possibilities for domestic abuse. This has been a particular danger in the COVID-19 pandemic. This creates the difficult decision of enduring various types of abuse or attempting to leave abusive housing situations with new challenges like increased financial instability. Unfortunately, many different demographics of community members often find themselves in unsafe situations with potential or current cohabitants and landlords, whether these are the situations that they are initially leaving or that they are coming into as they attempt to leave a worse situation.

One service provider shared a recent story of a client who has been continually running from their abuser, but their abuser was skilled at finding them wherever they went. This resulted in the client using their entire social assistance income and Child Tax Benefit to pay for accommodation that they felt was safer and less predictable. Further, due to the compounding effects of domestic and sexual violence, many marginalized community members have much higher support needs, such as for mental health, and are solely looking for a sense of safety.

Domestic violence is often a cause of homelessness, particularly for marginalized community members.

7.10 Disability

Disability is a key intersection with homelessness and is where resources continually fall short of supporting community members. The 2020 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count Final Data Report stated that 87% of respondents “indicated that they were experiencing at least one health condition”, with many indicating multiple conditions³⁶.

Service gaps for disabled community members often come from highly inequitable bureaucratic systems like disability assistance. Accessing disability assistance is a process filled with barriers that often prevent them from accessing necessary assistance and services. In May 2021, the rate of disability assistance for an individual is \$1,358.42 per month or \$1,694.08 for a single parent with a child³⁷. For a single adult living alone, this amount is already low for the monthly cost of living anywhere in BC but is particularly impossible to live on in the North Shore housing landscape. Based on 2020 CMHC data, average rents on the North Shore were \$1,548.00 in the City of North Vancouver; \$1,958.00 in the District of North Vancouver; and \$1,998.00 in the District of West Vancouver³⁸.

36 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancity-communityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/Hc2020_FinalReport.pdf

37 Province of British Columbia. On disability assistance. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/services-for-people-with-disabilities/disability-assistance/on-disability-assistance>.

38 Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2020). Vancouver - Rental Market Statistics Summary by Zone. <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/Table?TableId=2.1.31.3&GeographyId=2410&GeographyTypeId=3&-DisplayAs=Table&GeographyName=Vancouver>.

Based on these averages, a single person on disability assistance wouldn't be able to cover the price of rent alone, not to mention other living expenses such as utilities, groceries, and the costs of raising a child if they are a parent. This results often in the entirety of people's disability assistance money going toward rent, leaving them struggling to afford their other essentials.

To further complicate things, those on disability assistance often lose their assistance if they get married (a spouse's income must be declared on an application for benefits) and there is a low threshold of what they can earn alongside their disability assistance amount without forfeiting a portion of their earnings. Rather than creating a necessary baseline and a safety net for disabled community members, the restrictions around disability assistance actively keep disabled community members in poverty without options to increase their standard of living in ways that are accessible to them.

Service gaps also occur due to widespread misunderstandings of disability and what community members need. A lack of understanding around the wide diversity of bodies and minds in the community risks harm by making disabled community members a 'problem' instead of recognizing social and environmental structures as disabling. Disability is a critical intersection with homelessness and it is important to centre the autonomy, dignity and safety of disabled community members in responses to homelessness.

Disability is a critical intersection with homelessness and it is important to centre the autonomy, dignity and safety of disabled community members in responses to homelessness.

7.11 Trauma and Mental Health

The majority of homeless community members on the North Shore carry trauma, which may have been experienced before becoming homeless; in their experience of becoming homeless; or during their experience of being homeless. A useful lens for understanding trauma, particularly in relation to homelessness, is that trauma itself is an entirely reasonable response to a traumatic event, but often continues long after that initial event has ended. Further, if trauma is ongoing, as it often is for homeless community members, the trauma becomes compounded, where there is no sense of safety rebuilt and no time for recovery from one trauma before experiencing another.

When considering how trauma shows up in homeless communities, service providers said that nearly 100% of homeless community members were experiencing, or have experienced, trauma. Service providers consistently shared that mental health, more broadly, is the biggest challenge that homeless community members are facing on the North Shore, emphasizing that mental health was a particular concern for community members with multiple marginalized identities. While service providers are working to connect homeless community members with mental health supports, the waitlists and wait times are incredibly long, often taking several months before any support can be offered.

An important distinction to make here is that many people may need mental health supports of various kinds throughout their lifetimes, but those that are middle- or upper-income and securely housed are more likely to have mental health needs that are more maintenance-based, due to the financial ability to control most of their immediate environments and circumstances. In contrast to this, lower income levels are directly related to material crises, such as eviction, where mental health is greatly impacted by the lack of control over environment and circumstance³⁹. Because homeless and precarious community members' mental health needs are usually in relation to tangible, immediate challenges that are time-

³⁹ Vikki Reynolds (2020). Trauma and resistance: 'hang time' and other innovative responses to oppression, violence and suffering. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-6427.12293>

sensitive and require immediate support, months of wait time and supports that do not address material circumstances are inaccessible and ineffective.

Nearly 100% of homeless community members face issues around trauma and mental health.

7.12 Substance Use and Addictions

Myth: Substance use is a personal shortcoming and a root cause of how people become homeless

Fact: Substance use may be present for community members before, during, and after experiencing homelessness, but there are many complex reasons for substance use, such as trauma

Due to high rates of trauma that many homeless community members experience, substance use and addictions are prevalent elements for homeless folks, as they already are in the entire North Shore community. Although diverse experiences of substance use and addiction are widely present on the North Shore and beyond, substance use and addictions are a unique challenge to homeless community members due to their decreased access to resources and supports, resulting in greater risk of overdose and other health risks, particularly in the ongoing opioid crisis.

Based on a Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) presentation on drug decriminalization, illicit drug toxicity deaths have continued to climb across BC, reaching 680 in April 2021, as opposed to 390 in April 2020.

Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC

Table 1: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Month, British Columbia, 2011-2021^[3]

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Jan	24	20	20	23	43	85	147	134	94	80	185
Feb	24	17	21	38	31	58	124	108	85	75	159
Mar	25	25	33	28	32	76	130	158	116	112	160
Apr	27	31	31	29	34	72	154	135	83	123	176
Subtotal	100	93	105	118	140	291	555	535	378	390	680
May	22	19	28	40	41	51	149	119	88	177	-
Jun	22	25	25	29	34	71	128	116	74	185	-
Jul	33	29	39	25	40	74	123	147	75	183	-
Aug	22	20	21	37	53	64	127	123	84	159	-
Sep	22	16	28	32	50	63	97	136	61	137	-
Oct	23	19	19	35	53	76	98	118	79	173	-
Nov	27	28	31	28	52	140	112	131	83	163	-
Dec	24	21	38	25	66	161	104	124	64	159	-
Total	295	270	334	369	529	991	1,493	1,549	986	1,726	680
Average	24.6	22.5	27.8	30.8	44.1	82.6	124.4	129.1	82.2	143.8	170.0

Figure 8: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths in BC, 2011-2021⁴⁰

40 Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

To further illustrate, the province's number of 680 illicit drug toxicity deaths occurred from January to June 2021 (4 months)⁴¹ while 2,092 COVID-19 deaths were recorded in BC from March 2020 to November 2021 (21 months)⁴². As a monthly average, illicit drug toxicity deaths are claiming 170 lives per month across BC compared to COVID-19's monthly average of 100. This solidifies that many community members are living within dual crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and the opioid crisis, where many health and safety issues like domestic violence and substance use have spiked because of the pandemic.



