



Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

**Chilliwack, BC
March 29, 2018**

Introduction and Event Summary

On March 29, 2018 the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Chilliwack, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 90 to 95 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 the local Band Council Darcy Paul, 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.

The Parliamentary Secretary shared some closing remarks.

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 in poverty right now?

- Addictions and substance abuse
 - o People face addictions to drugs and alcohol
- Youth
 - o Family struggles are forcing youth out onto the street
 - o Family breakdown can lead to mental illness and addictions among youth
- Housing
 - o Low-income housing is being torn down for new development in Chilliwack
 - o Without housing, you struggle to find work and the consequence is homelessness
 - o Affordable housing doesn't allow pets over 20 pounds
 - o People need pets for emotional support
 - o I had to give up my animal to find housing since the transition house doesn't allow pets
 - o There is not enough housing for single people and families
 - o There is not enough affordable housing in the community
 - o People need to share with 1-2 other people to carry the costs of their housing
- Homelessness
 - o The Anne Davis shelter is a beginning
 - o We need more programs for people who are homeless in Chilliwack
 - o The 500 individuals identified in the homeless count is an under-report - in reality there are many more people who are homeless
- Housing
 - o People do not have enough money to pay for housing
 - o Ontario provides \$1500 for housing compared to BC which is \$375 for shelter and \$700 for other supports
 - o I can't afford a cup of coffee, all of my money goes to rent
 - o Chilliwack is different from Vancouver - in Vancouver services are more centrally located - in Chilliwack you have to take a cab (\$20) or transit to get to many services but the transit routes don't always take you where you need to go
 - o Instability/lack of housing breaks your spirit
 - o Homelessness leads to lack of confidence
 - o There is no foundation to build from
- Mental Health
 - o Many people have mental health issues
 - o Institutions are closed so hospitals have to care for people
 - o Lack of support can lead to people living on the streets
 - o People feel like they are cast out and on the outside
 - o These feelings of isolation/ exclusion can lead to mental health issues and addictions
 - o Emotional and mental abuse creates anxiety and depression
- Stigma/Judgement
 - o People should put themselves in the shoes of others
 - o There is no need to have poverty

- We are stuck in a cycle of poverty
- People in the community don't connect
- No one would choose to live in poverty
- Judgement/stigma results in social isolation
- Employment
 - There may be jobs but people lack the skills they need to get the jobs
 - Training and resume support is needed
 - People don't have an address or phone number to include in their applications
- Transportation
 - Transportation is only available until 11 pm
 - There is poor transit service on weekends
 - The high cost of transportation is a problem
 - It is a struggle for people with disabilities to access transportation
- Food Security
 - Food banks don't have enough variety
 - People need to be able to get essentials like peanut butter
- Community Services
 - There is no central service hub
 - Where do people go for work and housing?
 - Should have the supports together so people know what is available
- Children and Youth
 - Youth are learning from parents and the education system
 - They are not prepared for "real life"
 - Many youth do not have the mentorship or support that they need
 - There is nowhere to go, no drop in-centres during the day
- Seniors
 - Many seniors do not have savings and are living on the edge of poverty
 - Some seniors only have their CPP
 - Many seniors are socially isolated and people are not aware of their struggles
 - Some seniors are unable to cover their cost of their medication
 - Many struggle to pay for dental costs - this is a real struggle as their dental health deteriorates
- PWD
 - Eligibility requirements are too strict for PWD
 - People are denied PWD without proper justification
- Education and Training
 - Create pre-nursing/pre-teaching program
 - Put into place accelerated learning programs for mature students
 - Some of these programs could serve Chilliwack and the rest of BC (1 dot)
- Childcare
 - We need more affordable childcare
 - There are no vacancies in current childcare spaces

- Increase the salary of early childhood education workers
 - Reduce the number of children under each worker
 - The job is demanding but work is needed
- Supports
 - Provide bridging supports to people when they begin a job
 - Allow people to continue to receive some level of support- i.e. don't cut people off of income assistance immediately
- Housing
 - There is a lack of affordable housing or any housing in the community
 - Have support for those looking for housing, i.e. D+A/financial
 - 1 bedroom with utilities is \$900 and that is considered affordable
 - Many buildings/units do not allow pets
 - Pet deposit is ½ month is rent
 - There are bidding wars on housing
 - Landlords need references and criminal record checks
 - People need to be able to provide proof of income
 - People also need to allow landlord to complete credit checks
 - In some cases people have to give a cash deposit
 - 1st and last months rent, e.g. \$1600 rent + \$800 security deposit + \$800 pet deposit = \$3200 for the first month
 - Rents will continue to increase due to the high levels of demand for housing
 - Landlords need to pay their bills so rents will increase to whatever the market will bear
- Services and Supports
 - There is a lack of coordinated information about the programs/services and supports that are available
 - It is difficult navigating the different systems
 - There needs to be better coordination of services
 - People have no idea where to start
 - There is a lot of misinformation about what is available
 - No one takes the time to help - you are just referred from one service provider to the next
- Transportation
 - It is difficult to get around - the bus routes do not go to some areas
 - Many services are too spread out to access by transit
 - There are not enough bus stops and the transit hours are inadequate
 - There are not enough services with access for people with mobility challenges
 - The HandyDART service is inadequate
- Accessibility
 - You have to phone ahead of time to try to schedule a pick up
 - Community programs find it hard to find volunteer drivers
 - The cost of gas affects the affordability of the different service options

- Income Support
 - o Every year the cost of living goes up
 - o The cost of groceries went up at least double in the last year
 - o Utilities – Fortis/Hydro - Both increased 20%
 - o Car/home insurance Increased approximately 20%
 - o More people are falling behind
- Income Assistance/Earning Exemptions
 - o The income assistance cap on earnings should increase for those doing odd jobs
 - o The current rules cause people to work under the table
 - o By restricting earnings, it makes it harder for people to work
 - o The motivation to work is lower when people don't see any benefit from working
 - o When income assistance rates increased housing costs also increased
 - o The hold back of one month when income is declared affects a household's budget- it would be an easy fix logistically and would help individuals who are trying to get ahead
- Mental Health
 - o Mental health can cause less confidence and make it difficult to find work
 - o Reducing income assistance means people have even less opportunity and support
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - o The perception of people living with poverty and addictions is poor
 - o People use caution when they see people with addictions
 - o All people need to be treated with dignity and respect
 - o We need to walk alongside to support
 - o Letting others hear your story can cause shame and stress
- Seniors
 - o You have a fear of being a burden
 - o There was a mix-up with my OAS/GIS and I lost my home
 - o I was living in a mobile home and I was evicted because I owed two months pad rental
- Health Care
 - o Doctors screen out patients
 - o Doctors only take easy patients
 - o If there are any issues the patient is fined
 - o People will be "back balled" by other doctors
 - o We need a low barrier medical clinic
 - o We need a clinic that can support those with drug addictions, mental illness, drug seeking, etc.
 - o More nurse practitioners at clinics can help to take the load off doctors
 - o Walk in clinics are often closed or have reached their quota before all the patients are seen
 - o When there are no doctors available it means the more people have to use the emergency room
 - o There are no doctors available
 - o Some people are not getting the medical care they need

