



# Transcript: Community Meeting on Poverty Reduction

Smithers, BC  
January 13, 2018

## Introduction and Event Summary

On January 13, 2018, the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Smithers, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together over 80 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

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

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 13 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?

- Income assistance rates are too low
- Worst jobs are part time
- Part time work means you don't have to pay benefits
- If part-time had benefits would jobs become full time
- Child care \$45 per day, current subsidy only \$25
- Recreation – 12 free passes per year, once be month, could be better
- Clothing – have to be there to get anything (shelter)
- Salvation army - \$20- 3 times per year
- This time of year clothing is a big expense
- So many things happen in the bush = everything is frozen wet, cold
- Sleeping in wet blankets
- Don't smell good but can only wash clothes once per week but what can you do
- Shelter = food only available 8-10am, used to allow laundry, but not now
- Sunday 1:00 pm otherwise window closed at 10 – socks/boots
- Go into the woods to get wood – up all night just to keep the fire going
- Dumpster diving food but get charged if caught – have to go look at night – meat = cold so the meat stays good = Prince George has a way to distribute food, some local business help but a lot of food goes to waste
- Medication not covered, \$100 per month not covered pre-scribed
- Takes away from the food \$
- Lunches but at night we don't have anything so we have to be resourceful to have to dumpster dive = PLW
- Walk every morning = ground floods but in the spring
- Big bull – he didn't have to see me I was gone – mating season is hard – one time a bear was in our tent
- Bear through quite a bit
- Hitchhiking
- Housing option for seniors
- Stairs/accessible housing for seniors
- Access to:
  - o Long term and sustainable buildings not accessible enough
  - o Child care
  - o Transportation (seniors, disabled cannot travel with snow)
  - o Food (security and not affordable)
  - o Access to land (rural) real challenge
  - o Heating (as high as \$800 per month)
- People are choosing between heat and food
- Mould and poor insulation – when housing improvement rent goes up – people get kicked out (Smithers) Houston has low-income housing dilapidated- no furnaces – should be condemned but open because of shortage

- Lack of health homes, health get worse
- Short doctors – appointment max 5 min
- Access to natural meds
- Security – poor are criminalized or beaten by own people or RCMP
- Stigma- race, class, gender RCMP, people who could help and don't help, single moms, single dads (Indigenous in particular) Ex. Ppl with mental health may not get jobs, housing, medical, undiagnosed FASD, addition, “people are being asked to cope on their own and they cant do that.” “need anti poverty and disability and senior advocacy in north
- Dental care unaffordable and affects people sense of self and self esteem
- Child hunger – hungry in school I can't learn
- Addictions
  - o Need local – no funding for Metis to get treatments
  - o Need addictions counsellors, counsellors are out numbered
  - o Day treatment, detox – not enough
  - o Counselling not rooted in trauma/intergeneration, general
- Intergenerational poverty
- Food – brother on income assistance cannot afford food for 1 week, he goes to friends hoping for food
  - o 1 plus feeding sister \$500 per month groceries
- Pets – mental health helps
  - o Cant afford to feed
  - o Lots of places/rentals don't allow pets
- Accountability and feedback
  - o Someone with shelter should be able to give feedback and now harmed or penalized for doing so
- Need broader understanding of cost of life in north ie. Medical travel to PG or Van for essential medical. Health bus -> cant use it, out of work for week
- People can't make appointments, health, probation, penalized
- Look at system that penalize the poor and fix it
- Education 1 training and trades for Indigenous people (there is an invisible pop. and pop that gets stigmatized)
  - o Lots of women (single moms) poor because lack of opportunities, entrepreneurship
- Waited 3 months for group counselling – stigmatized as a man
- Not enough entry level jobs, even people working 2 jobs are penalized for working out shifts
- Working 2 jobs (if the can even get a job)
  - o Earning min. wage which does not cover child care, hydro, food, rent, etc
  - o Lack of child care lead to abuse – parents working rely on people/unsafe situation or kids left alone
- Need spaces to “unlearn” stigmatization, programs and community spaces – need life skills, conflict resolution, communication (positive ongoing programs)- programs that benefit community had no more funding