Figure 9: B.C. Total COVID-19 deaths as of October 21, 2021⁴³

For the North Shore specifically, the same VCH presentation shows that by the end of April 2021, 20 illicit drug toxicity deaths had already been reached, compared to a total of 48 for the entire year of 2020⁴⁴. This puts the North Shore specifically at an average of 5 illicit drug toxicity deaths per month, indicating that the North Shore may reach 60+ deaths by the end of 2021. It is important to note that these deaths outlined by VCH are for illicit drug toxicity deaths, meaning that the substances attributed to death are illegal drugs and do not include any deaths caused by legal substances. On the North Shore, service providers shared that homeless and precarious community members face significant addiction to alcohol in particular, with great resistance to speak about their experience.

Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths Rates by HSDA

Table 14: Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths by Health Services Delivery Area (HSDA), 2011-2021^(3,6)

HSDA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
East Kootenay	1	2	4	4	2	13	7	6	1	18	5
Kootenay Boundary	4	4	2	3	6	11	17	14	14	21	10
Okanagan	28	16	33	27	43	77	155	129	84	143	47
Thompson Cariboo	5	9	15	13	13	67	67	85	41	102	44
Fraser East	31	20	20	16	42	67	104	97	86	121	51
Fraser North	25	30	35	51	73	105	148	151	86	177	80
Fraser South	59	54	51	59	93	162	240	272	157	276	100
Richmond	4	1	3	3	6	14	28	12	13	18	11
Vancouver	69	65	80	102	138	231	375	396	244	408	156
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	8	6	12	15	16	31	45	43	26	48	20
South Vancouver Island	17	21	26	23	26	78	105	122	74	136	57
Central Vancouver Island	17	20	25	25	33	56	99	91	65	97	29
North Vancouver Island	11	4	9	7	13	27	37	30	29	31	22
Northwest	1	0	6	2	6	10	8	14	15	17	13
Northern Interior	8	12	8	11	15	24	35	63	34	84	21
Northeast	7	6	5	8	4	18	23	24	17	29	14
Total	295	270	334	369	529	991	1,493	1,549	986	1,726	680

Figure 10: Illicit Drug Toxicity Death Rates by Health Services Delivery Area, 2011-2021⁴⁵

41 Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

42 BC Centre for Disease Control (2021). BCCDC Data Summary 21 October 2021. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_sitrep/2021-10-21-Data-Summary.pdf

43 BC Centre for Disease Control (2021). BCCDC Data Summary 21 October 2021. http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID_sitrep/2021-10-21-Data-Summary.pdf.

44 Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

45 Vancouver Coastal Health (2021). Decriminalization in Vancouver.

Understanding the increased rates of trauma that homeless community members face and that substance use is highly linked to trauma remains crucial for addressing homelessness. Service providers shared that substance use is a central element that they are noticing in their community work and that the North Shore does not have adequate supports for substance use and addictions.

Substance use is highly connected to trauma, both of which are highly prevalent in the homeless community.

7.13 Age

Myth: Most homeless individuals are middle-aged people

Fact: Service providers shared that many of their clients are over the age of 55, with many youth under 25 also accessing services

Age is an interesting intersection with homelessness because it is the two ends of the age continuum, youth and seniors, that experience the greatest impacts of homelessness due to unique vulnerabilities. There are many misconceptions around the age of homeless people, especially on the North Shore where the myth of affluence is so prevalent. Youth are expected to be provided for by their families and seniors are assumed to be comfortably retired. It is estimated, however, that there are currently 1,620 households (33%) that have a household maintainer that is 65 years or older, the highest in the lower mainland⁴⁶. At the same time, service providers have shared that both youth and seniors are strongly represented in their client bases; in the 2020 North Shore Extended Count Pilot, “18% [of those surveyed] were under the age of 25, [and] 25% were over 55”⁴⁷.

When speaking about impacts, service providers have shared a number of anonymous stories from their senior clients, including many seniors that are receiving ‘renoviction’ (eviction for renovations) or ‘demoviction’ (evictions or demolition and rebuild of a property) notices. These seniors are terrified upon receiving these notices, wondering where they will go to live because they will not be able to afford the price of the renovated or new unit. Through these processes, many seniors end up homeless. Another common myth is that experiencing abuse somehow ends at a certain age. Many seniors, particularly women, become homeless after experiencing abuse. In one instance shared by a service provider, a woman over 66 years of age was assaulted in a way that has physically prevented her from working since. A 2014 press release quotes Linda Fox, saying that those “who provide services to the homeless say the population on the North Shore is generally getting older. ‘We’ve had people in [the Lookout Shelter] who are upwards of 80 years old”⁴⁸. The press release goes on to state that “there are also a growing number of families and children who are homeless”⁴⁹. Since 2014, service providers on the North Shore have continued to share that numbers of senior community members becoming homeless is increasing and that youth are greatly impacted by homelessness but are often less visible.

46 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Housing Vulnerable Populations on the North Shore: An Inventory and Gap Analysis Summary. <https://northshorehomelessness.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/housing-vulnerable-populations-on-the-ns-april-2016-final-draft.pdf>

47 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). A Pilot Project of the 2020 Homeless Count In Metro Vancouver: 2020 North Shore Extended Count. https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf

48 Jane Seyd (2014). Homeless count wraps up, North Shore News. <https://www.nsnews.com/local-news/homeless-count-wraps-up-2973185>.

49 Jane Seyd (2014). Homeless count wraps up, North Shore News. <https://www.nsnews.com/local-news/homeless-count-wraps-up-2973185>.

Both ends of the age spectrum, youth and seniors, are highly impacted by homelessness.

7.14 Demographics Not Represented

As has been said above, data related to housing and homelessness depends greatly on the questions being asked. All of the experiences and demographics raised so far are included in various data sources around homelessness or are central to how service providers describe the community. The wisdom from data and service providers is expansive, but still leaves several marginalized experiences unaccounted for. One experience that has been raised in one conversational interview with a service provider is the increased barriers held by formerly incarcerated individuals. In the 2020 Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count, the reason that 107 individuals experienced homelessness is recorded as “[i]ncarceration (jail or prison)”⁵⁰, primarily because formerly incarcerated people are not well supported in their transition back to housing and regaining stability.

A second experience that is largely unaccounted for in North Shore strategies is youth ageing out of foster care. Where many families continue to support their children well beyond the age of 18, the hard age cut-off in the foster care system and lack of ongoing supports often puts youth ageing out of care in precarious or dangerous positions⁵¹. This demographic often faces uniquely compounding oppressions, as many youth in care are Indigenous and traumatized from being removed from their families and cultures⁵². Understanding that the foster care system itself is often perceived as a form of violence and that Indigenous children and families are disproportionately impacted, youth ageing out of care are a very important demographic to centre in work on homelessness.

Finally, sex workers are largely missing from conversations of homelessness on the North Shore. It is important to distinguish here the difference between sex trafficking and consensual sex work, as these two things are often conflated. SWAN (Supporting Women’s Alternatives Network) Vancouver and PACE (Providing Alternatives Counselling and Education) Society Vancouver were not interviewed as part of this report but briefly confirmed by phone that their client base does include sex workers from the North Shore seeking supports and services that are not present there. From these preliminary conversations, there are sex workers on the North Shore who are not able to access all of the services they need in their community. For those that are also homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, the lack of connective services can be a significant barrier in accessing support. A holistic approach to homelessness that centres the most marginalized must ensure that there are pathways of support for sex workers experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness.