- There clearly should be someone available to complete PWD forms
- Specialists won't complete forms
- Although this is a clear need in the community, there are no placements yet for doctors
- Income Support
 - Minimum wage is too low
 - The cost of living is increasing faster than minimum wage
 - If minimum wage is raised employers need to recoup by reducing benefits
 - In some cases income assistance may seem like a better option
 - In some cases a parent can stay home with their kids and have close to the same income
- Childcare
 - Childcare costs are high
 - The cost of daycare is \$10/hr and a working single mother may only make \$11.35/hr
 - Why pay someone to raise your kids
- Ministry Services
 - The online government services are super hard to navigate
 - They take too long to work through the details
 - Many of the forms are too long for service providers to help support their clients
 - Government downloaded of the responsibility of supporting clients by going to an on-line application system
 - Non-profits don't have the resources needed to help those who need help
 - LOTS of people cannot manage the application process - it has contributed to an increase in homelessness because people can't get the support they need
 - IA/PWD clients face real barriers - to complete the form, it is expected that clients have computers, smart phones, scanners
 - The application wait times for PWD applicants also takes too long
- Housing
 - Increasing the shelter portion of income assistance from \$375 per month is necessary
 - The high cost of housing means giving up food
 - Where are the \$700 apartments?
 - People are forced to live in unsafe conditions because they can't afford the rent
 - People live in fear of violence
 - "I live with my 4 year old daughter and pay \$450/month for 420 sq. ft."
 - The housing conditions are unsafe
 - The quality of housing is poor and the landlord doesn't care
 - There are issues where I live with rats
 - I feel worried for the safety of our children but there are no other choices
 - The older places are being sold and landlords are increasing the rents by 3-4%
 - Not only did the rent jump up but people are being evicted
 - Landlords are also renovating units and then increasing the rents
 - The apartment is falling apart but landlords are having people sign contracts
 - New buildings are being built but there are not enough units to meet the need

- It is estimated that there are 300 people homeless in Chilliwack but the actual number is closer to 500
- Ruth/Naomis helps to provide addiction services
- There is a need for more services in the community
- The Yale provides 80 units of affordable housing
- This housing is available based on your situation/income
- The rent is scaled with caps in place
- The community needs more of this type of housing
- The Impact of Poverty
 - What about low income people?
 - What can they do – they cannot catch up
 - Working poor (not on support)
 - People do not have the income they need to buy decent food for their kids
- Services and Support
 - Not enough people provide supports
 - There are not enough advocates
 - The programs are changing so much - you have to be really involved to know what is available
 - Most private programs have long waitlists
 - People don't know where to find programs
- Ministry Services
 - The Ministry needs more social workers
 - It is hard because you can no longer have one-on-one support
 - There is no one to contact if you need help
 - If you do not fill out the forms properly you are denied
 - Your application gets stalled it does not roll over from one catchment area to another for follow-up – it just stays stuck
 - There is not enough cohesion in the process
 - The eligibility criteria is problematic - it is crazy that you need to live here for 4 months in order to be eligible
 - In Medicine Hat it is possible to access services within 10 days
 - There is one (1) advocate for all of Chilliwack and the surrounding areas
 - The line-up at the Ministry office can take up to 4 hours because there is only one (1) person at the desk
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - People have good and bad days
 - Many days you just feel like a number
 - You feel judged by everyone
 - 90% of the time you feel upset
 - The security guard is great (makes people feel respected and really appreciate his attitude)
 - Feel like no privacy when discussing issues

- You end up repeating hurtful stories over and over
- People have to recognize that poverty is a cycle – need to break the cycle
- It is not possible to slot everyone into the same bucket
- Everyone has a different background and story
- People need to be given some options
- Housing
 - People need to have a roof over their heads
 - People should not have to choose between food and other necessities
- Ministry Services
 - The Ministry rules make it that people cannot live together
 - The cheques are cut so that the Ministry's costs go down because couples receive less
 - The rules force people to live apart
 - The rules also prevent people from working
- Health
 - People have no extended medical, so keep getting dropped down the surgery wait list
 - Dental, eye care and counselling are not included in the costs that are covered by the Ministry
 - The cost of medication is unaffordable so you just don't take it
 - The generic medications are not as good
 - There are too many conditions around dietary supplement amounts if they are for a different diagnosis
- Childcare
 - Day care costs are so high!
 - Wait times for approvals take so long
 - It takes approximately 6 months to get approval for a childcare supplement
 - An individual reported that they applied for a childcare support in July and they finally got approval in January
- Education
 - People need access to post-secondary education
 - SPEED program from single parents is a good program
 - We need education programs for single parents
 - There should be more opportunities to participate in nursing programs
 - The different programs fill up
 - Need to introduce new programs where people learn skills in areas that are in demand
- Community Services
 - There are not enough programs for single men and couples without children
 - Need community centre/programs for families and singles
 - Need staff on site who provide support
 - People need more support including clothing to help to try to find a job
- Food Security
 - There is no place for affordable food
 - There is no place to get fresh foods like vegetables and milk

- People cannot afford healthy food
- Ministry Services
 - Eligibility for PWD is too strict/too restrictive
 - So many doctors give approval yet the application will still be denied
 - There is a disconnect between PWD, CPP and other supports
 - There is also a disconnect in the continuity of information provided
- Homelessness
 - Homelessness has changed over the last few years
 - The number of people living on the streets has increased
 - How are we caring for people in Chilliwack?
 - There is a lack of knowledge about available resources (local)
 - There is a lot of enabling going on (i.e. people are staying here because they get fed/other stuff)
 - The weather also means that there are more people living on the streets compared to other parts of the Province
- Housing
 - There is a shortage of housing
 - Affordability is a major concern
 - There are no vacancies (no inventory)
 - The population is increasing which has forced an increase in housing prices
 - There are no rent controls (no safety net for tenants)
 - Tenants are being forced out
- Mental Health
 - There is a lack of mental health resources for those with mental health-related challenges
- The Impact of Poverty
 - Working poor are being missed
 - Working poor can't get out of the cycle (how do I get out of it?)
 - The cycle of poverty forces an unhealthy lifestyle
 - There is the stress of feeling like a failure
 - People who live in poverty have poor nutrition
 - There are significant psychological impacts associated with living in poverty
 - It is hard to get motivated to get out of poverty when you don't have any money, home, or food
 - To do a proper job search you need a computer
 - A lot of people are not computer literate so they really can't engage
 - All of these factors combined leave people in survival mode
 - People are so busy just trying to survive that it is impossible to get of the cycle
- Income Assistance
 - Income assistance falls well below the poverty line
 - People are not being paid a living wage
 - Prices continue to go up – food, utilities, clothing, gas

