



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

**Coquitlam, BC  
March 17, 2018**

## Introduction and Event Summary

On March 17, 2018 the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction hosted a community meeting in Coquitlam, BC to discuss poverty and poverty reduction with local residents. The event brought together approximately 45 to 50 participants including people with lived experience of poverty; poverty reduction front line workers and advocates; people from the non-profit and business sectors; and other community members from all walks of life.

The event began with a welcome from Elder Tom Oleman, from Seton Lake, followed by opening remarks from Mable Elmore (Parliamentary Secretary on Poverty Reduction).

Participants then engaged in round table discussions in groups of 8 to 10 people per table. Each table had a dedicated facilitator from a local community group or from SPARC BC who helped to guide the conversations. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who helped to record the discussion.

There were two rounds of discussion which focused on the following questions:

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

Following the discussions, participants were invited to put a sticky dot beside the strategies or solutions that were most important to them. Each participant received four (4) sticky dots. Following the individual priority setting exercise, participants were asked to determine as a table the top three (3) priorities from the evening and to report these priorities back to the room.

The Parliamentary Secretary shared some closing remarks.

## Document Organization

This document contains the transcripts from the flip chart notes from those in attendance. The flip chart notes have been transcribed verbatim, correcting only for spelling and grammar as needed. The notes are organized according to the feedback received to the two questions beginning with:

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

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

- Ministry Services
  - o There are too many silos
  - o It is not easy to share information and coordinate services
  - o There is a need to look at privacy rules
  - o There is too much bureaucracy
  - o Am I talking to the right worker because as workers change and turnover you have to re-tell your story
- Debt
  - o Credit is too easily available
  - o People in poverty are given credit when they have no way of repaying it
  - o Department stores are giving out \$1000 credit cards
- Education
  - o The cost of education is too high
  - o I would like to go back to school but can't due to cost
  - o You get a \$35,000 debt from going back to school so people don't do it
  - o Student loans can be helpful but you still graduate with debt
  - o Schools require math but this is not helpful as we have no budgeting experience
  - o Schools should teach you "what you need to know"
  - o People are not taught enough practical skills in high school
  - o We need affordable and accessible education
- Employment
  - o People are earning above minimum wage but they don't get a raise when the minimum wage is increased
  - o Minimum wage is not good enough you also need to get respect from your employers
  - o Manufacturers go to other countries because Canadian wages are too high and land is too expensive for many businesses
  - o Large companies can afford to pay people better but they don't - CEO's are making huge salaries – some of this should go to workers
  - o Most people receiving the minimum wage are women over 35 years
  - o We allow Canadian companies to move manufacturing jobs to other countries that have horrible employment standards
  - o An increase in the minimum wage would help
- The Impact of Poverty
  - o Many people who live in poverty do not receive any help from the government
  - o A lot of people in poverty are just ignored
  - o People living in poverty die 5 years earlier on average than others
  - o People have to stay in their family home because they can't afford to move out
- Ministry Services
  - o Single parents can't leave income assistance or they will lose their medical insurance

- Why can't regulations be changed so that couples can claim the same amount as two singles – this has led to the breakdown of many families
- Seniors
  - I would like to see more help for seniors living in poverty (not those in million dollar homes) – those who really need the help
  - Not all seniors have million dollar homes
  - There is no money or supports for seniors who need wheelchairs or walkers
  - Seniors go into long term care or die
  - There is no money for dental
  - Seniors who were on income assistance get some benefits but those who are not on income assistance do not get any help
  - They can't afford hearing aids
  - Some people retire with nothing
  - Senior citizens who are in homes they've owned all their life but have little income still struggle to pay taxes and repairs and maintain their homes
  - Many seniors find it too difficult to use transit – they have mobility issues at the same time they cannot afford to take taxis or have a car
- Housing
  - Housing is very expensive in the Lower Mainland
  - The cost of housing is very unaffordable
  - I would like to see the government help more first time home buyers
  - Rent to own residences, where the rent goes towards covering the mortgage
  - Things have changed in 16 years – the reduction in funding for co-op housing has created pressure in the system
  - In Toronto the value of co-op shares has continued to go up as the market improves but the waiting lists for some co-ops are ridiculous
  - Some co-ops don't even let new people onto their waiting lists because they are too long
  - Not all co-ops are affordable some requires youth I have an annual income of \$43,000 for 1 bedroom - it is now a "survival of the fittest" approach whereas it used to be a more "for everyone approach"
  - We need more affordable housing of all types
  - In some co-op housing you are right on top of your neighbours –there is not enough privacy (everyone knows your name)
  - You used to be able to move out to Mission for better housing but the pressure in the Vancouver market has impact on Mission's housing too
  - Gentrifications used to be "ghettos" that have a feeling of community – now we have lost the sense of community
- Children and Youth
  - Kids are not learning the coping skills they need
  - Bullying is the result of poverty
  - Poverty discourages children from continuing in school

