



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). 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 gently guided the conversations. Each table also had a dedicated note taker who recorded the participants' contributions on flip charts for all participants to see.

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 solutions from question 2 that are most important to them with a sticky dot. There was then a short 'report back' round during which a participant from each table shared a few insights from their table with the rest of the room. 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 has also been categorized into two broad groupings to facilitate future analysis and reporting work:
 - o Policy Related Comments; and,
 - o Program and Service Related Comments.

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 they stop running in early evening
 - o Both accessible taxis broken down
 - o No transportation to get to work, I have no car and I would have to walk to work
 - o Living in shelter harder to go anywhere
- Housing
 - o Need landlord to turn heat up, cold draughts--“between heating and food I’d go with heat”
- Jobs
 - o Not qualified to get job and lack of training to get jobs
- Services
 - o Don’t have someone to help get kids to school, would be nice to have a pick up service
 - o Access to family planning, birth control, lack of health
 - o 6-8 weeks wait for diagnostic care
 - o Need safe housing for men who are abused
 - o Need parenting programs as there are not enough
 - o Need resources to help connect with children)
 - o Parents job searching
 - o At Manor, all the beds are taken up by long term, ill patients
 - o Not enough room for people to get a little assistance
 - o Not enough help for special needs
 - o Men stuck in homes where they only need a little help
 - o Transition from living independently at home to needing a little help
 - o Need a men’s shelter and more services for men
- Stigma
 - o Stigma surrounding abused men--when reported they get laughed at, not just peers but by RCMP too (police watched woman attack man, did nothing until man defended self)
- Child Care
 - o No child care subsidy, at least for single parent families
- Youth
 - o Not enough activities
 - o Not enough jobs
 - o Just hanging out at Tim Horton’s
 - o Need a diversity of resources for them
 - o 12-15 years, nothing for their age group, no safe space for them when parents go out drinking
 - o Need all night shelter for youth
 - o All places shut down at 6pm
 - o There’s a rec centre but have to pay to get in
- Addictions

- No safe house
- Leads back to addiction problem when go back home
- Housing
 - Landlords buying up, flipping & jacking rents
 - Property speculation
 - Evicting and raising rents
 - Landlords don't care about tenants or properties
- Access to Services
 - Fitting within guidelines that are too restrictive, leaving gaps in receiving help
 - So much red tape around receiving services, often get denied assistance
 - People being given the run-around and often denied assistance if living on reserve
 - Feeling like you have to beg for help
 - Takes too long to receive supplements/assistance
 - The harder you worked to get out of poverty, the more the government did to make it difficult to get ahead
 - History of systemic issues facing this community, continuous barriers
 - Misinformation on services in community
 - Gov't withholding policies, information ,eligibility guidelines
 - Child tax complexities between provincial and federal gov't
 - 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
 - Denied for old age security and told to get a job despite facing difficulty
 - Too restrictive, unable to access services even with having hearing difficulty (deaf)
 - Workers refusing to deal with you if you are angry or showing emotion
- IA
 - Clawing back assistance when working and trying to make ends meet
 - Penalizing people instead of rewarding them for working while on assistance
 - So many restrictions when you have a spouse on eligibility for assistance
 - Need to resolve the root of the problem, systemically
- Housing
 - Housing, families living in apartments with not enough space/bedrooms due to affordability/assistance rates
 - Ma'kola Housing too restrictive on applications
 - Turned away from housing based on history from 20 years ago
 - LNG promised to make an elders home: they never did it
- Employment
 - Prince Rupert has experience so much job loss recently and over time
 - LNG has done so much damage
 - Not enough jobs
 - I apply but I don't have right experience
 - Temp work office would be good

- Not enough access to training, people have to wait
 - No jobs, no training
- Stigma
 - Discrimination – the way you are dressed
 - Get turned away due to assumptions
 - If you're on social assistance you are turned away
 - Discrimination against First Nations for child care help or other forms of assistance
 - Racial profiling/discrimination in trying to get housing
- Food Security
 - Worried about the fish not being available this season which we rely on for sustaining themselves, going to need to apply for assistance
 - Afraid to eat meat because of contamination: land & water
 - Food is too limited
 - Food Bank need to make apt
 - Live on veggies and cans
 - Not enough choice in food at foodbank
 - Foodbank didn't give me food because I didn't have kids
- Homelessness
 - No shelter – extreme weather shelter is not enough
 - Need shelters for men and women (separate)
 - Homeless on sunny days too, need help all year
 - Not prioritizing homeless people all over BC –especially in winter
- Health Care
 - Not enough help for dental health care
 - Cousin over 1 month in hospital, given wrong medicine, medivacked to PG when doctors here could do better
 - Lack of access to women's health services
 - Some diagnoses for needed things for women take 6+ weeks
 - Some struggle to care for themselves at home and to get the right medications
 - Need better meds for elders
- Housing
 - Rent too high
 - 1 bedrooms – seniors can't afford
 - Put name down and wait forever
 - Makola, BC Housing have lots of spaces
 - No SROs available even
 - Landlords not taking good care of housing, not accountable
 - Cold weather: heating takes money away from food
 - "If it's heat or food, I'd go with heat"
- Transportation
 - Public transit on weekends, on early shifts, doesn't run
 - Accessible taxi is broken down, hours too short