- The cost of living has contributed to the growing number of people in poverty
- Children and Youth
 - There is no support for foster kids or single parents
 - Need to help teach life skills
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - People feel a sense of shame/lack of dignity in asking for help
 - Services aren't always welcoming
 - People don't want to come in to ask for help because of the negative perception
 - People feel labeled as lazy or on drugs
 - There is a US and THEM attitude (class/race)
 - There is a feeling of not feeling safe in your own town
 - The downtown is dying - Chilliwack is losing the community feeling
 - Tension is building and it is going to explode if it is not dealt with
 - People are dehumanized
- Housing
 - People are on cusp of homelessness because of the lack of affordable housing
- Health Care
 - People do not have access to dental or vision care
 - Basic dental hygiene is essential if you want to get a job
 - Mental health issues are not being addressed
 - Most mental health programs or services are underfunded - why?
 - There are not enough staff and other resources
 - People can't always access the medication/supports they need
 - Caseloads are too large
 - There are no advocates
 - People are falling through the cracks
 - There is no help for youth, who self-medicate
 - Street drugs are easy to access
 - People start to use to escape their realities
- Education
 - Schools help to provide basic psych assessments - however it can take a lot of time to have it done and get the supports in place
 - Not a lot of people can afford to have them done privately - so people depend on the public system
- Seniors
 - Poverty among seniors can be hidden
 - People assume that seniors have savings or CPP that they can rely on
- Transportation
 - Transportation costs are high
 - People are forced to commute
 - Sometimes it is cheaper to stay on welfare when you start to take into consideration all of the costs

- The transit system doesn't meet needs of many people who can't afford a vehicle
- Childcare
 - The cost of childcare makes it easier to stay at home
 - People are being forced to accept substandard childcare
 - It is the law of supply and demand when it comes to childcare costs
 - There is no childcare available for people who have to work shift work
- Discrimination and stigma
 - Landlords won't rent to people on welfare
 - Landlords will not rent to families with lots of kids
 - Persons with disabilities also face challenges finding suitable housing
- Health Care
 - There are no doctors
 - People cannot afford the cost of prescriptions
 - People cannot afford the cost of travel to medical treatment
 - People face long wait times
 - The social safety net is limited - more people are falling through
- Education
 - There is the perception that people are stupid
 - Lack of education support GED
- Mental Health and Addiction
 - There is lack of outreach/ mental health supports
 - There are not enough supportive recovery homes
 - There is the need for more daytox and detox centres
 - There is the need for more harm reduction sites
- Health Care
 - People do not have access to dental and health benefits
 - Medical advocates are needed
 - Medication and hygiene products are not covered
 - Often people don't have any way to get to their medical appointments
- Homelessness
 - There are no shelters for couples
 - Shelters are only open during cold weather
 - Should run shelters like international hostels
 - Shelters here are barely shelters
 - People are at risk of abuse in the shelters
 - There are no supports in the shelters
 - There are a lack options for people who are homeless in the shelters
 - Chilliwack needs more daytime shelters/drop-in services in Chilliwack
- Homelessness
 - Lack of address
 - ID
 - Telephone

- Computer
- Need a daytime place to sleep
- Camping guidelines are not being promoted
- The City is lying to people about the camping bylaw
- Mental Health
 - Many people have no family or mental health supports
- Children and Youth
 - Lack of safe bike riding sites in community for kids to go to school
 - Safety is a huge concern
 - Community meals on a family level
- Police
 - People face threats from the RCMP
 - The police don't help, they just arrest
- Education
 - Lack of realistic job training
 - Lack of support in developing the skills needed for employment
- Housing
 - Need a home
- Services and Support
 - Need more social workers and outreach workers to connect with people who are homeless
- Stigma and Discrimination
 - People have poor perception of people in poverty
 - Churches are kicking people off their properties
 - Rich people litter and blame the homeless
 - Jesus was homeless
 - People treat our refugees better than our homeless
- Housing
 - There is a need for affordable housing
 - Landlords – need to be more accountable (2 dots)
 - Need a regulatory authority
 - Landlords feel very empowered
 - Tenants lack any rights – there is “nothing they can do”
- Kids in Care
 - Kids are being apprehended
 - Parents are trying their best to provide
- Homeless
 - Need to be accountable
 - Provide running water and facilities
 - Need squatter's right on crown land
 - Chilliwack is the end of the line for many people

- Housing
 - o The city has bulldozed 200 units of affordable housing but there are no new units
 - o The BC Housing building, not kept up -> closed down
 - o Private landlords are not maintaining the buildings
 - o There is a low vacancy rate in town
 - o The rent for a 1 bedroom is \$600 and up
 - o Rental price control/freeze needed (2 dots)
 - o The rent is \$1200 for 1 bedroom in Abbotsford - who can afford these rents
 - o People need to get a roommate
 - o The government needs to look at residential tenancy laws
 - o Arbitration works sometimes
 - o Most people think "landlords are in charge" and therefore don't complain
 - o Landlords require reference and credit checks
 - o These are denied for many in poverty
 - o There shouldn't be credit checks
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - o There are lots of people with mental illness/addictions
 - o These people need access to services and supports
 - o There are no beds for detox
 - o It can take 3-4 months to get a detox bed
 - o You can "phone everyday" for 3 months
 - o There are no pay phones
 - o People need life skills training
 - o You are "back on the street" after treatment because you have nowhere else to go
 - o Need second stage housing
- Homelessness
 - o Why can't there be a camp with facilities? Toilet, garbage cans
 - o There are no public washroom for people who are homeless
 - o You feel the stigma when only some can use the washroom
 - o Need homeless camps with support workers
 - o Local politicians fear that all the homeless will come here
- Food
 - o Have services that provide food
 - o Create spaces where the homeless can grow their own food
 - o Help build self-esteem- provide access to opportunities and activities that build skills
- Shelters
 - o We need a new women's shelter (low barrier)
 - o We need more shelter beds
 - o The womens' shelter has mold
 - o People are turned away from the shelters every night
- Housing
 - o We need to hold landlords accountable

- Transportation
 - o It is a good system but not so good in places
 - o You need to ask for tickets
 - o The bus will drive past you even when it is the last bus of the night
 - o Some drivers will not allow poor people on bus
- Housing
 - o Housing is an issue
 - o The housing that is available is not affordable
 - o For \$375 income assistance you cannot rent anything
 - o You can't afford any rent on the current single person rates
 - o Finding affordable housing with no references is hard
 - o Rents in Chilliwack averages more than \$750/month for the smallest place
 - o Need workers to help people with disabilities navigate the housing market
 - o There are no subsidized rents if someone is receiving income assistance
 - o Landlords have a bias about not renting to low income renters
- Childcare
 - o Daycare rates are high
 - o Daycare subsidies do not cover enough
- Mental Health Care
 - o There are long waiting lists for mental health support
- Homelessness
 - o There are not enough supports to help the homeless to get off the street
 - o It feels like the city is not interested in helping the homeless
 - o The general public does not understand why people are homeless and in poverty
- Addictions
 - o There are no harm reduction centres in Chilliwack
 - o Drug use is rampant in downtown Chilliwack
 - o There are no proper safe injection sites
 - o Access to substance abuse support is needed
 - o People need longer rehab programs
- Food Security
 - o Food prices are high
 - o Food prices have gone up 100% in the last year
- Income Assistance
 - o The cost of living has doubled, but wages and welfare have stayed the same
- Transportation
 - o There is lack of access to transportation
 - o Chilliwack is large and only has limited bus routes
- Services and Supports
 - o People have mental and physical disabilities
 - o Lack of self-worth
 - o People start to doubt themselves

