



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

**Prince Rupert, BC  
January 11, 2018**

## Introduction and Event Summary

On January 11, 2018, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Prince Rupert, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together nearly 180 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

The event began with a welcome from the local First Nation, followed by opening remarks from Shane Simpson (Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction) as well as a welcome and introduction from the local MLA Jennifer Rice.

Participants then engaged in round table discussions in groups of 10 to 15 people per table. Each table had a dedicated facilitator from a local community group or from SPARC BC who helped to guide the conversation. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who recorded the participants' observations and reflections on flip charts.

There were two rounds of discussions, guided by the following discussion questions:

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

Following the discussions, participants were invited to identify the four issues or solutions that were most important to them based on their experience and insights. As well the different groups were asked to identify their top three (3) priorities in terms of solutions or ideas that they would like to share with the larger group as part of the 'report back'.

Following the 'report back' from the different tables on their observations and reflections, the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction shared some concluding reflections to end the day.

## Document Organization

This document contains the transcriptions of the flip chart notes for the January 11 event. The flip chart notes have been transcribed verbatim, correcting for spelling and grammar as needed, in order to preserve the original intent of each comment.

The transcript is organized as follows:

- Question 1 feedback has been transcribed word for word into one list; and,
- The feedback from Question 2 has been transcribed word for word and sticky dot votes have been noted in brackets next to the solutions in Question 2, where applicable.

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

- Transportation
  - o No bus for early morning and stop running in early evening
  - o Both accessible taxis are broken down
  - o Living in a shelter makes it harder to go anywhere
- Food
- Landlords/Housing
  - o Turn heat up, cold draughts
  - o “between heating and food I’d go with heat”
- Hospital
- Jobs
  - o Not qualified to get job and lack of training to get jobs
- Ridley Terminal
  - o No transportation to get to work, I have no car
  - o Would have to walk to work
- Single parents
  - o Don’t have someone to help get kids to school, it would be nice to have a pick-up service
- Women’s Issue
  - o Access to family planning, birth control, lack of health
  - o 6-8 weeks wait for diagnostic care
- Men
  - o Safe housing for men who are abused
  - o Stigma surrounding
  - o When reported they get laughed at, not just peers RCMP too
  - o Police watched woman attack man, did nothing until man defended himself
- Parenting Programs
  - o Not enough
  - o Need resources (i.e. help connect with children)
- Parents job searching
  - o No child care subsidy, at least for single parent families
- Youth
  - o Not enough activities
  - o Not enough jobs
  - o Hanging out at Tim Horton’s
  - o Diversity of resources for them
  - o 12-15 years, nothing for their age group - no safe space for them when parents go out drinking
    - Like need all night shelter
- All places shut down at 6pm
- There’s a rec centre but have to pay to get in

- At Manor: all beds are taken up by long term, ill patients
  - o Not enough room for people who only need a little assistance
  - o Men stuck in homes where they only need a little help – ELDERS
  - o Transition living at home to needing a little help
- No safe house
  - o Leads back to addiction problem when go back home
- Key Themes Table 3/5:
  - o Addictions, housing, jobs, transportation issues (northern transit strategy no info),
  - o Food (have to make choices like food vs heating),
  - o Hospital,
  - o Single parent supports,
  - o Women’s issues,
  - o Men’s issues,
  - o Elder’s issues,
  - o Parenting supports,
  - o Homeless,
  - o Youth issues
- Landlords are buying up properties, flipping & jacking rents
  - o Property speculation
  - o Evicting to raise rents
  - o Landlords don’t care about tenants or properties
- Fitting within program guidelines that are too restrictive, leaving gaps in receiving help
- People face the challenge of assistance being “clawed back” when working and trying to make ends meet
- Need a men’s shelter and more services for men
- So much red tape around receiving services, often get denied assistance
- Penalizing people instead of rewarding them for working while on assistance
- People being given the run-around and often denied assistance if living on reserve
- Not enough help for special needs
- Feeling like you have to beg for help
- The harder you worked to get out of poverty, the more the government did to make it difficult to get ahead
- Housing, families living in apartments with not enough space/bedrooms due to affordability/assistance rates
- Takes too long to receive supplements/assistance
- Ma’kola Housing too restrictive on applications
  - o Turned away based on history from 20 years ago
- History of systemic issues facing this community, continuous barriers
- Misinformation on services in community
- Gov’t withholding policies, information ,eligibility guidelines
- Too little changes over such a long period of time, things need to change now for people to receive greater assistance

- Too many promises unfulfilled
- Prince Rupert has experience so much job loss recently and over time
- Need to resolve the root of the problem, systemically
- Denied for old age security and told to get a job despite facing difficulty
  - o Too restrictive, unable to access services even with having hearing difficulty (deaf)
- So many restrictions when you have a spouse on eligibility for assistance
- Discrimination against First Nations for child care help or other forms of assistance
- Workers refusing to deal with you if you are angry or showing emotion
- Worried about the fish not being available this season which they rely on for sustaining themselves, going to need to apply for assistance
  - o LNG has done so much damage
  - o Afraid to eat meat because of contamination: land & water
- Child tax complexities between provincial and federal gov't
- No shelter – extreme weather shelter is not enough
  - o Homeless on sunny days too, need help all year
- LNG promised to make an elders home: they never did it
- Not enough help for dental health care
- Housing
  - o Rents are too high
  - o 1 bedrooms – seniors can't afford
- Shelters for men and women (separate)
- Put name down and wait forever
  - o Makola, BC Housing have lots of spaces
  - o There are no SROs (single room occupancy units) even
- Not enough jobs
  - o Apply, don't have right experience
  - o Temp work office would be good
- Transportation issues: public transit on weekends, on early shifts, doesn't work
  - o Accessible taxi is broken down, hours too short
- Bus every two hours near shelter
  - o Can't go anywhere
- Northern transportation strategy
  - o No info, don't know what's happening
- Food, limited
  - o Food Bank need to make appointment
  - o Live on veggies and cans
  - o Not enough choice
  - o FB didn't give food b/c didn't have kids
- Landlords not taking good care of housing, not accountable
  - o Cold: HEATING \$\$ takes away from food
  - o "If it's heat or food, I'd go with heat"
- Not enough things to do