- Benefits – on IA cannot earn anything. Need to allow people to live above poverty line – end to forced poverty
- The IQ level is low for people to access services (IQ higher than 50) and cannot get services, not a problem for people it's a problem with policy
- Often people with disability lose housing because they need to relearn skills
- People beat IQ score but are disabled need help and cant get it
  - o Undiagnosed FASD/FAS training for identifying people with disabilities and working with them
- Disabled people asked to fend for themselves
- We need flexible support for people, some people may need a bit of funding, some money
- Once people get into legal issues i.e. single mom can't afford – not enough legal aid – don't have a lot of lawyers to take on legal aid cases
- Child tax benefits – becomes power struggle – i.e. man wants 1 disputes benefits – lost house, lost kids, downward spiral
- People on IA that # is not their @ the have to borrow @ - IA cheque foes to debt – tell and ask for help and debt cycle. Monthly low income not enough and people have pets etc.
- “this create a desperate individual way of thinking when there is never enough. As a result there is a lack of kindness “
- There is charity – someone at top deciding – all kind
- Hierarchy is unity. It's the idea of helping each other
- In north, poverty of family (because of breakdown) and poverty of spirit (churches but not a lot spirituality) need spiritual leaders.
- Need training to budget – life skills – preparing food
- People in poverty can only go so far some people don't have homes
- No youth centre Smithers
  - o Fed \$ goes to youth employment no \$ for fun
- A lot of youth hunger- prevention so no go to prison
- Lot of youth couch surfing
- Local, small biz employment and production of local good. Bis mills shut
- Road conditions ruin vehicles – creates more \$ problems
- Cost of vehicles very high – cant afford repairs
- A lot of people providing social services are working poor
- Girlfriend lost home and spent more \$ than when had home
- Hotel rates to high – support travel and afford to go inside BC or inside Canada
- Cant go to another province and maintain IA
- Assumption people access net, wifi, phone, computer
  - o Not everyone has access or can afford – not close to reality – sometimes you cant do what is required
- Housing
  - o Lack of housing
  - o Affordable
  - o No place to rent or buy

- Housing cheaply built
- Over \$900/month hydro bills
- High utility bills
- Not affordable
- ½ income on rent
- BC Housing no more than 30% of income
- Min. wage jobs
  - Not cheap enough
  - Not enough money
- Lack of employment
  - Retail, chamber maids
  - Lack of staff
  - There is a labour shortage
  - 85% unemployment – Hazelton
    - Mental health
    - Addiction issues
    - Programs inaccessible
    - FSD – 67%
    - Cultural
    - Actual care
    - Issue, what is the cause?
  - Employment is?
    - Poverty – living off land
- Can you live in poverty and have a good quality of life?
- Mental health issues
- 1 paycheque away form poverty
- Invisible homelessness – couch surfing, family barriers to raising yourself out at poverty
- Food, nutrition
- Cost of transportation
- People hire their themselves out – give rides to people – cost a lot – cash
- Multi year strategy
- Poverty – rent – cant provide references
  - High damage deposits
- Low vacancy rate
  - Who would 1/1 choose
  - Personal references
  - Living day to day
  - Min wage job
  - Pick higher paying jobs
  - Kids
- People living in tents
- Mold – call 1/1 then may need to condemn then people get eviction notices

- Res- pay rent – evicted if you don't pay
  - o Can never build equity
  - o Cheaply built homes
  - o CMHC and BC housing going downhill
- People want to work but want to find a job that makes it worthwhile
- Gone are the 40 hour workweeks
  - o Minimum wage
  - o No benefits
  - o Retail – hospitality – entry level jobs
- S.C.S – shelter, low income housing
- CIC – mom dealing addiction
  - o Kids taken
  - o Detox no beds, must go to Prince George
  - o s/w didn't show up
- MCFD – not holding up their end
- Dease Lake – more cultural approach
- More CIC's in Hazelton
- More integration in communities
- MCFD raises children
- Medical – need to travel
- Lack of services – medical
- Lack of programs
- Hazelton – ecosystems – connection to the land when land raped and pillaged pushes people to poverty
- Ineffective programs
  - o Northern Development Imitative Trust
- Cities investing, lots of jobs
- Majority people – Hazelton not employable
- Generational
- Break the cycle
- Systemic approach to supporting Kids
- Trauma informed /learning
- Cost of daycare, if you can find it.
- Meant health and addiction
  - o Lack of local support
  - o Colonial structures
  - o Not-trauma informed
  - o Racism
- Heal land to support MH and culture
  - o Land-based healing programs
  - o Funded through IA/PWD/EI NVIT funds?
  - o Prevention focused programs