- Lack of mental support causes depression
- Employment
 - Minimum wage is too low
 - Part-time temporary work creates stress and uncertainty
 - Family hardship
 - 40% of children in Chilliwack live at or below poverty line
 - Trade roles of gendered
- Education
 - People need more access to education opportunities
 - People need job skills and social skills training
- Childcare
 - There is a lack of available affordable childcare
 - Not having childcare is a barrier to improving your circumstance
 - The stress of poverty creates increased hardship in/out of your home
 - You don't even have enough money to heat your own home
- Health Care
 - Access to primary medical care can be hard
 - "Better at Home" doesn't work
 - Health support through Fraser Health is expensive i.e. Bathing \$99/month = 1 bath/week with talk that they will be increasing to \$158
 - Affordability is not a "daily cap"
 - Many medications are not covered
- Homelessness
 - Homelessness has tripled
 - The percentage of homeless women is around 39%
 - There is a higher rate of homeless women in Chilliwack compared to Metro Vancouver
- Government Partnerships
 - Need municipal level to work together with the federal and provincial
 - The city did not approve another women's shelter despite funding being in place and in the middle of winter
 - There is a disconnect between the different levels of government
 - All communities have similar issues
 - Need to be clear on the needs and priorities
 - Money is going towards flowers at traffic circles instead of community issues
- Crime and Violence
 - The city has a very high crime rate
 - Not enough funding is going towards crime prevention
 - Crime is particularly bad in the downtown
- Drugs
 - The opioid crisis is affecting the community
 - The numbers are increasing

- No safe injection sites - council is opposed to this form of harm reduction - the nearest one is in Surrey
- Safe non-injection opioid sites are needed
- Homelessness
 - Modular housing is needed
 - Not enough nutritional supplements are available for the homeless
 - Our council is asking for the resources to step in
 - There are elderly women with kids on the streets
 - There are different levels of homeless - people are falling through the crack as they are not seen
- Employment
 - There are not enough jobs available to rescue the community from poverty
 - People are receiving income without a purpose, not working for income
 - Working gives dignity
 - People feel more connected to community through work
 - Need sustainable work
 - Real estate, agriculture and service industry are entry level jobs
 - The city is not doing a good job at attracting good sustainable, long term jobs
- Housing
 - Modular shelters are needed
 - Housing that is low barrier and not run by religious organizations
 - Something specifically for LGBTQ (big house or shelter)
 - The community is against the LGBTQ community – youth in the LGBTQ community have a high rate of suicide
- Cost of Living
 - People need help to cover basic living expenses including: hydro, gas, phone, internet, automobile and transit
- Housing
 - The rent is too high \$700 to 1000 per month for a 1- bedroom
 - There is not enough rental housing
- Homelessness
 - People discriminate and judge people with disabilities
 - Shelters are full
 - There are no spaces for people to go and hang out (drop-in-centres)
 - Lots of people living on the street
 - Police ask homeless to move all the time
 - People are not allowed to camp anywhere
 - People are not picking up their stuff
 - The community is upset with needles everywhere
 - There are not enough food services
 - There are no safe place to go
 - There are no laundry services

- There are only limited services for showers/laundry
- There is nowhere for the homeless to store their stuff
- There are not enough women shelter spaces or supports for women
- There are no washrooms available for people who are homeless
- Childcare
 - Childcare costs are too expensive
 - As kids get older they eat more and they have expenses
- Housing
 - There is not enough housing
 - Need outreach to help find housing
 - Need a shelter for teenagers/ youth
 - Housing doesn't accept teenagers/young adults
- Children and Youth
 - There are not enough activities/places for youth to hang out
 - Passes only last for 3 months and then you have to reapply
- Health Care
 - People need health care for teenagers
 - People need subsidized dental services
 - Need bigger hospitals
 - Need more doctors
- Services and Supports
 - There are not enough services for people with different levels of disabilities
 - People with disabilities are turned away from education and services
 - There are not enough services for people with autism
 - There is no funding after the age of 19 for people with autism
- First Nations
 - Not enough services/house support for Indigenous people
 - Need to have drop-in centres open 24/7 – none here
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - Need mental health services
 - Increase counseling services
 - Need trauma support
 - Need detox/treatment/drug and alcohol supports
 - Need to have safe injection sites
 - No 24/7 services for harm reduction supplies/supports for those on the streets
- Crime and Violence
 - People are losing their humanness
 - There is a lot more violence
- Services
 - There are no crisis grants to get from point A to point B
 - When you lose your job it is hard to get support
 - Need a “warmer site”

- Income assistance is forcing people out to Chilliwack but we don't have the services
- Education
 - People face numerous barriers and blocks to education
 - It is hard to up-grade your education
 - Tuition and grants are in high demand and only limited availability
- Housing
 - Community supportive housing is needed for youth, adults and seniors
 - People are being pushed out of the community
- Addictions and Substance Use
 - There is the need to crack down on drug dealers
 - There have been a lot more overdoses
 - People are being released to the community without resources after overdosing
 - People who have suffered trauma need supports
 - People will end up 6 feet under before they get the supports they need
 - There is the need for more harm reduction focused approaches
- Housing
 - Need better landlords – no up keep to housing that is available
 - Local residents transition to rental homes with lower rates
 - Housing availability
 - Foreign homeowners are kicking people out
 - Don't want this process to be lip service
 - Not enough housing
 - Not enough affordable local homes
- Programs and Services
 - Nothing going on in Chilliwack for people
- Addictions
 - Need harm reduction
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - Hatred
 - Racism
 - Hate crimes
 - Sexual assault
 - Stereotyping
 - “feeling under microscope” by society, seen as not “human”
- Homelessness
 - Not enough warming facilities for the homeless in winter - they closed it this year
 - Homelessness is caused by greedy - no one should be hungry or homeless
 - It is hard for homeless people to get a place of our own
 - “We are people too” - lots of people look at homeless/poor people as if they are not human
 - There are elders on the street – that is not okay
 - People are dying of exposure – that is not okay

- The city is not lifting a finger to help people get out of homelessness – The city wants the homeless to move or disappear
- People think that “homeless people are junkies”
- There are many reasons for homelessness
- The average length of homelessness in Chilliwack is 2.7 years
- Short term housing is a solution but most people go in and out of homelessness
- The housing needs to be close to services
- We need a place where people can go to hang out where they are not asked to leave
- People need a bathroom/ a place to set up a tent and not get kicked out
- People used to be able to camp anywhere 8pm-8am, but now there are only 2 parks where you can camp
- When the police show up everything goes downhill
- People do not have access to a shower
- Housing
 - There is not enough low income housing
 - Lack of housing magnifies all issues for self and the community
 - It is impossible to get a place
- Services and Supports
 - People come out of corrections clean, healthy, but there are no supports or places to live - people don't know how to apply to income assistance
 - Need programs to help reintegrate
 - Need support systems to help people get situated
- Discrimination
 - People don't want to rent to people on income assistance
 - When you are on income assistance you get turned away
 - Hospitals treat you differently when you are poor
 - One person was discharged in their hospital gown in winter with nowhere to go
 - Poor people are cast as being in the wrong all the time
 - Security, ops, city need mental health awareness training
 - Many services treat poor people poorly - they need to relate more to what people are going through
- Homelessness
 - Empty promises
 - Experience in a fire – homelessness has seriously affected person and wants to make a difference in other people's lives
 - Worry that this process will be a band aid and there needs to be actions
 - Fighting for places to sit
 - Assumptions, stigma of being criminals
 - The. \$375 rent allowance is not nearly enough
 - Money put towards this meeting should go towards real change – it is not enough to bring people to a nice hotel and offer food