Formerly incarcerated people, youth ageing out of foster care, and sex workers need to be included in conversations around homelessness.

50 BC Non-Profit Housing Association (2020). 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver Final Data Report. https://www.vancity-communityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/Hc2020_FinalReport.pdf

51 Stephen Gaetz (2013). 27. Ending Youth Homelessness in Canada is Possible: The Role of Prevention. In Gaetz, Stephen O’Grady, Bill Buccieri, Kristy Karabanow, Jeff Marsolais, Allyson (Eds.), *Youth Homelessness in Canada: Implications for Policy and Practice* (pp. 469-497). Canadian Observatory On Homelessness.

52 Homeless Hub (2021). Foster Care. Homeless Hub, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/legal-justice-issues/foster-care>.

7.15 Meeting the Community's Needs

The marginalized identities explored above are underrepresented in data and discussion around homelessness, but are overrepresented in the homeless population itself, with many homeless community members holding multiple marginalized identities. The main need that emerges out of these patterns is that the North Shore has an urgent need for spaces and resources that respond directly and proactively to these demographics. Examples of what this may look like are an Indigenous-only crisis centre as well as deep policy review and extensive anti-oppression training for all organizations that work with the North Shore homeless communities.



Figure 11: Key demographics of homelessness on the North Shore

With these dynamic experiences and identities of the North Shore in mind, anti-oppression work is at the core of meeting the community's needs. Anti-oppression, put simply, is the active opposition to oppression. Intersectional anti-racist and New York Times best-selling author Ijeoma Oluo shares that "[t]he beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward"⁵³. This definition of anti-racism can be extended to anti-oppression as well, where people can commit to fighting oppression wherever they find it, including within themselves.

The Task Force is made up of many unique organizations, who have all evidenced a commitment to addressing the root causes of homelessness and providing support services for the homeless by joining the Task Force. However, to put anti-oppression work at the core of meeting community needs, and to be able to respond directly and proactively to meeting the needs of all demographics within the homeless

53 Ijeoma Oluo [@IjeomaOluo] (2019, July 14). Twitter. <https://twitter.com/ijeomaoluo/status/1150565193832943617?lang=en>.

community, member organizations will also need to acknowledge that they carry legacies of harm towards marginalized community members and take active steps to reduce harmful practices where these exist.

Service providers shared broadly that community members seeking various supports on the North Shore are often met by other service providers with racism, victim-blaming, and other discrimination when trying to access supports. As the North Shore seeks to meaningfully address homelessness, anti-oppression must be at the centre of this work to repair and prevent violence against marginalized community members.

As the North Shore seeks to meaningfully address homelessness, anti-oppression must be at the centre of this work to repair and prevent violence against marginalized community members.

7.16 North Shore Municipalities

The North Shore is unique because it is made up of three municipalities which each have its own identity and rhythm, but the borders between the municipalities are fluid and most North Shore residents move freely between them for their living, working, and social needs. For example, Lonsdale Quay (CNV), Edgemont Village (DNV), and Ambleside Beach and Park (DWV) are all places that many community members go to frequently regardless of which municipality they are currently living in.

This mobility is shared across all classes of the North Shore. North Shore community members that are homeless or at risk of homelessness move freely between the municipalities based both on resources like various free meals and the West Vancouver shower program, as well as the places that they would like to be. Because many homeless folks on the North Shore are long-time community members, they share the collective sense of home that many North Shore residents feel and like to spend time at places of meaning for them.

The City of North Vancouver is the densest and most urban municipality, with Lower Lonsdale booming with waterfront public space, shops, breweries, and other attractions. The District of North Vancouver is felt to be more of an urban/nature hybrid, where community members identify strongly with the mountains and other natural features like Lynn Creek Canyon. Finally, the District of West Vancouver has a calm, garden community feel to it, with an ageing population that likes to stay engaged and active. These different environments are reflected in how each municipality is approaching housing and homelessness (Appendix E).

The City of North Vancouver is proactive in their intentions to provide more housing, but the gentrification of areas like Lower Lonsdale is still pricing long-time community members out. The District of North Vancouver has identified that it has city-owned land that may be used to respond to housing and homelessness. Finally, the District of West Vancouver is unique in that residents are resistant to higher density projects and in favour of prioritizing neighbourhood character, and that this has worked to retain affordable rental stock. Rental housing stock remains in the District of West Vancouver because apartment buildings from decades like the 1960s have been maintained and do not come with the added costs that new developments require. From comparing the housing goals and objectives for each municipality, which can be found in Appendix E, it is clear that the municipalities have largely complementary challenges and strengths between them, with an abundance of options in how they move forward together to address homelessness.

When asked about challenges that the North Shore homeless community face, many service providers shared that resources and supports were spread out over the North Shore and that homeless community members moved fluidly throughout the three municipalities. With three fire departments, three bylaw departments, two police forces, one paramedic service (provincial), and homeless community members moving fluidly between jurisdictions, it was difficult for the municipalities to know who should respond to issues related to homelessness and how.

All three municipalities have expressed clear priority around coordinating action on homelessness. From motions passed at each of the three municipalities, they formed the North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI), which is a “cross-jurisdictional committee created to enhance coordination across the North Shore with the goal of preventing and alleviating homelessness in [their] communities”⁵⁴.

The NSHAI is composed of the Mayors from each of the North Shore municipalities, a Council member from each Skwxwú7mesh and səliilwətaʔ Nations, the Vancouver Coastal Health Board Chair, the BC Housing Board Chair, and Provincial and Federal elected Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly⁵⁵. Launched officially on March 5, 2021⁵⁶, the NSHAI will work to address homelessness holistically across the North Shore.

This body is unique in that it includes Canadian municipal, provincial, federal governments as well as the governments of two First Nations. Having provincial and federal elected representatives included in the NSHAI is key to ensuring not only cross-jurisdictional collaboration across the three North Shore municipalities and two First Nations but also between all levels of government. This model offers a unique strengths-based approach to homelessness, where each level of government has particular resources and power to contribute. As this work progresses, there may be future opportunities for dynamic relationships between the Task Force and the North Shore municipalities where the community-based nature of the Task Force can greatly complement government-level work.

More about the NSHAI can be found in Appendix F.

Collaboration between all levels of government and First Nations is needed to meaningfully address homelessness.

⁵⁴ City of North Vancouver (2021). North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/north-shore-homelessness-action-initiative>.

⁵⁵ City of North Vancouver (2021). North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/north-shore-homelessness-action-initiative>.

⁵⁶ City of North Vancouver (2021). North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/north-shore-homelessness-action-initiative>.

7.17 North Shore First Nations

The North Shore, since time immemorial, has been the traditional, ancestral, and unsundered territories of the Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔ First Nations. First Nations have planned their communities also since time immemorial, including what is now called housing. Both Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔ First Nations prioritize housing because many of their members are unable to live in their communities, which is why the Skwxwú7mesh housing strategy is titled, “Bringing Our People Home” and is centred on this core value of bringing their people home to live⁵⁷.

