



Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

**Fort Nelson, BC
March 22, 2018**

Introduction and Event Summary

On March 22, 2018, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Fort Nelson, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 50 to 60 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 Curtis Dickie followed by opening remarks from Shane Simpson (Minister of Poverty Reduction and Social Development).

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 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 Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction 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?

- Child Care
 - o There is not enough child care for young children, toddlers and babies
 - o There is some child care for ages 7 and older but nothing for younger kids
 - o “I end up staying home – if I had childcare I could get an education and I could get a proper job”
 - o There is a lack of opportunity for education and training especially without affordable childcare
 - o It is not worth getting a job if you spend all of the money on childcare and can’t make rent
 - o No one is available to do childcare but there are a lot of families and kids that would benefit
- Health Care
 - o There is no maternity ward in Fort Nelson
 - o To give birth you have to go to Prince George
 - o All of the expenses while you are waiting to go into labour have to be covered by the family, including, travel costs, as well as, where you stay
 - o As an employer, it is hard to hire young females because they will have to leave the community to have their babies
 - o There is also a shortage of doctors in general in Fort Nelson - you are very fortunate if you have a family doctor
- Mental Health Support
 - o There are not a lot of mental health services available in the community
 - o Services are not broadcast out – so it is hard to know what is available
 - o There have been programs like AA but none on reserve
 - o AA is held 3 times a week in town
 - o The rate of alcohol use and drug use is getting worse – people are drinking and doing drugs because there is nothing to do
 - o Some people are drinking and passing out while on the road and dying
 - o People feel a sense of shame
 - o There are not enough quality mental health services in the community
 - o People are under a lot of stress - for housing, jobs
 - o For many people the economic downturn has meant a lack of hope (2dots)
 - o Too many people now feel a lack of purpose (1dot)
 - o There is a burn out - the stress is turning into physical illness and depression
- Employment
 - o More training (or re-training) is needed
 - o People need access to education for employment - this would help
 - o The last two years have been a downward spiral for many people
 - o To get well, people have to get employment that brings satisfaction
 - o Right now unemployment is the biggest problem in the region
 - o There is not a single business that is not struggling
 - o There is no real economic activity
- Education
 - o Teachers and local government are doing well

- Some people are graduating, but many are not passing
- Kids are being pushed out with no skills or education
- As an employer, just pushing people through school is not the right solution
- There is a lack of vision if people don't have goals
- The goal would be to make money, to get the economy to the way it used to be
- There is a need for inspiration to become better, instead of just existing
- With the strong economy gone, most people don't know what to do
- People who drive into town see the burned down Robin's donuts
- There is the potential for forestry development and other types of employment
- There is too much political infighting that stops these opportunities from going forward
- There is a division between the First Nations and the wider community
- We have to look at ways to bring the community together
- Housing
 - There is a need to get funding for more housing
 - There are many people who do not want to move off the reserve because living on reserve is more affordable than in town
 - For the housing on reserve the rents are between \$475 to \$700 per month
 - Housing has become more affordable now that there is not as much demand
 - There are a lot of rental units available and rents have gone down
 - A family of five (5) gets \$750 per month for rent from the Ministry so the gap is not as great as it used to be
- Education
 - People are trying to move forward, but without childcare and other issues it is a challenge
 - Accessing post-secondary education is a challenge
 - If you want to operate big machines, you have to go to school in Dawson Creek
 - The rent in Dawson Creek is twice as much as the rent in Fort Nelson – it means that it is unaffordable for some
 - Why do people have to go somewhere else for school?
 - If you aren't sure if you can complete the course you don't try - instead you just stay home
 - There are a lack of training opportunities in Fort Nelson
 - A lot of the opportunities have been cut due to the downturn in the economy
- Ministry Services
 - Accessing services can be hard
 - For many of the services you have to apply online
 - For the single parent initiative you are told to apply online but when you try to apply online and you get stuck, you are told to go to the office
 - Ministry offices in different parts of B.C. offer different services (i.e. Service BC)
- Employment
 - There is a lack of employment
 - There is a competition for work
 - It is difficult for some people to find work
 - Lack of education can also be a barrier

