



# **Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction**

**Campbell River, BC  
January 24, 2018**

## Introduction and Event Summary

On January 24, 2018, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Campbell River, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 80 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

The event began with a welcome from Elder Sharon Maksymetz of the Cape Mudge First Nation, followed by opening remarks from Mable Elmore (Parliamentary Secretary on Poverty Reduction).

Participants then engaged in round table discussions in groups of 8 to 10 people per table. Each table had a dedicated facilitator from a local community group or from SPARC BC who helped to guide the conversations. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who helped to record the discussion.

There were two rounds of discussion which focused on the following questions:

1. What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
2. What would address these issues and help you and others out of poverty?

Following the discussions, participants were invited to put a sticky dot beside the strategies or solutions that were most important to them. Each participant received four (4) sticky dots. Following the individual priority setting exercise, participants were asked to determine as a table the top three (3) priorities from the evening and to report these priorities back to the room.

## Document Organization

This document contains the transcripts from the flip chart notes from those in attendance. The flip chart notes have been transcribed verbatim, correcting only for spelling and grammar as needed. The notes are organized according to the feedback received to the two questions beginning with:

1. What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?
2. What would address these issues and help you and others out of poverty?

## Question 1: What are the issues facing you and people living in poverty right now?

- Housing.
  - o Lack thereof/ Price too high.
  - o Lots of industry work. (Dam construction – workers coming into town) Boosting the price of rentals
  - o Along with developers cashing in \$1000
  - o PWD only gives \$375 for rent.
  - o If you don't have a home how can you take medication, get a job?
  - o Can't be expected to take care of any other stuff if you don't have a home/food.
- Perception of poverty.
  - o General population doesn't want anything to do with it.
  - o They realise how easily it could happen to them
  - o Companies have difficulty moving into new regions if there is no affordable housing for staff
- Tax Breaks for big businesses.
  - o Government gives tax breaks to big companies like Amazon.
  - o Regular people need those breaks.
  - o Everyone has right to home, food, and education.
  - o Put that money towards helping people out of poverty.
- Supportive/ affordable housing.
  - o Poverty is very expensive.
  - o Emergency room vs secure housing,
  - o Supportive housing needs to be staffed properly.
  - o Long term funding.
  - o Up front expensive but long term economically sustainable.
  - o Lots of NIMBYism against it.
  - o People, who don't have family support end up homeless, couch surfing, etc.
- Food security and health.
  - o Help people get the skills to grow, cook, make healthy choices.
  - o How to live on limited income
  - o Stress caused by lack of food/housing
  - o Health effects and resulting, coping mechanisms – drugs, alcohol, mental health
- Expectations put on people with hidden disabilities.
  - o To get a job, keep job.
  - o Those job expectations not in line with abilities.
- Transportation.
  - o PWD supplies bus passes which is a really good policy.
  - o Buses not running frequently – once an hour.
  - o No Sunday evening service.

- No stat holiday.
- Medical Coverage
  - Medication/dental, glasses hearing aids.
  - Low income/medium income that stuff is expensive which is really challenging for people.
- Affordability.
  - Housing and affordable housing.
  - Affordable childcare, access to licensed child care spaces.
  - Transportation.
  - Working poor.
  - Food security.
- Service Providers.
  - Awareness of available service and long waitlist.
  - Networking of service providers/silos.
  - “Who is driving the bus” – lots of agencies providing services creates overlaps → falls to local government/band.
  - Short term funding vs. long term contracts for service providers lack of education /training within the community.
- Exclusion
  - Graduation/transitioning to adulthood --? Life skills (CLBC), youth aging out of care with lack of adult services.
  - Addiction → services and support.
  - Stigmatization asking for help – especially vulnerable populations.
  - Isolation.
  - Affordable healthcare, don’t get coverage through work.
  - Early years investment (family life society does).
  - Seniors: access to housing, services, transportation to services.
- Barriers to accessing supports/services.
  - Barriers to services like paperwork, forms.
  - Unawareness of services that are available and the STIGMA of accessing services.
  - Difficult navigating through services, esp. if they aren’t connected to community or organisations.
  - People with disabilities: cost to have doctors.
  - Assessors don’t help with forms.
  - People are denied because they fill out forms incorrectly, not enough supports.
  - Service Canada doesn’t help you fill out forms
  - No one officially responsible for supporting people to access government services.
  - Systemic bias in our systems: no one person, accumulation of process is a big barrier.
  - Overworked service providers some overwhelmed with workload.
- Addiction.
  - Most addicted people are men 20—50 years old.
  - Addictions create a poverty trap, don’t want to be exposed at safe injection site

- Stigma around substance use, self-medication, not accessing services.
- Hard to read and identify people that need help.
- Harder to achieve a “good life”, provide for family → drives substance use.
- Everyone is trying to do the best they can.
- Navigating the system.
  - No one knows where to go/what to do for services.
  - No clear pathway of how to navigate the system.
- Regional needs.
  - Models: what works in one city won’t/may not work in another.
  - Lack of government framework for communities to see where communities fit in.
  - Organization are frustrated, can’t move on initiatives without government direction.
  - No funding from government for acute care system
- Support Services are stretched thin.
  - Organization doing things off of the side of their desk (forms, navigation support).
  - Comox Valley Division of Family Practice – community navigator/social worker position was cut.
  - One navigator expected to know everything.
  - Access and funding to services.
  - Incorrect implementation of services.
  - Inconsistent funding, continuity of services.
  - Underestimate the amount of work of community health networks: collection of data, websites.
  - Bound to fail without proper funding/support of individual – specific initiatives.
  - Communication challenges – how information is shared is changing.
- Gaps in service.
  - Lack of men’s shelter (just expanded to 12 beds).
  - Outreach work is needed.
  - Can have many navigators but eligibility is unrealistic – Ex. SAFER for seniors and family rental subsidies – make “too much money” to access services because eligibility is too low (2-3 decades behind).
  - Seniors living in cares because they aren’t eligible for subsidized housing.
- Hidden Poor.
  - The “hidden poor” → poverty line, defining what is poverty.
  - System assumes you will move from rental → home but owning a home is out of reach.
  - Make too much money, forces you to consider leaving a full time job, lose an education.
  - Stereotype of what poverty looks like, but many people in poverty are highly educated with loads of debt.
  - “not just people that live in tents on side of the road”
  - Increasing interest rates → people living in housing bubble.
  - Barrier to education leads to barriers to employment.
  - Equity vs equality – support programs provided to everyone.