Both Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔ First Nations are finding innovative housing solutions for their members, which includes building different types of housing projects that are informed by community members. Further, both Nations support their community members through specific programs, such as crisis outreach, rent subsidies, and resource sharing. Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔ First Nations have deep knowledges, innovation, and leadership around community and homelessness. Just as the three North Shore Municipalities complement each others’ strengths and weaknesses to create an ultimate abundance, this abundance can be further strengthened by looking to Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔ First Nations for their expertise while sharing support and resources in reciprocity.

First Nations have been planning their communities since time immemorial and they should be looked to as leaders in addressing homelessness.

⁵⁷ Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Temíxw Nation (2020). Squamish Nation Housing Report 2020. <https://www.squamish.net/hiyam-housing-society/>

8.0 Key Takeaways

This report has explored how the Task Force can expand its worldview, where the Task Force is as an organization, and what homelessness currently looks like on the North Shore. There is necessarily a lot of information here because homelessness is highly nuanced and experiences of homelessness are unique on the North Shore. The key takeaways from this situation analysis of homelessness on the North Shore are:

- Work on homelessness must be relationship-based and centre the most impacted;
- Work on homelessness must trust the information being shared by the most impacted community members and take action without waiting for more data or research first. Community members are the experts;
- Work on addressing homelessness must make space for multiple ways of being and knowing, especially the ways of being and knowing that are specific to Skwxwú7mesh and səliłilwətaʔł as host First Nations;
- The Task Force is in a unique position to follow the leadership of impacted community members and to provide coordinated leadership across the various structures to which members belong;
- Areas of growth as a Task Force include collective advocacy, collective communication, capacity-building, and anti-oppression;
- Marginalized community members are underrepresented in data and discussion around homelessness, but are over-represented in the homeless population itself. The North Shore has an urgent need for spaces and resources that respond directly and proactively to these demographics;
- The Task Force must continue to focus on those that are already homeless as well as those who are at risk of homelessness to effectively address root causes of homelessness; and
- All actors on the North Shore (municipalities, First Nations, agencies, organizations, etc.) have a complementary set of challenges and strengths which result in collective abundance through creative collaboration.

Each member of the Task Force has a place and a role in this work and together, through these collective strengths, the Task Force can deepen coordination and advocacy work around homelessness. With all of the strengths, challenges, and perspectives that are surfaced in this Report, The Task Force can move forward in new, strategic, and community-led ways that empower and serve the homeless community on the North Shore. Next steps will include creating a North Shore Homelessness Community Action Plan that translates collective wisdoms from the North Shore community into a highly actionable strategic plan, which will be collectively implemented by Task Force members.

APPENDIX A: North Shore Homelessness Task Force Summary

Formed in 1998, the mandate of the North Shore Homelessness Task Force (the Task Force) is “to fulfill its vision of a North Shore without homelessness”⁵⁸. Membership of the the Task Force is voluntary and open:

“to any individual, private organization, not-for-profit organization, or public agency or institution who supports the North Shore Homelessness Action Plan, and is committed to working collaboratively and actively to address the issue of homelessness on the North Shore”⁵⁹.

With such a wide membership of individuals, organizations, and institutions, spanning the three North Shore Municipalities, the Task Force is unique in its ability to coordinate “partnership-based approach[es] to addressing the issues related to homelessness and to complement existing efforts on the local, regional, provincial, and national scales. Members include municipal staff, employees of Vancouver Coastal Health, law enforcement, staff from community organizations, passionate North Shore residents, and more. Defined in the terms of reference, the task force’s functions and purposes include:

1. To serve as the one North Shore wide entity whose focus is homelessness on the North Shore
2. To provide collaborative leadership in relationship to homelessness and to advocate and lobby for the homeless on the North Shore
3. To pool the resources, expertise, and knowledge of all those who wish to play a role in addressing homelessness on the North Shore
4. To develop, adopt, implement, monitor, maintain, and promote a long term North Shore Homelessness Work Plan
5. To identify and prioritize program and service gaps for the homeless people on the North Shore and coordinate, support, and advocate for actions to fill these gaps
6. To develop and maintain networking and a communication system among members of the Task Force and others to take advantage, in a timely manner, of funding, policy, and other opportunities that arise that can assist the homeless on the North Shore, and to collectively address cuts to or deterioration of existing programs and services for the homeless people on the North Shore
7. To collect, house, generate, share, and disseminate information and statistics on homelessness on the North Shore
8. To educate and engage the public, politicians, all levels of government, and the North Shore community in general on all aspects of and issues related to homelessness on the North Shore
9. To work in collaboration with other homelessness initiatives in the Lower Mainland and elsewhere, and liaise with other related initiatives, that have an impact on homelessness on the North Shore
10. To seek endorsement of and administrative and operating resources and funding from its members, private and public institutions, levels of government, and other appropriate sources on the North Shore and elsewhere⁶⁰

58 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

59 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

60 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

Appendix B: Membership List of the North Shore Homelessness Task Force

Canadian Mental Health Association
Capilano Church
Capilano University
City of North Vancouver
District of North Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
Dundarave Festival of Lights
Family Services of the North Shore
Harvest Project
Hollyburn Family Services Society
John Braithwaite Community Centre
Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society
Lookout Housing + Health Society
North Lonsdale United Church
North Shore Alliance Church
North Shore Community Resources, Community Housing Action Committee
North Shore Crisis Services Society
North Shore Disability Resource Centre Association
North Shore Neighbourhood House
North Shore Table Matters
North Shore Women's Centre
North Vancouver City Library
North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission
Parkgate Community Services Society
Quest Food Exchange
RainCity Housing and Support Society
RCMP - North Vancouver
Salvation Army - North Vancouver
Sharing Abundance
Squamish (Sḵwxwú7mesh) Nation
St. Andrew's United Church
Tsleil-Waututh (səlilwətaʔ) First Nation
Turning Point Recovery Society
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Coastal Health, Health Connection Clinic
West Vancouver Police Department
West Vancouver United Church
Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

APPENDIX C: North Shore Homelessness Task Force 2008-2018 Work Plan Key Priority Summaries

Maintaining linkages to related initiatives and work

As an organization with a wide membership that is primarily task-oriented, coordination and relationship-building are central for the Task Force because “homelessness is a multi-jurisdictional and multi-modal issue requiring a coordinated response”⁶¹. The linkages that the Task Force are focused on “homelessness-related committees and initiatives underway in other municipalities in Metro Vancouver”, BC, and beyond, as well as with homeless-related organizations and agencies in the North Shore community that share goals with the Task Force⁶².

Gathering of information and evidence

Alongside the coordination of individuals, organizations, and institutions, the Task Force acts as a hub of information by coordinating information and evidence gathering, synthesizing resources, and housing information related to homelessness. This work has prioritized the ongoing search for best practices in addressing homelessness, recording trends and patterns, as well as recording, recognizing, and celebrating any successes in addressing homelessness.

Establishing and maintaining a communications strategy

In order to achieve effective coordination of individuals, organizations, institutions, and information, the Task Force has prioritized strong communication between its members as well as the larger community, including those experiencing homelessness.

Advocating for a continuum of housing

With the above coordination-oriented pieces of work, the Task Force also has three advocacy-oriented pieces of work, the first of which is to advocate for a continuum of housing. This is a priority for the Task Force because “without housing, homelessness will never end”⁶³. This work has focused on supporting a central housing board, increasing rental stock, and amplifying recommendations such as those found in the Housing Sub Committee of Vancouver Coastal Health’s Mental Health and Addiction Operational Review.