- Teaching kids games?
- Swimming – even that’s experience
- Hospital
  - Cousin over 1 month in hospital, wrong medicine, medevac to PG when doctors here could be better
- Jobs
  - should have a raise, wages too low
  - Not enough access to training, people have to wait
  - No jobs, no training
  - Ridley Island & Terminal near Port Ed: buses don’t stop near there so have to walk to work if don’t have vehicle
- Single parents: not enough help with kids
  - Miss school or struggle to bring them to school
  - Stress
- Women’s issues and women’s health
  - Lack of access to these
  - Some diagnoses for needed things take 6+ weeks
- No transition house for men only
- Abuse against elders & men (not just physical, all abuse)
- Some younger people sit in seats on bus so elders can’t sit down
- Parenting programs are lacking
  - Learn the basics
  - Connecting with your children
- Parents looking for jobs, don’t have childcare/subsidies so can’t take jobs they might get
- Not prioritizing homeless people all over BC –especially in winter
  - Worrying about trails, park maintenance
  - Put people first
  - The news shows parks over people
- What about homes in BC that are open?
- Youth need different activities
  - Not just one youth group
  - 12-15 year olds: may have vandalized a park b/c there’s nothing to do
  - No safe place when parents are drinking
    - Need all night shelter for young teens
  - Van has youth stuff in churches but here everything closes at 6pm
- rec centre too expensive
- more bingo for seniors and away from the slots
- at manor, beds taken by LT ill patients so people who could need a little bit of assistance don’t have support
  - at home, maybe struggle to care for selves, get right medications
  - For elders
  - Transition from home alone to having a BIT more help

- Tried to put mom at Manor – would take whole cheque – also too \$\$
  - o So taking care of her at home but that’s also hard
- No safe house either
  - o People in recovery stay while people still struggling w addictions
- Being turned away from supports is discouraging
- Should be city that supports these issues, help from local government
  - o Start small with local changes, then get province involved
- Housing
  - o Affordable local rent
  - o Discrimination – way you are dressed
    - Turned away due to assumptions
    - If you’re on social assistance – turned away
  - o High hydro bills
  - o People cramming in one place to afford rent
  - o Landlords overcharge – visiting fees, ripping people off
  - o \$750 doesn’t include phone/hydro, supposed to be included but they don’t turn on heat
  - o Not complying with rental agreement – raffles, blocking fire exits
  - o Rats, bed bugs, should be shut down
- Wrap Around Programs
  - o Applying for disability >> taken away (\$5600 bill)
  - o Audited, \$20 taken from cheque
  - o No one to tell in the Ministry, don’t care
  - o Overrepresentation of Indigenous people
  - o Rental cut off because applied for cell phone > credit check
- Wages
  - o Loss & recovery program > WCB bill
  - o No compassion, hard rules
  - o Where do people go? Transition house?
  - o No phone, can’t access supports
  - o Minimum wage is too low or people/businesses not complying with wage standards
  - o Splitting threads – not enough \$ to pay bills/rent
  - o Money mart fees but have to use it
- Jobs
  - o Age discrimination
  - o Debt causes people to steal/break laws to make ends meet
  - o Education, trying to work to pay bills
  - o Lack of jobs
  - o Require education & experience
  - o Steal cell phones for food & basic needs
  - o Substance abuse
  - o Cycle >> drink alcohol to stay warm
- Transportation

- Greyhound bus closure, but too expensive anyway
- Can't afford bus, too expensive
- Train takes 3+ hours PR to Terrace, 2<sup>nd</sup> priority to CN Rail
- Walk, even close by in cold weather
- Clothing in different locations, no transportation to get to possessions
- Shelter busses should pick you up (solution)
- Shelters
  - Open at 8pm > and at 7pm, not allowed in otherwise
  - You're either working or walking
  - Don't allow pets
  - No smoking, charge you for visitors, overcharging
- Jobs
  - Not accessible
  - Finding a place to apply for jobs
  - Getting information from businesses > certain people, positions
  - Everything on-line, can't find a person to talk to
  - Singling out people, turned away because no computer
  - No phone calls/line, turned away & asked to e-mail
  - Seasonal work only
  - Don't want hardcopy resumes
  - If you don't have phone, they can't contact you, require email address so can't apply > shuts us out
  - Can do the work but job requirements screen you out
- Housing
  - Accessibility, no elevators
  - Fire alarms don't work – crooked landlords
  - Makola Housing owns most apartments
    - Mes up in one, they blacklist you
  - BC Housing waitlists even though there are vacancies
  - Landlords:
    - Not providing services in their agreement
    - E.g. heat/phone
    - Racial profiling/discrimination
    - No home, no job
    - One property manager has monopoly over apartments
    - Bed bugs, rats > not shut down
- Education
  - Lack of programs: first aid
  - On the job training not provided, college used to have it
  - Kermode provides subsidized wages, not in Prince Rupert
  - Daycare costs too high, babysitters you can count on
    - Waiting lists

