

Vancouver, BC
March 20, 2018

Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

Introduction and Event Summary

On March 20, 2018 the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Vancouver, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 105 to 110 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 Lorelei Hawkins followed by opening remarks from Mable Elmore (Parliamentary Secretary for Poverty Reduction) and members of the Minister's Advisory Forum.

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.

Shane Simpson (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?

- Housing
 - o There is a high cost for renting
 - o Many people can't afford housing in Vancouver
 - o Need guaranteed housing
 - o On welfare there are restrictions on subsidized housing (*1 dot*)
 - o Need to cut operating costs to housing providers to make them responsible
- Employment
 - o People who have a low wage job cannot make ends meet
 - o There is not a lot of job security in low paying jobs
- Transportation
 - o Give travel allowance – for PWD – so people can make it to more appointments
 - o Bus passes that should be allowed to be used for HandyDART
 - o Almost need two types of bus passes
 - o HandyDART is a nightmare to use, with long waiting time
 - o It is exhausting to use and you always need to book ahead of time
 - o People should be given a transportation allowance (bus pass) that is allowed to be used for HandyDART
 - o More buses (*1 dot*)
- Government Services
 - o Once you get PWD status, no further consideration for any alternatives
 - o On the ground there is incentive to innovate but the program maintains the status quo
 - o There are too many changes to programs
 - o There are inefficiencies
 - o There is less autonomy
 - o There is a disconnection between Headquarters & ground level
 - o The income assistance rates are too low
 - o \$100 rate raise does not recover the loss of income assistance
- Disenchantment
 - o The system is not working
 - o Lack of bursaries or having meaning in your life
 - o We are getting people to survive but not thrive
 - o We need a real political shift
 - o We are punishing people for being poor
 - o Reduce the unnecessary bureaucracy
 - o Poor attitude - “poverty is that person’s fault”
 - o How do we have so much poverty in the midst of obscene wealth
- Access to Government
 - o It is difficult to access services
 - o Remove rules, to make people ineligible
 - o The welfare system is broken - it causes the poverty cycle to repeat
 - o We need people or staff to voice our concerns
 - o Need to create a system that encourages feedback
 - o Government should hire people to help clients navigate the system--those that understand the system and can advocate for others

- There are some who cannot advocate for themselves – they need a voice
 - Many on welfare have barriers - like SDPR has 70 screens
 - Even educated people can't fill out all the information
 - Current programs like income assistance , EI, and OAS all have too many conditions
 - Dishonestly gets promoted when government staff question clients
 - The system intimidates people
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - People are self-medicating
 - Community clinics are all about the social determinants of health
- Health Care
 - There is a need for dental, optical, physio, massage, and chiropractor – with no user fees
 - The system is not as robust as it used to be
 - Pharmacare covers only some drugs
 - Benefits should be provided for everyone
 - People without proper benefits end up costing system more later (i.e. dental)
 - People may lose their jobs because they cannot get vision aids
 - Early help can prevent more serious problems later
 - Time in emergency wards is the result of lack of access to good medical benefits
 - Crisis and emergency services are more costly than preventative services
- Theft
 - Theft and replacement of ID and belongings is an issue
 - This happens if you don't have a home or a safe place to store your stuff
- Housing
 - Create social and affordable housing (*3 dots*)
 - We need to build more social housing
 - There should be strong rent control measures tied to units and not tenants
 - Inflation and buying power has to be factored in for the next 10 years
 - People who grew up in Vancouver have seen it become unaffordable for so many
 - Need more clusters of housing and services
 - Need to increase affordable/social housing after years of inaction
 - Carnegie did rent survey where private SROs rent for about \$650/month
 - Need stronger rent control
 - Money is going to landlords and not people
 - Have society create more social housing
 - Make developers responsible for building some of the social housing
 - Focus on the investment in our people to raise the whole society up, not on “costs to solve poverty”
 - “no one left behind” philosophy
- Aboriginal
 - Need to involve Indigenous people
 - Nuu-Chah-Nulth principle we can all learn from
 - Apply Indigenous lens to policies
 - Life expectancy of urban Indigenous less than non-Indigenous
 - Displacement from Indigenous lands
- Children
 - Kids at 12 years of age are working too late in unsafe conditions
 - Children in poverty are in poverty because their family is in poverty

- Children do not deserve to be poor
 - UN charter is not being followed properly
- Community action
 - People can't escape the cycle of poverty as an individual
 - In curriculum, poverty is not just financial poverty
 - It takes a community effort to help lift people out of poverty
- Income Assistance
 - Lose benefits from working, so why work? – It becomes a cycle
 - Raise welfare rates to the poverty line
 - Raise the rates
 - Increase welfare
 - PWDs – no incentive to leave system
 - Dental care \$1000/2 hrs (PWD)
- Income
 - Raise minimum wage
 - \$15 will make a difference in some areas but Vancouver's living wage is \$20/hour so \$15/hour is not enough
 - Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives suggests a living wage for a family of 4 = \$22/hr
 - The \$22 per hour applies if there is affordable childcare available in the community
 - People need \$29/hr to afford life's basic essentials
 - Increase minimum wage – faster and no exemptions (e.g. farmworkers, tip workers)
- Childcare
 - There is a lack of childcare
 - Need affordable childcare (*1 dot*)
 - Free childcare (*2 dots*)
- Seniors
 - People about 40 years old, should start to receive some benefits like regular seniors
 - Seniors' housing needs to be more affordable and appropriate
 - People with walkers need to be able to get around
 - There is a need for stronger pension plans
- First Nations
 - Policing range of responses scale of 1-7 where #1 polite, #7 fatal force and Indigenous youth start at #3-#4 because of racism in Vancouver's Police Department
 - Police force had conversation with Indigenous leaders – need to change approach
 - First Nations racism may be starting to change
 - Look at everything through an Indigenous lens
 - 7 generations, no "welfare" 1,000 years ago
 - No one left behind Nuu-Chah-Nulth (*2 dots*)
 - Boil water advisories in Indigenous communities is shameful
- Addictions
 - If family member dies because of opioid overdose, family is impoverished by the loss of life
- Lack of Community Engagement
 - USA – more money from philanthropists/private organizations
 - Vancouver wealthy not asked to contribute
 - There was a culture in Canada of pay by progressive taxes instead of philanthropy