Advocating for a continuum of support services

While homelessness cannot be addressed without housing, housing stock on its own is not enough to effectively address homelessness, particularly understanding all of the social factors related to homelessness. To complement access to housing, the Task Force also advocates for support services around mental health, addictions, health service, integrated case management, food security, and more, based on the needs of the community.

Advocating for adequate income levels and employment training

Finally, the Task Force advocates for adequate income and employment training programs, in order to complement housing stock and support services so that individuals are able to sustain a good standard of living.

61 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

62 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshore-homelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

63 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2008). The Road Home: NSHTF 10 Year Work Plan 2008 to 2018. <https://northshorehomelessness.org/about/10-year-work-plan/>

APPENDIX D: Summaries of Key North Shore Homelessness Task Force Initiatives

Connect Day: a day within Homelessness Action Week that features a number of services for the North Shore homeless community, “such as free on-the-spot medical services; housing and employment outreach; haircuts”; a thanksgiving lunch; and more⁶⁴.

Dundarave Festival of Lights: on Saturdays leading up to Christmas, “a full day of concerts is presented in a field of 100 Christmas trees on the beach, all to help raise awareness about homelessness, bring the community together, and raise funds for Lookout’s North Shore Housing Centre transitional housing”⁶⁵.

Friendly Soccer Drop-In: Salvation Army and Lookout Society have hosted drop-in soccer games that invite all homeless and at-risk people to play and share food afterwards⁶⁶.

Homeless Action Week: “is an annual event that focuses on bringing public awareness and understanding to the issue of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region. During HAW the public is invited to participate in events across the region. On the North Shore, it is coordinated by the North Shore Homelessness Task Force in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health, local municipalities, and many community organizations and churches. During the week, a variety of events geared towards homeless and marginalized populations are hosted”⁶⁷.

Keeping Safe Resource Card: “every year the North Shore Homelessness Task Force puts out our Keeping Safe Resource Card to help spread the word about the services available on the North Shore for those in need”⁶⁸.

64 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Homelessness Action Week & Connect Day 2015! <https://northshorehomelessness.org/2015/09/20/homelessness-action-week-connect-day-2015/>

65 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Dundarave Festival of Lights – Support North Shore Transitional Housing. <https://northshorehomelessness.org/2013/11/29/dundarave-festival-of-lights-support-north-shore-transitional-housing/>

66 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Salvation Army & Lookout Society Host Friendly Drop-in Soccer – March 22. <https://northshorehomelessness.org/2014/03/17/salvation-army-lookout-society-host-friendly-drop-in-soccer-march-22/>

67 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Homelessness Action Week. <https://northshorehomelessness.org/community/homelessness-action-week/>

68 North Shore Homelessness Task Force (2021). Keeping Safe Resource Card <https://northshorehomelessness.org/help-for-homeless/resources/keeping-safe-resource-card/>

APPENDIX E: North Shore Official Community Plans and Housing Strategies

Each of the three municipalities has its own bylaw department and its own Official Community Plan (OCP) which are all accompanied by a more detailed housing strategy. In relation to housing, cities are able to regulate the location, type, amount, and density of housing in ways that adhere to their OCPs.

In the three North Shore OCPs and complementary housing strategies, the municipalities reflected not only on elements like location, type, amount, and density of housing but also who they are prioritizing in their housing strategies. Below is a table that identifies the demographics that have been explicitly centred by the North Shore municipalities in their strategies.

CNV ⁶⁹	DNV ⁷⁰	DWV ⁷¹
Moderate income earners	Low- and moderate-income earners	
Low- and moderate-income families	Families	Young families
Seniors	Seniors	Seniors
At-risk youth and adults	Young adults and students	
Community members who are disabled/have a disability	Community members who are disabled/have a disability	
Persons Experiencing Homelessness or At-Risk of Homelessness	At risk	

Table i: Demographics targeted in North Shore OCPs and Housing Strategies

The core demographics that the North Shore municipalities are centring in their housing strategies are seniors; families; low- and moderate-income earners; youth and young adults; community members who are disabled/have a disability; and those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Based on interviews with community organizations, the demographics that are missing from the North Shore housing strategies are Indigenous community members; women; LGBTQIA2S+ community members; Farsi-speakers; immigrants and newcomers; substance users; and community members that have been formerly incarcerated. In addition to these key demographics that community organizations spoke to serving, an important subset of youth that often intersects with Indigenous and LGBTQIA2s+ identities is youth aging out of the foster care system.

69 City of North Vancouver (2016). City of North Vancouver Housing Action Plan. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/housing-action-plan>

70 District of North Vancouver (2016). District of North Vancouver Rental and Affordable Housing Strategy. <https://www.dnv.org/sites/default/files/edocs/rental-affordable-housing-strategy.pdf>

71 District of West Vancouver (2018). District of West Vancouver Official Community Plan Revised Draft. <https://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/assets/home-building-property/docs/major-projects/ocp/OCP%20-%20TRACK%20CHANGE%20-%2020180509.pdf>

Goals

Each municipality has outlined housing goals and objectives in their OCP and housing strategy. Goals are the highest-level things that each municipality is seeking to accomplish in housing, which are broken down into smaller, more concrete and actionable objectives. Goals are useful for guiding high-level direction of housing. The housing goals for each municipality are found in the table below.

CNV ⁷²	DNV ⁷³	DWV ⁷⁴
Goal 1: To increase the diversity of housing to meet the needs of various household types and income levels;	Goal 1: Expand the supply and diversity of housing;	Goal 1: Regenerate our primarily detached, single-family home oriented neighbourhoods with sensitive infill options, such as smaller houses on smaller lots, coach houses and duplexes;
Goal 2: To address the current local rental housing shortfall and meet anticipated rental demand in the future;	Goal 2: Expand the supply of new rental and affordable housing;	Goal 2: Expand “missing middle” housing options, like triplex, townhouse and mixed-use, in locations close to transit, shops, and amenities;
Goal 3: To support low-income households and those with unique needs to access affordable, accessible, and suitable housing;	Goal 3: Encourage the maintenance and retention of existing affordable rental;	Goal 3: Respect our neighbourhood character and encourage long-term protection of valued heritage properties with stronger incentives;
Goal 4: To raise awareness and increase support for actions that improve housing options; and availability, including through proactive City initiatives and policies;	Goal 4: Enable the replacement of existing rental housing with conditions;	Goal 4: Strengthen our centres and key corridors through local area plans, with separate, detailed and collaborative planning processes to determine area-specific visions, objectives and suitable built-form, heights and densities; and

72 City of North Vancouver (2016). City of North Vancouver Housing Action Plan. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/housing-action-plan>

73 District of North Vancouver (2016). District of North Vancouver Rental and Affordable Housing Strategy. <https://www.dnv.org/sites/default/files/edocs/rental-affordable-housing-strategy.pdf>

74 District of West Vancouver (2018). District of West Vancouver Official Community Plan Revised Draft. <https://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/assets/home-building-property/docs/major-projects/ocp/OCP%20-%20TRACK%20CHANGE%20-%2020180509.pdf>

<p>Goal 5: To build partnerships with and capacity of nonprofit organizations, community partners, the development sector, and housing stakeholders to collectively respond to housing issues in the City of North Vancouver; and,</p>	<p>Goal 5: Minimize impacts to tenants; and</p>	<p>Goal 5: Advance housing affordability, accessibility and sustainability through available policy levers.</p>
<p>Goal 6: To advocate to senior levels of government for increased funding and support for housing, in recognition of adequate housing being a fundamental right of all citizens.</p>	<p>Goal 6: Partner with other agencies to help deliver affordable housing,</p>	

Table ii: North Shore Municipality Housing Goals

Themes in North Shore housing goals include creating a diversity of housing, maintaining and increasing affordable housing supply, placemaking, increasing mobility, accessibility, and relationship-building with organizations and higher levels of government.