- Wrap around care
- Colonial structure and racism
  - Cost of northern living
    - Food/food security
    - Transport
    - Informal economies
- Housing the biggest issue facing people receiving social services
- Paying the cheque directly to landlord was de-humanizing
- Teacher sees people in poverty everyday
- Housing issues all the time
  - Local MLA
  - Different way to deliver services?
  - Housing people wanted places they choose themselves
- Alcohol counselling was tried but the person wasn't asked what would help
- Judgement
- Alcoholism is a complex disease
- Income assistance → people try all kinds of way to survive
- Housing needs to accommodate people who need an animal/dog companion
- Housing and addictions
  - Couch surfing – kids surfing
  - Huge issue right now
  - Home, no shelter (Hazelton)
  - No family/parent
- Gov't hours/avail limited
- Hydro bills are thousands of dollars
- ]people need help to speak up
- Smithers has an over representation of poor and rich/wealthy
  - 20% of population can barely afford a week of groceries
- All efforts towards housing
- New development of supportive housing will help but not addressing the whole issue.
- Money
- Legal clinics (people need to qualify)
- Multi-department government approach required
- So many layers of need
  - Good nutritious food not cheap crumby food
  - Child care
    - Single moms need support to get educational training and a job
    - Hard with distances to travel
- Put spokes back in the wheel
- Gov't appointees on school boards and other boards have caused continued problems
- Some issues are urgent/short-term
- Some are long term/ sustainable



- Seniors
- Children
  - o Education for parents
  - o Parents were not helping child count, read, spell his name
- New Canadians
  - o Refugees
  - o Family settlement
  - o Without English people were stuck in home, no ability to get out
- People with disabilities
  - o Isolation/transportation needs to help
  - o Support/care needed
- It's a multi department issues, needs co-ordination of services.
- Can't cope if not eaten (let alone learn)
- More counselling and mental health support
- 1:1 support for learning disabilities
- Reading help examples → age 9 critical
  - o Just need 1 or 2 people to help
  - o Reading needed for everything
- Restore all programs cut in last 16 years. Cataclysmic effect in our communities
- Whole generation without services needed
- Cultural biases
- Houston and grade 10 student
  - o Body there, mind elsewhere/asleep
  - o Miles behind
  - o No answer at home (discontinued)
  - o Couch surfing for 1 month
  - o Had been thrown out of home
  - o School was safe
  - o Teachers have unique view/angle
  - o Snowball effect
    - Drop out, no work, social assistance.
- Start at infancy/prenatal
- Let's let kids participate in school sports/programs at no cost
- School is scary esp. for some indigenous families
- Poor kids always get bullied
- Spend night in hospital/cell
- Youth housing a particular issue
  - o Need youth group homes
  - o Shouldn't house kids with adults
- 25 years in adult education
  - o Seen so much parents
  - o Can be an attitude/choices and what you value

- Education is the key
    - Kids and parents
- Low income
  - No money → end up homeless
  - Seasonal income – no winter jobs – have to work tonnes in the summer
  - Medical EI too low – cant cover utilities and rent
  - Rent \$940 → medical EI won't cover that (\$840/mo)
  - Not taking in seasonal nature/not designed for family assistance, retirement, also affects income
- Housing
  - Rent too high, increases (\$900-950)
  - No vacancies for social housing in Smithers
  - No stock in Smithers, have to be forced to Houston
  - Fewer services in Houston, bus only runs 3x per week, forces people back to Smithers for services
  - Hard to work when transportation not feasible → cant get to the job
  - Housing stock is sub par in Houston (poor insulation) poor windows = increase Hydro bills
  - Telkwa housing – slum lords raising rent to \$1000 for units poorly maintained
- Racism amongst landlords and community members
  - Traffic control → people drive by and say things security at safely pushed a lady down
- Societal awareness of poverty
  - Systemic oppression → not being taught in school
  - Impacts hiring practices, everything
  - Source of the problem
  - Scope → broad spectrum working min wage jobs, people on the verge (medical conditions and injustices → cannot afford to not work)
- Mental health
  - Combined with other stress makes it worse
- Food
  - Access (Houston has no grocery store for 1.5 years)
  - Compounding problem as transportation to grocery stores is expensive
- Access to services
  - Ministries bouncing you around to different programs, makes it difficult
  - Too much tech based people don't have computer literacy of internet, library is 30 min mac on computers
  - Communication difficult → workers leave, hard to find information
  - It takes time to figure out what is available
- Ministry: hard to navigate
  - Relies too much on technology
  - People don't have access to the internet
  - Personal info at public places (using libraries)
  - Frustrating phone line (1-866 number)