- Tax the rich
 - Liberals gave \$3 billion in tax breaks each year
 - Naïve to think that rich will give back in philanthropy
 - Tackling poverty is not a cost, it is a saving
 - Poor people stay in hospital longer, use emergency services more (*1 dot*)
 - There is financial and emotional cost of poverty
 - Feelings vary between rage and tears walking down Vancouver streets
 - Developers are not responsible for giving back enough
 - There was an ethic to give back at one time but the culture is shifting
 - Cultural shift – othering
 - Plan for employers to provide and maintain housing
 - Social contact no longer exists
 - Employers and employees don't have 25 year relationships anymore
- Education
 - Students have resiliency
 - Strong sense of mutual respect
 - Small schools - 100 students, not thousands
 - Mentorship students don't have opportunities
 - Kids don't get out into the rest of the province – don't see opportunities of moving
 - Students worry about student loans
 - Worry about not having a sure fire way to use post-secondary education
 - Kids scared to do impractical things
 - Free university – Holland, Germany ... (*1 dot*)
 - Now an undergraduate degree is what high school used to be
 - Major difference is that high school is free
- Social Isolation
 - Poverty – means not having money to travel, explore BC
 - Need a BC version of Katimavik – rich experiences
 - Cell phones disassociating people
- Geographic and rural concerns
 - Some of worst poverty is not DTES
 - Small communities with no support face greater poverty
 - Northern communities face 33° below temperatures in winter, not 3°
 - Rural/urban divide
 - Rural communities feed the city but urban areas do not see the need to give back
 - People flee to urban centres but if rural, could be made viable, people might stay
 - Lack of thinking as a community
 - Community mentorship is important
- Inequality and Taxes
 - Ensure the filthy rich are less filthy rich and the filthy poor are less filthy poor (*1 dot*)
 - Start taxing the rich more
 - Tax the rich (*1 dot*)
 - Greed tax to create social housing
 - Back to how welfare worked 15 years ago
 - Progressive taxation-- hit the rich

- Access to Services
 - o System navigators to assist clients
 - o Humanize the system
 - o Now they are trying to discourage people from getting on to the system
 - o Have to call and wait for over 20 minutes
 - o These are minutes you pay for on your phone card
 - o On the workers' screen at 10 minutes they get a notice to end call
 - o Used to be case workers who knew you
 - o Ministry has a 50% diversion rate
 - o They have made the system that you can't get right onto PWD—you have to go on welfare first
 - o Make public aware of the byzantine system
 - o The money was never enough but Liberals closed down smaller offices
 - o Many of the income assistance offices became Service BC offices
- Discrimination and stigma
 - o Challenge the stigmatization of poverty
 - o Stigma around poverty or needing supportive services
 - o Change language of cost to language of investment
 - o It's about reframing cost to benefits
- Social Isolation and Mental Health
 - o People feel isolated
 - o Social connections are important
 - o Struggle without supports
 - o How can they accomplish that without social supports
 - o When you live in poverty, your energies may be focused on getting essentials – housing, childcare, food - it does not leave time or energy for social inclusion
 - o Volunteer work and community involvement is important even though they do not produce income
 - o Not having a license restricts social interactions and family responsibilities
- IA
 - o Income assistance gives you money, but does not give you self-esteem
 - o Need balance between status and income
 - o What you do to get status might not get you income
- Mental Health
 - o People can sometimes get treatment they need, then have no place to go home to
 - o Residential treatment facilities are scarce
 - o Need to be available when needed or too late to make a difference
 - o Timeliness of services is essential
 - o Fear, anger - concern that there's so much anger about living in poverty, it affects your mental health
 - o Poor mental health linked to poverty
- Income
 - o Guaranteed Liveable Income
 - o Matched with cost regulation or prices will rise accordingly
 - o Need higher minimum wage
 - o Minimum wage is too low

- People get low wages and no benefits
 - Employers need to pay a living wage
- Housing
 - Used to be more Federal funding for co-operative housing
 - BC Housing doesn't want to be in the housing business
 - If you are evicted, you are priced out of the housing market
 - Former Veterans' housing replaced with new condos
 - All SROs in one area concentrates problems
 - Timeliness – housing is needed now
 - Cannot get appropriate housing quickly enough
 - Women stay in transition houses longer because they have nowhere to go
 - Stable reasonably priced housing or a shelter and nothing in between
 - It would give people more choice in where they live if they could share shelter costs
 - Seniors' housing needs to be affordable and appropriate
 - Need stable housing for people with mental health issues
 - Staff at BC Housing should remember they themselves could be one crisis away from being homeless themselves
- Transportation
 - High cost
 - Limited HandyDART service
 - 17 days to register for HandyDART to get first ride
 - Need to register 4 times to cancel a HandyDART ride
 - Increase transit support for people living in surrounding communities
 - Concentration of services in the DTES
 - Affordable transit access – pass (2 dots)
 - Transit isn't affordable for the working poor
 - Families can't afford the cost of transit
- Income Assistance
 - Women stay in abusive relationships longer than they should and Income assistance is structured to perpetuate this
 - Disability CPP claw back
 - Income assistance rates are half of what they need to be
 - Raise income assistance rates
 - People are looking to make money, but are scared to lose assistance (1 dot)
 - Time between income assistance cheques is too far apart
 - Transition from income assistance is "not recommended" (1 dot)
 - Income assistance rates way too low – raise rates (5 dots)
 - Welfare and disability rates need to be increased – too low
- Childcare
 - High costs
 - Hard to find childcare
 - Parents have to stay home
 - Early childhood education wages not high enough – lose good staff
 - Spring break pressure on families
 - Children miss out on school lunches

- Health Care
 - o Have to demonstrate that all these forward spending options in the budget result in savings to the health care system
 - o The “Missing Middle”
 - o Family doctor or emergency ward - nothing in between
 - o Smoking vs marijuana - Why is one treated as bad, but not the other
 - o Possible impact of recreational marijuana use on schizophrenia
- Employment
 - o How do people who have been involved in the “cash” employment market demonstrate to traditional employers that they have valuable skills and can be good employees
 - o Language and cultural barriers can often prevent access to employment
 - o Lack of choices
 - o Manitoba pilot showed that crime went down
 - o Parents spent more time with children
 - o Young men worked more
 - o Lack of access to good jobs can lead to criminal involvement
- Impact of Poverty
 - o Criminal activity can be rewarding (a bed and food) if caught – “3 hots and a cot”
 - o Poverty forces you to choose the “best” of worst possible options
- Government Role
 - o Regulate to prevent cost inflation
 - o Engage banks, corporations, business partners (*3 dots*)
- Housing
 - o For building permits for large developments, require units for non-profits and low-income housing
 - o Require a percentage of housing units to be for families (2 & 3 bedroom units)
 - o Build accessible housing (for people with disabilities) (*3 dots*)
 - o Supportive housing for persons with substance use, disorders and/or mental health issues
 - o Some families make “too much” to qualify for assisted housing, but not enough to achieve housing stability (*1 dot*)
 - o Percentage of affordable housing needs to be legislated – need to have clarity around the definition of affordability so it is truly affordable housing
 - o Goal is to have mixed housing - don’t want segregation by income, age, etc.
 - o Increase opportunities for purpose-built rental units
 - o Co-operatives and co-housing - more of it!
 - o More housing choices
- Transportation
 - o More affordable HandyDART services (*1 dot*)
 - o Easier to book HandyDART services
 - o Have to book too far in advance
 - o Cannot book as often as necessary (*1 dot*)
 - o Extended hours for bus services to make it easier to get to early starting jobs (*1 dot*)
 - o Better subsidies (or free) for low income persons
 - o More affordable transit across the board (side benefit less pollution)
 - o SkyTrain expansion (side benefit cheaper and faster)
 - o More transportation choices