- Bullying occurs at all levels of society – white collar bullying
- Bullying has changed – it is not always physical violence
- Bullying is not just in classrooms – it can also be online
- It is important for children to have a place to go and activities that they can do
- Childcare is also part of the solution
- Trauma based on childhood (e.g. divorces or parents with substance abuse problems)
- Child impacts are high - when both parents are working kids don't think that they are important
- Extend school days – open schools as a “hub” (with staff) so kids always have a place to go where they feel safe (e.g. if parents are fighting)
- Discrimination and Stigma
  - Most minimum wage earners are woman – women frequently earn less
  - Increasing minimum wage could help to take some pressure off single mothers
  - We have to build better awareness to create empathy for people in poverty - change negative perceptions and stereotypes about persons living in poverty
  - Reduce the stigma for people receiving income assistance
  - Attitudes needs to change
  - “I know people who live in a \$3million dollar house but have no income, no money and they are poor”
  - It is very difficult to get disability allowance
  - How did we manage 40, 50, 60 years ago?
  - People were poorer then but they seemed to manage better
  - People in poverty don't know what to do
  - “I grew up in poverty with no running water, dirty floors and was poor. I didn't know where we were from”
- Mental Health and Addictions
  - Homelessness starts with addictions
  - A lot of the younger generation suffers from mental health/ addiction issues
  - The mental health system is difficult to navigate especially from a youth perspective
  - The issue is the gaps in the health care system as a whole- it is not just mental health
  - Waiting lists contribute to a lack of health
  - More resources for mental health would help to reduce poverty
  - Substance abuse is self-medication – give people a more viable option
  - Stop mental health services from turning people away
  - Too many people can't navigate the mental health system
  - Educate kids in schools about mental health
- Transportation
  - We are criminalizing people who can't afford transportation
  - People have to get a compass card for transit but this is not affordable
- Ministry Services
  - Sometimes there are more government services available but people do not know about them

- The amount of time spent standing in food lines to get free food is crazy
- Solutions are difficult in the Lower Mainland but it is almost impossible in rural or remote areas
- Rural areas often lack access to transit or other resources
- Some people do take advantage of government benefits
- Housing
  - We need more permanent affordable homes - modular housing is a very temporary solution
  - People need a safe place to raise their children
  - People are living in constant fear of losing housing
  - “I moved 15 times or more in the last 10 years”
  - When the operating agreements for co-op housing expire a lot of people could be out of a home - most people living in co-op housing can’t afford to move out or to pay more rent
- Homelessness
  - There are a lot of homeless people in Coquitlam who live by the river
  - The shelters are full and people are sleeping on the streets or near Superstore
  - Landlords evict people who have substance abuse issues
  - There is no housing in the Tri-Cities so these people end up homeless
  - We should identify and help the homeless here before helping people who are coming in from other provinces
  - The Rain City housing shelter is amazing but it is not enough to support all of the homeless people in the community
  - Many of the homeless face social isolation and a lack of connection
  - People need access to a computer and the internet
  - People need their own post office box and confidential voice mail
- Housing
  - The BC Housing waitlist is 2 to 7 years
  - There are no supports for singles who need housing
  - The cost of renting a room is high
  - There are limited services for housing , limited supports and limited help
  - More single parent housing is needed
  - You can’t even get a room for \$500 to \$600
  - Larger families face real challenges finding housing
  - Renters need more protection
  - Room and board is not covered through the Residential Tenancy Act
  - We need more co-ops
  - We need more recovery homes and supportive housing
- Income Assistance
  - There are long wait times before you can speak to someone
  - There is miscommunication when trying to get help
  - The computer system is very difficult