- Application forms/ paper work too complex
- Rent
  - Wealth property owners in charge
  - Need to look at social structure
  - Racism, exclusions, disenfranchisement, disease
- History
  - Reserve lands taken away in the 1970s
  - First nations struggling in traditional territory
- \$240 income assistance on reserve not the same off reserve, have to sell firewood
- Lots of assumption regarding tax exemptions on reserve
- Forestry work
  - Needs class 5 license --. Tree planting
  - On reserve logging
  - Pipeline to AB
  - Accident on logging roads
- Education
  - Not finishing school
  - School in Fort Babine and Moricetown only goes to grade 7 then kids have to travel 2 hrs  
40 min round trip to high school (bad logging road)
  - Kids end up dropping out, do drugs, drink alcohol,
  - Vulnerable kids, no family
- Geography
  - Distance and vastness in the north vs the south BC
  - Impacts work, programs, services
  - Greyhound is pulling out, no way to get around
- Residential schools also has big effects
- Budgeting not taught in schools
- Kalers cabins – 2 room shack, poorly built, grew up in these homes
  - No water, no plumbing
- Forced to live in sub standard housing but if housing is improved rent goes up and cant afford cost to owners to upgrade housing
- People with disabilities
  - No ramps, no housing, few choices, no help
- People with low income have or might want to live in rural areas, cant live in the city, unfair for people to have to move
- First Nation people should not have to move period
  - They built Smithers, our territory
- Youth – not enough programs (after school) friendship centre drop in doesn't run anymore, nothing to do, vulnerable --. Can turn to drugs, alcohol, loneliness, no one to turn to
- School not teaching life skills
  - How to do taxes, budget
  - Teachers rely on family to teach life skills but no elders left

- Parents have to work so are not around to teach life skills --. Hard choice, have to work to survive
- Education is the key, no supports in place (including traditional)
- Recreation
  - Access is low
  - Stuff for youth to do
  - Need more access and more options
- Access to re-education without having to go far from home
  - Not just online
  - Close to home
  - Dogwood diploma, GED as a start
  - Traveling school system – cycle thru Northern communities
- Housing
  - Forced to be off-reserve because the housing is too poor on reserve, no renovation/bad reno's
  - Slum landlords → being rented but very poor conditions
  - Cant shut them down or there would be less housing so people without homes
  - \$\$landlords charging (\$750/room) they aren't using it to renovate or fix places or buy new places
  - Not well insulated hydro bills skyrocket.
    - Very little rental housing available
- Jobs Discrimination
  - When applying for job: "I was told to go to the liquor store instead."
  - No jobs → been looking for months even entry level
  - Even if they are training they say they aren't
  - Even with good resume and retail training in Vancouver
  - Entry-level jobs are available but -> discrimination against Indigenous youth
  - Discrimination against addiction issues
  - Seasonal only – hard to hold a job when you are struggling with addiction
    - Minimum wage
    - Have to work two jobs, don't get enough hours in either
  - Racism is huge here
  - What to do after retirement for seniors
  - Lose jobs due to injuries
    - See us at the stage (in town) then won't hire us
- Housing/landlords "I just want a home"
  - Landlords only want working couples without children (pets sometimes too)
  - Barriers to landlords due to TD insurance policies
  - Women's shelter
  - Assumption people will ruin rentals/prejudice
  - Landlords not understanding of baby's crying