- Transit more often, free or affordable, appropriate
- Health Care (*8 dots*)
 - Treat people as whole persons
 - Better integrated case management
 - Timeliness – on demand access to services
 - Need better access
 - Need something between family doctor and emergency room
 - Create urgent care clinics
 - More preventative care – upstream rather than downstream
 - More health care choices
 - Integrated/holistic system
 - Improved preventative care
 - Access health care services in a timely manner
- Childcare and Children
 - \$10 per day childcare!
 - Less expensive childcare (*1 dot*)
 - Pay child care providers more
 - More child care choices
 - People are happy about commitments to childcare
 - Reference - Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and UN Rights of Child
 - Kids should not have to be responsible for translation for their parents around public services
 - Children are noticeably absent in DTES (loss of custody)
 - Relatives should be able to support children to stay with families easier
 - Keep families together
 - People living in poverty with kids are leery of engaging with MCFD, afraid of losing kids
 - Concern about Indigenous youth being in foster care too long
- Access to Services and Information
 - Have more choices and information
 - Let people know what is out there
 - Put people in position to make informed choices
 - More representation of lived experience in government—diverse understanding
 - Have representatives from local communities help others navigate services
 - Concentration of services and access
- Geographic Issues
 - Congestion charges impact low income
 - Affordability and poverty is regional
 - Regional planning (*1 dot*)
 - Recent immigrants are living in Burnaby but their situation is being affected by gentrification of the housing stock
 - REACH – local community
 - Tackle NIMBYism
- Stigma
 - We need to educate to stop stigma and negativity that surrounds poverty
 - Need to break down barriers between neighbourhoods
 - Stop special programs only included in specific neighbourhoods
 - Fear of neighbours that kids in poverty will affect their local school programs

- The media is causing a negative image of poverty
 - Educate the general public about solutions/implementation of solutions
 - Stop objectivising homelessness
- Considerations of Poverty
 - Quality of Life – Directly affects poverty and the singularity of employment types, e.g. only professional occupations
 - Poverty is only measured monetarily
 - Need different measures of poverty
 - We need to look at poverty not only from a monetary perspective but other aspect, i.e. poverty around the world
 - We have a history of poverty, how do we address this?
 - Different approaches of media/embrace alternative media that side steps political narrative, e.g. use megaphone magazine
 - Bad government policy caused poverty
- Education
 - Financial literacy at a young age
 - Post-secondary education needs to be more affordable
 - Need for good and free education
 - Separation in private vs public education
 - Differences in school funding in rich and poor areas
 - Wait lists at schools for education supports
 - Inequality in accessing supports at school
 - Kids with biggest need for supports often in school with least supports
 - Deficiencies based on neighbourhood and which school students attend
- Housing
 - More people need access to home ownership
 - Housing as an asset for pension
 - Rushed decisions in choosing a rental housing unit because of competition
 - Biases in landlords choosing tenants
- Community and Cultural barriers
 - Lack of activist culture
 - Lack of citizenship
 - Connecting to community
 - Need to lower community barriers
- Health Care
 - Access supports for healthcare
 - Assessments are hard to access
 - Referrals are discretionary and lack of awareness of problems
- Employment and Disability
 - Employment opportunities for PWD recipients
 - Build awareness among employers for hiring someone with a disability
 - Access to Government Information
 - How to accommodate disability needs
 - Government supports/grants/tax incentives
 - Index-linked (income assistance & DWD benefits)
 - Housing subsidies for income assistance recipients
 - Better co-ordinations of resources and services in the community

- Who so I talk to about this?
- Transportation
 - Mobility/transportation
 - People without DWD seniors, income assistance recipients
 - People can't explore or even attend church
 - Transit zones
 - Poor people need to pay daily fares because they can't afford a monthly pass
 - Instead people are doing without
- Housing
 - Storage for NFA (homeless/couch surfing)
 - Being homeless is demoralizing
 - Can't even meet basic needs like showering
 - Rent needs to be controlled
 - Need more social housing
- Programs and Services
 - Some programs or services are not funded by government
 - Government should help programs or systems to sustain these services
 - Lack of volunteer coordination
 - Centralize services
 - Disconnect between knowing what services are out there
 - Volunteer-driven services – should be government funded employees/resources
 - Creation of “hubs” where people facing similar challenges can connect
- Seniors
 - Senior's need healthcare, dental, medications to be affordable
 - Expand the support to all income assistance clients & seniors (retired)
 - Seniors face challenges around housing, Pharmacare, transportation
- Immigrants
 - Recent immigrants and refugees
 - Language services/supports (e.g. Chinatown)
 - Interaction services
 - People aren't accessing services
 - They get taken advantage of
 - Discrimination (related to being in poverty)
- Education
 - Upgrading/training (employability for professionals is a waste of resources)
 - Cost of education high
 - Access to post-secondary/too expensive
 - No needs-based grants
- Stigma
 - Dispel myths about poverty and how it occurs
 - Some homeless people are being attacked
 - Picking on homeless people – stigma, violence, discomfort
 - Stigma against income assistance recipients for housing – especially for single people
 - Stigma for those involved with MCFD
- Homelessness
 - Help everyone out there who is homeless
 - If more condo owners lived in the DTES, violence would increase because of class divide