- Community Support.
  - o Modern image of poverty is equity.
  - o Local governments don't provide services means other communities have to step up.
  - o Relative scope of budgets – acute care vs community care.
  - o Need more funding in community care – keep people away from hospital, keep people healthy.
- Cycle of poverty.
  - o Identifying who is most at risk.
  - o A lot of assumptions of what poverty look like.
  - o Income inequality.
  - o Lack of safe, affordable and supportive housing.
  - o The stigma that comes with being poor.
  - o Difficult for people to get employment –i.e. if you are homeless how to access services.
  - o Lack of information available – what are they eligible for?
- Mental Health
  - o Lack of access to mental health services.
  - o Mental health plays a huge role.
- Affordability.
  - o Housing, over 50% of income toward shelter, .04% vacancy.
  - o \$900-1500 due to low vacancy rate.
- Medical Coverage.
  - o Cost of medical and dental.
  - o Working people cannot afford.
  - o Bad teeth are a barrier, people judge.
- Education.
  - o High cost of education which is needed to get better.
  - o Loss of access to subsidies
  - o Need to get a good paying job.
- Transportation.
- Childcare.
  - o Child care - \$14-\$21 per hour to make it work.
  - o Both parents have to work to make ends meet
  - o 2 children \$2600 per month for daycare.
  - o Lack of daycare spaces.
  - o Staff in childcare get sick because they are often exposed to germs from sick children.  
Parents still drop off at daycare because they cannot afford to stay home.
- Mortgage poor.
- Youth housing.
  - o Independent living, from home or from care
- Drug addiction and alcohol.
  - o Campbell River high problem – impacts getting a job
- Crime rate.

- 1.5 times above national crime rate – petty crime.
- Barriers to services, supports and opportunities.
  - Even difficult to know how to access services.
  - Financial literacy – may not understand what to do with income.
  - Hidden disabilities – i.e. FASD.
  - Undiagnosed disabilities.
  - Lack of doctors.
  - Lack of employment opportunities, especially well paying jobs. Not a great opportunity to earn high income.
  - There is a lot of competition for a limited number of high paying jobs.
  - Lack of online education – still working while studying.
  - In survival mode makes it difficult to study.
  - Racism.
  - Literacy.
- Children and youth.
  - Difficult for youth to access rental housing even if you are working.
  - Children in poverty – lack of good food.
  - Children may get into drugs and alcohol if it is in the home.
  - Bullying → do not have the nice clothing, shoes, etc.
  - Hard to get a fresh start if you have been in trouble in past.
- Barriers to employment.
  - Having a criminal record impacts housing and employment.
  - Immigrants → had good jobs in home country but the education is not recognized in new country.
  - People who do not speak English have barriers to employment.
- Barriers to affordable and safe housing.
  - People are camping because of ‘housing.’”
  - Campbell River is an aging community.
  - Affordable housing.
  - Rent costs too high.
  - Increasing minimum wage does not keep up with inflation.
  - No affordable units.
  - Starting from bottom really tough to get started, (renting).
  - Discrimination and racism when trying to rent and sexism.
  - No pet friendly units.
  - Hydro and gas and food costs
  - Healthy food unaffordable
  - People living in trailers that are not safe
  - Mould, unsafe heating, fire hazards
- Living Wage.
  - No jobs with a living wage.
- Transportation.

- Local bus schedule inadequate.
- Lack of child care
  - Affordability problem.
- Seniors housing
  - People in alternative living hospital beds instead of suitable housing.
- Health and wellbeing.
  - Income qualification for medical supplies too low.
  - Mental health supports not accessible.
  - Psychiatrist not available locally.
  - Dental care inaccessible
  - Optometry, specialists, inaccessible → child optical coverage inadequate, astigmatism specialized glasses
- Education.
  - Post-secondary school is unaffordable.
- Identification
  - No ID is a huge barrier to accessing employment, housing, health supports.
- Income assistance.
  - Income assistance rates too low.
  - Shelter rate too low.
  - Can never find a place to rent under these rates.
- Results of poverty.
  - Substance use is a result of poverty
  - Social isolation.
- Real estate market.
  - Housing market value increasing impact for low-income persons.
  - Property speculation has impacts.
- Health care for First Nations
  - Gaps in service
  - Discrimination
  - Services depend on where you live
  - People who are couch surfing fall through cracks
- Safe housing for moms and children
  - Emergency shelters don't allow kids or are not safe for kids.
- Isolation.
  - Hard for people in poverty to participate in community especially in remote areas.
  - People in remote areas have higher costs to obtain food, supplies.
  - Access to phones.
  - Barriers to accessing services like health care.
- Difficult to understand how to access services.
  - No handbook on how to be homeless.
  - Get runaround.
  - Need a services hub.