- Income assistance cheques can be directly deposited to landlords -> this isn't well understood!
- Need more low-income housing
- Single person an income assistance isn't allowed enough for rent
- Rent in Smithers is very high (925 for 1 bdrm) – lucky \$800/mo
- Mountainview Hotel - \$800-\$900 with hot plate and small fridge
- Housing – easy to fall through the cracks “I just want a home”
- Children living in foster care because we don't have a home
- Bad foster parent conditions, disconnection of culture, ministry is disconnected
- Individuals have lived in bush at -30 below before the shelter was opened
- Only 15 days available in shelter then have cold weather till 9pm to get in, if no room where we go, get a blanket still have to stay outside when people have homes and ruin for themselves by beating on spouses or other people
- Off reserve → no support from Band Offices
  - Education
  - Jobs – discrimination, no support for addiction
  - Housing → not enough affordable housing
  - Income assistance is too low
  - Health/problems → not enough coverage
  - Lack of compassion from employers when dealing with addictions
  - Utility and hydro costs (\$750/2 months)
  - People forced to move to Houston → but houses are poorly made house mean increased hydro costs
  - Cheaper places = bed bugs, poor conditions
  - Different weather than Vancouver, people don't understand geography
  - When rentals are put up but already rented by the time it gets out of advertisement
- BC brags they have the lowest unemployment rate → that is shocking, does not feel that way in Smithers
- Called “cold weather shelters” → only allowed in after 8 or 9 pm, out at 9 am with all your stuff
- Shelter (Broadway) only has 9 beds, can stay 2 weeks unless you have a case plan. In cold weather, they open not enough bus stops!
- Transportation: needs improvements from BC Transit, transit busses help
  - With disability, struggle to get around with crutches
  - Takes 1 hour to get from the shelter today → drive would take minutes
  - Elders/seniors → BC transit doesn't go to the right places
  - Busses don't go to recreation/hospital/restaurants
  - Hard to get ride up to hospital
  - Too cold to get there
  - In Winter/snow there is ice → don't take good care of their sidewalks: bylaws are not enforced!
  - Single mothers with strollers cant get out
- Law/legal

- Cops are discriminatory
- Denied food → dangers for health
- No mattresses when your in cell for night
- Know legal aid # off by heart
- Health
  - PLN services (Positive Living North, based out of PG)
  - Nurse cut due to budget cuts, used to come once a month from MHA
  - Not enough coverage and don't know if income assistance will help with costs
  - Long waits in emergency room, not enough staff or room, only three rooms
  - Applied for health supplement → denied by doctor, wouldn't sign application form
  - Intimating to go to a dr or sit and wait
  - Programs work but then they are cut → disheartening
  - Only allowed one piece of clothing from shelter
- Homes for pets damage deposit MSD not
- Elderly between 55 and 60 no homes no spaces
- Old age pension is not enough
- Those who are 40 to 55 are swallowed by street because there is no place for them
- Smithers – where the snow is piled = floods out every spring = tent roast not home unless on wheels = no garbage control sere control
- Up 8 to 10 to get food – 1 sandwich
- Clothing gets wet = 1 laundry ticket per week carry laundry all the way from the camp if you blanket get wet cant wash clothes
- Garbage = packing garbage out of the bust town will pick it up = ¼ mile
- 9 – winter = 8,9 summer more increase
- Slept on the stage = 2 dogs
- Just got a place – part time landlord \$700 only have \$530 other will pay out of your grocery = damage deposits
- Rent room \$350 no door no floor owe back rent in storage = since March \$150 per month = have been paying but have to go without things judge you because you have pets 12 years/4 years bad
- Stuff was in storage but I couldn't pay for the storage any longer so I lost everything - beds, television, photos, memories – photos of my son who committed suicide 7 years ago
- Don't know my grandchildren
- No support on reserve – I have been homeless for 2 years and can't live in my house.
- The reserve is to help me to bring my house up to standard [the plumbing does not work so I can't live there].
- I have been told for two years that I am at the top of the list. I used the money that I received from the residential school settlement to upgrade my home but the contractors took advantage of me. The work is not done number #1 but has been waiting 4 years = promised me first
- In town = can eat, shower, do things food = since April
- Lake Babine = live with family but don't always get along and moved into town = dumpster dive to get meals =\$235 from on reserve

- Go common law means \$178 more
- PWD = shelter allowance
- \$530 both of us but not enough
- Place for Feb 1 = been on the street for 1 year and a half/ off and unfair 6 years = not enough available
- Discrimination = phone and there is a place = go to get it and you are told it is taken
- Live with mice and rats = killed 20 mice a day - \$1200 rent said I was paying for the mice as well
- Medical have to go through red tape to prove that getting medical services to
- Not enough affordable housing
- Slum lords overcharging people for dives/
- Cant go back to school to get training/not enough funding – cant get a job
- Don't want to be on SA would rather be working
- EI only gives you so much after working for many years
- Discrimination
  - o For native culture form white community
- Landlords – not communic w/ tenants fairly w tenants
- Food security
  - o Day to day living trying to find food
  - o Time of food kitchens being open
- Logging road – school to gr. 7, then go to town for school no supports, kids either do not finish school or go to town and get drinking/drugs/homeless
  - o For Babine two Smithers, damage to vehicles \$\$\$
- “walk a mile in my moccasins and see how it feels”
- Language in schools in more public schools more than just reserves that have culture ed more school around here have more Indigenous students who don't get to learn about themselves learn more about other cultures then our own
- SA/Disability not enough to live on
- Transportation is tough to find
- Winter clothes are to expensive
- Disability to pay for bus passes/
- Ministry should be covering that
- Food is expensive
- Pets shouldn't prevent people from getti