- People can't get help if they have no internet access
- There are multiple steps to access help
- There is community support for help
- The income assistance rates are too low and need to be increased
- Transportation
  - The cost of transportation is very expensive
  - PWD should get a free bus pass
  - Single parents are not eligible for a bus pass
  - People have to take money out of their food budget to get around
  - Uber should offer services for people with disabilities if they are allowed to operate here
- Housing
  - We need more social housing
  - People pay \$1000 per month for a studio
  - If people are on minimum wage they can't afford housing
  - How can people afford housing if they are only receiving income assistance?
  - The government are out of touch with what people can afford -how can people get on the housing market today?
  - People can't afford to downsize
  - Condo living doesn't work for everyone
  - The things that make housing affordable are being lost like rental housing
  - The Ministry should provide the basics including help to remove barriers to entry
- Seniors
  - Seniors are panhandling and struggling with poverty. We need to think of our moms
  - People need easy access to a support network
  - "We never thought we would see it in or back yard – it has been put off for too long"
  - Preventative supports are needed so that seniors aren't homeless
- Transportation
  - Transportation rates are always increasing
  - The cost for fuel is high
  - Gas goes up like a rocket and down like a feather – gas cost less when oil was more expensive
  - There should be more regulation regarding fuel prices
  - People are struggling to put food on their table while transit costs continue to rise
  - Parking downtown is more affordable than taking public transit
  - We have to find ways to reduce the rates for public transit
  - Transit schedules don't work for people working night shifts or early morning shifts - certain areas need extended hours
  - Make transit accessible to everyone and affordable to people with chronic illnesses like Parkinson's
  - There needs to be a deeper awareness of the impact and the ability to relate to people in the community

- Give people \$70 and transportation - it shouldn't be a choice – people need both
- Transportation should be like medical supports – if you can't afford it, it is provided for you
- If you are on a fixed income with dependant it should also extend to dependants – whole family
- Income assistance
  - PWD \$50 per child is too low
  - The assistance levels do not reflect the true cost of living in BC
  - The Ministry has to make the application process simple and clear
  - You can only use your equity a few times and what after that?
  - People shouldn't have to go into debt be able to access the basic necessities
  - The application for assistance – you have to go into debt before you can get income assistance
  - Homeless people need more access to pick up their cheques –maybe they could be available through the churches
  - Cohabitation – if you live with someone why close their assistance file? -it takes away dignity and power from women mostly
- Services and Supports
  - The cost of services (e.g. police, first responders) is more expensive than housing
  - There should be more preventative measures so people are not put in a difficult positions to begin with
  - People forfeit assistance and end up in an abusive relationship then what?
  - People are forced into being “roommates” to avoid losing financial independence
  - Mom/child are back in the abusive home because there is no other place to go
  - You shouldn't have to fight for these services
  - If the fundamentals are provided people have a better chance at reducing poverty
  - There is no CPP for people who haven't contributed because they can't find employers
  - We need to hire more people with disabilities
  - The crisis grants need to be more accessible
  - Neighbours complain versus helping
  - People sometimes need someone to help with cleaning/ heavy lifting
  - The system keeps telling us how to manage our limited funds
  - Having a meeting costs more than just giving a crisis grant
  - All of the oversight has an adverse effect on mental health
  - Why is PWD lumped in with income assistance?
  - Some policies from income assistance seem to have been morphed to apply to PWD that doesn't make sense
  - Why does PWD expires at age 65?
  - In some ways PWD and Income Assistance should fall under separate areas in the Ministry
  - Some people have a pension – but for many people who are/were under-employed that doesn't work

- The focus is so much on employable PWD – what about those who are unemployable?
- There are more unemployable people that are struggling and that need action now
- Poverty reduction need to include PTSD and work safe
- There needs to be better communication between the Ministry and MCFD
- Housing
  - It is hard to find housing as a middle aged man
  - There is not enough affordable housing
  - New structures are forcing old homes to be demolished
  - Housing is not affordable for some people
  - There are demo-victions and people have nowhere to go when homes are destroyed
  - The government should allow access to crownland for housing
  - Simplify land development regulations
  - Change the legislation now to allow for more housing co-ops (through the law society)
  - Co-op housing models are good for some people but still require shares to be purchased – this can cost in the thousands and is no accessible for many low income people
  - People are also living on limited budgets and are not protected by the Residential Tenancy Act
  - For people who are new to the country finding housing is hard
- Ministry Services
  - The Ministry has to be more transparent
  - There is too much red tape
  - The Ministry needs to improve access to services
  - People need help to access lawyers – they can't access legal help
  - Access to justice is difficult
  - Waiting lists are too long for services
- Services and Supports
  - More services are needed outside of Vancouver
  - People can't afford a lot of services
  - People need help with community navigation to know what is available
  - Low income people face tough decision between food and medication
  - Some people do not have strong computer literacy skills
  - There is the need for outreach services
  - Calling the Ministry can use a lot of phone minutes
  - The Ministry downloaded their responsibilities to the community
  - People give up on services
  - The Ministry is saving money or at least that is the perception when clients can't access the services and community people can't help anymore
  - Volunteers get burnout, the community gets burnout
- Seniors
  - Seniors need help to move onto the next stage in their lives
  - There are not enough services
  - There are more seniors becoming homeless