- Homeless lack access to support
- Mental Health
 - People with mental illness deserve medical services provided by government
 - Need more services/facilities
 - Government is avoiding responsibilities for mental health
 - There is a lack of special needs advocates for mental health
 - Special needs advocates needed for autism spectrum, ADHD,FASD)
- Employment
 - 35% of new jobs need university degree
 - 42% require non-university post-secondary education, trades, certificates
 - University degree holders earn 1.7 times more than someone with high school
 - Poverty rates are two times higher for families without post-secondary degrees
 - Over the course of 40 years, a college graduate will earn \$400,000 more than someone with high school diploma
- Taxes and Inequality
 - Tax evasion – CRA - \$47 billion in tax evasion
 - Gap between rich and poor is increasing
 - Only cost \$4 billion to end poverty
 - Need more progressive income tax
 - Tax wealthy more, enforce more
 - Tax the rich
 - Need innovative ways to balance the system – estate tax, carbon tax
 - Look at ways to redistribute the wealth equally
 - Focus on changing the system
- Housing
 - Housing is a human right – it should not be seen as part of the real estate business
 - Landlords/other residents prefer not to have families with children
 - Build 10,000 units of social housing per year (*3 dots*)
 - Rent control-tied to unit not tenant
 - How can people get housing so that they aren't homeless
 - Why can't we focus on developing housing that reduces homelessness
 - There should be housing in the city that caters to different income levels
 - City's definition of affordable housing isn't always affordable
- Education
 - Children are deprived of education (*1 dot*)
 - There is a need for more teachers who are not in the union who can teach in class (*1 dot*)
 - Special needs workers cannot come into school to analyze
 - Too many barriers for "non-teachers" to come into schools to help
- Accessing Mental Health Services
 - Incentives for mental health awareness and support needed
 - Online and lack of person contact
 - No individual case workers
 - Lack of support especially difficult for LGBTQ community
 - Qualifications and rules make it impossible to access services
 - People find it difficult to apply without an advocate

- Access to Government Services
 - o Lack of communication between Ministries and service providers
 - o Barriers to applying for welfare/PWD (*2 dots*)
 - o MCFD, EDU, Finance all need to be included and work together
 - o There are many layers to solving poverty that requires all of government to work together
- Police Discrimination
 - o Police need to change the way they treat people in poverty
 - o The police are especially harsh to those living on the streets
 - o Don't respond to issues in the DTES
 - o Police are vicious towards the community
- First Nations
 - o Need to respect treaties with Aboriginal peoples, both federally and provincially
- Stigma
 - o Reduce stigma
 - o Address the stereotypes associated with being on welfare
 - o Government needs to take a stronger stance and be more positive about welfare
 - o Need to help to reduce the stigma
 - o People affected by poverty are misrepresented
 - o Certain groups experience greater levels of poverty
 - o Unequally represented (Indigenous, people with disabilities, single parents) – hyper represented
 - o Invisible population
 - o Lack of recognition
- Services and Supports
 - o Provide resources to maintain programs
 - o Encourage individuals to participate in programs
 - o Find ways to extend the life of programs that are working
- Food Security
 - o Food banks are not long term solutions
 - o Disconnect between living wage and food bank use
 - o Create more community gardens and community kitchens system
 - o The current system does not produce enough food for the year
- Lack of Trust
 - o The City pushes their own process but this can create fear
 - o Needs to do more engagement to alleviate fear/build trust
 - o Information provided by fear vs fact
 - o People losing trust in the systems
 - o There is not a list of cohesion – people are getting caught in the gaps
 - o Want to see more people in power that participate in finding solution
- Stigma
 - o Engage people who are in poverty
 - o Hire Indigenous people to reach out to the Indigenous community
 - o Strengthened social safety net helps eliminate stigma
 - o Have a process to eliminate barriers
 - o Finding housing harder for some people (minority groups) due to discrimination

- Racial profiling by landlords not renting to racialized people
- Employment
 - Automation is replacing peoples' jobs
 - People living in poverty may have jobs taken away because of automation
 - Loss of jobs increases people in poverty
- Access to Services
 - Being bounced between different agencies
 - Having to retell story over and over again
 - Have to get to right place because lack of communication (breakdown) between different agencies
 - People need to make cold calls to try to find the right solution
 - Individuals face a lot of different barriers
 - How do we increase awareness
- Social isolation
 - Social isolation is part of poverty
 - How to reduce social isolation
 - People often undervalued but hard to quantify the benefits of social engagement
 - Needs to be a shift and more understanding the benefit of creating inclusion
 - Developers money be invested into building community development through long-term initiatives to break social isolation
 - Use art and culture to engage marginalized people to reduce barriers (*1 dot*)
 - Amplify voices of others
- Housing
 - Set percentage developer pays to the community
 - Community amenity contribution (*3 dots*)
 - Library, parking, social housing, green space, benches, truly affordable housing
 - Should be protected for that community – where development takes place
 - Lack of social housing
 - Takes 6-8 hours to fill out paperwork
 - Outreach workers with individuals to find housing
 - Costs too high
 - Part time work and disability benefits are not enough to live on
- Access to Ministry Services
 - Need changes to the way the Ministry operates
 - People being treated poorly
 - Was told to “fuck off”
 - Limited number of people in office – forced to wait outside
 - Phone access – limited amount of minutes on phone plans restricts ability to hold
 - Must talk fast to worker or get cut off
 - System doesn’t function to allow Ministry workers to help
 - Not enough public spaces for people to get help (i.e. computer access, phones, help with forms, child care places)
- Housing and RTA
 - Residential Tenancy Branch – built to help landlords not renters
 - \$100 fee to file complaint is too much, not affordable
 - Cost to go to court (lawyer, etc.) too expensive, no representation
 - The process to make a complaint against landlord is too hard

- Legal jargon makes it difficult/impossible to be successful
 - Language is not accessible
 - No security for people in SROs
 - Renters are scared to make complaint due to risk of eviction
 - General abuse by landlords that go unpoliced
 - Police won't enter building
 - Management not accessible nor acting on complaints
 - No enforcement of standards or maintenance bylaw (standard of maintenance bylaw)
 - Renters are afraid to leave their room
 - Need for safe phones/911 accessible public phones
- Addictions and Mental Health
 - Needs more funding for harm reduction
 - Need more funding for addictions treatment
 - There is inference that people on drugs are crazy
 - There is a need for more supportive housing
- Housing
 - Build more social housing
 - Maintain existing social housing (repair)
 - Gentrification is resulting in the loss of affordable housing
 - Existing housing is falling into disrepair – social housing quality
 - The rate of 1:1 for new rental housing/social is no longer happening
 - People are getting displaced by gentrification
 - Funding for co-operative housing is in jeopardy and coops not taking new members
- SRO Housing
 - Need for individual bathrooms/toilets for each unit
 - People are afraid to leave rooms to use communal bathrooms
 - Unsafe; unclean
 - Bathing using a bucket
 - Impacts to people's mental and physical health
 - People living in poverty have lower life expectancy
 - Garbage piled up in the hallways
 - People living in poverty are vulnerable to abuse from landlords and other tenants
 - Tax breaks or incentives are given to developers rather than helping those who can help house the homeless
- Financial Aid
 - Student debt
 - Consumer debt, compounding debt
 - Predatory lenders – huge interest fees
 - Poverty wages, if wages are too low, can't get out of debt
 - Low income assistance rates
- Housing
 - Develop a housing strategy
 - Prioritizes social housing and rental
 - Put rent controls on units – not tenants
 - Tenants and people are being forced into substandard housing due to circumstances
 - No places to live