- Employment opportunities and skills training is needed (1 dot)
- Education
 - Educational opportunities are needed to help people out of poverty
 - Finance workshops could help
- Health Care
 - For women to give birth, they have to leave town
 - One girl had to move to Alberta to stay with her dad so she did not have to pay rent
 - One woman had to take her children and live in Prince George in her car for a week until she was ready to give birth
 - The health bus goes once a week
 - The clinic is not as busy as it used to be – there are not as many people as there used to be
- Seniors' Housing
 - Supportive housing is expensive but gives good services.
 - People want to use it but can't afford it
 - There are eight seniors' housing units that are not full
 - If there were government subsidies for these units they would be full
 - We need money to build an Elders facility, but there is not money to operate it
- Housing
 - People have seen a drop in real estate values
 - Some people are over-leveraged and are losing their home
- Food Security
 - The food bank is only available every 2 weeks
- Homelessness
 - There is a lack of shelters for people who are homeless
 - It is pretty common for young people to leave town
 - We need funding for shelters and for a transition house
 - We need more social/affordable housing/partnerships with BC Housing
- Mental Illness and Addictions
 - Mental health and addictions are challenges
 - Need a club house/drop-in for people with mental illness/addictions
- Health Care
 - Fort Nelson is a stop on the Alaska Highway
 - Sometimes people become sick and stay in the hospital in Fort Nelson
- Transportation
 - The Greyhound is pulling out of town – people are losing this vital service
 - A lot of people get around town by riding their bikes
 - We are losing our seniors' bus hours
 - The seniors' bus used to cost \$5 each way but the hours are being cut
 - There is only limited access in winter and limited working hours
 - There is no public transportation
 - Greyhound will be gone in May or June – this will be a real loss for the community
- Health Care
 - It can be expensive to see a specialist

- You often need to find your own way home/pay your own money
- Airfare is about \$400 to \$500 each way - \$900 return to Vancouver
- It is sometimes cheaper to drive to Fort St. John and then fly
- These communities are relatively remote
- There is a significant distance between neighboring communities and health care centers
- The Northern health bus helps to build important connections but runs relatively infrequently
- When you need health care, you become separated from your family
- Seniors
 - Some seniors are at risk of abuse
 - Seniors living with children who have addictions can be at particular risk of abuse
 - Seniors and elders need more subsidized housing and assisted living options
 - There is only one (1) worker to care for seniors in their home
 - Many seniors experience isolation
 - There is a seniors' development that was built with the funds raised through donations
 - Right now three (3) of the seven (7) beds are full because seniors can't afford the service
 - The Senior Society tried to reach out to BC Housing for help but was refused
 - Seniors used to move out of the community but now they are choosing to stay
 - There are only some facilities for seniors – long term care and extended care at the hospital
- Employment
 - There is not enough employment
 - The mill and gas industry was going well, but that is gone now
 - The key economic indicators show the community is struggling
 - We have an increase in clientele accessing FC and Work BC
 - Income assistance is at 33% - 5 years ago it was at 1%
 - We have counselors but no treatment
- Child Care
 - There are not a lot of child care spaces
 - The cost of child care is high - about \$800/ month
- Housing
 - We don't have a lot of affordable housing
 - The houses that we have are not affordable
- Education and Training
 - People have to leave the community to go for training but they can't afford to go
 - The ABT program is in jeopardy
 - People often leave the community for training and then don't come back
 - The community has lost safety classes
 - When money was good in oil/gas people quit school to work
 - When the money ran out people came back but did not have the education to find other work
 - Many people are unskilled and have huge debts
 - In the last 4 years more than 200 kids dropped out of school
 - It is getting harder to find teachers who will move into the community
 - When you are trying to attract families/couples it is even harder