- No care for kids, lose job
  - Hands on experience is critical, how we learn, with hands and eyes
  - Can't learn everything from a book, skills passed through family
  - Safety training needed
  - Technology is moving everything faster
- Wrap around services needed
  - Knowledge w/ housing: what are you rights
  - Programs: what they actually do for you, EXPLAIN THEM don't just give acronyms
  - Education: supports and services
- Office workers that provided valuable service were fired
- Access to technology and resources (library) to apply for jobs and benefits
- No place to keep warm
- Computers to apply for licenses, child care, etc. library only place
- Transition house, special services
- No one to help
- Barriers to get jobs (e.g. I qualify as mail carrier but I am not given the opportunity. I don't know right people)
- Boiled down to who you know or don't know, even if you are very qualified
- Don't have access to people to help (e.g. with computers)
- Social assistance – couples didn't get \$200, they only received \$100
- Food prices go up on welfare cheque week
- Social services took savings for child's education
- Local supermarkets increase prices on cheque day - \$7/8 for hamburger before cheque day – triple on cheque day/week
- Couples get less (\$800 for 2)
- Hydro costs are high – our bill was \$1,200 over the winter > no help
- No more fishing and forestry jobs
- Tougher to get EI year round
- Job creation programs not helping people who have paid into EI/taxes
- Grocery – only get sale price if buy 2 items (eg \$39, not \$29)
  - People need the sales – very aggravating
- EI 560 hours only 490 hours – welfare wouldn't help because of my vehicle
  - Again, needed computer, no help available, not homeless
  - Need the car, need a vehicle
    - How can you work without one?
- Without EI, I am now homeless. Plus without the additional 70 hours to get EI the previous hours will expire and I will have to start over again next year to get 900 hours
- Income assistance exemptions
- Low level of money before clawback
  - Eg \$1000 raffle > wouldn't keep it
- Food insecurity, kids go hungry
  - Cheaper to buy junk food

- Churches giving out hot meals
- People eating throwaways
- Food bank
- Not enough salmon to share
- Scarce
- Welfare cheques come only once a month but people get paid every two (2) weeks. It is hard to make the welfare cheque stretch.
- Social services staff can be mean
  - “taking it makes you feel bad” the staff act like it’s their money
  - They need to change their mindset
  - People are always judging (e.g. if you go out to eat even if buying the cheapest meals and want to treat your family –people look at you like you should be doing that if you are receiving income assistance –even if we always get the leftovers to bring home)
  - It can get personal in the line ups
  - The people who are making the decisions should have to live a month on welfare
- Landlords will take \$ rent when rates go up
- Pipeline talk made rents go up
- Landlords use increases in property tax as excuse
- Landlords will also change door knobs on the cupboards or do small things to increase the rent
- We also have ‘renovictions’ here
  - Minor improvements as excuse to increase rent
- If you are receiving welfare, you are lucky to find housing
- Poor quality housing (mold)
- A number of the rental buildings burned down – they are not rebuilt
- Speculation on real estate (port) jacking prices up
- Our own people are on the street
- Our own people don’t benefit from the port
- The port was given a good deal on the taxes but the community is not benefitting
- Hydro & gas bills high, cut off
  - Hydro staff have no respect
- Used to have my own a place, shared with others, taking people in made me feel good – I felt like I was sharing the wealth.
- Hydro – pay now or you`re cut off
  - There is a reconnection fee but they won’t reconnect you if you don’t pay the full amount upfront - \$1200 for 2 months
- Freedom of Information can limit who you can help. Need to have permission
- There is a lot of government secrecy – they use freedom of information as a barrier. It costs money to get the information
- Everybody on welfare is under the poverty line
  - \$375 for rent from welfare
  - No address, no IA
- All of the BC Housing is now managed by private landlords but they only have bachelor suites

- My daughter started working and now welfare won't cover her rent for February > even though only worked 24 hours – they will also clawback her income.
- There are many housing challenges
  - o The cost of rent is high
  - o The landlords put through rent increases (illegal)
  - o There is a lack of seniors/elders housing
  - o BC Housing does not keep waiting lists, you have to apply every year
  - o Slumlords
    - Landlords refuse to repair facilities
    - Won't let tenants or caretakers update
  - o Low supply of subsidized housing
  - o Single occupancy rules
  - o Access to disability assistance
  - o Increase available bachelor's suites
    - More affordable bachelor rentals
- Immigration is putting strain on gov't budgets
  - o Put Canadians first
- Healthcare services – can't work if you're sick
- Property owners don't live locally
- The employment training programs are weak. There are tickets/certificates through the employment training programs but you don't get experience, therefore can't obtain employment
- There is no housing for single people
- Lack of youth centres/programs for youth
- People have to have multiple jobs to make ends meet
- Subsidized housing not for singles
  - o Nowhere for a single person to rent
- Families are getting priority over singles on housing applications
- Makola Housing
  - o Rent not based on income
    - Native housing \$1200 +
    - Empty units
    - Can't get subsidies for people living in Makola housing
- Welfare rates too low
- Lack of subsidized seniors housing
- Lack of employment – beyond industry and for the middle aged
- Port jobs driving up rental cost
  - o Can't get port job without being 'in the know'
  - o Creating a working poor
  - o High cost of rent
- More jobs
- Education

- Cost of education is not affordable especially those that also have to maintain a home
    - Can't afford to take time off to further education
  - Affordable job training programs
- Addictions
  - Substance abuse is high
  - Lack of support services
  - Long wait times for appointing/getting into a bed or getting a referral
  - No residential treatment (only 1 detox bed, day programs)
    - No sober living centre
- Services for men
  - Only Raffles Inn
  - Has bugs, therefore underutilized, needs renos
- Understanding the forms/applications & process in order to access services
- Homecare services for elders/seniors
  - There is some but not enough locally
- Infrastructure repairs
  - Taylor/summit street sidewalk
- Vandalism
  - Playgrounds
  - Bus stops
- Need for public facilities (washrooms)
- BC Hydro annual adjustments
  - One big bill once a year, sets you back
- Landlords not fixing property, spending money elsewhere instead of repairs
- Salvation Army shelter closed – used to have 12 beds, city closed them
- Stonecliffe
  - Renovictions
  - Illegal evictions
  - Houses destroyed
- More shelter support services
- Greyhound pulled services from the north
- Lack of affordable housing
  - Supportive, subsidized,
  - Couch surfing
  - Youth staying in unsafe places
- Financial literacy – need funding for everyone in Prince Rupert
  - Income tax filing
  - Teach in school
- Programs cut by liberals – employment programs
  - Bridging employment program
- Need treatment centres
- Education at university