- Employment
  - o People need access to job training and employment
  - o The economy has too many boom and bust cycles
  - o People need more support from WorkBC
  - o There should be different models
  - o People are not aware of all the systems unless they bump into staff members (e.g. WorkBC)
  - o The assumption is that people when they get out of care won't seek assistance
  - o We need to find ways to help people help themselves
- Taxes
  - o Taxes should be in line with what you are paid
  - o Finances need to come from somewhere else
  - o Taxes are going up but wages are not matching inflation
  - o Who is making money?
- Housing
  - o The massive housing projects are an issue - seniors are getting kicked out of their housing to allow for new developments
  - o Overseas investors are buying properties to invest and develop
  - o There is a lot of speculation with buying houses that remain empty
  - o Using property as investment pushes up the cost of housing
  - o The empty home tax should be province wide – not just in Vancouver
  - o There is not enough affordable housing
  - o There is the need for clarity around the definition of affordable housing
- Cost of Living
  - o Doctors are leaving due to expenses
  - o Lawyers are moving to the states as Canada is expensive
  - o There is a lack of services in the Tri-Cities area
- Non-profits
  - o Strengthen/ increase funding to non-profits for space, more services and staff retention
  - o There is not enough space for non-profits
  - o There is money needed for drop in services
  - o Administrative paperwork is overwhelming
  - o There are not enough advocates – sometimes you have a 3-4 month wait for an advocate
  - o You need to go to other communities for services and outreach
- ID
  - o People need access to IDs to access the computer/internet
  - o The foodbank requires documentation - government picture ID that includes proof on income and address
- Services and Supports
  - o There is lack of funding for the services and supports needed
  - o There is lack of communication regarding the services that are available.

- There is the need for quality of childcare and childcare facilities
- There is the problem of discrimination of newcomers to Canada people are passionate to work and can learn
- We need to focus on how to develop good childcare programs
- Childcare should be more affordable for working families
- Landed immigrants cannot get help with the cost of childcare
- There are no drop-in centres
- Housing
  - Affordable housing for seniors is needed
  - Seniors are selling their houses because they cannot afford the property taxes
  - Shelters are not always senior friendly
  - The high value of real estate has made housing unaffordable
  - The cost of renting is \$1,100 - \$1,200 per month – this is not affordable
  - Build more social housing or government supported public housing
  - Provide tax breaks for low income earners
  - Tax rich people who buy houses for investment
- The Impact of Poverty
  - We are 1 pay cheque away from being homeless
  - Income assistance rates are below the cost of living
  - There are too many barriers preventing people from escaping poverty
  - There are not enough social workers
  - The government thinks that it is ok to live in the constant cycle and churn of poverty
- Income
  - \$14-\$18 per hour is not enough to afford a living
  - Raise minimum wage a living wage
  - People do not always receive fair compensation for the work that they do
- Services and Supports
  - There is the need for more services
  - There is the need for a more integrated management model
  - We should look at best practices across Canada and internationally
  - We need to find a creative approach to how we pay for services
  - We need to simplify access to services
  - We need to make dealing with bureaucracies more accessible - find ways to meet people in the middle
  - We need to change perspectives to support more facilitated access to services

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

- Housing
  - o People are one pay cheque away from being homeless
  - o There is only 1 transition house for women and children fleeing abuse and not enough 2<sup>nd</sup> stage housing
  - o There is the need for more funding for woman's services
  - o The waiting list for BC Housing is at least 1 year
- Income Assistance
  - o There are healthy people who are receiving income assistance
  - o People should be fined for working under the table
  - o Employers who are benefiting should be penalized
- Education and Training (4 dots)
  - o Provide funding for programs at BCIT (that people receiving income assistance can take)
  - o Work on reducing student loan fraud
  - o Provide training for persons with disabilities
  - o Give people access to life skills, anger management and soft skills training
- Programs and Services
  - o There is a lack of coordination for services (5 dots)
  - o There is a need for increased information sharing between service agencies
  - o There is the need for increased communication with the Ministry
  - o Remove discriminatory taxes (3 dots)
  - o Try to find a way to decrease costs (5 dots)
  - o Do not just increase what we receive – decrease the costs of some services as well
  - o Make life more affordable without just shelling out more money
  - o Explore a Guaranteed Annual Income (3 dots)
  - o The Ministry offices should be videotaped – it could help to reduce the level of bullying
- Community Services
  - o Community gardens, better system
  - o Government could make crown land available – like homesteading
  - o People could build on crown land but they must make improvements after 10 years for it to become theirs
  - o If people could build their own place they would take pride in it
- Housing
  - o It seems strange that the best government can do is container homes when there are huge tracts of unused land
  - o There should be more options for people who want to own their own home
  - o Don't treat housing as a market commodity (provincially and nationally)
  - o Government should encourage more public housing
  - o There is also the need for more co-op housing