- There may be a job for one partner (i.e. teaching) but there is no employment for the spouse
- The Economy
 - Big players used to come donate to the food bank \$10K to \$1 million
 - These businesses had to pull away because of the slow down
 - There was a decrease in donations from oil company employees
 - The needs have increased but the donations have decreased
 - There was a lot of money in the community before – it made it easier to get help for the different programs and services
 - Four (4) or five (5) companies are fighting for the same work now (i.e. road clearing companies)
 - Big contracts go elsewhere because of the lack of a trained workforce
- Ministry Services
 - There are limited Ministry services in town
 - There is no income assistance or employment insurance office in town
 - If you can't get through to speak to someone you give up
 - Many people gave up because they just could not get through
- Minimum Wage
 - Minimum wage is too low
- Services and Supports
 - There are a lot of single parents due to a high teen pregnancy rate
 - This can be the beginning of the poverty cycle
 - There is also a lack of childcare and childcare spaces in the community
 - People do not have money to spend on groceries
 - There is a lack of service providers
 - The services that are here have a monopoly so people don't have choice
 - People need more mental health supports
 - There is competition among the non-profit organizations in the community
 - Everyone is doing their best to survive – so it is hard to work together
 - Everyone has a different vision of what needs to be done
 - Funding is tight
 - Organizations may only receive funding for six (6) months
 - Programs like life skills program – you just get the program going and then you lose the funding - when you lose the funding you also lose the staff
 - The community have to fight for everything
 - HIV/AIDS funding was stopped after one year
- Health Care
 - Health care and health care authorities are functioning but are disconnected
 - Most health care services are centralized
 - Service providers are not living in the communities where the service is provided
 - There is a social cost to poverty
- The Impact of Poverty
 - No work - not enough to do
 - It becomes a cycle, that's not an easy fix – it becomes learned behavior

- Use drugs and alcohol to “self-medicate”
- Can’t maintain a lifestyle with no work
- Lack of life skills to deal with windfalls
- Lack of social service workers
- Pattern of behavior when hard times come
- Shame attracted to your past, carried forward and passed on
- First Nations
 - Indigenous relations institutionalized not nurtured so don’t know how
 - Province is one of the last to recognize Metis people
- Transportation
 - Transportation challenges
 - Cost
 - Losing Greyhound
 - Planes are too expensive
 - No flight to Fort St. John anymore
- First Nations/ Indigenous Relations
 - Poverty causes otherwise friendly people to turn on their neighbor
 - The community struggles with issues of racism
 - Was vocal and hurt feelings
 - Conflict related to agriculture benefits payments only for First Nations not Metis
 - Non-Indigenous don’t understand how positive that was for the community as a whole
- Impact of Poverty
 - One of the impacts of poverty is that people react negatively
 - Community members are frustrated – it leads to violence that may not have otherwise happen
 - Can cause someone to go down a hole
 - Contributes to alcohol and drug abuse
 - Working poor – not enough to pay for housing and transportation
- Housing
 - The rent in the community is high
 - It is hard to share housing with others -creates conflicts
 - There is not much subsidized housing available
 - There are a lack of things to do and places to go when you are poor
 - There is no public transportation in Fort Nelson so this is a barrier
- Addictions and Substance Abuse
 - People fall into the cycle of spending on alcohol and drugs
 - There is no money for food left over
 - It becomes a coping mechanism
 - Treatment centre has a long waiting list and people have to travel to get there
 - Detox centre availability is limited
 - People have no support once the program is done
 - Metis and non-Indigenous people don’t have access to funding for treatment

- Social isolation
 - o People feel out of the “loop”
 - o No interactions with others
 - o When you are not in a work environment you can feel very alone
 - o There is a lack of inclusion
 - o Lack of involvement in society
 - o People have skills but if they are not able to show it – it can affect your sense of self-worth
 - o People are not able to support their family like before
 - o Depression caused by that isolation
 - o Families separated – children have to leave to find work
 - o Fathers leave families for work and mothers stay at home with the kids
 - o There is stigma associated with not working and contributing
- Children and Youth
 - o Almost lost children to system because system didn’t agree with parenting
 - o The system will always react negatively to information and not work well with families
 - o It is hard to find qualified childcare
 - o Youth activities are expensive
- The impact of Poverty
 - o Work gives people a sense of purpose
 - o Stigma to being poor
 - o Often people feel ashamed and isolated
- Stigma and Judgment
 - o Cycle of abuse needs to be broken
 - o Need to feel useful for self and society
 - o Being able to get out to the bigger city once in a while helps with isolation
 - o Always know that somewhere, somehow you could get hit with comments related to racism
- Income/ Employment
 - o People need fair wages
 - o People need to be able to afford rent and food
 - o Daycare costs
 - o Parenting support
 - o There is a lack of work
 - o Often only part time work is available
 - o Isolation
 - o Transportation
 - o Income assistance rates are too low
 - o There is not enough money to afford the cost of housing
 - o There is a lack of subsidized housing
 - o There is no work
- Seniors
 - o Pensions are low so people are struggling
 - o People are living below the poverty line