- More than trades needed
  - Other academic programs cut
  - People leave for education and don't come back
  - BSW
  - Closed trader building continuing education
- Lack of child care
- No programs for kids with autism
- Anti-poverty society
  - Lack of services for adults in community
- Lack of funding for grass roots organizations to address poverty
- Mental health
  - Taking away services
  - Move outreach needed
  - Drop in centre needed
  - Gov't staff
  - One-on-one, holistic
- Food security
  - Need crisis intervention
  - Access to everything
  - Need food every day
  - Salvation closed on Sunday
- Housing
  - Tiny housing village
- Access to Services
  - Retelling story > brings back bad memories
  - Need quick and timely access
  - Discharge from hospital and go out on the street
  - Need services in hospital to have a plan getting out
  - Stigma when accessing service
    - Need to be safe and friendly
- Public awareness for FASD
  - Signs, school education (prevention)
- More cultural recognition
  - Needs signage in First Nations languages
- Kids bullied and shamed in school
  - Don't have nice clothes
- Lack of funding for sports programs
  - Extra costs (gas)
- Lack of lunch programs in school
  - Not adequate
  - Low quality
- People in poverty can't tell their story

- Shaming if in poverty
- Needles bureaucracy
  - Unnecessary forms
  - Access issue
- Access
  - Troll free place to have dialogue
  - Modernization of services leaves people out (credit card for example)
- Community supports – need people helping people
- Local/provincial/federal gov't mentality that solutions were tried before so they won't work
- Competition
  - Everyone wants funding, based on winning
  - Need to work together, need a level playing field
- Dental/Glasses: lack of services
- Hydro expensive: need subsidies
- Price of food going up
- Need more businesses
- Clean up the town
- Lack of community meeting place
  - Build community, help each other
- Lack of advocacy (legal, everything)
- Lack of communication (no one answers the phone)
- Job search/employment
  - Not everyone can work
  - Need basic security
- FOI Act is made for gov't not the people
- Rent – high cost even with both working
- BC hydro
- Food – meat cost increased in recent times
- Minimum wage – increase
- Childcare is not affordable (\$750 – 1 child)
- After school care
- More stable expenses
- More full-time hours on jobs
- Disability does not allow partners to get higher paying jobs out of town
- Food bank – only one a month and not in december
  - No fruit and vegetables
  - Food share? None here
  - Soup kitchen – no dinners
  - No access to local deer population: use of local wildlife
  - More people require soup kitchen
  - Someplace to actually cook meals for soup kitchen
- More activities for kids at min or no cost for outside activities

- Tech available or is this a barrier?
  - o Online access?
  - o Email address?
  - o 1800 numbers?
  - o Need more assistance In House
- Lots of hiring of connected/family persons locally
- Food fish: not sufficient allowance for urban people
  - o Should be more allotted
- Tenancy Act not being enforced in some places, too strongly by RCMP
  - o Landlords not following rules
- Rent is too high, goes up every year
  - o Rental allowance doesn't go up fast enough
- Not enough low-income housing or rentals
- Moving online paperwork hard for people without computers
  - o Not enough support for online/toll-free navigation
- Duplication of programs is too much for welfare to be eligible
  - o Process for paperwork discourages people from doing anything
- Process is designed for when urban cities not small towns
- Not allowed to go to school without giving up benefits
- Unemployment, not enough jobs, limits w/ criminal record
- No health benefits between claimers (eg physio) > limited coverage
- Medical issues (mental health and disability and substance abuse)
  - o Drug dealers
- Discrimination (gender, sexual, racial, religion, economic, etc.)
- Not eligible for business loan (minimum dollar earning)
- BC Hdoro and PNG hates for heating
- No supports to move belongings when evicted > have to start from scratch
- Quality of low income houses
  - o Especially with the rain: mold, poor insulation, have to raise heat
- Cost of everything is higher in PR
- No dedicated men or youth shelter
- Youth programming and centre (none available) w/ 24 access
- Cancelling planned building projects
- Violence against women
  - o Communication training
- Not enough life skills training
  - o Taxes, money, cooking
- Alcohol and drug abuse, not enough support or counselling psychologists
- Accessibility/transportation > vehicle access
- No place to put junk/stuff/belonging (storage)
- No appliances in some rentals (store, fridge, washing machine, heating)
- Not enough resources for kids especially with development issues

- Not enough gardens: fresh food < public accessibility
- Rent prices – not affordable
- Not enough jobs with wages that can cover rent
- Multiple expenses
  - o Hydro, groceries, rent
  - o People sacrifice one for another
- Services not available every day of week/long weekends need 24/7 services
- Few options
- Kicked out – multiple times
- Services for men – transition house for men
- Address racism
  - o Lack of respect
- Crowded housing affects health
- Current issues/housing
  - o Overcrowding
  - o Not affordable
  - o Places aren't in good condition
- Access to family doctors which impacts referrals (barrier)
- If don't have washer/dryer at home
  - o Laundromats prices high
- Applications to services – many barriers
  - o Forms complex
  - o Literacy levels/comprehension
  - o Signatures from professionals needed
  - o Online (need internet & computer) (print)
  - o Access to people to ask questions
  - o Major consequences for not filling out – but no help
- Stereotyping/biases
- References required
- Knowing who can help & how to get
- Computer literacy & access
- Access to services
  - o Legal
  - o Eye/vision care
  - o Dental
  - o Prejudices preventing understanding of the problem
- Stress/mental duress from many stressors
- Washrooms/showers – not available 24/7
  - o Need to be clean & safe
- Lack of political power
- Roadblocks thrown up/excuses when solutions are proposed
- Not having fixed address – barrier