- Health Care
 - o Medical bills and drug costs
 - o Poor health outcomes
 - o Choosing not to take medications due to high costs
 - o Lack of front line services for people with mental illness
 - o Counselling, physiotherapy not covered (extended health)
 - o Lack of family doctors
 - o Not enough doctors
 - o If you don't have an address you can't access a doctor
 - o Where to find doctors
 - o Lack of information
- Transportation
 - o HandyDART is completely inadequate
 - o Not enough
 - o Time consuming
 - o Arrangement issues with HandyDART
 - o Can't get to appointment
 - o Results in people not being able to access community resources
 - o Not getting the service due to no transportation
 - o Waiting in line causes people to not want to access the service
- Child care
 - o Single mothers stay on income assistance to help with access to child care
 - o Child care costs are high
 - o Out of the workforce
 - o Hard to get back to work
 - o "I'm doing all the right things but child care and rent is hard"
- Education
 - o Students are working while studying
 - o Degree is taking longer to complete
 - o More debts means more time paying off
 - o Entry level jobs after having a degree, but now with more debt to pay (student loans)
 - o Systemic barriers, hard to get a higher paying job
 - o \$3000 in unmet need after being assessed (NOA) for a student loan
 - o Results in extra debt, like more credit card debts, which is then harder to pay off
 - o End up not only with student debt but other debts
 - o Students' parents are also suffering to help carry costs
- Taxes and equity
 - o Taxation is too low
 - o Should tax the rich more
 - o For people earning \$80,000 or above, increase tax rates
 - o Follow a progressive taxation system to provide services like protection and improved public service
 - o Create a society where everyone, not just a few, can live their best life possible
 - o No tax loopholes for poor
 - o People do not know what they can claim for, i.e. bus passes
 - o No tax filing help

- There are no accountants for people in poverty, no free services
- Social Isolation
 - No chance to build social capital
 - Social isolation is a problem for seniors
- Housing
 - Rates (income, disability assistance) are so low, that people can't afford rent
 - \$687 is the average rent for a SRO (2018) up from \$548 (2017)
 - Not enough social housing, waitlist is 10,000-12,000
 - No rent control
 - Rent increases are more than inflation
 - In-between tenancies – people are living in overcrowded conditions
 - Sub-standard housing
 - People end up sleeping in libraries
- Employment
 - Working poor, never made more than \$0.50 above minimum
 - Exploitation of workers for lack of knowledge of their rights
 - Foreign workers lack cultural know-how and language skills
 - We see exploitation of farm workers and care givers
 - No enforcement of employment standards
 - Misclassification of workers
 - Saying you're a contractor when you're an employee
 - People not qualifying for benefits because they're part time
- Mental Health
 - Connection between poverty and mental health
 - Cannot resolve these issues overnight because they are systemic issues
 - Anxiety of being alone and living on streets
 - Having to sleep all day to stay up all night to protect yourself
- Food Security
 - Forced to buy (if you can afford it) unhealthy foods/junk
 - Price fixing by grocery stores when they know that there are no other options
 - Food banks are good only for people who have stuff to cook with
 - Social aspect of sharing food is lost
 - Problems accessing food services (mobility issues)
- Access to Services
 - Process for applying for assistance is difficult
 - People don't have access to phones (pay phone) and internet – long waits on the phone
 - People access libraries to apply for assistance, but librarians are told it's not their job
 - Lack of local offices
 - Being asked to call the phones instead of in person
 - At least 40 minutes on hold
 - People can't afford to call
 - No internet available
 - Not having an address causes barriers in applying for jobs, receiving mail
 - No services before/after 5, does not work with people working during the day
 - Access to multiple languages is limited
 - No translation services available for social assistance

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

- Programs and Services
 - o Have a universal program that contains no conditions
 - o PWD has easier accessibility from a continuity basis
 - o Reduce the bureaucracy that's in place
 - o Make it so people are able to navigate the system easier
 - o Help people create more access identification (*3 dots*)
 - o Have more access to Legal Aid (*1 dot*)
 - o People need to be able to contribute in a meaningful way
 - o Build on the things we already have in place
 - o Give people or employees incentives
 - o Organizations should work in collaboration and share data and resources
 - o Collaboration can help to provide a more streamlined service
 - o Sharing information could create fear for some
- Income
 - o Create a basic income that is by right
 - o Look at other models – Australia's model
 - o Minimum wage & livable wage should meet each other
 - o Need guaranteed livable income to pay for housing
 - o Minimum wage is not enough to make ends meet
 - o We need a guaranteed income (*2 dots*)
 - o We have low wages that don't meet the cost of living
 - o Create guaranteed income – set at the cost of living, including inflation (*1 dot*)
- Employment
 - o There are a lack of good jobs
 - o It is difficult to get to jobs
 - o Employers should be respectful of employees' time
 - o Many refugees have difficulty getting employment
- Housing
 - o There is a need for access to shelters without long waitlists
 - o Healthy building standards are a must (*3 dots*)
- Transportation
 - o There are no passes for those on welfare, so they can't get to work (*1 dot*)
 - o Need for access to free Transit (*2 dots*)
 - o It is difficult to visit friends
- Discrimination and Stigma
 - o Refugees are facing racism
 - o Criminalization of poverty
 - o There is an issue people end up with fines and criminal records because they are poor (*2 dots*)
 - o Police brutality
 - o Need to adopt a new language to talk about poverty reduction

- Inequity in society – e.g. 1 in 8 members of the family is “sick”, but what are the other members doing?
 - There is a lack of a societal level commitment to solving poverty
 - Deliberately blaming people, i.e. “get a job”
 - Legitimize poverty - If it’s people’s fault, why should we help?
 - Can create a stigma for people on income assistance
 - There is shame and stigma to being poor
- Services
 - Phone/email/communication
 - Need more access to in-person contact
 - Need more access to resources in the DTES
 - Have a community approach to poverty
- Child Care
 - Have more child protection
 - There is a bias against poor parents
 - Need free childcare
 - Too many children are not being cared for
- Employment
 - Have to travel to pick up cheque
 - It is difficult to search for employment
 - “Job stacking” can be necessary financially, but does not leave time for social and community involvement
 - Multiple jobs can prevent people from making the community contributions they would like
 - Lack of good jobs can lead to criminal involvement
 - Foreign workers – previous government introduced protocol re: farm workers so we have a responsibility to them if they’re here. Jim Sinclair says unionize!
- Education (*3 dots*)
 - Help with school costs
 - Have education or training that you can take and still receive assistance with (*3 dots*)
 - Life skills training is often needed
 - Money should be invested in public schools not private schools
 - There has been an increase in children in post-secondary with non-academic courses
 - Would like more community-based approach to professional development
 - Kids in poverty don’t have mentors
 - Have alternative Grades 10, 11, 12 for kids who are not successful in mainstream schools
 - Kids who are living in poverty often have to work - this compromises their education
 - Children in poverty are getting poor nutrition
 - BC Teachers Federation – starting salaries need to go from \$40,000 to \$50,000
 - Need to attract teachers from out of province
 - We need to have more teachers to give support for kids with special needs
 - Schools need more resources
- IA
 - Raise welfare to poverty line (*2 dots*)
 - Make welfare be welfare
 - “Welfare” is supposed to be a positive thing