- Seniors work their whole life and benefits aren't enough
- Health Care
 - There is a lack of access to health care
 - Maternity services are outside of community
 - No surgery
 - People travel out of the community - Fort St John, Vancouver, and Dawson Creek
 - It is hard to access medical doctors
 - Often people don't go to avoid the long waiting lists
 - MRI services 800 people ahead in line, have to travel outside of the community
 - There is no physio
 - For work related injuries, people have to travel and then can't pay their bills
 - There is no nutritionist
 - Expenses related to out of town appointments can get expensive
- Addictions and Substance Use
 - Not enough access to services like drug and alcohol services
 - There are huge wait lists that often causes relapse
 - Treatment wait times are 1 to 4 months
 - No detox in Fort Nelson
 - Need to be sober for 24 hours but can't access
 - Used to be 7- 10 days in hospital
 - Detox and withdrawal management – the nearest is Dawson Creek
 - The opioid crisis is affecting the community
- Health Care
 - The hospital is empty - they have taken the beds out to reduce the budget
 - To get medevacked to Fort St. John is expensive
 - The spouse can't travel with the patient so it breaks up families
 - Cancer care and a medical diagnosis takes longer
 - Medical tests means travel out of town expenses
 - Medical appointments online (telehealth)
 - Video doctors to treat and to help make a diagnosis
 - People with addictions – Whitehorse solution
 - Use video supports for doctor and nutrition
 - Need better access to medical services (5 dots)
 - Disabilities and health support, wheel chairs second hand
 - Mental health support has long wait lists
 - People in crisis in the community are pulling together to help support through Facebook
 - There is no telehealth support
 - Clients for NWT can't access Northern Health services
 - Treaty 8 have to travel to Edmonton
 - Hope Air helps people for medical trips
 - Fort Nelson no longer has access to their service

- Appointments in Grand Prairie get referred to Alberta Health, individuals have to wait longer for BC Health Care because Alberta denies services to residents
- Many people are suffering from a history of trauma
- Barriers result in delayed access to care and treatment
- Addictions and Mental Health
 - People who struggle with addictions and mental health have a harder time with employment
 - Often people can't keep their jobs because of their addiction
 - Money goes to addictions
 - There are not enough resources for people who are struggling with mental health and addictions
 - The cost of prescriptions is high
- Transportation
 - There will be no Greyhound after May
- Services and Support
 - Access to legal services is limited
 - There are not enough services in the community to meet the full range of needs
- Affordability
 - Hydro/ gas costs (\$120/month)
 - Heating is expensive- costs of Hydro, Gas, wood; heat is \$45/month and gas is \$95/month
 - Internet costs are high
 - People have poor or limited access
 - The cost of bills are high – the average cost is \$130 per month
 - Shaw and Northwest are both slow and priced too high
- Geographic Differences
 - A Northern Living Allowance is needed
 - Need tax credit to balance medical and other costs
 - Transportation
 - "Fort forgotten"
 - Cheaper to fly to Hawaii from Fort Nelson than to Fort St John(\$1400 to \$1500 return) from \$600 before
- Food Security
 - Food costs are very high
 - The quality of food is very poor
- Health Care
 - MSP covers \$250, the rest is out of pocket
- Education/Training
 - Need ticket to work in the industry
 - \$4000 costs, only good for a certain time
- Affordability
 - To fix a leaking well you need \$100k
 - Bills are high – hydro \$100 per month or higher
 - Internet is expensive about \$90 for basic service