- Infrequent bus every two hours near shelter
- Can't go anywhere
- Need a northern transportation strategy (no info, don't know what's happening)
- Ridley Island & Terminal near Port Ed: buses don't stop near there so have to walk to work if don't have vehicle
- Some younger people sit in seats on bus so elders can't sit down
- Services
 - Not enough things to do
 - Teaching kids games? Swimming-- even that's experience
- Income
 - should have a raise, wages too low
 - Min wage is too low or people/businesses not complying with wage standards
 - Not enough \$ to pay bills/rent
 - Low wages
 - Money mart fees but have to use it
 - Debt causes people to steal/break laws to make ends meet
- Families
 - Single parents get not enough help with kids
 - Miss school or struggle to bring them to school
 - Lots of stress
 - Parenting programs are lacking
 - Learn the basics
 - Connecting with your children
- Services
 - No transition house for men only
 - Abuse against elders & men (not just physical, all abuse)
 - Government is worrying about trails, park maintenance--put people first (the news shows parks over people)
 - More bingo for seniors and away from the slots
 - At Manor, beds taken by Long term ill patients so people who need a little bit of assistance don't have support
 -
 - Transition from home alone to having a BIT more help
- Child Care
 - Parents looking for jobs, don't have childcare/subsidies so can't take jobs they might get
 - Daycare costs too high, babysitters you can count on
 - Waiting lists for child care
 - If no care for kids, you lose job
- Youth
 - Youth need different activities, not just one youth group
 - 12-15 yr olds may have vandalized a park because there's nothing to do
 - Van has youth stuff in churches but here everything closes at 6pm

- rec centre is too expensive
- Housing
 - Tried to put mom into Manor but it would take whole cheque – too \$\$--taking care of her at home but that's also hard
- Addictions
 - No safe house --People in recovery forced to stay with people still struggling with addictions
 - Being turned away from supports is discouraging
 - Substance abuse issues
 - Cycle of drinking alcohol to stay warm
- Community
 - This should be a city that supports these issues with help from local government
 - Start small with local changes, then get province involved
- Housing
 - Need affordable local rents
 - High hydro bills
 - People cramming in one place to afford rent
 - Landlords overcharge – visiting fees, ripping people off
 - \$750 doesn't include phone/hydro, supposed to be included but they don't turn on heat
 - Not complying with rental agreement – lotteries
 - Unsafe housing by blocking fire exits
 - Rats, bed bugs, some places should be shut down
 - Rental cut off because applied for cell phone and had a credit check done
 - Where do people go? Transition house?
- Services and Supports
 - Wrap Around Programs
 - Applying for disability, it gets taken away (\$5600 bill)
 - Get audited and \$20 taken from cheque
 - Lost & recovery program > WCB bill
- Aboriginal
 - Overrepresentation of indigenous people in poverty
- Access to Services
 - No one to tell in the ministry, don't care
 - No compassion, hard rules
 - No phone, can't access supports
 - 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
 - Office workers that provided valuable service were fired
 - Gov't staff needs to be one-on-one, more holistic
- Employment
 - Face age discrimination

- Education, trying to work to pay bills
- Lack of jobs
- Require education & experience
- Jobs are not accessible
- Finding a place to apply for jobs is a full time job
- Seasonal work only
- They don't want hardcopy resumes
- If you don't have phone, they can't contact you, require email address so can't apply and this shuts us out
- Can do the work but job requirements screen you out
- No more fishing and forestry jobs
- Tougher to get EI year round
- Job creation programs not helping people who have paid into EI/taxes
- 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
- Barriers to get jobs (eg qualify as mail carrier) not given the opportunity – don't know the right people
- EI requires 560 hours, can only get 490 hours – welfare wouldn't help because of my vehicle
- Need a computer but no help is available
- It boils down to who you know or don't know, even if you are very qualified
- Transportation
 - Greyhound bus closure coming, but it was too expensive anyway
 - Can't afford bus, too expensive
 - Train takes 3+ hours from Rupert to Terrace, 2nd priority to CN Rail
 - Have to walk everywhere, even in cold weather
 - Clothing in different locations and no transportation to get to possessions
 - Shelter buses should pick you up
- Shelters
 - Open at 8pm, not allowed in otherwise so you're either working or walking
 - Don't allow pets
 - No smoking, charge you for visitors (overcharging)
- Housing
 - Accessibility issue, no elevators
 - Unsafe with fire alarms don't work
 - Crooked landlords
 - Makola Housing owns most apartments and if you mess up, they blacklist you
 - BC Housing has long waitlists even though there are vacancies
 - Landlords are not providing services in their agreement (eg. heat/phone)
 - No home equals no job

- One property manager has monopoly over apartments
- Bed bugs, rats but building still not shut down
- Education
 - Lack of programs: first aid
 - Education: supports and services needed
 - On the job training not provided, college used to have it
 - Kermode provides subsidized wages elsewhere, but it is not in Prince Rupert
- Services and Supports
 - Wrap around services needed
 - Need to know what are your rights around housing
 - Programs: explain what they actually do for you, don't just give acronyms
 - Access to technology and resources (library) to apply for jobs and benefits
 - No place to keep warm
 - Lack of computers to apply for licenses, child care, etc. --library is the only place
 - Transition house, special services
 - No one to offer help
 - Hydro bill > no help
 - Don't have access to people to help (eg with computers)
- IA
 - Social assistance – couples didn't get \$200, only \$100
 - Clawbacks
 - Social services took savings for child's education
 - Couples get less (\$800 for 2)
 - Income assistance exemptions
 - Welfare cheques only 1+ month--how do you pay for things?
 - Low level of money before clawback--eg \$1000 raffle > wouldn't keep it
- Food Security
 - Food prices go up on welfare cheque week
 - Grocery - \$7/8 for hamburger before cheque day – triple on cheque day/week
 - Steal cell phones for food & basic needs
 - Grocery – only get sale price if buy 2 items (eg \$39, not \$29)
 - People need the sales – it is very aggravating and unfair
 - Food insecurity, so kids go hungry
 - Cheaper to buy junk food
 - Churches giving out hot meals
 - People eating throwaways
 - Food bank is a necessity
 - Not enough salmon to share
 - Need food every day
 - Food is too scarce
- Employment
 - Can't work in rain