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

- Supporting elders w/ early pension/disability
  - o people who need aren't getting it
- better system for people who don't have a place to stay
- not enough beds – 8 beds at Broadway

- too much racism from the landlords
- ways to report racist
- disability not enough to pay for winter clothes
- support for people with disabilities to get housing
- not enough work opportunities
- opportunities to help older people get back into the workforce
- address discrimination in finding work/employers
- food programs for schools
  - o health nutritious food
  - o health
  - o development
- mental health/addictions
  - o trauma-informed care
  - o recognize healing power of land
  - o culturally-informed care empowered
  - o poverty hurts health and of poverty
    - helps healing, or lack of health helps create poverty
  - o Ab rights and title
- Employment
  - o Opportunities are part of the problem
    - p/t work
    - min. wage
    - no benefits
  - o development programs like NDIR or LNG promises that destroy communities must be reformed
  - o employment/jobs are not always the reason for poverty – most often jobs are not the answer
- land
  - o intact ecosystems
  - o connection between health land and healthy people
  - o land heals MH, addiction, violence
  - o direct resources to getting people on the land
  - o value multiple worldviews
  - o recognizing Ab rights and title
- housing
  - o all types, all forms esp. supportive housing
- indigenous languages
  - o spoken by ministry staff
  - o proportioned to be taught in schools at same level as French, Spanish, etc.
- general public education to understand how structural oppression leads to/affects poverty → push for structural change
- maternity support program



- raise welfare rates on and off reserve
- First Nation land title claims will affect all businesses changes within treat territories → PR strategy must take these possibilities into account as \$ may move twds nations not province
- Band office pay attention to people's problems (two blue sitckys)
- Advocacy for people to navigate buaracracy
- Pet friendly park and dog bags doo doo poop
- More pet friendly rental homes (two green sticky's)
- More paces to support pet owners
- Affordable housing (two red, 1 yellow)
- Places to comfortably tie up dogs
- Expand hours of shelter food service
- Accommodate food requirements
  - o Allergies
  - o No teeth
- Improving relationships between races and cultures
- Education around communication with each other
- Addressing racist behaviours (one green, one red)
- System for reporting racism
- Housing specific racism
- Training/education for landlords (1 yellow)
- Community building events
  - o Not just dinner but creating dialogue
- More medical for people on disability
- More support to get onto disability
- Transportation between town
- Increase income assistance
- Increase earning amount while on SA (1 red, 1 yellow)
- More affordable recreation opportunities (one blue)
- More support for youth transportation to/from recreation (1 red, 1 yellow)
- Better child care support (1 blue)
- Gainful employment
- Living wage – 3 in social service office working poor
- Realistic income re poverty line ( 1 yellow)
- Flexible employment that help come people participate more in workforce (1 yellow)
- Analyze all systems that keep people in poverty – complete systemic overhaul build of bottom up operations
- Set own agenda – as a Metis women coming to these meetings want to set my own agenda – how we would do a meeting like this would not be done like this. This causes tension. There kind also be kindness. Sharing land – 1 space to be hero in a good way.
- Elite live off underclass = people on welfare – who is on welfare? The person or landlord?
  - o Need to honestly look at class structure and remove stigmatization
  - o Identify propaganda and slogans that enforce class