- Transportation – especially for kids/transporting kids
  - o Service/bus on weekends
- Childcare costs
- Harsh climate
- Closure of CFC canning lines
- High cost of rental
  - o Bachelor \$1100
  - o 1 bed \$12-\$1500
- Nowhere to rent
- Lots of homelessness
- Restrictions – no children, no pets
- Not enough senior residences on fixed income
- No jobs
- Bed bugs, mice, rodents
- Buildings not being maintained
- Mold – human health
- Slumlords, renoviction
- Landlords do not know rules
- References if you haven't rented before
- No support for moving once you're evicted
- Fix up closed schools
- Misconception that Prince Rupert is booming – it's a ghost town
- More liquor stores than grocery stores
- Lack of skills training education
- Lack of access to medical treatment
  - o Lack of doctors/specialists
- No walk-in/have to go to emergency
- Can't change doctors/limited options
- No youth centre – youth couch surf
- No men's shelter – men end up on street
- Lack of affordable day care
- People with children that work don't get the childcare support from unemployment
- No detox/people get stuck in addiction cycle/leave for treatment come back and fall into same habits men/women/teens
  - o Limited support at all for addiction
- Mental health unsupported
  - o People shipped to terrace/PG
- End of line for shipping food, treatment, etc.
- Greyhound pulling out
- City buses stop at 6 – not running on Sundays
- Racism
  - o Prejudice in renting

- Jobs/hiring
  - At hospital white people first
  - Inclusivity is important, some places you can feel you are not welcome
- People won't rent to you if on income assistance
- Domestic violence leads to runaways
- Transition house does not have second phase housing
- Transition house stays full long term
- No resources to help people through transition to get back on their feet
- BC Housing has lots of empty units
  - Run by society Makola (application through BC Housing)
    - Long waitlists 1+ year
- High cost of utilities
  - Hydro
  - Gas
- No lunch program in schools & better advertisement needed
- No after school programs
- When on income assistance, can't access education
- Hire more people at the port
  - Unfair hiring process – union unfair selection
  - Its who you know that's how you get a job
  - Hiring from outside the community
  - Jobs going to people from out of town
- Lack of skills but no skills training
- Closed fisheries
- Mills have closed
- Canneries closed
- Used to have ministries here
- Offices moved to Terrace
- Fisheries have collapsed because of the fish farms
- The coal
- Stopped the country on seals & sea lions – overpopulated, eating all of the fish/abalone
- Lack of opportunity to harvest/water polluted
- Limited opportunity for practicing cultural activities
- Need more opportunities to gather more cultural dialogue w friendly atmosphere
  - Respect for other cultures
- Elder and women abuse
- Poor parenting skills
- Lack of affordable leisure activities
  - Pool hall, bowling alley
  - Nothing to do with families that are affordable
  - Youth up to age 30: blade runners
- No safe space for homeless people to go have coffee, talk, relax

- Safety – especially homeless
- Food insecurity
- Proper education, different approaches
- Affordable housing ie digby Towers
- Appropriate housing
- Renovations
- More support within public school system
- Mental health
- Violence against women and vulnerable people
- Transportation
- Safety – especially homeless
- Food insecurity
- Proper education for FAS, FASE, ADD, ADHD
  - o More support in public schools
- Affordable housing
- “mental health” support worker
- Violence against women
- Transportation for disability
- Affordable housing not just for seniors
- Increase minimum wage
- Addictions
- Physical disabilities
- Low self-esteem
- Affordability of good food
  - o Rising cost of food
  - o Transportation
  - o Kids are starving in school (teacher is providing food)
  - o Food security
- Housing
- Getting kids to school? Put bus into play
- Clothing program
- Hygiene security
- Enough time to eat meal: etiquette
- Cost of hydro
- Rental cost
- Overcrowding in housing
- Safe and adequate housing, stable, healthy
- Mol
- Smoking/addictions
- Sustainable subsidy
- Subsidized housing for all seniors, singles, families
- Fighting discrimination in housing

- Lack of detox centers in the north & treatment centers
- People with disabilities
- Employment opportunities
- Access to mental health care
- Waitlists too long
- Safety in the community
- Lack of resources for mental health issues
  - o PTSD – lack of resources
  - o Lack of understanding and empathy
- Child care, lack of affordable
- No identifications
- No ability to have a bank account
- Addictions
  - o Addictive lives
  - o Lack of help, understanding
  - o Not enough resources
  - o People who use resources over and over take away from people who need it
- Depression
- Lack of mental health resources
  - o 6 week wait for treatment
  - o Lack of grief support
  - o Need a variety of supports for people
- People turned away from help and being turned away hurts
  - o Discouraging
- Housing
  - o No SRO
- Education
  - o Don't teach kids to budget and no taxes
  - o Life skills training
- Jobs
  - o Not enough
  - o Need labour office to apply for jobs

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

- Jobs (4)
  - o Job creation
  - o Apprenticeships: address some teenage issues and adult issues
  - o Training allowance exemption for assistance
- Housing (9)
  - o More affordable, SROs
  - o One for elders
  - o One for singles
  - o Housing built by people getting training for jobs
- Labour office for causal labour pickup (1)
- Incorporate a community centre w/recreation, library, run by volunteers like Carnegie in Vancouver
  - o Safe environment for everyone (4)
  - o Safe spaces for youth, elders so they have things to do
- Local detox centre with a safe house (3)
  - o Close treatment centre
  - o Addictions and alcohol transition (1): detox/treatment home, day program is not enough (this is harm reduction not treatment)
- Extend hours for transit (3)
  - o Talk to BC gov't and BC transit about it
  - o Special buses for special times (ie shift change for job sites, work/employment (1)
- City needs to really help (2)
  - o Ie find things for kids, work on trying to get housing
  - o City hires younger adults, youth to help w/ training/jobs that would benefit community
- Housing for kids (1)
  - o Support group, counselors, etc. to help kids
  - o One place for kids to help them
- Single parents
  - o Kids taken away and parent doesn't learn anything
  - o Need better way to keep families and kids together and help parents at same time (1)
- More info needed for parents/people about resources and supports
- Local seniors advocate need to reach out and do more
- No \$ to eat when travelling for gov't services, gov't doesn't pay for food
  - o Airlifted to Vancouver but no coverage for food, clothing, return trip home
  - o Can't plan for emergency, need transportation to get home paid for
- BC Housing should be open more than 2 days/week (2)
  - o Needs consistent hours