- Has to start all over to get \$900 hours
- Need a vehicle but how can you work without one?
- Access to Services
 - Social services staff can be mean
 - “Taking shit make you feel bad” act like it’s theirs
 - Need to change their mindset
 - People making the decisions should have to live a month on welfare
 - Freedom of Information can limit who you can help. Need to have permission
 - Gov` t secrecy –it costs money to get the information
 - No address, no IA
- Stigma
 - Judgement if you go out to eat even if buying cheapest meal)
 - People get personal in line ups, make mean comments
- Housing
 - Landlords take \$ for rent when rates go up
 - Pipeline talk made rents go up
 - Using property tax as excuse
 - Change door knobs on cardboards ‘renoviction’
 - Use minor improvements as excuse to increase rent
 - People on welfare lucky to find housing
 - Poor quality housing (mold)
 - Burned down buildings not rebuilt
 - BC Housing only has bachelor suites
 - Speculation on real estate (port) jacking prices up
 - Hydro & gas bills so high, and you get cut off
 - Hydro staff have no respect
 - Used to own place, shared with others, taking people in made me feel good sharing the wealth
 - Hydro – pay now or you`re cut off and reconnection fee, \$1200 for 2 months
- Taxes
 - Use port tax to community
 - Our people don` t benefit
- IA
 - Everybody on welfare is under the poverty line
 - \$375 for rent from welfare
 - Daughter started working and now welfare won` t cover her rent for February even though she only worked 24 hours
 - Clawback of income
 - Welfare rates too low
- Housing
 - Cost of rent
 - Rent increases (illegal)

- Lack of seniors housing
- No waitlists, have to apply every year
- Slumlords who refuse to repair facilities and won't let tenants or caretakers update
- Small supply for subsidized housing
- Property owners don't live locally
- Single occupancy rules
- Poor access to disabled suites
- Increase available bachelor's suites and have more affordable bachelor rentals
- No housing for single people
- Subsidized housing not for singles
- Nowhere for a single person to rent
- Families are getting priority over singles on housing applications
- Makola Housing--rent not based on income
- Native housing \$1200 +
- Empty units in Makola
- Can't get subsidies for people living in Makola housing
- Lack of subsidized seniors housing
- High cost of rent
- Stonecliffe is undertaking renovations--illegal evictions
- Houses destroyed
- BC hydro annual adjustments--One big bill once a year, sets you back
- Landlords not fixing property, spending money elsewhere instead of repairs
- Stigma
 - Immigration is putting strain on gov't budgets--put Canadians first
- Health Care
 - Healthcare services – can't work if you're sick
- Employment
 - Tickets/certificates through employment programs but no experience, therefore can't obtain employment
 - People need multiple jobs to get by
 - Lack of employment – beyond industry and for the middle aged
 - Port jobs driving up rental cost
 - Can't get port job without being 'in the know'
 - Creating a working poor society
 - Need more jobs
- Youth
 - Lack of youth centres/programs for youth
- 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
 - Need affordable job training programs
- Addictions

- Substance abuse is high
- Lack of support services
- Long wait times for getting into a bed or getting a referral
- No residential treatment (only 1 detox bed, day programs)
- No sober living centre
- Services and Supports
 - No services for men, only Raffles Inn which has bugs, is underutilized, needs renos
 - Hard to understanding the forms/applications & process in order to access services
 - Homecare services for elders/seniors--there is some but not enough locally
 - Need for public facilities (washrooms)
 - Financial literacy – need funding for everyone in Prince Rupert
 - Income tax filing--teach these skills in school
 - More access to everything
 - No programs for kids with autism
 - Lack of services for adults in community
 - Lack of funding for grass roots organizations to address poverty
- Community
 - Infrastructure repairs--Taylor/summit street sidewalk
 - Vandalism of playgrounds, bus stops
- Homelessness
 - Salvation Army shelter closed – used to have 12 beds but City closed them
 - More shelter support services
 - Our own people are on the street
- Transportation
 - Greyhound pulled services from the north
- Housing
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Need more supportive, subsidized units
 - People are couch surfing
 - Tiny housing village
 - Youth staying in unsafe places
- Employment
 - Employment programs cut by Liberals
 - Need a bridging employment program
- Addictions
 - Need treatment centres
- Education
 - Need education at university--more than trades needed
 - Other academic programs cut
 - People leave town for education and don't come back
 - Closed trader building continuing education
- Child Care

- Lack of child care
- Childcare is not affordable (\$750 – 1 child)
- Parents need after school care for work
- Mental health
 - Taking away more and more services
 - More outreach needed
 - Drop in centre needed
 - Need crisis intervention
- Services and Supports
 - Salvation closed on Sunday
 - Discharge from hospital and go out on the street
 - Need services in hospital to have a plan getting out
 - Lack of funding for sports programs
 - Extra costs (gas) to get to programs and recreation
 - Public awareness for FASD
 - Signs, school education (prevention)
 - Lack of advocacy (legal, everything)
 - Local/provincial/federal gov't mentality that solutions were tried before so they won't work
- Access to Services
 - Retelling story to ministry staff brings back bad memories
 - Need quick and timely access
 - Stigma when accessing service—it needs to be safe and friendly
 - Need less bureaucracy and unnecessary forms
 - Lack of communication (no one answers the phone)
 - It is an access issue
 - FOI Act is made for gov't not the people
 - Technology—if it is not available is this a barrier? (online access?, email address?, 1800 numbers?)
 - Need more assistance In House
 - Moving online paperwork hard for people without computers
 - Not enough support for online/toll-free navigation
 - Duplication of programs is too much for welfare to be eligible
 - Process for paperwork discourages people from doing anything
- Aboriginal
 - More cultural recognition
 - Needs signage in First Nations languages
- Stigma
 - Kids bullied and shamed in school if they don't have nice clothes
 - People in poverty can't tell their story because of shaming if in poverty
- Food Security
 - Lack of lunch programs in school