- Legislation – protect poor, disabled, Indigenous, women, children, families (singles and mom and dad)
  - o Protect low income housing
- Kids in care – should not be business same with jail and women
  - o People earning \$ lots of out people are making people suffer
  - o This happening since contact
  - o Systems built on back of our people
- In 2011 more kids in care in BC than residential schools in Canada
- Need stronger and more childhood advocacy (look at Cindy Blackstock’s research)
- Programs for youth (1 yellow, 1 red)
- Sustainable, long term funding for social services
- In state of emergency prices frozen until emergency over. There’s an emergency for poor right now
- Price freeze on fuel and food for people in struggle and those in service provision /working poor
- Promotion of pro bono law help – people must have access to justice
- Internet opt out freedom – people should live off grid and use mail they want
- Use same people with similar model, programs, services, for mental health needs that are in place for people who are disabled (1 red, 1 green)
- Take complete look, an independent look at how the entire system keeps people in poverty (2 yellow, 2 red)
  - o Policy legislation programs
  - o People have different cultures – blended cultures, not everyone is the same
- Responsibilities need to be given back to hierarchy system to help people
- Responsibilities stripped from hereditary system, devalued, colonized, approach cannot work for trauma. Reindigenization, not charity, mutual aid (7 sticky’s)
  - o Grassroots infrastructure to empower heredity to recreate enoughness
  - o 100 year of disruption to Aboriginal peoples
- Accountability and feedback mechanism – people in shelters
- A recovery home in north – send to Van – come home to unimproved community – need protection that coming to health enviro
- Evidence based policy (1 blue)
  - o Need to stop policy based on voting demographics
  - o Use academic research – lots out there, not shortage
- Invite people in poverty to be part of the solution (two sticky)
  - o Picture when having diverse voices better
- Ministry (2 sticky)
  - o Need humans (not paper, phone lines) to help people with the system and actually direct them in the right place
- Cultural accessibility (2 sticky, 2 red)
  - o No aboriginal language spoken by staff – need
  - o Also not taught in school – should be a dedicated class supported by the school system
  - o Look at reconciliation document

- Restore ancestry connection (1 sticky)
- All ministries need to be engaged – especially education for learning First Nations language (1 sticky)
- First Nation land titles changes (3 sticky)
  - o How will this affect poverty? Must be planned for
  - o Band offices getting new business (mining, forestry, tourism)
- Education
  - o Basis for funding a good job, home, nice life
- Raise welfare rates on and off reserve ( 1 red, 2 sticky)
- Other issue – no support for people with different needs (eg little person) to stay in home community (1 sticky)
- General public education (2 sticky, 2 red)
  - o People cant solve a problem they don't know about
  - o Awareness on all issues about poverty
  - o Learning about structural oppression
  - o Care about it
- Danger: mitigation not the hard part
- What is the vision? (not iphone 7) wider scope
  - o Alternate to poverty
  - o Cant shop for it
  - o Have to construct it
  - o Must hear from people in poverty
  - o Top 3% of earners
  - o Tax corporations
- Paolo friere – bottom up approach, empowerment through education, good example
- Define a glutenly line
  - o Restructure the taxation system
  - o Wage and wealth distribution disparity
  - o Tax the rich
  - o Arbitrary definitions, min. wage, poverty
  - o Goal – people get the resources they need
- Housing
  - o Availability
  - o Affordability
  - o Quality
  - o Heating
  - o Ownership
- Comprehensive strategy that addresses families, singles MH etc. so folks can have needs met → 1 size does not fit all
- Support landlords to rent to more “risky” tenants”
- Lease land to building for mixed –use
- Employment

- Quality, appropriateness/fit, development programs
- Sustainable land restoration projects that employ
- Redefine wealth to include access and community
- Barriers
  - NFA, references, expectations, colonialism
- Working within NA framework → trickle down capitalism
- Programs need to be 5-7 years to change mindset
  - Vision even longer: 50 years plan
  - Focus on decolonizing and gov't to gov't relationship
  - Land rights and title
  - Using money to fight legal battles now and could be funding wellness
  - Expand awareness of opportunity
- Raise taxes to support programs
- Land is major economic driver and is imperative
  - Salmon is 110000000
  - Wild mushrooms 21 000 000
  - Tourism is land-based here
  - Redistribution systems
- Children and families
  - MCFD accountability
  - Learning affected
  - Daycare
  - Fund education better
  - Invest in maternal health and ECE
  - Wrap around care in schools
- Rehabilitation services for parents – life skills
- Subsidize working families – child car costs
- Economic development in small and indigenous communities so people don't have to leave
- Mandatory free breakfast and lunch programs in all schools for all kids (no stigma)
- Ex. Houston meal program
- Feeding is critically important
- Cultural biases
- Houston and grade 10 student
  - Body there, mind elsewhere/asleep
  - Miles behind
  - No answer at home (discontinued)
  - Couch surfing for 1 month
  - Had been thrown out of home
  - School was safe
  - Teachers have unique view/angle
  - Snowball effect
    - Drop out, no work, social assistance.