- Reasonable measures
 - o Can't do everything so don't demand unreasonable things
 - o But if NDP doesn't do something, they won't be re-elected
- Housing
 - o Build social housing
 - o Have stronger rent controls on units (*2 dots*)
 - o Stronger municipal guidelines needed for developers
 - o Singapore has about 89% social housing
 - o Half of housing in Vienna is social housing - built after wars, when the country was devastated
 - o Landlord gave 2 months to get out
 - o Mother went to Craig's List to find housing for herself and her kids but 2 months is not enough time
 - o Must be realistic about timelines
 - o Decades of neglect of social housing
 - o Need stable housing
 - o A shelter is not a home
 - o Without housing, we cannot meet other needs
 - o Shelters are temporary and over crowded
 - o Lack of housing is demoralizing
 - o Where do we send people when shelters are full
 - o If you can't afford to live where you work, you have increased transportation costs
- Children and Foster Care
 - o Foster Parent being paid
 - o Why don't they pay biological parents as much as they pay foster parents?
 - o People live in fear of having kids taken away.
 - o It is not fair to conflate poverty and neglect
 - o Story about kid who could be placed with relatives, but not enough bedrooms
- Education
 - o Private schools should be private with no public funding
 - o Money to public schools (*1 dot*)
 - o Socially conscious youth – our future
 - o Not everyone has the same access to scholarships
 - o People in workshops
 - o People in associations
- Government Role
 - o Regulate to prevent cost inflation
 - o Engage banks, corporations, business partners (*3 dots*)
- Housing
 - o For building permits for large developments, require units for non-profits and low-income housing
 - o Require a percentage of housing units to be for families (2 & 3 bedroom units)
 - o Build accessible housing (for people with disabilities) (*3 dots*)

- Supportive housing for persons with substance use, disorders and/or mental health issues
 - Some families make “too much” to qualify for assisted housing, but not enough to achieve housing stability (*1 dot*)
 - Percentage of affordable housing needs to be legislated – need to have clarity around the definition of affordability so it is truly affordable housing
 - Goal is to have mixed housing - don’t want segregation by income, age, etc.
 - Increase opportunities for purpose-built rental units
 - Co-operatives and co-housing - more of it!
 - More housing choices
 - End homelessness (*1 dot*)
- Transportation
 - More affordable HandyDART services (*1 dot*)
 - Easier to book HandyDART services
 - Have to book too far in advance
 - Cannot book as often as necessary (*1 dot*)
 - Extended hours for bus services to make it easier to get to early starting jobs (*1 dot*)
 - Better subsidies (or free) for low income persons
 - More affordable transit across the board (side benefit less pollution)
 - SkyTrain expansion (side benefit cheaper and faster)
 - More transportation choices
 - Transit more often, free or affordable, appropriate
- Health Care (*8 dots*)
 - Treat people as whole persons
 - Better integrated case management
 - Timeliness – on demand access to services
 - Need better access
 - Need something between family doctor and emergency room
 - Create urgent care clinics
 - More preventative care – upstream rather than downstream
 - More health care choices
 - Integrated/holistic system
 - Improved preventative care
 - Access health care services in a timely manner
- Childcare and Children
 - \$10 per day childcare!
 - Less expensive childcare (*1 dot*)
 - Pay child care providers more
 - More child care choices
 - People are happy about commitments to childcare
 - Reference - Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and UN Rights of Child
 - Kids should not have to be responsible for translation for their parents around public services
 - Children are noticeably absent in DTES (loss of custody)
 - Relatives should be able to support children to stay with families easier
 - Keep families together
 - People living in poverty with kids are leery of engaging with MCFD, afraid of losing kids

- Concern about Indigenous youth being in foster care too long
- Access to Services and Information
 - Make it so that people can more efficiently navigate support services (i.e. waiting time on the phone)
 - Educate public on process to obtaining services
 - Have more choices and information
 - Let people know what is out there
 - Folks don't have the power/knowledge to get access to ways to get out of poverty
 - Put people in position to make informed choices
 - More representation of lived experience in government—diverse understanding
 - Have representatives from local communities help others navigate services
 - Concentration of services and access
- Community Issues
 - Congestion charges impact low income
 - Affordability and poverty is regional
 - Regional planning (*1 dot*)
 - Recent immigrants are living in Burnaby but their situation is being affected by gentrification of the housing stock
 - REACH – local community
 - Tackle NIMBYism
- Income
 - Increase minimum wage (*1 dot*)
 - Universal Income (*2 dots*)
 - Not having money can prevent you from earning more money
 - Provide living wage (*1 dot*)
- Food Security
 - Feeding yourself is a full time job
 - Food security and the connection to MH support (or lack of)
 - Food banks were intended to be short term
- Taxes and Inequality
 - Progressive taxes – tax more for those with more
 - Proportional fines – base fines on percentage of family income (*4 dots*)
 - Regulate money in politics – where parties get financial support
 - Higher taxes, progressive taxation, tax the rich (*3 dots*)
- Trust in government
 - How to improve community-government relationships and trust?
 - Re-establish trust in government
- Housing
 - Social housing is needed
 - City wide adoption of the downtown development plan – e.g. 20% low income housing
 - Incentivize and penalize development of affordable housing units (i.e. fine if not followed through) (*2 dots*)
 - Building specific advocacy
 - You can't complain about housing (BC Housing) for fear of losing it
 - Housing First – housing for those on low income and disability – the very poor (*5 dots*)
 - You would spend more for very poor if they weren't housed – medical supports, etc.
 - Housing advocacy