- Library needs consistent hours
- Ministry
  - o Volunteer supplements
  - o For seniors, libraries etc. garbage pickups
  - o Graffiti removal
  - o Xmas tree pick ups
  - o Recycling depot – service for ppl who don't have cars
- Income assistance
  - o Earn \$, it's taken away (even volunteer \$ for meal, transport)
- Confidential phone line + connect ppl to services
  - o Hire real operators (no phone trees)
- Training
  - o Cultural training for new people
  - o Sensitivity training – RCMP, schools for kids
- More life skills training in schools
  - o No job search skills
  - o Denied assistance: put through job training if don't go, don't get a cheque
- Early learning of life, practical skills, reduces anxiety, stress later on
- MSDPR
  - o Help find out why people need help or their needs – social anxiety as examples
- Need more income support that is individualized: be more flexible
- Programs that don't exclude people (ie single fathers get courses/help that pregnant women can get like parenting courses)
- Continuing to make opportunities to share and have more supports
- Increase minimum wage and protect workers from employers penalizing them for increase such as recently in Ontario/Tim Hortons
  - o Incentivize companies to reward employees financially
- Child tax should not be based on income unless it is extremely high
  - o Should be based on whether you are a single parent, PWD, etc. (Needs-based)
- Learn from Scandinavian countries and their models of assistance
- Liberals try to stop whatever NDP does and NDP tries to stop whatever Liberals do
  - o Gov't needs to work together.
- More money (1)
- More meetings like this
- Take away limitations around PWD & other forms of assistance (3)
- Cover gaps in programs
- Homeless program to access different furniture
- Assistance to deal with things like bed bugs, or other unforeseen circumstances (1)
  - o Tailor assistance more to needs
- More regulations on landlords so they can't jack up rent (2)
  - o Better protection for tenants, more restrictions on landlords
  - o Rent restrictions on what can be charged (1)

- Close loopholes in housing policies, renovations to increase rent
- Do more for kids taken away from parents (2)
  - More support for relatives taking care of others kids
- Better communication, amplify voices instead of silencing them
- Working with Ma'kola Housing to respond better to tenants and former tenants
  - More accountabilities and revamped
  - Less discriminatory guidelines
- Increase communication on available programs (1)
- Address Housing Vacancies (2)
  - Too many empty homes and apartments b/c landlords discriminating on applicants (judging references, income, etc.)
- Incentivize owning and living in own home
  - Rent to own programs for housing (1)
- Address on/off reserve income assistance discriminatory policies: end them (1)
- Re-examine ID requirements needed for accessing assistance (1)
- Stop deducting family tax from assistance cheques
  - Benefits re: kids should never be clawed back (3)
- Better balance between job creation and environmental protection
  - Land is contaminated, make sure job creation is coupled with environmental protection
- Tax breaks and universal income policies should be considered, look to other countries as well (1)
- Extend supports (family allowance) for you and families raising youth to 24 or examine what is reasonable (2)
- Immediate, not progressive, changes/increases to minimum wage at \$15/hr (2)
  - Be responsive to inflation & minimum wage more quickly
- Universal/guaranteed income should be applied all across Canada and be tied to inflation (3)
- Raise IA rates all across the board (1)
- Make it easier to help others access supports
- Housing
  - Reduce wait time
  - Look at Haida Gwaii program – gave wood to build but no training
  - How do you get by with \$300/month
  - Rental Cap
  - Landlords
    - Accountability, proper complaint system
    - Education and awareness, compassion, empathy (1)
    - Gov't intervention in rental system
    - Penalize them if they don't comply
  - Use unoccupied buildings for housing
    - BC Housing, or city, buy vacant buildings
  - Funding for true renovations, not paint
  - Own place vs shelter

- Fairness & equity for Aboriginal People – reconciliation
- TRC agreements (1)
- Enforcement of regulations (fire marshall in buildings)
- More seniors housing – they have additional barriers
- Allowance for shelter costs
- Showers in shelters
  - Basic living essentials
- Programs (welfare)
  - Increase welfare rates based on community living wage
  - A community office, not gov't
  - Awareness
  - Hydro rates freeze
  - Ministry involvement in community
  - Tied with jobs > wraparound services, transportation, child care
- Jobs
  - Training incentives such as:
    - Commitment to hire you is option not requirement
    - More accessible
  - Increase welfare while you're in school
  - Allow full-time school while on welfare instead of student loan
  - More programs for upgrading
  - Program to pay off loans
  - Fast accreditation if you can already do the work > fast track to certification
  - Hands on oversight and support for work
- Advocacy vs Penalty (1)
  - This is what minister is trying to do > continue this
  - Support rather than trying to kick people off assistance
  - Penalties should be pardoned if justified ex. Audits on people already living in poverty
  - Better access to wage increases, same work, same pay **FAIRNESS AND EQUITY**
  - Supported employment for a period of time
    - Childcare
    - Housing
- Transportation
  - Bus shuttles for people to get around
  - Certain drop off/pick up points downtown to Ridley etc.
  - More frequent bus service
  - Train not viable option for transportation
- More money (6)
- Programs to help people to get EI hours
- More job creation programs > let the hours count towards EI
- Help with computer (2)
- Training for forestry/agriculture