- Not adequate and low quality
 - Price of food going up
- Isolation and Access
 - Troll free place to have dialogue
 - Modernization of services leaves people out (credit card for example)
- Community
 - Community supports – need people helping people
 - Need more businesses
 - Clean up the town
 - Lack of community meeting place
 - Build community, help each other
- Competition
 - Everyone wants funding, based on winning
 - Need to work together, need a level playing field
- Health Care
 - Need dental/glasses
 - Lack of services
 - No health benefits between claims (eg. physio) and limited coverage
 - Crowded housing affects health
- Housing
 - Hydro too expensive: need subsidies
 - Rent – high cost even with both working
 - BC hydro is a problem
- Employment
 - Job search
 - Not everyone can work but everyone needs basic security
 - More full-time hours on jobs
 - Disability does not allow partners to get higher paying jobs out of town
 - Lots of hiring of connected/family persons locally
 - Unemployment, not enough jobs
 - Not enough jobs with wages that can cover rent
 - Limits and challenges in finding work if you have a criminal record
 - Closure of CFC canning lines
 - No jobs
 - Misconception that Prince Rupert is booming – it's a ghost town
- Food Security
 - Meat cost increased in recent times
 - Food bank – only one a month and not in December
 - No fruit and vegetables
 - Food share? None here
 - Soup kitchen has no dinners
 - No access to local deer population: use of local wildlife

- More people requiring soup kitchen
 - Need some place to actually cook meals for soup kitchen
 - Fish: not sufficient allowance for urban people—more should be allotted
- Income
 - Minimum wage needs to be increased
 - More stable expenses
- Housing
 - Tenancy Act not being enforced in some places, too strongly by RCMP
 - Landlords not following rules
 - Rent is too high, goes up every year
 - Rent prices – not affordable
 - No appliances in some rentals (store, fridge, washing machine, heating)
 - Rental allowance doesn't go up fast enough
 - Not enough low-income housing or rentals
 - BC Hydro heating issues
 - No supports to move belongings when evicted > have to start from scratch
 - Quality of low income houses
 - Especially with the rain: mold, poor insulation, have to raise heat
- Northern
 - Process is designed for when urban cities not small towns
 - Cost of everything is higher in PR
 - Harsh climate
 - Rupert is the end of the line for shipping food, treatment, etc.
- IA
 - Not allowed to go to school without giving up benefits
- Addictions
 - Medical issues (mental health and disability and substance abuse)
 - Drug dealers
 - Alcohol and drug abuse, not enough support or counselling psychologists
 - No detox/people get stuck in addiction cycle/leave for treatment come back and fall into same habits men/women/teens
 - Limited support at all for addiction
 - Mental health unsupported
 - People are shipped to Terrace or PG for treatment
- Stigma
 - Discrimination (gender, sexual, racial, religion, economic, etc.)
 - Address racism
 - Lack of respect
 - Not eligible for business loan (minimum dollar earning)
 - Stereotyping/biases
 - Prejudices preventing understanding of the problem
- Homelessness

- No dedicated men or youth shelter
- No place to put junk/stuff/belonging (storage)
- Youth
 - Youth programming and centre (none available) with 24 hour access
 - No youth centre
 - Youth are couch surfing
- Services and Supports
 - Violence against women
 - Communication training
 - Not enough resources for kids especially with development issues
 - Not enough life skills training
 - Taxes, money, cooking skills
 - Services not available every day of week/long weekends need 24/7 services
 - Few options available
 - Kicked out – multiple times
 - More activities for kids at min or no cost for outside activities
 - Need services for men – transition house for men
 - If don't have washer/dryer at home, laundromat prices are high
 - Washrooms and showers are not available 24/7 but I need to be clean & safe
- Transportation
 - Accessibility of transportation and lack of vehicle access
 - Transportation issues especially for transporting kids
 - Bus service on weekends is limited
 - Greyhound is pulling out
 - City buses stop at 6 pm
 - Buses do not run on Sundays
- Food Security
 - Not enough gardens: fresh food < public accessibility
 - More liquor stores than grocery stores
- Income
 - Multiple expenses of hydro, groceries, rent and people sacrifice one for another
- Housing
 - Overcrowding
 - Not affordable
 - Places aren't in good condition
- Health Care
 - Poor access to family doctors which impacts referrals (barrier)
 - Need better access to eye/vision care, dental services
- Access to Services
 - Applications to services present many barriers
 - Forms are complex
 - Literacy levels/comprehension

- Signatures from professionals needed
- Online (need internet & computer) (print)
- Access to people to ask questions
- Major consequences for not filling out – but no help
- References required
- Knowing who can help & how to get
- Computer literacy & access
- Need access to services like legal
- Roadblocks thrown up/excuses when solutions are proposed due to lack of political power
- Not having fixed address is a barrier
- Mental Health
 - Stress/mental duress from many stressors
 - Mental health concerns
 - Need “mental health” support workers
 - Low self-esteem
 - Addictions issues
- Child Care
 - Childcare costs
 - Lack of affordable day care
 - People with children that work don't get the childcare support from unemployment
- Housing
 - High cost of rental--bachelor \$1100, 1 bed \$1200-1500
 - Nowhere to rent
 - Lots of homelessness
 - Tenancy restrictions – no children, no pets
 - Not enough senior residences for those on fixed income
 - Bed bugs, mice, rodents
 - Buildings not being maintained
 - Mold affects human health
 - Slumlords and renovictions
 - Landlords do not know rules
 - References if you haven't rented before
 - No support for moving once you're evicted
 - Fix up closed schools
 - BC Housing has lots of empty units
 - Makola application is through BC Housing and they have a Long waitlist
 - High cost of utilities (hydro, gas)
- Education
 - Lack of skills training education
 - When on income assistance, can't access education
 - Lack of skills but no skills training