- Housing, including, supportive house (3 red, 2 green)
- Collaboration between funders (provincial and federal) to support all children in school (2 yellow)
- Food in programs in schools (1 red)
  - o Nutritious
- Increased \$/person social assistance (2 green, 1 red)
- Cycle
  - o Poor kids/poor parents
  - o Don't know how to break the cycle
- Poverty is a product of lack of education feeling good about yourself
- Social assistance is so low
- No money 2 weeks in
- Public education on being poor
  - o Ex. People don't know how low welfare housing rate is (\$325)
  - o Take away stigma
  - o Increase awareness and go where people are and treat them with dignity
  - o Get out from privilege
- Lunch and breakfast programs in schools → free and available to all, without stigma (2 red, 1 green, 2 blue)
- Optional housing for students who have to travel long distances so they can participate in all school activities and spend less time travelling on the bus
- Food availability – nutritious, good food (one yellow)
  - o Less time in hospital with dietary issues
  - o Brain development
  - o Food banks as community spaces
    - Share information
    - Need to be open every day
    - Train people who give out food
- Child care (subsidized) (1 blue)
  - o Major investment required in public child care (not private)
  - o Foster day care (1960's) for today
- Inter community transit/transport
  - o Regular hours
  - o Shop in terrace \$5 from Hazelton
  - o Let people take many items
- Free lunch and breakfast programs would have long term benefits
  - o Health
  - o Development
- Free post-secondary education
- Education for everyone from birth to senior age → bring back seniors college and support life – long learning (1 yellow, 1 blue)
- Maternal support program with a dedicated support worker for all mothers (Hawaii model) (2 blue, 1 green, 1 yellow)

- Extended version of Public Health Nurse visits
  - Make sure the people who need it, get it
- Give people essential skills like how to grow food, how to access services, etc. etc. etc.
- More affordable low income housing needed (3 stickies)
- Crack down on bad landlords, stricter laws
- Bigger shelter, at least 20 so people aren't turned away
- Discrimination and racism needs to be looked at – would solve a lot of problems (4 sticky)
- Increase social assistance for a single person and for people struggling with addictions
- Smithers needs a detox centre, not just hospital room
- Bigger storage in shelter for belongings (1 stick)
- Longer hours in shelter, both open and before lights out more funding for training and education (1 sticky)
- Youth activities and youth recreation so they have somewhere to go (3 sticky)
  - Consistent, not cut then brought back
- More awareness and postings of training (1 sticky)
- Safe warm place to go for addicts (where you can drink so not forced on street or not be kicked out for addictions and intoxication) (3 sticky)
- More bus stops/ more frequent (1 red)
- Longer hours of service for bus (1 green)
- Free bus passes for people on income assistance (1 red)
- Need heated port-o-potty- and serviced more frequent should be in places across town as denied use of same public washroom
- Morizetown bus is free in morning only, too early ->provide free service all day
- More funding for our very well used library programs out of library \*most used library in BC (2 sticky)
- Support services to find housing that is actually available
- Open health services in Houston
- Re-open walk in clinic in Smithers (1 sticky)
- Provide prescriptions over the phone
- Shorten time to wait for housing on reserve – took 20 years, 15 year waitlist
- Better housing renovation on and off reserve
- Allow you to get donations from shelter more frequently (they have a lot but only allowed to go once) (one yellow)
- Housing options for elders
- Safe consumption sites for drugs and alcohol
- Enforce clean sidewalk bylaws for people on crutches, wheelchairs to get around
- Housing
  - Made affordable for families, elders, and people living in poverty
  - More resources and support to find affordable housing
- Places to gather, build community, stay warm
- Library funding
- Youth drop in centre

- Place to hang out for adults
- End discrimination and racism
  - o From landlords
  - o Cops
  - o Employers
  - o Public
  - o Healthcare workers
- More affordable housing
  - o Have more strict laws for the slum landlords
  - o A bigger shelter
  - o Discrimination should be looked at
  - o Increase on social assistance at least for a single person
  - o And for people dealing with addictions they should have a bigger detox centre
- Social services
  - o Increase SA
  - o Increase housing support
  - o Increasing disability to meet basic needs food shelter/home clothing
- Support from band office
- House hold function
- Transportation
- Caring for elders
- Getting them into the community
- Place to get and stay warm
- Youth drop in centre
- Place for adults to go and stay/hangout at
- Discrimination
  - o From landlords
  - o Cops
  - o Employers
  - o Public
  - o Healthcare workers
- Housing
  - o Affordable housing
  - o Elders, families
  - o Resources to find housing
  - o Increase income assistance to afford housing