- Now people pushed until get hurt
- Training needs to lead to a job and cover good skills
- Mentorship on job sites with experience workers (1)
- Need to have good compensation for people hurt on the job
- Certificate training to show employer (eg everyone should have level 1 1<sup>st</sup> aid) (2)
- All people should get access to training (not just 55+) (2)
- Services should be ready and available when you need them (2)
  - Hydro, bills, welfare
- IDEA > pay hydro directly from welfare (1)
- Everybody wants to work, so
  - Give everybody the opportunity
  - Encourage employers to give opportunities so that it's not 'who you know' (3)
- Be flexible with how EI hours calculated (1)
- Share jobs and opportunities (4)
  - Let people keep seniority when they share, 'job share' for port jobs
    - Jobs are too exclusive
- Welfare increase should have gone to both people in a couple (\$200 increase for 2, not \$100 for 2)
- Predictable, good paying jobs that can support a family > security (1)
- Fair shift allocation (not based on sales of department/out of your control) (1)
- Affordable phones to help keep job (1)
- Neighbourhood houses (2)
  - Get help and compassion without judgment from people, not computers
- Transportation > more access (1)
  - Keep longer hours, not just 9-5
- Access to housing, employment, food (3)
- Keep EI hours for 2 years (like previous policy) (4)
- Retrain and help people out of bad situation w no judgement (3)
- Need someone who would take time to sit down and LISTEN to you
- Need a community place to gather, to be around other people and share. Instead people are isolated (3)
- Warm, dry, safe, helpful place. Like how community used to be
- Need a community instead of little pockets of isolation
- Help to use computers
- Basic respect (2)
- Welfare clawbacks
  - Change the rules to let people keep money
- Political parties should pay, not tax payers (2)
- Keep shelters open longer
  - Homeless have nowhere to go or eat on Sundays (only 1 hr)
- Installing cameras to decrease vandalism in public areas (1)
- Stop renovictions

- More accessibility to the food bank, be able to go more times
- Opening an addictions centre and detox centre for men and women (2)
- More subsidized rent availability (2)
- Make use/repurpose empty buildings (encourage business/shelters/could kitchens)
- Increase existing support for anti-poverty programs (increase the funding)
- Longer bus hrs and run from Monday-Sunday
- Bring more doctors to the north that will help homeless (2)
- More rent assistance to people that work (1)
- Open a walk in clinic (1)
- Increase welfare rates
- Increase welfare rates for single parents
- Laws preventing high rent
- Day facilities for the homeless between 8am-8pm
- More low-income housing for single people (\$375 not enough)
- More job security for people with families/people @ risk
- More affordable housing units (25 will not be enough)
- Road safety – its too dark on crosswalks. Fix sidewalks (1)
- Have the city work with owners of empty properties to get them occupied
- Bigger public areas for meetings
- More affordable or free employment programs for tickets (1)
- Encourage development of affordable restaurants
- Increase soup kitchen hours and open it @ dinner (1)
- Bring back the boys & girls club
- Prevent employers from discriminating against people with learning disabilities/medical disabilities
- Adult drop-in centre (like the 44 in Vancouver) (1)
- Programs for young adults that are too old for youth programs (most end at 18)
- Encourage I/I to rent empty units – prevent homes from being empty for long periods of time
- “don’t reinvent the wheel” (2)
  - o Use existing resources but change the system
  - o Allow community to come up with solution
  - o Funding needs to be more user friendly
  - o Cut out bureaucracy
- Voluntary sharing of resources and wealth (1)
  - o Give tax incentives
  - o Find a place to share it (eg once a month at hall)
- Housing (5)
  - o Need a boarding house
  - o Need housing for society’s to manage
- Utilize talents of people in poverty (2)
  - o Skills share: sign up sheet with city
    - Labour unlimited example

- Networking, community building
- Improve access to mental health services (4)
  - Need services in communities
- More flowers: improve living environment (1)
- Mental health treatment centre (3)
  - Remove waitlist (1)
  - Need one in Prince Rupert
  - Direct transportation to treatment and home
- Central access to information (1)
- Co-op housing (4)
  - Rent is a % of what you make
  - Provides more money for paying for other expenses
  - Equal playing field
- Cities to provide land for housing projects to a society (such as unity city) (1)
- Tiny housing projects (4)
  - % of income
  - Have administrator run subsidies to remove stigma of poverty
- Empowerment (2)
  - Root causes are the focus, not the person
  - Action plans to give people tools to get out of poverty
  - Education
  - Hand up. Not hand out
- Group homes for teens (2)
- Subsidized day care and facilities onsite (eg hospitals) (3)
- More rent control for lower rents (1)
- More control over rent eviction
- Availability to funds when short monthly that are regulated
- More training about RTA
  - Education about how to care for your property
- Self help for parents
  - Life skill training
  - What is respectful?
- More programs at local college
  - On-line training courses but cost for internet and course fees
  - How can you get education when availability and cost are not making it possible?
- So lack of jobs to earn sufficient money to purchase a house or see it in the future
- Jobs
  - Renewable jobs
  - Forestry
- BC Housing vacancies: WHY?
  - More control locally: answers locally!
- What are taxes? Can this cost reduce the rent cost?

- Medicare
  - o Indigenous healthcare services moved from federal to provincial
  - o Costs have increased and cut backs
  - o \$140/month cost to 1 person
- Tenancy Act Problems (3)
  - o Update the laws
  - o Take the RCMP out of the equation
  - o Hire more people to represent tenants
  - o Strengthen the ombudsperson
- High rent/low assistance (2)
  - o Raise the rental allowance with the market
  - o Cap on rental rates
  - o Build more supportive housing
- Not enough housing (2)
  - o Build more rental housing
  - o Funding for restoring vacant/deteriorated housing
  - o Landlords get incentives/rebates to improve housing
  - o Incentives for new landlords to get into low-income housing
  - o Direct deposit to avoid \$ issues
- Bad paperwork/Online process (3)
  - o Hire more support works to help navigate and advocate
  - o Public accessible computers
  - o More housing advocates and resource funding
  - o Simplify the paperwork
  - o Use the phone and paper
- Jobs/Unemployment (2)
  - o Allow more busking
  - o Reduce restrictions on criminal record
  - o Help with training, certifications
  - o Help with job skills like interview skills and resumes
  - o Provide business loan availability
- Not enough health coverage (1)
  - o Physiotherapy after injury should be covered
  - o More addiction supports and counselling
  - o Central health clinic/walk-in
  - o More doctors
  - o Increase welfare/insurance coverage for meds
- Addiction (2)
  - o Treatment centre established w/counsellors
  - o Detox centre w/transition housing
  - o Get day dealers off the street or regulate distribution
  - o Safe injection sites