- Mental health support
 - Safe housing
 - Not enough supportive housing/lack of
 - One size fits all not working
 - The application process for housing is too slow/bureaucratic
 - Modular housing is short term; we need longer term solution
 - Lack of public awareness around implementation
 - Neighbourhood discourse regarding modular housing is causing nimbyism
 - Lack of education on housing matters/housing terms
 - Communication regarding modular housing was bottom up rather than top down
 - Neighbourhoods competing: them vs us for community amenities
 - Housing conditions for some rental units have poor health and safety risk
 - Fear of speaking up to landlord or face eviction
- Education
 - Needs-based grants/bursaries for education
 - International students take advantage of the resources
 - Students in Marpole brought back the humanity to poverty
 - We need to focus on children in poverty in education policy
 - Reform education - less standardized testing
 - Education reform that encourages students to learn to speak up
 - More hands on learning, employment programs
- Supports and Services
 - Increase resources for youth and adults
 - Identify community supports, more education of life skills
 - Teaching life skills in school
 - Early childhood education on consequences of children/family planning
 - Forum or space for youth peer learning from each other
 - Lack of lived experience being taught, need more
- Housing
 - Regulate Airbnb
 - Homes to house students in radius of post-secondary institution
 - Incentives: rent free, tax incentives (*1 dot*)
 - Housing is a big problem for students
 - Need housing solutions now (students in tents and cars)
 - Students are using student loans to pay for housing
 - Need for rent control
 - Graduating students are worried/leaving the Province due to housing
- Mental Health
 - Mental health education (*1 dot*)
 - Learning how to take care of ourselves when we are in poverty
 - Living with the stress and risk of near poverty (*1 dot*)
 - Learning self-care and modelling self-care to parents
 - Prevention not crisis (*2 dots*)
- Housing
 - Housing advocacy should include recognition about the impact on poverty
 - Access to housing – cost and availability

- Articulate existing issues of poverty prior to releasing solutions, e.g. Marpole Modular Housing lack of approach (*1 dot*)
 - More dialogue in neighbourhoods to find allies/build partnerships in neighbourhoods
 - More transparent process within neighbourhood decisions on developments
 - Provide more housing resources/advocates
 - Comprehensive approach to housing prevention, no one gets left behind (*1 dot*)
 - More rent controls
 - More public housing, more co-operatives (*2 dots*)
 - Question the model of housing, e.g. BC Housing
 - Bureaucratic shift: shared risk, shared mortgages, co-housing
- Community
 - Active citizenship – remove working barriers (i.e. remove working 2-3 jobs)
 - Create opportunities to engage with community
 - Capture information differently (i.e. census does not capture poverty)
 - Provide long term continuous support (*1 dot*)
 - Community policing
- Stigma
 - Address issues of poverty stigma
 - Prevent negative view of people living in poverty
 - Kindness/basic humanity/respect
 - Share the humanity of poverty
 - Dignify and stop criminalising how we engage people living in poverty – stigma (*2 dots*)
 - Adopt a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction
 - Educate what lack of privilege is, practical experiences
- Education
 - Free public education
 - Quality and supportive education (from pre-K to post-secondary) (*2 dots*)
 - Empower people to be self-sustaining
 - Engage teachers and support curriculum to educate on citizenship and poverty
 - Change core education (*1 dot*)
 - Increase accessibility to education
 - Access to technology, library resources
 - Invite people to engage, remove barriers (*1 dot*)
- Seniors
 - Seniors' driver's license and medical forms
 - Seniors are starting to work now
 - Better seniors homecare/home support
 - Businesses are hiring students for general help not seniors – difficult for seniors to find work
- Health Care
 - Doctors' visits are costly (\$200/2 years)
 - They can charge whatever they like
 - Forms should be billed to government (as they do with Ministry medical forms)
 - Faster action when finding or implementing resolutions
 - Health interchange (*1 dot*)
- Children and Youth and MCFD
 - Fix MCFD (*1 dot*)

- Too much apprehension of children – especially First Nation/International families
 - Special needs advocates need to be in place at time of apprehension
 - There is a lack of workshops for prevention of apprehension of children
 - Need for more workshops for MCFD workers
 - Teachers call MCFD for apprehension of children – need to help increase understanding-
- Advocates need to provide workshops for teachers
 - Apprehension prevention workshops are needed
- Education
 - Needs-based grants program for post-secondary (*1 dot*)
 - Cancel all student debt
 - Free tuition
- IA
 - At least match Alberta assistance rates of \$12,000 per year – still not high enough for BC
 - Make welfare/PWD more accessible
 - The income assistance rate in Alberta is about 30% higher than BC – why?
 - People can't get out of poverty with what they receive
- Services and Supports
 - Politicians should try to make life easier for people, not more difficult
 - More funding for advocates and community organizing (*1 dot*)
 - Increase grants higher than \$500 (community grants)
 - More funding for grandparents raising grandchildren (*1 dot*)
 - More funding for culturally relevant training for government employees, service providers (doctors, nurses)
 - Encourage empathy through empathy training
 - Digital access and literacy
 - Universal broadband – free Wi-Fi
- Environment
 - Invest money in clean energy (*1 dot*)
 - Government has no right to destroy environment
 - Stop use of pesticides, eliminate all pesticides – need organic farming
 - Create more green spaces
 - Reduce gas emissions – reduce related health issues/poverty issues
- Community Engagement
 - Decrease rent for community centres
 - More friendship centres
 - Greater supports for organizations like urban native youth
 - More opportunity to foster a healthy democracy
 - More funding for after school events for pre-teens
 - Greater civic engagement for young people
- Services and Supports
 - Lack of resources available
 - Lack of accessibility
 - Current systems that support poverty don't help people get out of poverty, e.g. food bank, non-profit organization
- Mental Health
 - Invest in the social determinants of health
 - Recognize the importance of social inaction and relationship

- Addiction services, treatment on demand
- Childcare
 - Need affordable childcare
 - Females should have equal rights
- Income
 - Raise minimum income and living wage
 - Hourly wage vs actual income
 - Basic income guarantee/liveable income (*6 dots*)
 - Eliminate minimum wage exceptions
 - Raise the MINIMUM/LIVING WAGE
 - Make a distinction between a livable wage and annual income/actual income
 - Someone making \$21/hour but only working part time hours will still struggle (*6 dots*)
 - People don't have enough income
 - People not making a living wage
- IA
 - If assistance goes up \$100, rent goes up the same)
 - Make sure other areas don't get clawed back
 - Don't cut back on education
 - Make sure child tax benefit still exists
 - Other systems still need to exist/build linkage to other systems
 - Invest in hiring people who are living on the margins – youth, POC, LGBT, disabled
 - Focus on what it looks like to engage marginalized people
 - Raise in rates without rent controls results in money going directly to landlords instead of person
 - Disability benefits and income assistance rates too low
- Community Supports
 - Support NP sector (*1 dot*)
 - Make funding more sustainable
 - How to integrate long term pathway to address poverty
 - Government needs to support communities/individuals affected by poverty
 - Share the data (the numbers) as a way of empowering community
 - Help community and service providers find solutions (*1 dot*)
 - Government should be more open about collecting data--share knowledge
 - Now the “burden” to pull oneself out of poverty is on the single individual
- Food Security
 - Government should invest in food policy plan/strategy
 - How to ensure food security & equitable (*1 dot*)
 - Maintain access to healthy food
 - Food people can afford
 - Need to protect culturally appropriate food through policy and zoning
 - Increase money for food
 - Lower food costs
- Seniors
 - Do away with fees related to elders, seniors and licensing testing
 - Protection for vulnerable people (seniors, PWD, etc.)
- Access to Resources
 - Connect people to resources