- Wrap around services.
  - Make info available in emergency department.
- Issues for children.
  - Need breakfast, healthy food
  - Supplied by schools
  - Unsafe streets, can't access things, hard to cross
  - Busy streets
- Medical Coverage.
  - High costs of specialized medications.
  - Important and critical medications not covered.
- Barriers to access.
  - Literacy.
  - Poverty is a barrier
  - Cant access online services
  - Literacy/education access costs money.
- Seniors.
  - People in poverty including seniors, need info provided in accessible way.
  - Seniors on fixed incomes making impossible choices – choosing between medication, or hydro or food.
  - Pension security for couples where only one person worked – survivor benefits don't always get passed on.
  - Wages and pension amounts aren't keeping up with rising costs
- Interconnection of issues.
  - Mental health is linked to housing.
  - People feel better when they live somewhere that makes them happy.
  - Poverty has a huge range – not one size fits all.
  - Affordable childcare would be a huge help to women and families.
  - Language learning and literacy rates are key amongst new Canadians; how can you fully participate and get help when you don't know what you are reading or being told.
  - Urban/rural divide to help new residents who want to live in smaller towns.
  - Cultural supports around housing – how are we helping seniors stay in homes and near families?
- Housing
  - Finding homes that match what people need to be safe and supported
  - Different types of housing for different needs.
  - Not everyone can manage a home, just a room with support.
  - Can't leave people on their own; needs assessment that will support where people are in their lives
- Mental health and wellness issues that aren't being addressed.
  - have to re tell stories again and again to get support
- Intergenerational poverty is huge
- Student Supports.

- Students aren't coming to school ready to learn.
- Teachers are feeding, clothing, and providing emotional support to kids in a place they can learn.
- Need to put the child at the centre and find a way to support them as a whole person not as a different client from different ministries.
- Personalized Holistic Support.
  - There are not any dynamic support options for people;
  - No ebb and flow for funding that allows people to get the variety of supports they need
  - 6 months in one program isn't always enough.
- Funding models, investments, and governance.
  - Funding for individuals versus programs.
  - Downloading to local governments and not for profits
  - Creative ways to apply for funding
  - Longer term grants are easier for NFP because the staff costs to always be writing grants is huge
  - Basic income for people would help address wage gaps and lift people out of poverty
  - Adopt a non-profits, build a relationship with investors and help to fund/equip NFP organization
  - Good will program for business that could be extended to government
  - Government and private industry should be partnering to help people out of poverty.
  - Investment in technology and education in rural areas is huge.
  - Poverty reduction has fallen to local government and its too hard for municipalities
  - Municipalities don't have the tax base or the power to make real meaningful change.
- People with disabilities living in poverty.
  - Inclusion (social/physical).
  - Accessible transportation options.
  - Affordability cash on hand.
  - Access.
  - People can't access their mail with the end of door to door delivery.
  - Interconnected challenges that people face - one, two, three, four problems becomes impossible.
- Medical coverage.
  - Dental health is huge and not adequately funded.
  - Vision care is unaffordable.
- Stigma.
  - Invisible disabilities have an added challenge and social stigma.
  - Access to showers and the ability to maintain good self-care and personal hygiene
- Lack of proactive approaches.
  - More proactive solutions to poverty – majority is a reaction and intervention.
  - Addressing the root causes of poverty, addiction and mental health challenges.
  - Prevention and long term investment helps to get ahead of challenges and social programs.

- PTSD in first responders is growing – how much could be prevented with early intervention and getting at the root of the problem that sparks addiction and mental health challenges.
- Address the social stigma of being poor and homeless
- Not everyone can get a job; some people need support.
- Guaranteed Basic Income.
  - Basic income would help lift people out of poverty; for those that don't need it, claw it back on income tax.
  - Basic income shouldn't be at the expense of support programs.
  - Determine the return on investment for good social programs
  - Need to communicate how effective these programs can be.
- Community involvement and engagement.
  - Need to use plain language for people to understand what's being said
  - Qualify and quantify what people are doing to help the larger community.
  - Importance of community building.
  - Guaranteed annual income.
  - Guardian angel group to help those who cannot look after themselves.
  - Case management.
  - Public organizations get together and work to help many people that are outside of the focus is not just on the group mandate.
  - Prevents duplication of services.
  - Write proposals together with other organizations.
  - Easier communications.
  - Willing to work together.
  - Passion about what community needs.
  - Have people help themselves, giving them the organizations they can work with.
  - Corporate investment relationship building.
  - Able to build relationships with NFP and get info out to groups who need help.
  - Don't have to deal with government red tape.
  - Funding? Tax credits? For people to look after seniors.
- Childcare spaces (3 votes).
  - Affordable childcare.
  - Subsidized.
  - Pay better wages to get better workers.
  - Success by six.
  - Work with school and educators.
  - Cut red tape for facility requirements.
- Informal language for learning opportunities funding.
  - Allows immigrants to integrate into community.
- Literacy programs.
  - Language helps people to move forward in society – education, work, all things and aspects of living in community.

- Housing.
  - o Look at solutions in Scandinavian models of living/ housing/communities.
  - o Small (under 100 sq. foot) houses for people who are homeless.
  - o Develop housing for the difficult to house.
  - o Have cities come forward with property to house homeless.
- Barriers
  - o Driver's licenses.
  - o Driver's licences taken away and a cost to get it back.
  - o Expensive to participate in graduate licence program.
  - o Barriers for transport to/from work/services.
  - o Identification – difficult to get/ replaced.
- Advocacy.
  - o Lack of voice to advocate and stand up for rights.
- Access to service.
  - o Access to information about the services and how to apply for assistance.
  - o Need cells, phones, and computers and there is no internet access, rural areas.
- Safe affordable housing.
  - o Affordable, safe housing.
  - o Quality of housing - lack of access to (water, heat, plumbing, cooking facilities).
  - o Supportive housing options limited.
  - o People living in the streets and in sheds.
- Income inequality.
  - o Not serving everyone.
  - o Working poor, low wages.
  - o No full time options.
  - o Lack of power and voice to speak up.
- Public transportation.
  - o Ineffective routes, not reliable, no routes available.
- Childcare.
  - o High costs.
  - o Long wait lists.
  - o Not enough spaces.
- Food access
  - o Increasing costs.
  - o Not affordable for healthy food.
  - o Less availability.
  - o Not convenient options
  - o Food waste due to lack of food safe knowledge.
- Low literacy rates.
  - o Decreased education, trade-offs.
  - o Access to education.
  - o Language barriers.