- Quality of Housing (3)
  - o Community neighbourhood house (laundry, cook, etc.)
  - o Bed bug + lice support service
- Cost of Heating (2)
  - o Renovate rents/housing
  - o Ensure all rentals have serviceable appliances
  - o Increase rebates amount + number
  - o Get PNG on board w/BC Hydro energy efficiency program
- Discrimination (2)
  - o Educate people (landlords, staff, etc.)
  - o Requirements to learn
- No support for moving (2)
  - o Crisis grants
  - o Assistance for eviction
  - o Place for storing belongings
- Cost in PR vs Vancouver (1)
  - o Education on different markets
  - o Account for differences
- Not enough life skills training (2)
  - o Offer more training
  - o Need more skills training workers/outreach
- Not enough resources for kids (2)
  - o Offer more resources
  - o Youth shelter
  - o 24 hour community house
- Targeted services for men (1)
  - o Transition house for men
- Open and ongoing communication – where is poverty reduction strategy going?
- Connecting ppl who want to help with work eg. Firefighting
- Affordable housing (2)
- Support groups in addition to counselling – for more than drug and alcohol issues (2)
- Access to health food
  - o Groceries
  - o Soup kitchens
  - o Nutrition
  - o Traditional & local foods
- Existing facilities (eg friendship house, salvation army) not available
  - o Showers laundry
- Increase seniors housing / lower age of entry (2)
- Weekend bus service
- Support networks
  - o Family-based drug & alcohol centre (1)

- Suggested example – port alberni food-based gatherings monthly
- Simplified forms & in-person support for understanding & completing forms (1)
- Continued support for unemployment Action Centre & KAPS
- Landlords/residences – making criteria to restrict entry/housing
- Policy restrictions and interpretation of policy
  - Can restrict non-family members from being in 3 bedroom units
  - National Occupancy Standards
  - Could/should be more flexible (1)
- Increase flexibility & creativity to match need with availability (1)
- Solutions need to be tailored to PR people/environment
- Access to education (1)
  - Preschool
  - Respectful
  - Culturally appropriate
- Truth & Reconciliation Commission adopted
- Existing programs (eg strongstart) need to reach broad audiences and overcome barriers (eg transportation)
  - Need to know where to access services (eg computers)
- Education of people delivering programs to understand true nature of problems
- Adopt adjacency principle (1)
  - So fish caught in local waters get processed in PR
  - Can many diff species/products
  - Adjacency for forestry: value-add
- Increase access to clean, safe facilities (1)
  - Washrooms “Portland Loo” all-weather bathroom
  - Laundry
  - Showers
- Political power
  - Ballot (prove residency)
  - Education
- Access to health care providers/clinic
- When salvation army can’t sell things, make available for free
- Fishing licences at local DFO
- More job opportunities
- Rules around joining Blade Runners are a problem: allow people to join blade runners again after a few years
  - Someone who participated in 2010 cannot participate again
- Fewer restrictions on training/school for people on EI or social assistance
- Build more affordable housing
- Cap on rent increases
- Penalties for slumlords
- Call line 1800# to report landlords who are breaking law, not caring for properties

- Have housing for you that are on independent living agreements
- Specific supports for youth, youth designated housing
- In PG they have youth shelter with apartments for youth on independent living
- Bring more support workers, counsellors, etc. for all ages
- Need more staff at hospital, more doctors, more specialists in town
- Landlords need to be more accountable
  - o Fines for landlords who don't exterminate rats, bed bugs
- Better tracking on illegal suites
- Create more permanent training facilities at the college
  - o Cooking, welding, trades, etc.
- Late night city bus service
  - o Open 10pm + Sundays
- Compensation for tenants when suite has pests
  - o Tenants should get put up somewhere while extermination happens or make landlord eat them
  - o Affordable programs at rec centre and pool leisure guide activities are not affordable
- Get rid of rugs in rental houses
  - o Roll landlord in the rug after
- Allow seal/sea lion hunting to bring population down/bring fish back
  - o Create seal hunt industry
  - o Fur coats, meat, jackets
- Stop immigration – take care of the people who are here who need help
  - o Solve homelessness, water issues on reserves before immigration
  - o Support those who need help here
- More support for small business
- Make rules to prevent wealthy & corporations from buying up property and closing businesses
- Fix up closed schools
  - o Turn into affordable housing
- Need representation with the city
  - o Tsimshian representation on city council/school board
- Provincially/federally representation as (*illegible*)
- More media talking about how the community is struggling
- Youth shelter/affordable youth housing
- Mental health (3)
  - o More publicity, people aren't aware of services
  - o More feet on the ground, more trained ears
  - o Addiction counselling, suicide prevention
- Homelessness (2)
  - o Not safe
  - o Something like "bear patrol" in Winnipeg for violence against vulnerable people
  - o Warm clothing & reflective clothing
- Cohousing for affordability and Social Intercourse

- Money to bring BC Housing units up to code
- Better standards against slum lords
- Illegal to deny rental units to people w/pets & have dog/cat runs
- Food Insecurity
  - o Transportation for food to be subsidized
  - o Better access to healthy food/fruit/veg
  - o Good food box
  - o More community gardens, supply seeds
- Affordable transportation
  - o Subsidy for working poor
  - o Extended bus service (esp Sunday)
  - o Handy-bus currently 8-1630
- Upgrading education
- Increasing supports for aging parents
- Supports for the caregiver
- Reducing debt load
- Personal interest workshops
- Individual action plans
- Person coaching – finances etc.
- Increase non-smoking and anti-drug laws
- Increase awareness on human rights/respect/dignity
- Better monitoring of government/trustees
  - o Transparency
- Increase legal services