- Housing
 - o Landlords won't rent to couples
 - o People can only afford the rent if they bunk together/share space
 - o People pay \$500 to \$600 per month on rent - the same rent that others pay
- Ministry Services
 - o Medication is not affordable
 - o You are told that you can't get help with medication because Ministry staff don't think you need it
 - o Chilliwack is one of the worst places to be poor
 - o Need to hold government accountable
 - o When every interaction is hard it hurts
 - o These types of negative experiences come out in actions later
- Homelessness
 - o There are safety issues
 - o I saw a 20 year old jump a 60 year old homeless man
 - o People are taking issue into their own hands
 - o Some people have thrown pipe bombs at homeless people
 - o Some people give no thought for danger or the humanity of people
 - o Need to plan ahead, to avoid getting into poverty
 - o People are waiting for change but are tired of waiting
 - o There are no public bathrooms because a few bad apples messed it up for everyone else
- Employment
 - o New apartments, people move in but can't find a job
 - o Brewery opening, people need job training before applying
 - o People move from elsewhere, if they have a home they get the jobs over others
 - o If you don't look the part no one will hire you
- Homelessness
 - o Stores are supposed to help low income people
 - o Local business don't even let homeless people shop there even if they have money
 - o You are constantly watched or accused of stealing
 - o A single homeless person was asked to leave their purse behind the counter -no one else was asked
 - o People say things that are not true
 - o People need a warm place in winter to get out of the elements
 - o A young women who was caught in a fire was told the shelter kicked her out because she was mentally unstable - the shelter told the media that she chose to leave and sleep outside
- Housing
 - o There is not enough low income housing
 - o There is not enough information about the options if they exist
- Cycle of Poverty
 - o Being on disability means limited options

- Can risk going back to work, getting paralyzed, or sign up for PWD – not a real choice
- Drugs
 - The opioid crisis has resulted in people dying here
 - Instead of kicking people out of everywhere have a location where is it safe for people to go take positive action (3 dots)

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

- Services and Supports
 - Need community!
 - The cost of personal hygiene, haircuts, and decent clothes is high – people need to pay these costs if they want to secure housing/jobs
 - People need access to home health and home health support including assistance with costs
 - Financial literacy is an issue for many people
 - Walk the talk (1 dot)
 - Do something with this information
- Health Care
 - This is the age where there is the least privacy ever - yet privacy is the reason that is used for not working together
 - Need better communication (2 dots)
 - One doctor to communicate with all service providers
 - Provide continuity of care - communicate with family members
 - With better communication there is better alignment of services for the client
 - Better acknowledgement/awareness of a person’s cognitive ability will allow for better alignment of services
- Mental Health
 - Creating hubs of care are part of the solution
 - Need a team based approaches
 - Social/food/mental health/housing- similar approach to the Foundry
 - Intake and referral to appropriate services (2 dots)
 - Care teams that are trained to deal with a broader range of issues than just mental health (1 dot)
 - Care teams with access to other supports (i.e. rental subsidies)
 - Should be “one stop shop/one window access”
- Housing
 - Create housing hubs (1 dot)
 - Establish a coordinator to help build linkages/referrals to other community resources
 - Put into place appropriate supports to ensure people stay housed
 - Recognize that rents are too high and help to provide needed supports

- Ministry Services
 - o Better communication
 - o Less restrictions on communication between different levels/departments of government (1 dot)
 - o Main database of information
 - o Rework communication confidentiality plans so information can be shared across Ministries
 - o Privacy concern went from good intention to hindrance
 - o We need to relook at privacy concerns/legislation to ensure that the service needs of clients are not compromised(2 dots)
 - o Standardized confidentiality and access to data base
 - o People should be able to provide an ID number or swipe an ID card that gives access to client information
- Employment
 - o Work BC site needs to step up
 - o There is lack of funding to help people find work
 - o There are only limited job opportunities
- Seniors
 - o There is a lack of senior facilities in Chilliwack
- Government Services
 - o Improve access to ID for everyone (2 dots)
 - o There should be more invitation to social programs where people can go to build bridges
 - o Need to find ways to address the divide in the community
 - o Create community meals that are not based on status
- Children and Youth
 - o Need more social workers to work with families
 - o Support families with family/parenting classes (1 dot)
 - o Need actions to prevent children from being taken from their parents
 - o Need free social programs for low income families (1 dot)
 - o Need to have more facilities for youth
 - o Need resources for a youth drop-in centre
- Storage
 - o Need subsidy to help with cost of storage (1 dot)
 - o Storage lockers help keep supplies
 - o Mailboxes needed
 - o ID storage for people so it is kept safely
- Food Security
 - o People cannot access breakfast or lunch downtown
- Personal Care
 - o People need support for clothing

- Transportation
 - o There are a lack of transit options in Chilliwack
 - o Not everyone can take buses
- Housing
 - o There are a number of slum landlords
 - o Long term community housing is needed
 - o There is lack of respect for bylaws (standards of maintenance)
- Addictions
 - o Look at Dr. Gabor Maté for addiction solutions
- Homelessness
 - o Mentorship and volunteer programs needed (5 dots)
 - o Communication hub to share information and coordinate volunteers to support all areas
- Services and Programs
 - o Public awareness and education
 - o Design awareness campaign/presentation for churches and other organizations (5 dots)
 - o Warming stations and cooling stations (1 dot)
 - o Access to fresh water, fruits and vegetables and washrooms (2 dot)
- Stigma/Judgement
 - o Address the social perception of homelessness
 - o Stigma attaches to all
 - o Hospital discrimination is a big issue and they boot you out
 - o People lack access to proper treatment
 - o Many people are very judgemental
 - o There is a lot of stereotyping of people
 - o People make assumptions
 - o The City keeps moving us along - local bylaw enforcement won't allow homeless people to sit in public places
 - o City staff and the RCMP do not understand the challenges that people are facing
 - o There is lack of empathy and support for those who are homeless
- Crime and Violence
 - o So many people who are homeless have physical exhaustion
 - o People are at risk of physical and verbal abuse from citizens
- Housing
 - o Rental rates are too high
 - o Rents keep going up every year
 - o People can no longer afford the rent
 - o The Ministry needs to increase the rental allowance (2 dots)
- Income Assistance
 - o Increase income assistance for all
 - o There is the need to increase both the shelter and support portion
 - o Need to increase support for seniors (3 dots)

- Services and Programs
 - o Do not know what people are eligible for, federal and provincial
 - o Lack of positive events for people who are poor. Need more of this
 - o Lack of relationship building opportunities
 - o Every person needs different supports – there is no one size fits all/cookie cutter
 - o Lack of proper support
 - o Lack of communication
 - o Lack of resource centre
 - o Laundry facilities
 - o Shower facilities
 - o Someone to talk to/ someone to listen to you
 - o Spiritual support
 - o Food
 - o Place to hang out for the day
 - o Lack of mentorship (1 dot)
 - o Lack of access to counselling
 - o Need for harm reduction counselling
 - o Need a Society to support homeless like in Victoria
 - o Waiting lists for services can be too long
 - o Need more hospitals that have mental health services
 - o Focus should be on mental health recovery - stereotype
- Income Assistance
 - o Let people on welfare make money so they can get out of poverty
 - o There is 3rd/4th generation poverty
 - o Kids are discouraged from working
 - o Poverty affects the entire household
 - o Volunteer work is good - pay people to pick up garbage give gift card for groceries
 - o Make the “beginning” experience harmless- it feels good for people to try and succeed
- Health Care
 - o More doctors are needed
 - o I lost my doctor – he lost his ticket to work
 - o People are forced to use the drop-in clinics
 - o It cost \$15 to get a doctor’s note
 - o There should be a not-for-profit medical centre (1 dot)
- Impact of Poverty
 - o It is a “vicious cycle”
 - o We need to get people off welfare
 - o Find opportunities to create employment for the homeless
 - o Grow food
 - o Provide training/skills (1 dot)
 - o Give people a chance to succeed
 - o Look at other countries in Europe to find solutions (1 dot)