- Barriers to accessing medication.
  - o Costs.
  - o Benefits.
- Low IA PWD rates.
- Medical emergency and then no plan or support to return to their home/ community.
- People with disabilities have several challenges.
  - o Lack of equipment.
  - o Accommodations.
  - o Supports in communities.
- Access to treatment.
  - o Access to services for mental health and addiction recovery treatment.
  - o Limited supports for aftercare and basic supports.
  - o Lack of access to dental.
  - o High cost of dental work and dentures.
  - o Drugs not covered.
  - o High cost of eye care.
- Discrimination and stigma.
  - o Age discrimination with respect to employment options –more with women than men.
  - o General discrimination/ racism towards people living in poverty.
  - o Disabilities.
  - o Mental health and or addictions.
  - o Sexism.
  - o Lack of education.
  - o Lack of understanding and empathy for people who live in poverty.
  - o Multiple health issues/ challenges make it difficult to participate.
  - o Systemic discrimination shuts people out.
  - o Depersonalized services.
  - o Stigma.
  - o Investing in all people especially people in poverty, is an excellent investment in broader society.
- Seniors/ Transportation.
  - o Lack of affordable transportation.
  - o Need consistent and reliable transportation.
  - o CPP – cannot access bus pass.
  - o Seniors discounts but no discount for all ages in poverty.
- Affordable day care spaces non-existent
  - o Work only to have someone else raise kids and only for a little money after expenses
  - o Back to lack of quality of life – work that matches happiness
  - o Should have a way to access basic needs
- Access to legal services.
  - o Lack of legal help for divorces lawyers.
  - o Suspended issues unresolved.

- Lack of legal support for poverty issues.
  - Lack of middle class legal support.
- Quality of life.
  - Lack of mental health services, limited variety of services, varied effectiveness.
  - Lack of public seating.
  - Life in general sucks.
  - High rates of change - speed of life too fast.
  - Elders used to be treated as elders.
  - Government not supportive.
  - Loss of job due to age related health.
  - Low income and no access to same quality of life.
  - Forced to retirement earlier than expected.
  - Older truckers replaced by new group of people and technology.
- Housing
  - Unable to pay rent.
  - Low vacancy rate – landlords evicting people.
  - Power imbalance.
  - Unfounded evictions occurring.
  - Cut backs limiting access to help.
  - Lack of affordable housing.
- Online rentals.
  - Air B and B is reducing available accommodation.
  - Online vacancy for tourism but no vacancy for locals.
  - Tight market – high rents.
- BC Hydro rates high.
  - Year ends adjustments - surprise when owing.
  - Tiers not equitable.
- Disparity in skill sets expected and acquired.
  - Employer not recognizing undocumented skills.
- Quality of life is not a focus.
  - Low income assistance rates.
  - Lack of money spent but no money left over.
  - Lack of ability to feel free.
  - Government projects not meeting need.
  - New hospitals not meeting current demand.
  - Over capacity - patients staying in motels.
  - Demonized old hospitals instead of using.
  - Services prejudice against the poor.
  - Lack of tracking or monitoring patients.
- Benefits.
  - CPPD has no benefits compared to provincial disability.
  - Camping pass – no for federal, yes for provincial.

- No medical benefits unless on provincial.
  - Medication out of pocket.
- WCB.
  - 9 years still fighting for benefits.
  - Interrupts quality of life.
  - Opiates were working but no longer prescribes.
  - No support just cut off.
- Barriers to service.
  - Everything is online and access is limited.
  - Phone trees taking a long time on hold.
  - Tenancy Act inadequate and hard to access services.
  - Computer applications stressful and require help – not always working well.
  - People not computer literate
- Provincial government
  - Eligibility program support being done by community groups, downloading/offloading.
- Addiction issues.
  - No safe injection site.
  - Controlled substance addiction assistance.
  - Wait list for treatment long - 8-10 weeks.
  - Increasing wait lists – 5-10 years.
  - Drug addicts say they are alcoholics to get drugs.
  - No wet emergency shelter/low barrier people getting drunk to get into sobering centre.
  - No shelter to get in from cold unless drunk or on drugs.
- Affordability.
  - Income.
  - Food.
  - Rent.
  - Affordable services and/or ability to pay user fees.
  - No social housing.
  - BC Housing Grants – Homeless Prevention Program.
- Housing.
  - Lack of affordable housing.
  - Subpar housing.
  - Housing not maintained.
  - Shelter for people ‘using.’
  - Youth housing.
- Barriers to accessing supports
  - Lack of capacity for professionalism.
  - Service transportation.
  - Automation of service. i.e. - the application for Income assistance.
  - Reduction in staffing at BC Employment Assistance Office.
  - Community advocacy (Lack of service, cost prohibited)