- There should be more housing from charitable organizations
- Children and Youth
  - Kids need healthy connections
  - Start early in elementary school with education on poverty
  - Schools are a good starting place
  - There should be more funding for support workers in schools
  - There shouldn't be a 6 month waiting list to talk to someone in crisis
  - There should be more sex education
- Health Care
  - Have more emergency funding for those in need
  - Have vouchers for taxis for emergency (medical) purposes - for people with disabilities
  - Increase care through health benefits, for seniors and people on low income (7 dots)
  - Increase access to government clinics
  - Have dental benefits as part of medical care
  - Increase access to pharmacare
- Services and Supports
  - There is the need for more advocacy
  - Increase awareness about poverty issues – how do you make people care?
  - We need to determine the definition of poverty
  - People need to have purpose and a reason to get up
  - Mental health, health, addictions issues need to be addressed
- Taxes
  - Use tax funds from legalizing marijuana to fund programs for mental health, addictions and homelessness
  - Provide higher taxes for those with higher incomes
- Childcare
  - Subsidize childcare costs
  - People cannot afford to work with the high cost of childcare
  - Schools should be open from 7am-7pm to help provide free childcare
  - We need more afterschool programs
- Services and Supports
  - There should be more criteria around continuing to receive disability assistance to prevent misuse
  - We need to create more funding for disability assistance
  - We should encourage volunteering, education and work
  - We should provide more supports for those people who want to get back to work
  - People should have to be involved in the community if they are receiving public assistance – working, volunteering, learning
  - We need to encourage people to help themselves
  - We were poor in the 80s but no-one helped us- there were no food banks or anything and we got by
  - Provide the homeless with access to a bank/ banking services

- Transportation
  - o Provide access for bus/sky train for low income or single parent families
  - o Provide access for Wi-Fi or internet access at local SDPR
  - o Provide an easier way to access MYSS/Application for SDPR
  - o Transit should not displace people
  - o Many people don't have extra money to drive a vehicle with the increasing cost of fuel
- Income Assistance
  - o Increase PWD rates and give free bus pass
  - o Allows single mothers a period of time to cohabitate before they lose their assistance – (i.e. 3 months to 2 years)
  - o Local EAW workers should help people to connect with community services
  - o Housing (4 Dots)
- Housing
  - o There is the need for more affordable housing
  - o Tenants should have more rights
  - o Room and board should be regulated through the RTB
  - o There should be more rent control
  - o We should create more low income housing for singles parents, elderly and families
  - o We need to stop kicking people out of low cost housing – this is not a solution
  - o We should stop renoviction - stop building condo's that are only built for profits
  - o We need to focus on low cost rental units for people in poverty
  - o We need to create a Board for housing
  - o We need to adjust the RTB to include recovery homes
- Employment
  - o Provide more access to clothing and resources to help people get jobs
  - o Employment standards need to be actively enforced
  - o Change frontline workers to make things better or to offer different perspectives
  - o Provide people with job incentives
- Education and Training (2 dots)
  - o People need to be able to upgrade their skills
  - o Provide free education for people who can't afford it
  - o Provide loan assistance for graduates of post-secondary education
  - o Provide student with more grants
  - o Provide budget workshops
  - o Teach people how to manage money and deal with credit - this could be done through schools and community centres
- Food Security
  - o Give people with low incomes access to meal plans
  - o Work on solutions for food waste
  - o The cost of food keeps increasing - everyone should have enough money to eat
  - o There are no low income grocery stores