- Recycling - pay people to pick up garbage
- Health Care
 - Earn credits to see a doctor
 - It is hard to access services
 - I can't even get a medical card
- Educational Training
 - Empower people through mentoring programs
- Services and Supports
 - Provide supports for families
 - Provide supports for people with mental health issues (1 dot)
 - More mental health services
 - Provide holistic health treatments
 - Provide access to traditional health
 - Provide life skills programs - teen challenge – need programs funded such as this (2 dot)s
 - Get rid of street mentality of tough kids
 - Teach new skills
 - People have to go through lots of hoops to get services
 - Need role models: especially for boys - more Big Brother programs; and Big Solution
- Housing Affordability
 - Freeze rents (landlords are “gouging”)
- Housing
 - More second stage housing
- Homelessness
 - Pay homeless
 - Provide washroom facilities
 - Allow for homeless camps
 - Ensure people have access to food
 - Ensure people can access the internet
- Housing
 - House was sold and now renting
 - One person without housing (on \$375, nothing available)
 - Renovate BC Housing owned building
 - Long wait list for BC Housing
 - Nurse Practitioners work with BC Housing to get housing
 - BC Housing to explore other properties (old Courthouse, Old Cultural centre)
 - Government funding for housing (BC, feds)
 - Volunteers to help to build trust
- Services and Supports
 - Create a society for benefit the of the homeless/poverty reduction (4 dots)
 - Have government workers with lived experience (1 dot)
 - Provide skills for youth with autism and other youth

- Help youth learn new skills, get experience (5 dots)
- Provide positive learning opportunities/skills for street kids/youth
- Income and Employment
 - Pay for day labour (labour ready) in communities like Chilliwack (5 dots)
 - Allow youth to work even if parents are on welfare (1 dot)
 - Even at \$15/hr, no extras for kids
 - Open “Home Boy Industries” (3 dots)
 - Skills training for guys who want to change
 - A second choice; tattoo removal
 - Help people get work and experience
 - People can’t get services because they do not have ID
 - The government won’t help replace ID if they have a copy
- Housing
 - 80% of B.C. single parent families spend more than 50% of income on rent
 - Need social housing re-instated (7 dots)
 - Need more subsidized housing
 - Need more rent control
 - No more Housing Committees - need government building housing
 - If you have a roof over your head you’ll do better
 - Take away the profit from housing
- Seniors
 - Inequitable pensions
 - Many seniors are struggling
- Capacity Building
 - Adopt socialism - everyone earns the same minimum (1 dot)
 - Like barn raising people collectively help each other
 - Working together makes sense - we all have a vested interest in improving the community (3 dots)
 - Remove the politics from helping
 - Communal living helps to develop community
 - Letsemot (sto: lo word) one hear, one mind (again connect to community)
- Childcare
 - Shorten accreditation for childcare providers to make it easier for people to provide safe childcare options
 - Open more spaces (Responsible childcare program)
 - Have regulated or capped childcare costs (3 dots)
 - Support families for parents to stay at home (1 dot)
 - Child poverty is above average, especially for Indigenous people
- Housing
 - Vacancy rate is low – people are not able to find housing
 - A high percentage of homeless are seniors, specifically elderly women
 - Downtown Chilliwack looks like the Downtown Eastside on Sundays

- The downtown Eastside is safer than Chilliwack
- The city council doesn't think there is a problem
- Seniors need social housing (1 dot)
- There are a lot of vacant stores - these spaces could be used for temporary low income housing
- Heritage buildings are being torn down and made into parking lots
- The homeless population is being bounced around everywhere
- Making the homeless move to different locations is not a solution
- Some of the places are not safe
- Chilliwack is in the top 3-4 for crime in Canada
- Council is pushing back against help from Indigenous community
- Income Assistance
 - Provide adequate and accessible income support for unemployed
 - Raise welfare/disability rates
 - Provide basic income with supports (2 dots)
 - Set targets to reduce the poverty rate by 30 % in 2 years, 75% in 5 years
 - Focus on addressing the heads of marginalized groups
 - Ensure that every BC resident receives an income that reaches 75% of poverty line (basic/ guaranteed income within 2 years) (2 dots)
- Homelessness
 - Set a target that no one has to sleep outside in two years
 - End all homelessness in 4 years (or sooner in our community)
 - Provide good quality housing for the homeless
 - If Medicine Hat ended homelessness, Chilliwack can end it, too (1 dot)
- Government
 - Tax the wealthy more
 - Cap incomes for elected officials and public servants (2 dots)
 - Chilliwack needs a Poverty Reduction Plan
 - Redistribute money within Ministries
 - All government income should be indexed to the cost of living (3 dots)
 - Address the needs of those most likely to be living in poverty (1 dot)
 - Focus on alleviating poverty for "high risk" groups like Indigenous people, single parents, students with debts, PWD recipients, immigrants and refugees, those with mental health challenges, etc.
- Services and Supports
 - Enhance community and mental health services
 - Provide health and mental health care
 - Provide a nutritional support system for people with drug management problems
- Housing
 - Lack of affordable housing is barrier to improving circumstance (1 dot)
- Stigma and Discrimination
 - The stress of poverty creates increased hardship in/out of the home (2 dots)

- Address issues around discrimination (2 dots)
- Health Care
 - Improve access to healthcare, including substance abuse support and primary medical care (1 dot)
 - Provide help with medication costs
 - Provide help with parking and transportation to medical appointments
- Education
 - Increase access to educational opportunities (3 dots)
 - Need more social skill supports (1 dot)
 - Need help to navigate life skills and job skills training
 - Invest early in healthy childhood development
 - Support adult education programs (2 dots)
- Childcare (2 dots)
 - There are not enough affordable childcare spaces
 - Special needs children require additional support
- Employment
 - Need help for the working poor (2 dots)
 - Minimum wage = poverty wage
 - \$18.36/hr is the living wage in the Fraser Valley (1 dot)
 - Part-time temporary work can result in stress and hardship
 - Families are working more than full-time just to make ends meet
 - A Guaranteed Annual Income could address this
 - 40% of children in Chilliwack are at or below the poverty line (2 dots)
- Income Assistance
 - Income assistance levels are too low (1dot)
 - Claw backs are punitive and create a source of anxiety
 - There is the need for more counselling services
- Women
 - Women are disproportionately affected by poverty (2 dots)
 - 80% of single parents are women
 - 50% of income of single parents goes to rent
 - Loss of pension/old age support for women
- Government
 - It is more expensive to leave poverty unaddressed
 - Need to provide supports for families (1 dot)
 - Justice system
 - Health care
 - Sustainability must be one of the guiding principles
 - Need to give people certainty
- Income Support
 - Guaranteed Annual Income (1 dot)
 - Minimum wage tied to a living wage