Objectives

The housing goals above are further broken down into smaller, more tangible action items. Objectives are usually further broken down into even smaller action items like policies, but to keep this analysis high-level, only objectives will be outlined below.

CNV ⁷⁵	DNV ⁷⁶	DWV ⁷⁷
Objective 1: To create “shovel ready” projects to leverage current senior government funding opportunities to facilitate new non-market housing;	Objective 1: Focus on the needs of low and low to moderate income earning households that are most likely to face challenges in finding appropriate and affordable housing;	Objective 1: Amend neighbourhood subdivision standards (including consideration of site-specific applications) to enable the development of smaller houses on smaller lots in existing detached residential areas;
Objective 2: To support the funding of and utilization of monies in the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (AHRF) to facilitate affordable housing projects, initiatives, and research to advance housing diversity and affordability in the City;	Objective 2: Consider the housing needs of lower income families as a key area of focus;	Objective 2: Update zoning provisions (including consideration of site-specific applications) to increase the supply of coach houses (“detached secondary suites”) in existing detached residential areas;
Objective 3: To enable affordability for low and moderate income renters;	Objective 3: Seek to address the housing needs of lower income seniors, students, persons with disabilities and vulnerable populations at risk of being homeless, as well.	Objective 3: Expand opportunities for duplex housing;
Objective 4: To increase the number of three or more bedroom units appropriate for larger and/or extended families within new multi-unit residential developments;	Objective 4: The 10 year (2016 – 2026) estimated demand for affordable rental units in the District is 600 -1,000 units.	Objective 4: Increase “missing middle” housing options with ground-oriented multi-family on appropriate sites along the Marine Drive Transit Corridor;

75 City of North Vancouver (2016). City of North Vancouver Housing Action Plan. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/housing-action-plan>

76 District of North Vancouver (2016). District of North Vancouver Rental and Affordable Housing Strategy. <https://www.dnv.org/sites/default/files/edocs/rental-affordable-housing-strategy.pdf>

77 District of West Vancouver (2018). District of West Vancouver Official Community Plan Revised Draft. <https://westvancouver.ca/sites/default/files/dwv/assets/home-building-property/docs/major-projects/ocp/OCP%20-%20TRACK%20CHANGE%20-%2020180509.pdf>

<p>Objective 5: To increase rental options in lower density areas to support renters and provide homeowners with additional rental income, while retaining neighbourhood scale and character;</p>	<p>Objective 5: Establish rental thresholds for new affordable rental units at the time of rezoning and through a signed Housing Agreement;</p>	<p>Objective 5: Encourage mixed-use and live-work development on existing commercial use and marine commercial sites District-wide;</p>
<p>Objective 6: To increase the diversity of homeownership options in lower density neighbourhoods;</p>	<p>Objective 6: Use the established CMHC Affordability Criteria, as updated on an annual basis, to guide the determination of affordability levels;</p>	<p>Objective 6: Prioritize community use and/or housing objectives when considering redevelopment proposals of institutional, public assembly or community use sites District-wide that provide an existing community or public use function;</p>
<p>Objective 7: To preserve and enhance the existing non-market housing stock and support non-profit housing operators to remain viable upon expiry of their operating agreements with senior levels of government;</p>	<p>Objective 7: Include provisions in the Housing Agreement to the effect that existing and potential renters are income tested to ensure that affordable units are provided to low and low-moderate income earners;</p>	<p>Objective 7: Consider proposals within neighbourhoods for site-specific zoning changes that are not otherwise supported by policies in this plan only in limited circumstances;</p>
<p>Objective 8: To increase accessibility in the City's ground-oriented housing stock;</p>	<p>Objective 8: Continue to encourage diversity and increase the supply of housing in town and village centres in accordance with OCP and centre implementation plan policies;</p>	<p>Objective 8: Ensure that new single-family dwellings respect neighbourhood character;</p>
<p>Objective 9: To encourage residential development in close proximity to public transit, in addition to promoting overall household affordability by eliminating vehicle-related expenses on City households;</p>	<p>Objective 9: Expand the supply of rental and affordable housing in a manner that is consistent with the OCP, and enables low and moderate income households to access transit and community services, retail and employment within walking distance from their homes.</p>	<p>Objective 9: Protect buildings, structures and landscapes on the District's Heritage Register;</p>

<p>Objective 10: To foster relationship building with organizations of various sectors to collectively facilitate and implement the initiatives and actions of the Housing Action Plan;</p>	<p>Objective 10: Encourage development applicants to demonstrate how the proposed project will support rental and affordable housing in the District, where feasible;</p>	<p>Objective 10: Support the Lower Caufeild Heritage Conservation Area by reviewing proposals against neighbourhood built-form guidelines;</p>
<p>Objective 11: To generate investment in and support for housing affordability from senior levels of government.</p>	<p>Objective 11: Ensure that new rental includes a range of units, (i.e. number of bedrooms) to suit the needs of families and other households;</p>	<p>Objective 11: Support the small island character of Eagle Island by prohibiting continuing subdivision and attached or detached secondary suites (i.e., basement suites or coach houses);</p>
	<p>Objective 12: Negotiate for rental and affordable units, land (typically for larger projects), a cash-in-lieu contribution (typically for smaller projects) towards affordable housing, or some combination thereof, at the time of rezoning, and on a case-by-case;</p>	<p>Objective 12: Implement the Marine Drive Local Area Plan (estimated 500 - 750 housing units);</p>
	<p>Objective 13: Consider opportunities for density/ height bonus zoning, on a case-by-case basis, to facilitate provision of affordable housing;</p>	<p>Objective 13: Create capacity for an estimated 1,700 – 2,100 net new housing units through local area plans;</p>
	<p>Objective 14: Consider opportunities, on a case-by-case basis, to incentivise rental and affordable housing with parking reductions in key centres and along the frequent transit network, and in consideration of applicable centres plans and transportation policies;</p>	<p>Objective 14: Prepare local area plans;</p>
	<p>Objective 15: Continue to apply the strata rental protection policy recognizing that strata rental provides an important source of market rental housing;</p>	<p>Objective 15: Prior to the adoption of a local area plan, consider proposals within the local area plan boundary;</p>

	Objective 16: Encourage the maintenance of purpose built rental to the end of its economic life, and ensure the appropriate enforcement of the Standards of Maintenance Bylaw in consideration of other applicable policies;	Objective 16: Support existing purpose-built rental housing stock and renter households;
	Objective 17: Prioritize the maintenance, restoration and retention of purpose built rental subject to an objective assessment of the building condition, and in consideration of applicable centres plans objectives and policies;	Objective 17: Secure new purpose-built market and non-market rental, seniors and supportive housing units in appropriate locations close to transit and amenities;
	Objective 18: Consider the replacement of existing rental, on a case-by-case basis, and subject to negotiation of the replacement rental units reflecting the number of bedrooms and affordability of original units, or some combination thereof, to meet the affordable housing needs of families and other households;	Objective 18: Update and periodically review the District's housing action plan to monitor local market conditions, respond to community housing priorities and needs, reflect changing household demographics, and update housing strategies as needed;
	Objective 19: Work with land owners and developers to explore a phased approach to development to minimize impacts to existing tenants, where feasible;	Objective 19: Work with non-profit housing groups and senior levels of government in the maintenance of existing and creation of new non-market rental, seniors or supportive housing, particularly in areas close to transit service;
	Objective 20: Apply a Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy to encourage development proponents to offer assistance to tenants in their search for new housing;	Objective 20: Ensure that new multi-family multifamily and mixed-use housing development meets the community's needs;