- Connect students and seniors
 - Use technology to provide opportunities for students to help seniors (*4 dots*)
 - Set up programs (systems) for management of services
 - Integrated projects (*1 dot*)
 - Participation from various ministries
 - Testing to be done by the Province and not by the most expensive doctors (*2 dots*)
- Transportation
 - Fare capping
 - Subsidies for low income/working poor
 - Children in school should pay way less for transit, burden on families
 - Transit costs too high
 - Free transit (*5 dots*)
 - Reduce gas emissions
- Storage
 - Extra hidden cost for NFA
 - Provide space for personal belongings
 - Shelter only provide limited/short term storage
- Housing (*2 dots*)
 - Developers now in control instead of city
 - Tax breaks for multi-use properties
 - When city shuts down a property, have a plan to rehouse tenants
 - Build more modular housing
 - Rental controls when transferring tenants (free market)
 - Housing subsidies
 - Charge price per square foot (*1 dot*)
 - Legislation around what landlords can charge (rent control)
 - Address renovictions/demovictions
- Education
 - Education grants rather than loans (*1 dot*)
 - They get better jobs, pay more taxes (*1 dot*)
 - Loan forgiveness
 - Place incentive on finishing school
 - Give grant and forgive once completed
 - Lower cost of education
 - Reduces barriers to access with PWD
 - Apprenticeship programs used to be free (until 2002)
 - Student grants from the Province and need-based grants (*1 dot*)
 - Free/lower tuition for low income students
 - Improve outcome for K to 12 education
- Advocacy and Government Support
 - Not enough funding for advocates to help people in poverty
 - Number of advocates is too few
 - Advocates are inaccessible
 - Advocacy organizations have trouble getting funding; loss of funding
 - Many advocacy agencies run on volunteer basis
 - Advocacy agencies are swamped and can't find housing for people

- Programs and Services
 - o Provide more money to advocacy agencies for “storefront” access to help people
 - o Need access to translation services
 - o Funding for specialty services/advocacy for people with health/disabilities
 - o Funding to help people navigate the health and welfare systems (*4 dots*)
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - o More mental health services
 - o Bring back funding for peer run addictions
 - o Mental health services (e.g. ARA – Mental Health Action Patients Research & Advocacy Association)
- NP Sector
 - o Funding of grassroots organizations
 - o More outreach to find out what services communities need/want
 - o Hire/run by people with lived experience
 - o Agencies should have accountability to those they serve
 - o Agencies based on volunteer model are not sustainable
 - o People are burning out
- Housing
 - o Rent control attached to the unit not the tenant (*5 dots*)
 - o Re-write the Residential Tenancy Act so it is fair
 - o Close loopholes in the Residential Tenancy Act that favour landlords (*3 dots*)
 - o Preserve SROs – repair, keep (*1 dot*)
 - o Build more social housing (*5 dots*)
- Children and Child Care
 - o Help foster kids when they age out of care
 - o Look at the amount of money being given to foster parent vs biological parent
 - o Why are foster parents receiving more money to care for kids than parent on welfare?
 - o Access to same resources to keep kids with parents
 - o Free pre-natal care (more)
 - o Cheap and accessible child care (*1 dot*)
 - o Increase access to affordable child care - \$10/day child care
 - o Increase/improve wages of early childhood educators
- Income Assistance
 - o Allow income assistance to continue until student loan payments arrive (*1 dot*)
 - o Raise welfare rates (*3 dots*)
 - o Change eligibility rules for income assistance
 - o Improve process to apply for income assistance
 - o Ensure Charter of Rights is applied to welfare applicants/recipients
 - o Raise rates – all social assistance/income assistance rates
 - o Raise income assistance rates to improve food security
 - o Raise social assistance (income and disability rates) (*4 dots*)
- Housing
 - o More social housing spaces
 - o We need 10,000 housing spaces per year and they should be affordable for people on assistance (*2 dots*)
 - o Rent control on the unit, not the tenants (*2 dots*)
 - o Increase residential and homecare spaces

- Employment
 - o Strengthen employment standards, rights, and enforcement
 - o Allow people on social assistance to attend education
 - o There should be resources for people on social assistance to access job training (job certification)
 - o Invest hiring marginalized people such as youth, people in poverty, etc *(5 dots)*
 - o Focus on engaging and hiring marginalized people
 - o Change our evaluation method on how we value employees *(1 dot)*
 - o To retain employees - it should not be about money and profits only
- Health Care
 - o Implement a pharmacare strategy/program (i.e. free pharmacare, prescription drugs, dental care, physiotherapy, counselling, mental health services, podiatry) *(1 dot)*
 - o Legalize drugs including opioids
 - o Eliminate treatment gaps in health care system
 - o Full and free Health Care *(4 dots)*
 - o Free Pharmacare for all
 - o Free basic dental
- Transit
 - o Discounted/free transit passes for kids and low income singles
 - o TransLink needs to be more willing to find solutions
 - o Free transit
 - o Calgary has \$5/month for transit – why can't BC do it?
- First Nations
 - o Reconciliation with Indigenous communities
 - o Compensation for stealing Indigenous land
 - o Provide education on Indigenous culture
- Government Services
 - o Expand to a sanctuary provinces for undocumented people
 - o Protect and improve public services
 - o Reduce bureaucracy (i.e. harmonize eligibility for programs)
 - o Avoid scarcity mindset / over capitalistic mindset
- Income
 - o Minimum wage and livable wage
 - o Help close the income gap
 - o Raise minimum wages
 - o Have a Guaranteed livable income
 - o Income by right
 - o Universal program for income with all conditions removed
 - o Raise minimum wage
 - o Living wage
 - o Increase minimum wage so that people can afford food
 - o People need to make enough money not to be hungry
 - o Raise minimum wage faster
 - o Look at a living wage *(3 dots)*