- Health Care
 - o Lack of access to medical treatment
 - o Lack of doctors/specialists
 - o No walk-in/have to go to emergency
 - o Can't change doctors/limited options
- Homelessness
 - o No men's shelter – men end up on street
 - o Safety concerns for homeless
- Stigma
 - o Racism
 - o Prejudice in renting, in jobs and hiring
 - o At hospital, white people get service first
 - o Inclusivity is important, but some places you feel you are not welcome
 - o People won't rent to you if on income assistance
- Services and Supports
 - o Domestic violence leads to runaways
 - o Transition house does not have second phase housing
 - o Transition house stays full long term
 - o Proper education for FAS, FASE, ADD, ADHD and more support in public schools
 - o No resources to help people through transition to get back on their feet
 - o No after school programs
 - o Elder and women abuse
 - o Poor parenting skills
 - o Lack of affordable leisure activities (pool hall, bowling alley)
 - o Nothing to do with families that are affordable
 - o More support within public school system
 - o Violence against women and vulnerable people
 - o No safe space for homeless people to go have coffee, talk, relax
 - o Need safety, especially for homeless
- Food Security
 - o No lunch program in schools & better advertisement needed
 - o Seals & sea lions are overpopulated and are eating all of the fish/abalone
 - o Lack of opportunity to harvest/water polluted
 - o Food insecurity
 - o Food insecurity issues
 - o Lack of affordability of good food
 - o Rising cost of food
 - o Kids are starving in school (teacher is providing food)
 - o Food security problems
- Employment
 - o Hire more people at the port
 - o Unfair hiring process – union unfair selection

- It is who you know-- that's how you get a job
- Hiring from outside the community
- Jobs going to people from out of town
- Closed fisheries
- Mills have closed
- Canneries closed
- Fisheries have collapsed because of the fish farms
- Youth up to age 30: Blade Runners
- Access to Services
 - Used to have ministries here but offices have moved to Terrace
- Aboriginal
 - Limited opportunity for practicing cultural activities
 - Need more opportunities to gather more cultural dialogue w friendly atmosphere
 - Need respect for other cultures
 - Proper education, need to accept different approaches
- Housing
 - Affordable housing—i.e. Digby Towers
 - Appropriate housing
 - Renovations
 - Affordable housing
 - Affordable housing not just for seniors
 - Lack of affordable housing is a big problem
 - Cost of hydro
 - Rental cost
 - Overcrowding in housing
 - Safe and adequate housing, stable, healthy
 - Sustainable shelter subsidy
 - Subsidized housing for all seniors, singles, families
 - Fighting discrimination in housing
- Women
 - Violence against women
- Transportation
 - Transportation for disability
 - Transportation issues
 - Getting kids to school? Put bus into play
- Income
 - Increase minimum wage
- Services and Supports
 - Physical disabilities
 - Clothing program
 - Hygiene security
 - Safety in the community

- Need enough time to eat a meal: etiquette
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - Smoking/addictions
 - Lack of detox centers in the north & treatment centers
 - Access to mental health care
 - Waitlists too long
 - Lack of resources for mental health issues
 - PTSD – lack of resources to address
 - Lack of understanding and empathy
 - Addictive lives
 - Lack of help, understanding
 - Not enough resources for those with addictions
 - People who use resources over and over take away from people who need it
 - Depression and a lack of mental health resources
 - 6 week wait for treatment
 - Lack of grief support
 - Need a variety of supports for people
 - People turned away from help and being turned away hurts—very discouraging
- Employment
 - Employment opportunities for people with disabilities
 - Not enough jobs
 - Need labour office to apply for jobs
- Child Care
 - Child care, lack of affordable
- ID
 - No identifications
 - No ability to have a bank account
- Housing
 - No SROs
- Education
 - Need to teach kids to budget and do taxes
 - Need life skills training

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

- Employment
 - o More and better jobs (4)
 - o Job creation
 - o Apprenticeships: address some teenage issues and adult issues
 - o Labour office for casual labour pickup (1)
 - o Training allowance exemption for assistance
 - o People need job search skills
- Housing (9)
 - o More affordable, SROs
 - o A development for elders
 - o Housing for singles
 - o Housing built by people getting training for jobs
- Services
 - o 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
 - o City needs to help address social issues like finding things for kids to do, housing (2)
 - o Local seniors advocate need to reach out and do more
 - o City hires younger adults, youth to help w/ training/jobs that would benefit community
- Mental Health and Addictions
 - o 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)
- Transportation
 - o 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)
- Youth
 - o Housing for youth (1)
 - o Support group, counselors, etc. to help kids
 - o One place for kids to help them
- Families
 - 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)
 - o More info needed for parents/people about resources and supports