	Objective 21: Seek opportunities to partner with community stakeholders and senior government towards achieving affordable housing goals;	Objective 21: Use surplus District-owned lands to increase the availability of more diverse and affordable housing;
	Objective 22: Explore opportunities to utilize District owned land subject to consideration of, but not limited to: proximity to frequent transit network; access to community services and employment; availability of external funding and partnerships; alignment with OCP, centres implementation plans and other applicable municipal policies;	Objective 22: Create new regulations prior to 2022 that replace expiring Land Use Contracts, meet community housing needs, and respond to neighbourhood context and character;
	Objective 23: Establish a reporting framework to routinely monitor appropriate affordable housing metrics, not limited to the number of units and bedrooms, and level of affordability of existing and new affordable units, by project and by area;	Objective 23: Review regulations to promote advance climate adaptation measures in new housing and site design.
	Objective 24: Report on these metrics for each applicable residential development application and on a consolidated, annual basis and compare to projected demand estimates;	
	Objective 25: Consider the allocation of Community Amenity Contribution funds for affordable housing, on a case-by-case basis, and subject to consideration of the District's long-term funding strategy.	

Table iii: North Shore Municipality Housing Objectives

As can be seen in the longer list of objectives from the municipalities, even largely aligned goals can be mobilized in many different ways that respond to local contexts. These objectives, which will be further broken down into policies, are some of the many ways that the North Shore municipalities are responding to housing and homelessness.

Appendix F: North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative

All three municipalities have expressed clear priority around housing and homelessness. On June 22, 2020, the Mayor and Council of the City of North Vancouver passed a Notice of Motion on June 22, 2020 directing staff to create a cross-jurisdictional steering committee and working group to develop actions and strategies to:

- prevent homelessness
- serve the people who are currently homeless
- create pathways out of homelessness

The District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver passed similar motions in the summer/fall of 2020. This created the North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative (NSHAI), which is a “cross-jurisdictional committee created to enhance coordination across the North Shore with the goal of preventing and alleviating homelessness in our communities”⁷⁸. The specific objectives of the NSHAI are to:

- Review and consider community needs related to homelessness
- Inventory opportunities and current actions to address homelessness
- Develop a list of priority actions and specify the role of partners in achieving those actions
- Explore alternative options for delivering coordinated services and supports
- Report back on the outcomes of the NSHAI
- Launch a coordinated and ongoing communications and advocacy strategy⁷⁹

78 City of North Vancouver (2021). North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/north-shore-homelessness-action-initiative>.

79 City of North Vancouver (2021). North Shore Homelessness Action Initiative. <https://www.cnv.org/city-services/planning-and-policies/housing/north-shore-homelessness-action-initiative>.

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Poverty Reduction Planning & Action Program

2022 Program & Application Guide

1. Introduction

In March 2019, the Province of BC released their poverty reduction strategy: [TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). Mandated through the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act*, the strategy set targets to reduce the overall poverty rate in British Columbia by at least 25%, and the child poverty rate by at least 50%, by 2024. *TogetherBC* is based on four principles: affordability, opportunity, reconciliation, and social inclusion. These principles guided the priority action areas that form the core of the strategy.

With investments from across government, *TogetherBC* reflects government's commitment to reduce poverty and make life more affordable for British Columbians. It includes policy initiatives and investments designed to lift people up, break the cycle of poverty, and build a better BC for everyone.

Local governments have long-advocated for a provincial poverty reduction strategy and are crucial partners in this work. They are at the front-line of seeing the impacts of poverty in their communities and play a central role in developing local solutions with community partners and other levels of government.

Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program

The intent of the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program is to support local governments in reducing poverty at the local level and to support the Province's poverty reduction strategy. In 2020, the Province provided \$5 million over three years and the program is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). The first two intakes of the program in Spring 2020 and Spring 2021 awarded over \$2 million to more than 70 local governments across the province.

2. Eligible Applicants

All local governments (municipalities, regional districts, and the Islands Trust) in BC are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants can submit one application per intake, including regional applications or participation as a partnering applicant in a regional application.

3. Grant Maximum

The 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program provides two streams of funding. Projects funded under Stream 1 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$25,000. Projects funded under Stream 2 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$50,000. Regional projects under either Stream 1 or Stream 2 may receive up to 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$150,000.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, all other grant contributions for eligible portions of the project must be declared and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the grant.

4. Requirements for Funding

As part of the approval agreement, approved projects must meet the following requirements for funding:

- Any in-person activities, meetings, or events must meet public health orders and/or guidance in relation to COVID-19.
- Activities must comply with all applicable privacy legislation under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in relation to the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information while conducting funded activities. Personal information is any recorded information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information. This includes information that can be used to identify an individual through association or inference.

5. Eligible Projects

To qualify for funding, applications must demonstrate the extent to which proposed activities will reduce poverty at the local level.

To qualify for funding, projects must:

- Focus on one or more of the six priority action areas identified in *TogetherBC*:
 - Housing
 - Families, children and youth
 - Education and training
 - Employment
 - Income supports
 - Social supports
- Be a new project (retroactive funding is not available);
- Be capable of completion by the applicant within one year from the date of grant approval;
- Involve key sectors of the community including community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations.

Within the six priority areas, eligible projects may also address one or more of the other key priorities identified in *TogetherBC*: mental health and addictions, food security, transportation, and/or access to health care.

Regional Projects

Funding requests from two or more eligible applicants for regional projects may be submitted as a single application for eligible, collaborative projects. In this case, the maximum funding available would be based on the number of eligible applicants included in the application. It is expected that regional projects will demonstrate cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.

The primary applicant submitting the application for a regional project is required to submit a resolution as outlined in Section 6 of this guide. Each partnering applicant is required to submit a resolution that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

The total funding request for regional projects cannot exceed \$150,000.

6. Eligible & Ineligible Costs & Activities

Eligible Costs & Activities

Eligible costs are direct costs that are approved for funding, properly and reasonably incurred, and paid by the applicant to carry out eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of application submission until the final report is submitted.

Stream 1: Poverty Reduction Plans and Assessments

The intent of this funding stream is to support communities to develop or update assessments or plans in order to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 1 is \$25,000 for a single applicant and \$150,000 for regional applications.

Under Stream 1, eligible activities must be cost-effective and include:

- Development of a local Poverty Reduction plan or assessment that addresses one or more of the six priority action areas as identified in *TogetherBC*;
- Engagement of people living in poverty or with a lived experience of poverty in planning activities;
- Adding a poverty reduction lens including specific activities and outcomes to support people living in poverty, to existing plans or policies, such as:
 - Official Community Plans or community or neighbourhood plans;
 - Zoning and other policies;
 - Development permit requirements;
 - Emergency response, evacuation, and/or emergency support services plans;
 - Food security and food systems planning;
 - Community planning processes related to social determinants of health (e.g. affordable housing, homelessness, etc.).

Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action

The intent of this funding stream is to support communities to undertake local projects in order to reduce poverty at the local level. The funding maximum under Stream 2 is \$50,000 for a single applicant and \$150,000 for regional applications.

In order to be eligible for Stream 2 funding, eligible applicants are required to have completed a Poverty Reduction plan or assessment, or demonstrate that their Official Community Plan, or an equivalent plan, is inclusive of poverty reduction principles.

Under Stream 2, eligible activities must be cost-effective and may include:

- Pilot projects to evaluate the impact of providing supports such as reduced-fare transit, recreation passes, or other service opportunities for low-income residents;
- Supporting financial security through tax-filing programs;
- Awareness campaigns to reduce stigma around poverty and promote social inclusion;
- Social enterprise initiatives that provide supported employment opportunities for people with multiple barriers to employment;
- Local food security initiatives including food-waste diversion projects and community kitchens that support training and social inclusion, as well as access to food;
- Pilot projects to assist key populations living with low income as identified in *TogetherBC*;

Stream 2 of the 2022 Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program is not intended to be a capital funding program. However, minor capital expenditures for eligible activities that have a clear and definable benefit to people living in poverty, that are clearly linked to activities identified in the application, and that are intended to reduce poverty at the local level will be considered for funding under Stream 2.

Capital costs cannot exceed 25% of the total requested Stream 2 grant (i.e. an application for a \$50,000 grant cannot include more than \$12,500 in capital costs).

Eligible Activities Applicable to Both Funding Streams

The following expenditures are also eligible, provided they relate directly to the eligible activities identified above:

- Honoraria for community member participants who are living in poverty. It is expected that the payment of honoraria should align with current best practices and that any honoraria paid for the ongoing participation of people living in poverty should be at least the current provincial minimum wage;
- Consultant costs;
- Incremental staff and administration costs;
- Public information costs.

Ineligible Costs & Activities

Any activity that is not outlined above or is not directly connected to activities approved in the application by the Evaluation Committee is not eligible for grant funding. This includes:

- Development of funding application package;
- Development of feasibility studies and/or business cases;
- Development of architectural, engineering, or other design drawings for the construction or renovation of facilities providing services to people living in poverty;
- Long-term, permanent capital investments including the purchase of land and/or buildings;
- Major capital improvements to existing facilities and/or construction of new, permanent facilities;
- Regular salaries of applicant staff or partners;
- Routine or ongoing operating (e.g. heating and lighting; security; telephone; internet) and/or planning costs or activities that are not incremental to the project;
- Purchase of software, software licences, service subscriptions, or membership fees;
- Legal, audit, or interest fees or fees to incorporate a society;
- Project-related fees payable to the eligible applicant(s) (e.g. permit fees, DCCs, etc.);
- Existing programs with established, designated funding from other partners;
- Purchase of promotional items, door/raffle prizes, give-away items, and/or gifts for community members;
- Fundraising, lobbying, or sponsorship campaigns.

7. Application Requirements & Process

Application Deadline

The application deadline is February 11, 2022.

Applicants will be advised of the status of their application within 90 days of the application deadline.

Required Application Contents

- Completed Application Form;
- Detailed project budget, including itemized costs/activities that will be funded by the grant and separating out any in-kind and/or cash contributions from the applicant(s) or other grant funding;
- Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution, indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management;
- **For regional projects only:** Each partnering eligible local government must submit a Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution that clearly indicates support for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf;

Resolutions from partnering applicants must include the specific language above.

- Optional: Up to three letters of support as evidence of partnership or collaboration with community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations.

Submission of Applications

Applications should be submitted as Word, Excel, or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20MB.

All applications should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Review of Applications

UBCM will perform a preliminary review of applications to ensure the required application elements have been submitted and to ensure that eligibility criteria have been met. Only complete application packages will be reviewed.

Following this, all eligible applications will be reviewed and scored by the Evaluation Committee. Scoring considerations and criteria include the following:

- Alignment with the intent and objectives of the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program;
- Demonstration of direct participation in the proposed activities by people living in poverty or with a lived experience of poverty;
- Anticipated outcomes and a clear and achievable evaluation framework on how the success of the project or plan will be measured;
- Demonstrated clear and definable benefit to the community as a whole;
- Partnerships and demonstrated community support, including community-based poverty reduction organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, businesses, local First Nations, and/or Indigenous organizations;
- Cost-effectiveness of the project, including in-kind or cash contributions to the project from the eligible applicant(s), community partners, or other grant funding.

Point values and weighting have been established within each of these scoring criteria. Only those applications that meet a minimum threshold point value will be considered for funding.

The Evaluation Committee will consider the population and provincial, regional, and urban/rural distribution of proposed projects. Recommendations will be made on a provincial priority basis. All funding decisions will be made by UBCM.

All application materials will be shared with the Province of BC

8. Grant Management & Applicant Responsibilities

Please note that grants are awarded to eligible applicants only and, as such, the applicant is responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

Applicants are also responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining acceptable accounting records for the project. UBCM reserves the right to audit these records.

Notice of Funding Decision & Payments

All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions. Approved applicants will receive an Approval Agreement, which will include the terms and conditions of any grant that is awarded, and that is required to be signed and returned to UBCM within 30 days.

Grants under the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program will be awarded in two payments: 50% at the approval of the project and when the signed Approval Agreement has been returned to UBCM, and 50% when the project is complete and the final reporting requirements have been met.

Please note that in cases where revisions are required to an application, or an application has been approved in principle only, the applicant has 30 days from the date of the written notice of the status of the application to complete the application requirements. Applications that are not completed within 30 days may be closed.

Progress Payments

In exceptional circumstances, to request a progress payment, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Written rationale for receiving a progress payment;
- Description of activities completed to date; and
- Description of funds expended to date.

Changes to Approved Projects

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Approval from UBCM will be required for any significant variation from the approved project.

To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Amended application package, including updated, signed application form, budget, and an updated Council, Board, or Local Trust Committee resolution (including resolution(s) from regional application partners in the case of a regional application); and
- Written rationale for proposed changes to activities and/or expenditures.

Applicants are responsible for any costs above the approved grant unless an amended application is submitted and approved prior to work being undertaken.

Extensions to Project End Date

All approved activities are required to be completed within the timeframe identified in the Approval Agreement and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by UBCM. Extensions will not exceed one year.

9. Final Report Requirements

Final Reports are required to be submitted within 30 days of the completion of the project. Applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete final report, including the following:

- Completed Final Report Form with all required attachments;
- Detailed financial summary that includes the actual expenditures from the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action program and other sources of funding (if applicable) and that aligns with the actual activities outlined in the final report form;
- For Stream 1 only: electronic copy of the completed plan or assessment;
- Copies of any materials that were produced with grant funding;
- Optional: photos of the project, media clippings, and/or any reports or documents developed or amended with grant funding.

Submission of Final Reports

All final reports should be submitted as Word, Excel, or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20MB.

All final reports should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

All final reports will be shared with the Province of BC

10. Additional Information

For enquiries about the application process or general enquiries about the program, please contact:

Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Phone: (250) 952-9177

For more information on BC's Poverty Reduction Strategy, please refer to [TogetherBC](#).

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