- Housing
 - o Need more affordable housing
 - o Subsidized/affordable housing stock (1 dot)
 - o Housing should be carefully administered to be safe and exploitation free
- Education
 - o Education is key to elevating a persons' circumstances
 - o There should be student loan forgiveness
 - o Provide expanded access to bursaries
 - o Have fully subsidized post-secondary education
- Childcare
 - o Childcare (ECE) (women) (2 dots)
 - o Create available and affordable childcare
 - o Fully subsidize childcare
 - o Childcare needs to be properly regulated
- Youth
 - o Provide expanded support to youth ages 6 to 16
 - o Provide access to before- and after-school programs
 - o Provide extra-curricular activities to help prevent youths from falling through the cracks
- Income Assistance
 - o Equal pay for women (1 dot)
 - o End of disability claw backs (women) (3 dots)
- Seniors
 - o Improve senior care (women) (1 dot)
- Housing
 - o I would like my own place (1 dot)
 - o There should be subsidized housing for people receiving income assistance
 - o People receiving income assistance and disability assistance should get a flat rate (1 dot)
 - o There should be subsidized housing for all low income people
- Transportation
 - o People need better transportation options (i.e. the bus only goes to Cultus Lake) (1 dot)
 - o Transportation choices are limited
- Income and Employment options
 - o People need higher wages and more jobs
- Housing
 - o Build low income housing (4 dots)
 - o Housing, Housing, Housing, Housing!
- Ministry Services
 - o Not everyone has a cell phone- it is a huge barrier
 - o Stop lying to people in poverty
 - o Keep people accountable
 - o If government can keep making people think they're doing something wrong they can continue to do nothing

- Homelessness
 - o Everyday 2 cops, 2 city people, 2 bylaw officers, walk around displacing people
 - o They won't even let people stand in public places
 - o There are two (2) shelters at the moment
 - o One person was told that they can't stay because they had more than 1 backpack
 - o How can you fit whole life into one bag?
 - o Need to find ways to relax the rules because the current option is to leave things outside where they can get stolen
 - o Chilliwack is one of the only places in the Lower Mainland that has done nothing about homelessness – council has adopted that attitude – “Ignore it and it'll go away”
 - o Establish a working committee of homeless people to solve issues day-to-day
- Employment
 - o Empower people to find employment
 - o Help clean up, get fresh clothes and shower
 - o A place to live is critical - if you do not have a home you can't decide on anything else let alone find work
 - o People need on-the-job training
 - o Need cultural exchange that bring people here from other countries
 - o Have people work directly with low income people
- Stigma/ Judgment
 - o How do we create a culture shift where people view people living in poverty differently?
 - o People don't want handouts they want real support
 - o People want empowerment to get out of the rut and move forward
 - o Provide training for frontline staff - health professionals, doctors, city officials, police
 - o Need to destigmatize poverty - see people as people
 - o Need outreach workers on street to help liaise with security
 - o Need to meet people where they are and support them to get the services they need instead of needing them to go to an office for help
 - o Have more flexible supports that can be more responsive to individual needs
- Income
 - o Need more money to cover basic needs to get the services that they need – food, hydro, clothing, rent, etc.
- Healthcare
 - o Medical care – should be free, including medications
- Housing! (5 dots)
- Plane tickets to Fiji (2 dots)
- Homelessness
 - o City council should relax existing bylaws that limit capacity
 - o Create a “one stop” shelter that includes drop-in services
 - o Need a semi-permanent campsite in a fenced area - need a “tent subdivision” that includes portable garages/ sheds, port-a-potties, communal plumbing, policies/rules
 - o This type of proposal has been put forward to the community but they said no

- Transportation
 - o Provide tokens for cab fare to and from foodbanks, especially when you have bags of groceries
- Housing
 - o Create more appropriate and affordable housing for single people and families (4 dots)
 - o Have more affordable housing that allows pets (2 dots)
 - o Housing is the foundation that people need for mental/spiritual wellness (2 dots)
 - o Provide more co-op housing
 - o More criteria- based housing
- Shelters
 - o More shelters for men, women and families (1 dot)
- Mental Health and Addiction
 - o More long term addictions treatment (residential) that also provides housing
 - o Additional treatment services could reduce the street population by half (6 dots)
 - o Develop more mental health treatment centres that allows for long term stays to allow people time to heal (2 dots)
 - o Provide counselling services and more funding for mental health and addiction services in Chilliwack (1 dot)
- Dental Care
 - o Provide dental care for children, seniors, low income families
 - o Provide more support for PWD (increase max of \$1000) (4 dots)
- Income Assistance
 - o PPMB should automatically roll over to PWD after 2 years if you have the qualifying factors, less paperwork and applications! (1 dot)
- Education
 - o Implement life skills training in schools (1 dot)
 - o Provide funding/resources/access to training programs for work/job skills (2 dots)
 - o Provide rental awareness training in schools for tenancy rights and communication
 - o Open more nursing and other leading program spaces in post-secondary institutions
- Employment
 - o Have an electronic work record, similar to Electronic Health records
 - o Increase minimum wage to a living wage (2 dots)
 - o The main solution to poverty is a job
- Housing
 - o Rental caps and housing that provides 24 hour support/wrap around services
 - o Landlords need to be held accountable
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - o Create more community awareness about poverty
 - o Bridge the gaps between the different classes
 - o Work to create a level of understanding and acceptance (1 dot)
 - o Reduce the stigma of poverty
 - o Build community inclusion

- Strengthen community connections so that people reach out and support each other
- Transportation
 - Have more consistent bus transportation options (1 dot)
- Health Care
 - More doctors and nurse practitioners (2 dots)
- Access to Government Services
 - In person services at government offices (2 dots)
 - Better connected services/ better advertising for the services that are available
 - An intake and referral process that can direct someone to best services for them (1 dot)
 - Increase in IA/PWD/ CPP/ CPPD/ CPPR/ CIS/ PPMB/ SAFER allowances (2 dots)
 - Increase the rental amount for IA/PWD to match community housing costs (3 dots)
- Housing
 - More rental subsidies (2 dots)
 - More subsidized housing (1 dots)
 - More housing (2 dots)
- Taxes
 - Higher earnings exemptions (1 dot)
 - Regulate BC hydro and gas prices (car and home and food costs) (1 dot)
- Transportation
 - Provide higher transportation allowances/ subsidies (1 dot)
 - The bus pass should be for all not just PWD
- Childcare
 - Increase the childcare subsidy (1 dot)
- Housing
 - Improve access to low income housing
 - More low barrier housing (1 dot)
 - More no barrier housing
- Health Care
 - Increase access to treatment beds for adults and youth (1 dot)
- Seniors
 - Strengthen access to services and supports for seniors
 - Index pensions
- Education
 - Strengthen financial literacy program training (1 dot)
- Government Services
 - Improve coordination and access to government services
 - Provide greater continuity within government and across agencies
- Housing
 - Create more affordable housing
 - Provide more subsidized housing (7 dots)
 - Build more housing
 - Strengthen tenant protections