- Food Security
 - o 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
- Access to Services
 - o BC Housing should be open more than 2 days/week (2)
 - o Need consistent hours at BC Housing
 - o Library needs consistent hours
 - o Confidential phone line and connect people to services
 - o Hire real operators (no phone trees)
- Services
 - o Volunteer supplements
 - o For seniors, libraries etc. garbage pickups
 - o Graffiti removal
 - o Xmas tree pick ups
 - o Recycling depot – service for people who don't have cars
 - o Cultural training for new people
 - o Sensitivity training – RCMP, schools for kids
 - o More life skills training in schools
 - o Help find out why people need help or their needs – social anxiety as examples
 - o Early learning of life, practical skills, reduces anxiety, stress later on
 - o Programs that don't exclude people (ie single fathers get courses/help that pregnant women can get like parenting courses)
 - o Continuing to make opportunities to share and have more supports
 - o Learn from Scandinavian countries and their models of assistance
 - o Liberals try to stop whatever NDP does and NDP tries to stop whatever Liberals do
 - o Gov't needs to work together
 - o More meetings like this
 - o Cover gaps in programs
 - o Tailor assistance more to needs
 - o Do more for kids taken away from parents (2)
 - o More support for relatives taking care of others kids
 - o Better communication, amplify voices instead of silencing them
 - o Increase communication on available programs (1)
- Income assistance
 - o Earn \$, it's taken away (even volunteer \$ for meal, transport)
 - o Denied assistance: put through job training if don't go, don't get a cheque
 - o Need more income support that is individualized: be more flexible
 - o Take away limitations around PWD & other forms of assistance (3)
 - o Stop deducting family tax from assistance cheques
 - o Benefits re: kids should never be clawed back (3)
 - o Raise IA rates all across the board (1)

- How do you get by with \$300/month?
- Increase welfare while you're in school
- Pay hydro directly from welfare (1)
- Income
 - Increase minimum wage and protect workers from employers penalizing them for increase such as recently in Ontario/Tim Hortons
 - Incentivize companies to reward employees financially
 - More money (1)
 - Universal income policies should be considered, look to other countries as well (1)
 - 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)
 - Increase welfare rates based on community living wage
- Taxes
 - Consider tax breaks
 - Child tax should not be based on income unless it is extremely high—it should be based on whether you are a single parent, PWD, etc. (Needs-based)
- Homelessness
 - Homeless program to access different furniture
- Housing
 - Assistance to deal with things like bed bugs, or other unforeseen circumstances (1)
 - More regulations on landlords so they can't jack up rent (2)
 - Better protection for tenants, more restrictions on landlords
 - Rent restrictions on what can be charged (1)
 - Close loopholes in housing policies on renovations to increase rent
 - Working with Ma'kola Housing to respond better to tenants and former tenants
 - More accountability and revamped
 - Less discriminatory guidelines
 - Address Housing Vacancies (2)
 - Too many empty homes and apartments because landlords discriminating on applicants (judging references, income, etc.)
 - Incentivize owning and living in own home
 - Rent to own programs for housing (1)
- Aboriginal
 - Address on/off reserve income assistance discriminatory policies: end them (1)
 - Fairness & equity for Aboriginal People – reconciliation
 - TRC agreements (1)
- Access to Services
 - Make it easier for people to access supports
 - Re-examine ID requirements needed for accessing assistance (1)
 - Education and awareness, compassion, empathy (1)

- Employment
 - o Better balance between job creation and environmental protection
 - o Land is contaminated, make sure job creation is coupled with environmental protection
 - o Offer complete training programs—example of Haida Gwaii program – gave wood to build but no training
- Youth
 - o Extend supports (family allowance) for youth and families raising youth to 24 or examine what is reasonable (2)
- Housing
 - o Reduce wait time
 - o Rental cap
 - o Landlords accountability with proper complaint system
 - o Gov't intervention in rental system
 - o Penalize landlords if they don't comply
 - o Use unoccupied buildings for housing
 - o BC Housing or city should buy vacant buildings
 - o Funding for true renovations, not paint
 - o Big difference between one's own place vs a shelter
 - o Enforcement of regulations (fire marshall in buildings)
 - o More seniors housing – they have additional barriers
 - o Hydro rates freeze
- Homelessness
 - o Allowance for shelter costs
 - o Showers in shelters
 - o Provide people the basic living essentials even in shelter
- Services and Supports
 - o Have a community office, not a government office
 - o Higher awareness
 - o Ministry involvement in community
 - o Services tied with jobs
 - o Wraparound services addressing transportation, child care
 - o Program to pay off loans
 - o Advocacy vs Penalty-- this is what minister is trying to do; continue this (1)
 - o Support rather than trying to kick people off assistance
 - o Childcare and housing supports to help get people back on their feet
 - o Penalties should be pardoned if justified (eg., audits on people already living in poverty)
 - o Services should be ready and available when you need them (2)
 - o Affordable phones to help keep job (1)
 - o Neighbourhood houses (2)
 - o Get help and compassion without judgment from people, not computers
- Employment
 - o Better training incentives