- Gas is about \$141/L
- Heating bills are very high due to the longer winters
- May people struggle with food insecurity
- There is not enough money to buy nutritious food
- Can't save money for legal aid after grocery bills and rent
- Childcare
 - Need affordable childcare
 - People on minimum wage cannot afford child care costs
 - Not enough money to make ends meet
- Services and Supports
 - Business barriers due to security clearance costs \$10k
 - MOW for 2 times a week \$10
 - Basic needs can't be met
 - Banks should waive account fees for low income
- Transportation
 - Central Mountain air is 2-3 times the price but it is the only airline
 - Population is declining due to job loss and economic down turn
- Utilities
 - Generator was lower than what we pay now hooked up to hydro
 - The natural gas hookup will cost more
 - Winter means you are stuck in the community
 - Winters are long- 8 months
 - Winter driving conditions are not safe
 - There is snow every month - very wet and damp
- Health Care
 - Price of medicine
 - Generic brands or what is covered aren't as a good
 - People have limited money for medication
- Employment
 - The sawmill shut down
 - Canfor has rights to lumber/timber
 - They can't sell for 10 years
 - The oil patch is closed with abandoned wells
 - Site C Dam has a large portion of workers from Alberta - 37%
 - 50% of provincial revenue used to come from Fort Nelson
 - The community didn't benefit and now the community feels forgotten
 - Many of the jobs are unsustainable or the employment created in variable
 - People can't collect enough hours for EI
 - If you own your own home, you are not eligible for income assistance
- Training and Education
 - Make ticket requirements for jobs in industry
 - Requires dozens of ticket/safety requirements that cost money

- Driver license renewals cost a lot of money
- The province is selling raw materials that should be processed here
- Health Care
 - Long waitlists for extended care
 - Support requires you to have a home in order to have home care
 - Need more care at home – income assistance won't help cover this cost because it is not life or death
- Ministry Services
 - Have to pay taxes on hunting, fishing licenses
 - There is a lot of confusion and issues around communication
 - There is real confusion for Indigenous people getting sustenance licenses
 - There are not enough moose to sustain a family (1 per year, compared to 34 that are needed)
 - Alberta comes here to hunt and the moose population is now way down
 - People are now eating elk
 - Horse blankets used to be given out every year but no longer
 - One bullet is given instead of a box of shells
 - Treaty money never goes up

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

- Employment
 - We need funding for a co-op business to help build industry and grow jobs (4 dots)
 - There are not a lot of stable career jobs
 - We need to hire locally (1 dot)
- Training and Education
 - Need employment that offers full time employees with added benefits (2 dots)
 - Need for life skills and money management education
 - Education results in more flexibility and opportunity for people (2 dots)
 - Education (2dots)
 - Curriculum (1dot)
 - Teach life skills (2 dots)
 - Want elders to share their knowledge and experience
 - Provide people with access to education – i.e. training in carpentry
 - People could put these skills to use by fixing up houses
- Childcare
 - More licensed spaces
 - More access
 - More subsidy

- Forestry
 - Logs that are from here should be processed here
 - If this was done it would create jobs
 - When logs are shipped off site it means that the employment is not here (2 dots)
- Transportation
 - o Transportation (2 dots)
 - o There is a need for subsidized transportation
 - o We need a bus service that is local (1dot)
 - o There is a high cost of fuel – it doesn't make sense that gas costs 36 cents more per litre when compared to Prince George (PG) (2 dots)
- Geographic Differences
 - o Need to take into consideration geographic differences/fair share
- Housing (2 dots)
 - o Subsidized housing needs to be increased
 - o Houses should be fixed or replaced
 - o Need more affordable housing in the community
 - o There is lack of funding/programs for housing
 - o There is lack of funding to rehabilitate/improve the quality of the existing housing
 - o Housing on reserve is poor quality
 - o Habitat for Humanity helps to meet needs
- Resources
 - o Apprenticeship programs
 - o Volunteer Programs
 - o BC 2nd type program
- Services and Supports
 - o The cost of technology/access to the internet is expensive
 - o It costs \$157 for 300 GB and \$130 for 150 GB
 - o The internet can help the community to deal with the social isolation (2dots)
 - o The internet provides important opportunities for teaching youth
 - o The internet is part of the social infrastructure in communities
- Stigma
 - o People feel the stigma of poverty – it affects their self-worth
 - o People need training and access to opportunities
 - o People need support to purchase a home
 - o Need more treatment options for mental health and addictions (4 dots)
 - o Need to have open drop-in centres where people can come to access services
 - o Need to provide support for clients and their families
- Food Security
 - o People cannot always access good quality food
 - o There may be ways to use greenhouses/geothermal technology better
 - o Grow our own produce
 - o Creates more affordable produce and reduces energy and costs

