



**BC Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan
Geographical Area North Thompson Clearwater-Barriere**

***Public Engagement Process Conducted by
Yellowhead Community Services Society***

March 10-28, 2018

Introduction:

Date:	March 10-28, 2018
Community:	Clearwater-Barriere
# of Participants	57
# of Organizations	5

Yellowhead Community Services Society is pleased to present the findings of the public engagement process that was conducted between March 10-28 primarily between the communities of Clearwater and Barriere in the North Thompson Valley. Funding was applied for and received from SPARC BC to enable our organization to conduct these small group discussions as well as collect information from other sources and via a cluster of means. In addition to the small group discussions that were held on March 20-21 respectively in Clearwater and Barriere, information was also gathered by way of questionnaires that were crafted from information contained within the SPARC toolkit and distributed to key areas in the communities. Keeping with the intent of this project, efforts were made to engage individuals who have experienced poverty either currently or in the past that would help inform this process. An online survey was also created and notice of the survey was provided to key community stakeholders. Questionnaires were made available at five Yellowhead Community Service Society locations including Dutch Lake Community Centre, YCS main office, WorkBC, Clearwater and area transit and Barriere Ridge.

About the Participants:

The breakdown of participants in this analysis are as follows:

- Barriere 16
- Clearwater 41
- 42% of Participants Seniors
- 18% of Participants 50-59
- 25% of Participants 40-49
- Remainder under 40
- An equal number of Participants had family members that relied on them for support (ie: children, persons with disabilities, aging parents)
- 72% of the Participants were on some form of assistance while 28% were on employment income.
- 72 responded their benefits were not adequate to support their needs.

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Dutch Lake Community Centre
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Organizational Participation:

The following organizations had representatives that either participated in the survey or group discussions. These included:

- Yellowhead Community Services Society
- Barriere and Area Food Bank Society
- North Thompson Volunteer Information Centre
- Success by Six
- District of Barriere

About the Findings: Issues

Two areas most strongly indicated by the participants were affordable food and affordable housing. These two issues were identified by 75% of those participating in the survey and or the group discussions. Issues were also identified which included:

- Employment opportunities
- Improved social or community connections
- Easier access to transportation
- Employment training/education opportunities
- Improved access to medical services
- Improved access to mental services
- Improved access to child care
- Addictions and treatment services

Possible Solutions:

The following represented solutions that were identified by the participants. They include:

- Developing of affordable housing
- Access to more affordable food
- Guaranteed annual income to remove poverty stigma
- Increase child care subsidy
- Increase shelter portion of income assistance
- Increase Persons with disability benefits
- Better employment opportunities

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Solutions and Actions that can Make a Difference:

- Increase income assistance and PWD amounts and also increase the limit people are able to earn before benefits are reduced.
- Government work to subsidize hydro rates for low income individuals and families.
- Government sponsored medication program.

Top Three Solutions:

1. Increasing amount of affordable housing available.
2. Increase PWD and income assistance benefits.
3. Increase supports to child care subsidy to allow for parents with low incomes to work and retain a greater portion of their income.

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