- The Impact of Poverty
  - o How do we break the cycle of poverty?
  - o How do we get to the root issues of poverty?
  - o How do we get the community and government involved?
  - o We should aim higher and work to eliminate poverty not just reduce it
- Services and Supports
  - o There are some people who access services and many who don't
  - o When services are needed – “people who are affected need to be the voice”
  - o More services should be developed by the people who use it
  - o The Ministry's services are fractured - there is lack of coordination
  - o There is a lack of communication about the services that are available
  - o There is the need for more housing and transportation
  - o There are often too many barriers to access services
- Health Care
  - o There are not enough medical doctors
  - o We need to create a health care system that focuses more on prevention versus waiting for a crisis
  - o We need to provide more medical support for those in need
  - o We need to provide access to dental clinics and eye clinics for people who cannot afford these services
  - o Prescriptions need to be more accessible and affordable
- Income Assistance
  - o Persons with disabilities have higher levels of poverty
  - o Increase welfare rates for earnings for families and single parents
  - o There is the need for a guaranteed income
  - o Create legislation that raises the income rates for families
  - o A basic income allowance would be good for people who are unemployable
  - o Set up ways to redistribute and bridge the gap between people and profit
  - o Increase funding
  - o Adopt fair taxation
- Housing
  - o There is need for more rental housing
  - o There is a lack of affordable housing units- affordable means 30% of your income
  - o Explore alternative options like cohousing and tiny homes
  - o Create a Committee for housing
  - o Property values keep increasing
  - o Provide modest homes - different housing options
  - o Land values are so high so why do rents keep increasing?
  - o Provide access to help with maintaining the existing housing
  - o There should be more help for tenants who are facing evictions
  - o There is the need for more modular housing
  - o Help to connect seniors to housing

- Provide rent to own incentives for housing
- Create more special needs housing
- Homelessness
  - There is need to have more people come out to meetings regarding shelters – we need variety of people engaged, not just home owners
  - We need to figure out how to get more people off the streets
  - We need to help people understand the housing situation
  - The cost of shelter is \$375– there is nowhere that people can rent for that amount
- Childcare
  - CPP is based on what you made in your lifetime
  - Stay at home parents are penalized because they don't have earnings
  - Stay at home parents should be compensated for the costs to raise children
- Mental Health and Addictions
  - Treatment is always the first priority - but what if we looked at putting housing as the first priority
  - There is a need to address mental health issues
  - There is the need for housing and treatment to be based on people's needs
  - People are being refused counselling because of substance abuse and being high - how can they get help if they are being turned away?
  - We need to create more incentives for people who need treatment
  - We need more resources in mental health and addictions services
  - People are provided with 10 sessions once you are accepted for counselling but this amount needs to be increased
  - There should be more access to suicide prevention programs
  - Instead of waiting for a crisis there should be more resources put into prevention
  - There should be more individual case workers not just the '1-800' number
  - There should be a focus on building relationships as a solution
- Services and Supports
  - Give young families access to more programs and resources
  - Provide more recreation opportunities for everyone including programs that don't require tryouts
  - There is the need for more weekend, evenings and after hours services
  - Focus on making services senior-friendly
  - Work to build networks that help to direct people to services
- Transportation
  - There is the need for transit for those on a fixed income
  - We should provide transit passes for families who are low income
- Homelessness
  - Provide storage facilities that are easy to access and secure
  - The 1<sup>st</sup> United Church offers lockers and parking for shopping carts and bicycles for those in need
  - The Sikh temples offer free meals to anyone

- People often ignore homeless people or call the police – there needs to be more compassion
- There is nowhere for homeless people to go
- There are more seniors becoming homeless
- Transit is not affordable to people who are homeless
- There is need for more hygiene facilities- people go to the rec centre to shower – but they need a place to store their belongings - currently there is nowhere
- Community Services
  - We need to work together as a community and create more community involvement
  - Community organizations should work together as a group
  - Currently there are no drop-in centres
  - There are not enough after-hours supports for adults, youths and seniors
  - When Riverview was shut down people didn't know how to live or cope
- Mental health and Addiction
  - There is the need to provide on-going support
  - There is the need to improve access to treatments and detox
  - There is a need to provide people with supports
  - There is the need to create treatments for youth and women
  - People with addictions have to go to a hospital or leave the area to get help
  - There are long waiting lists – sometimes people can wait for weeks or months for services
  - There is the need for outreach services
  - Treatment has a high cost – people need access to government funded programs to help with these costs
  - Provide supports for family reconciliation
  - Provide funding for training
  - Focus on harm reduction – currently there are no safe injection sites
  - Addicts have to hide substance misuse to prevent discrimination
  - People need more harm reduction supports
- Childcare
  - Need to increase options for childcare
  - Need to increase the quality of childcare