- Employment
 - o Lack of jobs (3 dots)
 - o Need to create viable employment opportunities
- Health Care
 - o There are not enough supports for people with disabilities
- Improve transportation choice
 - o People have limited transportation choices
- Improve Child Care
 - o People have limited child care choices
 - o There are no daycares spaces
 - o Women have to leave community to give birth (1dot)
- Education
 - o People have limited education choices (1 dot)
- Employment
 - o Many of the jobs available are low wage (2dots)
- Address social Isolation
 - o There is a lot of social isolation in the community
 - o Social isolation happens for a number of reasons including lack of money
 - o People are unable to afford extracurricular activities for adults and youth
 - o The burden of child support is fully on ex-spouses
- Ministry Services
 - o Direct access to centralized 1-800 services (4 dots)
 - o Incentives and support for new businesses (4 dots)
- Housing
 - o Need more affordable rental housing
 - o Need more mobile homes
 - o A lot of the housing is poor quality
 - o Need to improve the quality of the housing
 - o Need more rental housing that allows pets
 - o People feel extra stress at the thought of not being able to keep their pets
- Education and Training
 - o More programs for life skills
 - o More single parent programs
 - o More training around budgeting (2 dots)
 - o Time management
 - o Nutrition
 - o Motivation/ Self esteem
 - o Increase the training programs that are available
 - o Provide more money for non-profit organizations
- Child Care
 - o Access to affordable childcare is needed
 - o Subsidized daycare is needed
 - o Increase the number of daycare spots

- Transportation
 - o Getting public transportation – BC transit (2 dots)
- Education and Training
 - o Funding for infrastructure for colleges
 - o Video conferencing
 - o University transfer
 - o Target youth and those who need to increase their skills
- The Economy
 - o Bring back industry
 - o Invest in technology
 - o Build the infrastructure for video chat/counselling
 - o Look for ways to use technology to support people with mental illness and addictions
- Geographic Differences
 - o Break down geographic barriers
 - o Canfor has the rights to timber/all the forest products – i.e. the mill
 - o Need to look at how these rights were given
 - o Need to find a way to ensure companies have a commitment to the community
 - o We are waiting for Canfor to start the mill – it would provide 400 jobs if it would open (7 dots)
- Health Care
 - o Medical – allow specialist consultation via video conference
 - o Provide incentives for specialists for mobile doctors
 - o Provide travel benefits to help with the cost of medical travel (1 dot)
 - o Re-visit medical credentials – to allow more doctors to practice (1 dot)
 - o Establish interprovincial credentials for medical
 - o Maternity Services – have some kind of housing owned by Northern Health so people can stay rather than pay for travel (2 dots)
- Services and Supports
 - o Build better public awareness of the programs available
 - o Provide more incentives for young people to get educated
 - o Provide more consistent multi-year funding for non-profits to allow for greater job consistency and program consistency
 - o Ensure that there is sustainable funding available
- Child Care
 - o Provide more child care options/solutions
 - o Now one person has to stay at home with kids while the other earns
 - o Provide free hygiene and feminine products, including shampoo, soap and toilet paper (1 dot)
 - o Provide free haircuts
 - o Provide free medications and vaccinations that are free of charge
 - o Provide free water and better water quality
 - o Fund organizations that provide services like the food bank, clothing, and other centres (1dot)
 - o Provide access to affordable dental work, eye glasses and medications (1 dot)
 - o Provide access to transportation affordable flights and housing (1 dot)
 - o Provide workshops and services