- Lack of legal training of advocacy staff.
- When applied for disability no one asked him; what are your disabilities? What are your issues? How can we help?
- Need to be assessed as an adult.
- Lack of awareness of services that are available and how to access them.
- Can you get a job if you don't have a house?
- People are moving to remote communities without service because the rent is affordable.
- Falling through the cracks because of age and/or issues.
- Look at full picture.
  - Coordination of plans (poverty production)
  - Need to include all issues (housing and childcare).
  - Income assistance (PWD/IA) does not cover costs of rent, groceries, transportation etc.
  - It is currently illegal to be homeless – if you leave your things somewhere safe, you are breaking the law. Things will be removed by the law. Society does not think its ok.
  - Not safe when living outdoors. People think that you are a terrible person (if you do live indoors).
  - Lack of services for children with disabilities.
  - Anxiety and stress.
  - Food security.
  - Isolation (one store in Port Hardy) some people due to social issues are banned – there is no place to get food.
  - Social isolation.
  - Addictions and mental health – lack of treatment and social services.
  - Generational trauma – residential school trauma PTSD.
  - Criminality.
  - Lack of employment – entry level jobs, low wages, lack of resource based jobs.
  - Lack of social planning within the municipality.
- Housing.
  - No way to get housing for people with disabilities (PTSD, Autism)
  - People live in fear which gets in the way of asking for assistance.
  - Feel misunderstood/ scared of me.
  - Attitudes for others, discrimination.
  - It is painful to be disclosing disabilities and getting no.
  - Have to disclose that I am on income assistance
  - Feel that I am labelled and targeted when I share this information.
  - Lack of safe and affordable housing.
  - Room and board is not working out.
  - Rental Tenancy Branch does not cover roommate situations. i.e. sexual, locked out, kicked out.
  - Many buildings are in a poor state of repair.
  - Long wait lists for housing.

- Out dated occupancy standards
- BC housing (# of children to bedrooms), culturally inappropriate.
- Hydro disconnects and high hydro rates.
- Causes of poverty.
  - Opportunity to spend rent money on alcohol and drugs – addictions make poverty.
  - Lack of jobs/education.
  - Lack of affordable childcare.
  - Lack of money management.
  - Mental health issues and trauma.
- Impacts of poverty.
  - Proof of the effects of poverty – evidence.
  - There are financial impacts when a child goes into care – now there is child tax care benefit available.
  - No contact order – breadwinner leave and takes \$ with him.
- Inequality.
  - Wage gap (gender)
  - Trades - resource based industries
- Medical problems
  - Medications not covered
  - Medications not covered so tests not done
  - Medical literacy
- Barriers.
  - Literacy.
  - Stigma of poverty.
  - Social isolation.
  - Racism/discrimination.
- Affordability.
  - Living wage jobs hard to come by here.
  - Minimum wage vs cost of living.
  - Unpredictable work schedule.
  - Power imbalance created by shortage of jobs, housing, childcare.
  - Lack of affordable transit
- Welfare rates.
  - Using food money to cover shelter
  - Shelter rates
- Unaffordability of technology i.e. internet cellphones
  - Safety issue.
  - Hard to secure housing.
- Foodbank access.
  - Special diets for health problems required
    - Not accessible to access because dependant on food bank.
  - Access to food bank due to location.

- People should not have to depend on the food bank.
- Lack of coordinated community effort to address poverty.
  - Agency case funding cuts.
  - Living wages for staff.
  - Better wages for community services staff.
  - Legal aid – threshold to avoid quality.
  - Bureaucracy/ form literacy.
  - Day care spaces impacted by the licencing requirements for day care spaces.
- Access to Health Supports.
  - Local psychiatric services.
  - Suicidal people – poor response from emergency room/ addiction before addressing mental health.
  - Dental care (lack of it) affects overall health
  - Vision health.
  - Discrimination and access to urgent care and mental health services.
  - More social workers
  - More supports for people with moderate mental health issues and cognitive behavioral therapy.
- Seniors living in poverty
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Loss of income when one partner dies, pension split.
  - Cost of home support.
- Systemic Issues.
  - Lack of self-esteem/confidence.
  - Patriarchy.
  - Capitalism.
  - Economy.

## Question 2: What would address these issues and help you and people out of poverty?

- Food security
  - Supportive education (1 vote)
  - Nutrition, cooking, preserving
  - Make it fun
  - Family and community gathering
  - Gardening
- More community-oriented solutions (1 vote)
  - Start in schools - get it going young
  - More opportunities for people in poverty to access leisure activities

- Bringing families together/less screen time
- Housing
  - Canada only country in G7 that doesn't have a National Housing Strategy
  - Need municipal and provincial legislation too
  - Coop housing/cohousing
  - More innovation in housing models
  - So much affordable housing infrastructure is aging and falling apart needs to be replaced.
  - Lived in shipping container housing in Vancouver – Atria housing- really beautiful
  - Combined with mentoring for women's shelter next door
- More community engagement.
  - Make innovative solutions work for each community.
  - Would be really good in local Indigenous communities.
- Community Connections.
  - Build housing/apartment with more community space – spaces for classes, etc.
  - Connections between elders homes and children's' day care- win/win for both.
- Real Estate.
  - Price of housing and land has been rising at astronomical rate.
  - Foreign ownership.
  - If you are buying a house to live in it that's fine
  - Stop the purchasing of houses as investments
  - More support for programs like habitat for humanity
  - Solutions need to be coming from government
- Social Programs.
  - Canada is talked of as such a wonderful country but need to put money where your mouth is (Trudeau).
  - National fair Pharmacare policy.
  - You will save money in the long run if you invest in supports – there are higher costs when people can't buy their medications and they end up in emergency.
  - Crack down on drug companies.
- Income inequality
  - Increase min wage
  - Adopt a guaranteed annual income.
- Social determinants of health
  - Need health services, housing food, prescriptions, more investments
- Housing first
  - Transitional housing for men: jail, bad relationships.
- Services
  - Coordinated hub for access to services
  - Community
  - Focus on assisting people
  - Access to transportation for essential services