- Commitment to hire youth to be a requirement
- More accessible training opportunities
- Allow full-time school while on welfare instead of student loan
- More programs for upgrading skills
- Fast accreditation if you can already do the work
- Fast track to certification
- Hands on oversight and support for work
- Programs to help people to get EI hours
- More job creation programs > let the hours count towards EI
- Help with use of computer (2)
- Training for forestry/agriculture (currently, people pushed until they 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 1st aid) (2)
- All people should get access to training (not just 55+) (2)
- 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
- 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)
- Income
 - Better access to wage increases, same work, same pay FAIRNESS AND EQUITY
 - Supported employment for a period of time
 - More money (6)
 - Help people reduce debt load
- Transportation
 - Bus shuttles for people to get around
 - Certain drop off/pick up points downtown to Ridley etc.
 - More frequent bus service
 - Train is not viable option for transportation
 - Transportation, need more access (1)
- IA
 - Welfare increase should go to both people in a couple (\$200 increase for 2, not \$100 for 2)
 - Welfare clawbacks--change the rules to let people keep money
- Services and Supports
 - Need 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)
- Help to use computers
- Installing cameras to decrease vandalism in public areas (1)
- Increase existing support for anti-poverty programs (increase the funding)
- Road safety – its too dark on crosswalks. Fix sidewalks (1)
- Access to Services
 - Need someone who would take time to sit down and LISTEN to you
- Community and Services
 - 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
 - Bigger public areas for meetings
 - Allow community to come up with solution
 - Networking, community building
 - More flowers: improve peoples` living environment (1)
 - Community neighbourhood house (laundry, cook, etc.)
 - Solutions need to be tailored to PR people/environment
 - More media talking about how the community is struggling
- Stigma
 - Basic respect (2)
- Homelessness
 - Keep shelters open longer
 - Homeless have nowhere to go or eat on Sundays (only 1 hr)
 - Bring more doctors to the north that will help homeless (2)
 - Day facilities for the homeless between 8am-8pm
- Housing
 - Stop renovictions
 - More subsidized rent availability (2)
 - Make use/repurpose empty buildings (encourage business/shelters/could kitchens)
 - More rent assistance to people that work (1)
 - Laws preventing higher rent increases
 - More low-income housing for single people (\$375 not enough)
 - More affordable housing units (25 will not be enough)
 - Have the city work with owners of empty properties to get them occupied
 - Encourage one to one to rent empty units – prevent homes from being empty for long periods of time
- Food Security
 - More accessibility to the food bank, be able to go more times
 - Increase soup kitchen hours and open it at dinner (1)
- Addictions
 - Opening an addictions centre and detox centre for men and women (2)

- Transportation
 - o Longer bus hrs and run from Monday-Sunday
- Health Care
 - o Open a walk in clinic (1)
- IA
 - o Increase welfare rates
 - o Increase welfare rates for single parents
- Employment
 - o More job security for people with families/people at risk
 - o Prevent employers from discriminating against people with learning disabilities/medical disabilities
 - o Utilize talents of people in poverty (2)
 - o Skills share with a sign up sheet with the city
 - o Labour unlimited example
- Services and Supports
 - o More affordable or free employment programs for tickets (1)
 - o Encourage development of affordable restaurants
 - o Bring back the boys & girls club
 - o Adult drop-in centre (like the 44 in Vancouver) (1)
 - o Programs for young adults that are too old for youth programs (most end at 18)
 - o “don’t reinvent the wheel” (2)
 - o Use existing resources but change the system
 - o Funding needs to be more user friendly
 - o Empowerment (2)
 - o Root causes are the focus, not the person
 - o Action plans to give people tools to get out of poverty
 - o Education
 - o Hand up, not a hand out
 - o Self help for parents
 - o Life skill training
- Taxes and Inequality
 - o Voluntary sharing of resources and wealth (1)
 - o Find a place to share it (eg once a month at hall)
 - o Give tax incentives to those who share
 - o Political parties should pay, not tax payers (2)
 - o Make rules to prevent wealthy & corporations from buying up property and closing businesses
- Housing (5)
 - o Need a boarding house
 - o Need housing for society’s vulnerable
 - o Build more co-op housing (4)
 - o Rent to be a % of what you make

- Provides more money for paying for other expenses
- Cities to provide land for housing projects to a society (such as unity city) (1)
- Tiny housing projects (4)
- Pay only a % of income
- Have administrator run housing subsidies to remove stigma of poverty
- More rent control for lower rents (1)
- More control over rent eviction
- Low income renters have availability to funds when they are short on rent (regulated)
- More training about RTA
- Education about how to care for your property
- Tenancy Act problems and need to update the law (3)
- Mental Health
 - Improve access to mental health services (4)
 - Need these services in communities
 - Mental health treatment centre (3)
 - Remove waitlist for care (1)
 - Need a facility in Prince Rupert
 - Need direct transportation to treatment and home
- Access to Services
 - Central access to information (1)
 - Equal playing field
 - Cut out bureaucracy
 - Bad paperwork/Online process (3)
 - Hire more support works to help navigate and advocate
 - Public accessible computers
 - Simplify the paperwork
- Youth
 - Group homes for teens (2)
- Child Care
 - Subsidized day care and facilities onsite (eg at hospitals) (3)
- Stigma
 - Consider what is respectful
- Education
 - More programs at local college
 - On-line training courses but the cost for internet and course fees is too high
 - How can you get education when availability and cost are not making it possible?
 - Lack of access to education lead to lack of job to earn sufficient money to purchase a house or have a future
- Employment
 - Renewable jobs
 - Forestry
- Housing

- Why are there BC Housing vacancies?
- More control locally: answers locally!
- What are taxes? And shouldn't they reduce the rent cost?
- High rent/low assistance (2)
- Raise the rental allowance with the market
- Cap on rental rates
- Build more supportive housing
- Not enough housing (2)
- Build more rental housing
- Funding for restoring vacant/deteriorated housing
- Landlords get incentives/rebates to improve housing
- Incentives for new landlords to get into low-income housing
- Direct deposit to avoid \$ issues
- More housing advocates and resource funding
- **Aboriginal**
 - Indigenous healthcare services moved from federal to provincial
 - Costs have increased and services cut back (\$140/month cost to 1 person)
 - Need Tsimshian representation with the city
 - Tsimshian representation on city council/school board
- **Justice**
 - Take the RCMP out of the equation
 - Hire more people to represent tenants
 - Strengthen the ombudsperson
 - Reduce restrictions on criminal record for employment
- **Employment**
 - Address lack of jobs/unemployment (2)
 - Allow more busking
 - Help with training, certifications
 - Help with job skills like interview skills and resumes
 - Provide business loan availability
- **Health Care**
 - Not enough health coverage (1)
 - Physiotherapy after injury should be covered
 - Central health clinic/walk-in
 - More doctors
 - Increase welfare/insurance coverage for meds
 - Access to health care providers/clinic
 - Need more staff at hospital, more doctors, more specialists in town
- **Addictions**
 - More addictions services (2)
 - Treatment centre established w/counsellors
 - Detox centre w/transition housing