- Provide places for people to belong and earn their keep
- “teach people how to fish rather than giving them a fish”
- Provide public showers and free laundry (1 dot)
- Make public washrooms clean and available
- Establish a Job Centre for short term opportunities
- Promote indigenous art work and crafts – advertise well/ promote talent to increase self-efficacy (1 dot)
- Create outdoor activity spaces and provide equipment for adults
- Waive fees for BC Services and care
- Increase the number of transient shelters spaces including the number of beds and rooms
- Have a local place to make long distance calls - helps people to reach out to family and stay connected
- Provide affordable childcare spaces
- Families need a living wage for community they are living in (1 dot)
- Quality and affordable childcare are a significant issue (1 dot)
- All day childcare spaces are full (2 dots)
- Childcare employers earn low wages (1 dot)
- Health Care
 - Bring back maternity care, dental, orthodontic and surgery (3 dots)
 - Subsidize the private senior care facilities so that it is affordable
- Housing
 - Elder care could improve if you build and operate a new seniors facility - it also creates employment
 - Elders don’t want to leave their homes, - they would rather have nurses come in
 - Promote information about programs, services, and the supports that are available
 - Money from industry should stay in the community for the benefit of the people
 - Industry includes gas, mining, forestry, agriculture
- Education
 - Provide training and education (2 dots)
 - Reduce the number of people coming from out of town for work
 - Get contracts so local people can work
 - Survey the community to see where people want help and what people can pay for
 - Combine training and childcare so both parents can find work/ get training (1 dot)
 - Provide affordable childcare
 - Provide access to training
 - Employer-supported training means more jobs (2 dots)
 - Provide access to mental health and addictions services
 - Lots of First Nations are using drugs/alcohol to self-medicate - if any work comes up, those with addictions cannot go
 - It is hard to find spots for people with addictions or mental health challenges – need to create opportunities

- Services and Supports
 - o Advertise community resources
 - o Teach positive path
 - o Incorporate understanding of poverty into the education system
 - o Teach people that it is okay to be poor
 - o Be a survivor and share that strength
 - o Enjoy what you have because money isn't everything
 - o Incorporate strength and knowledge of Elders in teaching youth
- Training and Education
 - o Help to break into new pathways
 - o Education system to include lifestyle skills
 - o Teach basic home economics
 - o Teach history of residential schools – the “why” residential schools
 - o Teach people how to make ends meet
- Health Care
 - o Need maternity services in community
 - o Need anesthesiologists and surgeons to come into the community before you are due
 - o Only 1 doula in the community
 - o It's important to be in your own environment when you are giving birth
 - o More services should be provided in the hospital in town (1 dot)
- Economy
 - o Timber rights – take from Canfor (2 dots)
 - o Local harvest and local process
 - o Extend the amount of time tickets last
 - o Reduce the cost of tickets
 - o Get help to advertise/ market Fort Nelson
 - o Find ways people can come back to the community
 - o Diversify Fort Nelson's economy
 - o Grow marijuana and hemp factories (2 dots)
 - o Pull back on what we export to US
 - o Put tariffs on US exports
 - o Build a new refinery in the North
 - o Stop selling raw products
 - o Have raw products processed here (1 dot)
- Transportation
 - o Province step in to support “Greyhound”- help keep this essential service in the community
 - o Provincial bus service, not commercial services (3 dots)
 - o Improve transportation from here
 - o Lower air fare fees (2 dots)

- Services and Supports
 - o Legal aid eligibility
 - o Increase access to EI or IA for people who have good jobs but only for 4 months out of the year
 - o Provide access to court services
 - o Shorten the year and a half long wait to get to court
 - o While people are waiting for court times - the accused and victim are living in the same community and breach conditions as a result (4 dots)
 - o The earning exemptions should be higher for people receiving disability benefits
 - o Being allowed to work allows you to be a part of the community and participate
 - o Exemptions should be higher so people don't feel like they can't work due to the claw backs (1 dot)