- Subsidized affordable childcare.
- Community Development.
  - Adopt a not-for-profit
  - Identify opportunities for businesses/ corporations to invest in the community
  - Build relationships so they see the investments at work.
  - Relationship building/connection b/w service providers
  - Inventory central hub to link people, increase resources and navigation
  - Properly funded services over the long term.
- Prevention and intervention.
  - Child development, education.
  - Reduce barriers that make the system hard to access – computer literacy.
  - Reduce stigma.
  - Equitable access to services no matter where you live.
- Affordable housing strategy.
  - More affordable housing (4 votes).
  - Rent supplements.
- Affordability.
  - Affordable/quality – accessible education (2 votes).
  - Affordable child care (2 votes).
  - Helping people learn to be daycare provider – paid opportunity.
  - Accessible medical and dental.
- Outreach.
  - Need outreach workers to reach people to let them know about available services/resource
  - Outreach workers are literally out on the streets – build a relationship/trust (2 votes).
  - Incentives to bring companies to the local area.
  - Working poor need more access to services- not for just people on income assistance – the working poor should be offered the same program.
- Education.
  - Easy access to scholarships/grants
  - Provide people with information about what is available.
  - Education should be free (2 votes).
  - Interest free student loans.
  - Companies – if they pay for education and once they hit a certain threshold they should get a tax break.
- Mental health.
  - Mentorship/role models for people – i.e. living in remote community.
  - There is a high suicide as people do not see a way out.
  - More access to treatment for drugs and alcohol.
- Policy changes.
  - Less barriers to get wage subsidies → ease up on criteria.
  - Incentives for employers to offer daycare in the physical building for staff.

- Canada is the only country in the G7 that does not have a Housing Strategy.
- Federal government should not be downloading so much to the province.
- School supports.
  - Have free food available to children in schools.
  - Have a garden in schools.
  - Teach children sewing, cooking, life skills to become independent.
  - Set examples: diversity → this is a good thing.
- Transportation.
  - Redo bus system (1 vote).
  - Get input from community about how to fix.
- Housing.
  - Assistance program to help with housing.
  - More affordable housing.
- Technology.
  - Access to internet – that’s affordable.
  - Access to phone, communication.
- Community hub (5 vote).
  - Health network hub.
  - Holistic centre.
- Medication
  - Better coverage for medication.
  - Better information about coverage .
  - Revamping Rx coverage (Methadone, insulin, epi-pens).
- Education
  - Transportation/access to education systems (1 vote)
- Income.
  - Increasing income assistance rates
  - Income assistance should be connected to inflation.
  - Living wages.
- Harm reduction.
  - Access to clean water and sanitation.
  - Clean, safe amenities for people that are homeless.
  - Safe needle disposal.
  - Increase funding for harm reduction.
  - More outreach services.
- Housing.
  - Affordable housing strategy (1 vote).
  - Mental health housing.
  - Supportive housing.
  - Suitable housing for people who have no alternative to hospital.
- Literacy programs.
  - Centrally located.

- Accessible by bus.
- Recreation.
  - More affordable family recreation.
- Safe places for vulnerable people.
  - Safe housing for: moms and children, seniors, single men (4 votes).
  - Increase # of beds
  - More supports for recovery
  - Medical detox → increase availability.
  - Inter-collaboration between resources.
  - Setting people up for success.
  - Don't discharge people into unsafe situations.
  - Make housing accessible for PWD's and seniors.
- Gardening,
  - Teach gardening skills.
  - Support community gardens.
  - Have affordable housing w/ land to garden (2 votes).
- Volunteerism.
  - More volunteers, big brothers.
  - Get information about volunteering out to public.
- Make getting ID quicker and easier.
  - Provide help and assistance
- Outreach
  - Mobile services (Health, outreach, volunteer, Nursing centre on wheels).
  - Educate the community about resources.
  - Publically available stats/info about the need for poverty relief (1 vote).
  - Public education to help prevent poverty stigma.
  - Making sure information about coordinated resources is available.
  - More positive awareness through media hub.
  - Nursing services, social workers, haircut, foot care, free store, food, supports and services info, lockers, and mentorship program.
- Subsidize cost of health food.
  - Reduce food waste
  - Establish relationship with businesses for donations.
- Supports.
  - Provide help getting to medical appointments.
  - Create a safe place for people to store ID, make it free.
  - Free showers, lockers, for people living on street.
  - Secure place to store belongings → free.
  - Need to involve people who are passionate about problems.
  - Raise awareness, engage community.
  - More events to raise funds and inform the public about poverty issues.
  - Help getting to medical appointments.

- Barriers to supports for homeless people.
  - o Access to services.
  - o Inadequate health care.
  - o No address for ID.
  - o Geographic.
- Creative solutions.
  - o Small pop up houses that could be a temp solution for immediate need
  - o Educating the public about what poverty looks like
    - Change the stigma of what it means to be poor.
  - o Stigma of going to food banks, food security is huge.
  - o Review and make changes with ICBC to change points and methods to help people with low income to get licence and vehicle back.
  - o Sliding scale for impound driver charges/fees
- Advocacy
  - o Increase funding and resources for advocacy services.
  - o Provide reasonable options.
  - o Reduce phone access more in person appointments
  - o Access to computers to apply
  - o Flexible service options – evenings, weekends.
  - o 1:1 appointments for support.
  - o Increased advocacy and accessibility to get involved.
- Housing access.
  - o Access to rental subsidies or decreased rental rates.
  - o Social housing options in a variety of neighbourhoods.
  - o Housing coops.
  - o Policy changes to Housing First.
  - o Housing lists.
- Funding.
  - o Increase funding for supported options for people with disabilities and mental health issues.
  - o Increase minimum wage.
  - o Guaranteed annual income.
  - o Improve employment protections in legislation and enforcement.
- Transportation.
  - o Smaller vehicles, more service.
  - o Ferry cost, increase ferry service.
  - o Make bus passes easier to access.
  - o Dial a bus (have in Red Deer).
- Childcare.
  - o Increase funding to public childcare.
  - o Increase employment incentives – i.e. student loan reduction.
  - o Increase spaces – review independent childcare options.