- More addiction supports and counselling
- Get day dealers off the street or regulate distribution
- Safe injection sites
- Build community support networks
- Family-based drug & alcohol centre (1)
- Housing
 - Better quality of housing (3)
 - Bed bug + lice support service
 - Address the high cost of Heating (2)
 - Renovate rents/housing
 - Ensure all rentals have serviceable appliances
 - Increase rebate amount and number supported
 - Get PNG on board with BC Hydro energy efficiency program
 - Lack of assistance for moving (2)
 - Crisis grants
 - Affordable housing (2)
 - Assistance for eviction
 - Cost of housing in PR (1)
 - Place for storing belongings if evicted
- Stigma
 - Address discrimination (2)
 - Educate people (landlords, staff, etc.)
 - Requirement that people take training
 - Increase awareness on human rights/respect/dignity
- Services
 - Not enough life skills training (2)
 - Offer more training
 - Need more skills training workers/outreach
 - Not enough resources for kids (2)
 - Offer more resources
 - Targeted services for men (1)
 - Transition house for men
 - Open and ongoing communication on where this poverty reduction strategy is going
 - Support groups in addition to counselling – for more than drug and alcohol issues (2)
 - Existing facilities (eg friendship house, salvation army) not available
 - Showers and laundry facilities
 - Existing programs (eg Strong Start) 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
 - Increase access to clean, safe facilities (1)
 - Washrooms “Portland Loo” all-weather bathroom

- When salvation army can't sell things, make available for free
- Laundry and showers
- Rules around joining Blade Runners are a problem—should 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
- Have housing as part of an independent living agreement
- Affordable programs at rec centre and pool leisure guide activities are not affordable
- Bring more support workers, counsellors, etc. for all ages
- Youth
 - Need a youth shelter
 - 24 hour community house
 - Specific supports for youth, youth designated housing
 - In PG they have youth shelter with apartments for youth on independent living
 - Youth shelter/affordable youth housing
- Employment
 - Connecting people who want to help with work (eg. firefighting)
 - Continued support for unemployment Action Centre & KAPS
- Food Security
 - Access to health food
 - Groceries
 - Soup kitchens
 - Nutrition
 - Traditional & local foods
 - Suggested example – Port Alberni food-based gatherings monthly
- Transportation
 - Weekend bus service
 - Late night city bus service
 - Transit that is open after 10pm and on Sundays
- Access to Services
 - Simplified forms & in-person support for understanding & completing forms (1)
- Housing
 - Increase seniors housing / lower age of entry (2)
 - Landlords/residences – making criteria to restrict entry/housing
 - Policy restrictions or interpretation (can restrict non-family members from being in 3 bedroom units)
 - Need strong national Occupancy Standards
 - Could/should be more flexible (1)
 - Increase flexibility & creativity to match need with unit availability (1)
- Education
 - Good access to education (1)
 - Preschool

- Ensure education is respectful and culturally appropriate
- Create more permanent training facilities at the college
- Cooking, welding, trades, etc.
- Help people to upgrade their education
- Reducing debt load
- Aboriginal
 - Truth & Reconciliation Commission adopted
- Employment
 - Adopt adjacency principle so fish caught in local waters get processed in PR (1)
 - Need a local facility to can many different species/products
 - Adjacency for forestry also
 - Value-add to raw products
 - Fishing licences at local DFO
 - More job opportunities
 - Allow seal/sea lion hunting to bring population down/bring fish back
 - Create seal hunt industry with fur coats, meat, jackets
 - Stop immigration – jobs for the local people who need help
- Housing
 - Build more affordable housing
 - Cap on rent increases
 - Penalties for slumlords
 - Call line –a 1-800# to report landlords who are breaking law, not caring for properties
 - Landlords need to be more accountable
 - Fines for landlords who don't exterminate rats, bed bugs
 - Better tracking on illegal suites
 - Compensation for tenants when suite has pests
 - Tenants should get put up somewhere while extermination happens or make landlord eat them
 - Get rid of rugs in rental houses (roll landlord in the rug after)
 - Fix up closed schools and turn them into affordable housing
 - 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
- Services and Supports
 - Support those who need help here
 - More support for small business
 - Solve homelessness, water issues on reserves before immigration
 - Increasing supports for aging parents
 - Supports for the caregiver
 - Better monitoring of government/trustees--transparency
 - Increase legal services

- Personal interest workshops
- Individual action plans
- Person coaching – finances etc.
- Increase non-smoking and anti-drug laws
- Mental health
 - More mental health supports (3)
 - More publicity as people aren't aware of services
 - More feet on the ground, more trained ears
 - Addiction counselling, suicide prevention
- Homelessness (2)
 - Homeless people are not safe
 - Something like "bear patrol" in Winnipeg for violence against vulnerable people
 - Provide warm and reflective clothing
- Food Security
 - Transportation for food to be subsidized
 - Better access to healthy food/fruit/veg
 - Good food box
 - More community gardens, supply seeds
 - Food insecurity is an issue
- Transportation
 - Affordable transportation
 - Transit subsidy for working poor
 - Extended bus service (especially on Sunday)
 - Handy-bus currently 8-1630