- Require more accountability from the landlords
- A local Housing Authority needs to be put in place (1 dot)
- The BC Housing waiting is too long, we need to find ways to create a shorter waiting list (1 dot)
- Create a rent to own program (3 dots)
- Have more subsidized housing for people in different circumstances/ stages: singles, family, couples, seniors, PWD
- Mental Health
 - Provide more access to mental health services with 24 hours support for families, singles, and seniors (1 dot)
- Health Care
 - Increase coverage for dental, vision, medical and counselling (8 dots)
 - Need an urgent system in place for medical and dental emergencies
- Government Services
 - Better instructions and accessible help when filling out application forms (5 dots)
 - Better timeline as to when and how to ask for help (1 dot)
 - List of what programs/advocacy groups that are available (1 dot)
 - Agents to help people fill out the forms
 - Forms need to be simplified (3 dots)
 - Have drop down boxes with definitions
 - Need another way to fill out the forms
 - Need to be able to speak with someone if you need assistance
 - If there is an error just show people where they made the error
 - Help people fill out the sections where they made an error
 - Provide people with a list of where to go for advocates (4 dots)
 - Need more advocates (2 dots)
 - Flowchart or map that shows the resources or supports available for specific situations
 - Have people available to be able to dispatch people to the right services (1 dot)
- Education
 - Implement life skills training in school
- Community
 - Have ways for people to give back to the community (2 dots)
 - Create opportunities for volunteering or employment
 - Help people to give back and alleviate pressures on the communities
- ID
 - Provide assistance to help people replace lost or expired ID
 - People need help so that they do not get denied their cheques
- Addictions and Substance Use
 - Make Narcan kits available at gas stations
 - Provide community training for Narcan

- Health Care
 - o Allow for longer hospital stays for people who are sick - the hospital kick people out too quickly (1 dot)
- Homelessness
 - o Bring Our Place Society model to Chilliwack including inside storage
 - o Provide people with multiple options including harm reduction/ safe consumption sites (2 dots)
- Income Assistance
 - o Increase the money available to singles, families and seniors through income assistance
 - o Look at the model used in Ontario (3 dots)
- Community Services
 - o Have a drop-in centre where people feel welcome (5 dots)
 - o Provide laundry, shower, supports, meals, games room, resource, phones, job search, ID, storage, volunteer opportunities, computer access, pets
 - o Provide supports for those with addictions (1 dot)
 - o Focus on prevention programs for families so they don't become homeless
 - o Provide better access to programs that are available
 - o Put lived experience on Boards, Committee, etc. (2 dots)
 - o Open a daytime drop-in centre (3 dots)
- Housing
 - o Create tiny houses for the homeless (1 dot)
 - o Explore container housing
 - o Build more affordable housing (7 dots)
 - o Pay rent directly to landlord and establish a cap so that the rent can't be increased
 - o Increase shelter rates
 - o Create housing hub to co-ordinate access to lower cost units
- Attitudes
 - o Build public awareness and support about the needs of people in poverty
- Increase income assistance (4 dots)
 - o Provide more funding for BC Housing (2 dots)
 - o Provide more rental subsidies
 - o Improve access to social services(5 dots)
- Childcare
 - o Provide support for people to set up affordable childcare centres
 - o Affordable childcare means more people can work (2 dots)
 - o It takes a village, so we need to help each other and not rely on government only
- Accountability
 - o Too many groups blur the lines of government responsibility
 - o Focus on who is responsible for what
 - o Take a community approach to getting things done
 - o See something that needs to be done and do it
 - o Don't wait for the government (3 dots)

- Step up and take action
- Community Stigma
 - The visibility or impact of the poverty issues can be a good thing
 - We need to change perceptions
 - The more we all have connections the greater chance that people will be motivated to change
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - Provide more mental health spaces in institutional settings (1 dots)
 - Increase mental health services in the community including – add more longterm stay beds (5 dots)
 - Make connections to resources (3 dots)
 - Increase harm reduction supports (2 dots)
- Government Initiatives
 - Create separation between church and state (4 dots)
 - Recognize the linkage to Human Rights including the fact that everyone has right to have a roof over head (1 dot)
 - Address homelessness
 - Provide universal publicly funded childcare
 - Increase minimum wage (1 dot)
 - Improve earnings and working conditions
 - Enhance support for training and education
 - Provide access to free college education
 - Reduce tuition fees by 50%.
 - Allow income assistance recipients to access post-secondary training and apprenticeships (Free) (1 dot)
 - Offer nutritious meal programs through the schools to address poverty
 - Have government supported training/ programs by partnerships with businesses (1 dot)
- Housing
 - Put a cap on rents to help bring down housing costs (1 Dot)
- Homelessness
 - Build modular shelters/ units for youth, adults, seniors, and women (2 dots)
 - Adopt an Affordable Housing Plan
 - Create public washrooms, showers, laundry facilities for the homeless (2 dots)
 - Help the working poor sleeping in their cars
 - Provide homeless campgrounds with facilities for the homeless (1 dot)
 - Provide drop-in centres for youth, adults, seniors, and women (2 dots)
 - Provide people with a place to go and nap, warm and a safe space to hang-out (1 dot)
 - More funding for programs, housing, disabilities(1 dot)
 - More funding for non-profits (2 dots)
 - More low or no barriers support (1 dot)

- Addiction and Substance Use
 - o More safe injection sites (1 dot)
 - o More detox, trauma services, disability supports (1 dot)
 - o A bigger hospital with more mental health and treatment services
 - o Transition house for women
 - o More outreach (2 dots)
- Taxes
 - o Higher taxes for the rich
 - o Low taxes for lower income households (1 dot)
 - o Lower or capped utilities
- Health Care
 - o Better dental care for people with low or no income
- Homelessness
 - o Hand-out gift cards to the homeless
 - o Re-open the bridge for the homeless (1 dot)
- Childcare
 - o More and cheaper childcare
- Food Security
 - o Cheaper food
 - o Transportation to the Salvation Army (1 dot)
 - o More nutritious food at a cheaper rate
 - o More donations from grocery stores (1 dot)
 - o A “food bank” (3 dots)
 - o Deliver food for more accessibility (1 dot)
 - o More choices of fresh nutritional foods
- Services and Support
 - o More subsidized access to recreation/ activities (1 dot)
 - o More access to computers and more help with applications
- Education
 - o Free post-secondary education (1 dot)
 - o More education and skills training including skills training for daily living, life coaching, cooking (1 dot)
 - o More education and training around technology
- Housing
 - o The solution is so simple – housing first, everything else can follow (3 dots)
 - o Not even sure increases in income assistance would help as much as housing – housing keeps coming back as the number 1 solution
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - o People not in poverty need to understand what it’s like to be poor – empathy (2 dots)
 - o Educate the community/general public on how to interact with each other (1 dot)
 - o Parties at park bring homeless people and the broader community together
 - o Helps to build connections

- Get people to volunteer at shelters
- Build community empathy
- Government officials should spend a few nights outside
- Shelters
 - Change shelter policies to be open regardless of weather –
 - Even if it is 0 C in the evening by 10 pm the temperatures can drop through the night
 - People are dealing with pneumonia and have nowhere to go
 - “How anyone can think we’re doing this by choice” (1 dot)
- Youth Services
 - The Triangle Resources Program is a good model to follow (1 dot)
 - Instead of sending kids to jail for petty crimes, send to Triangle
 - Provide youth support instead of punishing them
 - Young people need things to do to stay occupied safe, entertained and out of trouble