- Food Security.
  - o Subsidies for farmers (local, diverse, farming systems).
  - o Protection of the agriculture land reserve.
  - o Increased wage to cover cost.
  - o Offer local food safe courses in affordable ways.
  - o Legislate marketing and taxed on junk food.
- Education.
  - o Review education system and include personalized learning plans.
  - o Offer options to complete applications.
  - o Literacy audits.
  - o Social programs to encourage reading/ writing.
- Healthcare.
  - o Review formally, extended health, national coverage.
  - o Increase assistance and shelter rates.
  - o New positions created to transition people home – navigators.
  - o Funding needs to be attached.
  - o Review transitions of care.
  - o Treatment beds and support recovery.
  - o Increased funding.
  - o Universal dental coverage, eyes and hearing exams and supplies.
- Reduce stigma.
  - o Legislation/enforcement to reduce stigma.
  - o Increase knowledge of employment standards.
  - o Education.
  - o Conversations.
  - o Offer cultural sensitivity and safety.
- Accessibility.
  - o Increase services and supports in community.
  - o Accessibility audits of programs and services.
  - o Increase supports with goal of maximizing participation.
  - o Increase advocacy and political communication.
  - o Public spaces need places for people to sit and rest for those that need this.
- Housing
  - o Mini homes with hook ups.
  - o Vacant land for shared housing.
  - o Portable sani-service.
  - o Campers/crown land, motorhome etc.
  - o Charge governments for trailer parks, private camp grounds.
  - o Home owners can add small.
  - o Multiple housing zoning rules.
  - o Develop affordable small lots that people can put houses on.
  - o Get rid of dumb rules.

- Subsidize middle income renters.
- More emergency housing, low barrier.
- Short, medium, long term housing.
- 24 hour supervised housing.
- Use successful models from other places.
- Reduce stigma
  - Public education on NIMBY barriers to solutions.
  - Buy in through education.
  - Groups for men's shelter models (east coast).
  - Allowing social face to face meeting places.
  - Public education of poverty – the realities and the solutions that are sustainable and effective
- Economic changes
  - Sustainable employment.
  - Income.
  - Post-secondary
  - Provide diversity of opportunities to allow hands on experience.
  - Focus on different learning styles.
  - Target strengths and develop teaching around the student (more motivated when good at something).
  - How to keep the dollar at parity.
  - Match trades with interest, concentrate on strengths.
  - Shorter wait lists for addictions services.
  - Need follow up support after completion of programs – longer term more effective program for transitions.
  - Provide in-between support for returning to community.
- Government funded industry.
  - Promote marketable products and skills.
  - Models that lead to sustainability and create new industry where others have closed.
- Disparity closed.
  - Open up benefits given to provincial disability to federal disability.
  - Eyes and teeth part of public health.
  - Street service for homeless –socks, showers, laundry, phone, computer.
  - Recreation for middle aged person in poverty.
  - Coordinate services with other provinces so equalized services to control migration.
- Affordability.
  - Cost of living is very high.
  - Minimum wage – close loop holes that take advantage to pay less.
  - Co-op housing.
  - Subsidized housing.
  - Raise income assistance rates.
  - Raise earning exemptions – \$500 for single employable people.

- Graduates of programs struggling to afford the cost of living once subsidies drop off – need extended transition support – childcare.
- Parents/Caretaker supports.
  - Transitional housing for men/with kids.
  - Support for those caring for those with aging parents.
  - Support for the aging parents.
- Community organization inventory.
  - Provincial inventory of what community organizations are already doing.
  - Structure way with sustained investments for a team to maintain the inventory, support people working in.
  - Reduce silos.
- Education.
  - Debt forgiveness for students, student loans.
  - More funding for education and community based education.
  - Training in high-schools should continue/ expand and include life skills training/ budgeting in high schools.
- Accessing support
  - Reduce stigma, concerted effort – look at how to reduce stigma when accessing service.
  - Asking for help should be more socially acceptable.
  - Keep collecting data, bringing data of what is happening in the community.
  - More consistency in staff, consistent funding to allow for this
  - Allow for flexibility in service eligibility, grey lines are ok.
- Service Providers.
  - Need time to build relationships with community.
  - Policies need to match community needs.
  - Service providers engage in policy making.
  - Leadership @ community level to identify needs in community.
  - Deliver more services at the community level example – children’s health in Gold River.
  - Provide services in a way that meets community needs.
  - Locally based workers as navigators, provincial resource.
  - Can deliver to provide services in innovative ways – technology.
  - Change the line to meet the needs to the community.
  - Establish clever new view and different dimensions of poverty and recognise them in eligibility criteria.
  - EDI’s.
  - Technology allow for more data and accessibility of data, require local data
  - Regional hub (physical place) where you can find out all about provincially funded supports
  - Focus on prevention and intervention
- Reducing Barriers.
  - Computer literacy barriers – housing is all internet based, huge barrier, job applications require emails.
  - Skills development – access to education and soft skills to gain employment.

- Reduce intentional barriers, designed to make the system harder to access.
- Support light – do we have to make everyone go through the same hoops?
- Provide initial support to get started.
- Learn processes, unnecessary steps to access service.
- Fix the application to get on assistance, too challenging and must have an email and photo.
- Have people in local offices to support people to fill out forms.
- Stop forcing people to use computers.
- Good paying jobs in local communities.
- Stop eliminating jobs, societal value.
- Improved Service.
  - Bring back individualized worker assigned to you, bring back relationships.
  - Poverty reduction works through building relationships and personal connection.
  - Better communication of available services, comprehensive services.
  - Longer term, sustainable outcomes, realistic goals.
  - Bring back service providers together (health and education) to talk about the services you provide.
  - Engage/ connect to provide a circle of support.
  - Identify gaps for people living in poverty.
  - Look for opportunities to promote collaboration among service providers.
  - Resource fairs – agency tables pay with gift cards, people in poverty receive give – away.
  - Relationship building and connections takes resource/funding.
- Community Building.
  - Denman/Hornby: kids helping kids.
  - Inter-classroom supports
  - Linkages and sharing needs to start in school.
  - Link together community through life experiences
  - Create a sense of community through story telling.
  - Involve people in poverty in the solutions
  - Look for options for people living in poverty to make positive contributions
  - Habitat for Humanity helps with building homes.
- Financial Support.
  - Amount of income assistance to be enough to cover the basics – rent, groceries, hydro
  - Guaranteed income system returned (9 votes)
  - Supports to go with the ‘funding/PWD’ – for a plan to be learn basic life skills, budgeting, training etc.
  - Parents receiving income assistance not to be mandated to work until the kids are 12 years old
  - Parenting support should be provided.
  - Couples receiving income assistance should increase income not decrease income.
  - People should be allowed to receive a gift from their family.
  - Paid caregivers for ‘children of parents’ doesn’t seem fair.
  - People should have a paid leave for having to be a family caregiver.

- Minimum wage review.
  - Financial planning for family – financial literacy training.
- Accessing supports.
  - Easier to access income assistance (Hours of work, More staff – face to face support).
  - Easier access to provincial services and supports.
  - Fair pharmacies
  - MSP
  - BC 2
  - SAFER
  - RAP
  - Medical travel
  - Prescriptions
  - Coordination of services.
  - Community navigator (1 vote).
  - If province deems you disabled, you should automatically be entitled to have federal help.
- Housing.
  - Housing First committee.
  - Housing coalition.
  - Affordable housing strategy for the region (3 votes).
  - Address regional discrepancies in access to services.
  - Decriminalization of homelessness.
  - Identify and allow areas for safe/dry tent living.
  - Housing that isn't tents.
  - Youth create housing.
- Mental Health and Addiction.
  - Full access to treatment centres in all areas.
  - Mental health funding and support services.
  - Temporary shelters for people 'using.'
  - Safe injection sites in our cities.
- Cohesive/coordination of poverty reducing strategies that include
  - Housing
  - Childcare
  - Treatment
  - Mental Health
- Community building.
  - Neighbourhood houses - community centre in all communities
  - A place where people can go during the day, bathrooms, showers, dry, warm, safe
  - Provide training for public workers and facility staff around trauma informed practice
- Wages.
  - Maximum wage – wage disparity.
  - Guaranteed livable wage. Ex. Norway.
  - Provide training opportunities in city facilities. i.e. in libraries, recreation centres.

- More medical coverage.
  - o Loss of benefits
  - o Over 65.
  - o More comprehensive medical and dental and vision and mental health for everyone .
- Coordinated effort to reduce poverty.
  - o Pooling resources.
  - o Core funding for community based poverty reduction service organizations and initiatives (transformation).
  - o More funds for direct services.
- Family Supports.
  - o Putting funds into supporting families to keep families together rather than funds going to foster parents.
  - o Attending addiction treatment with children – family treatment.
- Housing.
  - o Change to occupancy standards
  - o Strengthen Municipal bylaws
  - o Improve Residential Tenancy standards
  - o Culturally appropriate housing standards.
  - o Allow for more than 2 children to a bedroom.
  - o Roommate conflict not covered in Residential Tenancy rules
  - o Strengthen Residential room and board situation.
  - o More housing along the continuum (3 votes).
  - o Homeless shelters, SRO's, co-ops, Low Income Housing (need more).
  - o Family shelters (we don't have one here)
- U.N. Declaration of Rights of the Child
  - o Adopted in BC – need to recognize and act.
- Ensure continuity of strategy over change in government mandates.
  - o Create community liaison
  - o Core funding
  - o 2012 Poverty Reduction Strategy – where is it?
- Community education
  - o So all people realize what is happening in community and what the impact is.
- Essential of daily living.
  - o Income assistance amounts based on local costs of living.
- Advocacy (3 votes)
  - o Create community based groups and one employed director responsible for communication, education and facilitation of all agencies in their community
- Ready to work.
  - o Ensure that job seekers have the skills to get and keep employment.
- Access to education.
  - o Free post-secondary education (2 votes).
- Childcare.

- A parent should be able to stay home with kids until they are in school.
  - Free childcare – funded in same way as public school.
  - Support for parents returning to work.
- 4 day work week.
- Consistent predictable funding.
  - GAPS in resources – identify and fund.
  - Focus on performance/ outcomes.
  - Change mind-set/ community resilience.
- Adjust poverty benchmark
  - Revisit to include broader factors, not just wages.
  - Consider cost of living etc.
  - Social determinants of health.
- Financial Safety nets.
  - Regulate payday loan centres.
  - Community based micro loans.
  - Guaranteed livable wage.
- Advocacy and accountability.
  - Coordinated accountable community based agency.
  - Support community Empowerment.
  - Provide Core funding.
- Supports for the homeless
  - Stigmatism around homelessness and accessing services.
  - Free foot care services.
  - General lack of understanding of what it means for someone with a disability to access housing and services.
  - Homelessness v safety.
  - Family violence.
  - Financial literacy support worker.
  - Stop discharging people from the hospital into homelessness.
- Invest in people.
  - Social determinants of health (food security, social supports, housing, education/employment, health)
  - Guaranteed income system returned.
- Safe, affordable, supportive housing
  - More housing along the continuum.
  - Increased access and choices, supportive neighbourhoods.
  - Housing First Model, more co-op housing.
  - Housing for mental health addiction.
- PWD supports.
  - Support to go with the funding for people who face within the PWD designation.
  - Help people to learn basic life skills, budgeting and provide people with training.
- Regional needs.

- Affordable housing need a strategy in each region.
  - Equitable access to services no matter where you live.
- Income equality.
  - Increase minimum wage.
  - Guaranteed annual income.
  - Employment protection.
- Reducing Barriers.
  - Relationships building.
  - Focus on prevention/ intervention.
  - Reduce barriers that have been designed to make system (stigma) harder to access.