

Draft Regional Homelessness Plan

Prepared by
The Greater Vancouver
Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH)

2015-2025

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List of Acronyms

ACT	Assertive Community Treatment
AHSC	Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee
BCNPHA	BC Non-Profit Housing Association
CHT	Community Homelessness Table
CT	Constituency Table
CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
HPS	Homelessness Partnering Strategy
LGBT2Q	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning and 2-Spirited
RAHS	Regional Affordable Housing Strategy
RHP	Regional Homelessness Plan
RSCH	Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness

Executive Summary

This draft Regional Homelessness Plan (RHP) has been prepared by the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH). It will replace the RSCH's first regional homelessness plan prepared in 2001 and updated in 2003, known as *3 Ways to Home*.

The goal of this RHP is to end homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region over a period of 10 years. To achieve this goal, the RHP is focused on 3 areas: Housing, Prevention + Support, and Capacity Building.

The RHP identifies indicators of success and targets to help measure success in achieving the plan's goal and objectives. It is proposed that the RHP be considered a 'living document' and that it be monitored every three years to determine if targets are being met and if they need to be revised.

Meeting the indicators of success and targets established in this RHP will achieve the following milestones by 2025:

- Nobody is living on the streets in the Metro Vancouver region.
- Nobody is turned away from emergency shelter.
- Everyone in an emergency shelter is able to move along the path to safe, secure, and affordable housing with appropriate support within 30 days.

Implementation of this RHP will require partnerships, collaboration, and commitment among a wide variety of partners, including all levels of government and the private and non-profit sectors.

The RHP is based on the assumption that the RSCH will continue its mission – to inspire and lead a coordinated response to homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region. To achieve its mission, it will be necessary for the RSCH to:

- Identify sources of funding for the RSCH to coordinate, facilitate and monitor implementation of the RHP; and
- Engage and develop relationships with all partners and stakeholders to build support for the RHP and create opportunities to work together to implement the RHP.

Next steps to complete a final Regional Homelessness Plan include the following:

- Consult with stakeholders to obtain their feedback on the draft RHP and on actions required for implementation;
- Estimate the cost to implement the RHP and potential sources of funding;
- Prepare an implementation plan that identifies lead agencies, actions and responsibilities; and
- Present the Regional Homelessness Plan to Metro Vancouver, local governments, and other stakeholders for endorsement.

The objectives, priorities and indicators of success for the RHP are set out below.

Objectives	Priorities	Indicators of Success over the next 10 years
Housing		
Housing options expanded to meet needs of all homeless people in Metro Vancouver region	Increase Housing Units for People who are Homeless	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 6,200 additional units are available for people who are homeless. 2. Nobody is living on the streets in the Metro Vancouver region. 3. Nobody is turned away from emergency shelter. 4. Everyone in an emergency shelter is able to move along the path to safe, secure, and affordable housing with appropriate support within 30 days. 5. Nobody is homeless for 1 year or more.
	Provide Housing Specific to Priority Populations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. At least 31% of all 6,200 housing units are developed and managed by Aboriginal Peoples for Aboriginal Peoples. 7. Housing units are targeted to homeless families (2%), youth (16%), seniors (19%), and other adults (63%) based on the proportion of people identified in the 2014 and subsequent homeless counts or research. Communities develop additional targets to meet diverse needs within these population groups.
	Protect and Improve the	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. All Metro Vancouver municipalities have adopted an affordable housing strategy or action plan that addresses homelessness.

Objectives	Priorities	Indicators of Success over the next 10 years
	Existing Housing Stock	<p>9. All tenants who are displaced as a result of renovations and/or redevelopment have been offered a viable affordable housing option.</p> <p>10. No non-profit and co-op housing units have been lost as a result of the expiry of operating agreements (i.e. units are not converted to market rents or rents do not increase substantially).</p> <p>11. All non-profit housing projects that have reached the end of their useful life have been redeveloped and no affordable housing units have been lost.</p>
Prevention + Support		
Support services expanded to prevent people from becoming homeless and help people maintain their housing	Improve Income and Financial Stability	<p>12. No one is evicted or loses their housing due to lack of financial means and/or relevant support services.</p> <p>13. All homeless persons report receiving some form of income in the next homeless count.</p> <p>14. All homeless persons report receiving income through some form of government transfer payment in the next homeless count.</p> <p>15. Agencies that provide employment services for people who are homeless report increased success in clients obtaining jobs, participating in employment training and education programs, and accessing income assistance (if eligible).</p>
	Enhance Outreach and Support Services	<p>16. Appropriate support services and levels of support are in place so that at least 80% of clients who are housed through programs that receive government funding remain housed for at least 6 months.</p> <p>17. All people who are homeless were offered housing within the last 30 days.</p> <p>18. Local committees of service providers are in place to improve coordination of services to people and facilitate access to services.</p> <p>19. Nobody experiences more than one episode of homelessness in a year.</p> <p>20. All hospitals, jails, and treatment centres have partnerships and protocols in place with community agencies to work with persons identified as having No Fixed Address to develop discharge plans so that no persons are discharged into homelessness.</p>
	Provide Support Services Specific to Priority Populations	<p>21. Appropriate health and social services are in place for all priority populations at risk of homelessness to prevent them from becoming homeless.</p> <p>22. All youth who transition out of foster care have a housing and support plan in place.</p> <p>23. No families with children are homeless.</p>
Capacity Building		
Funding and other resources, advocacy, and community capacity are expanded to implement RHP	Facilitate Collaboration	<p>24. Local and sub-regional Tables are in place to identify and address local and sub-regional homelessness issues and strengthen the regional response to homelessness.</p> <p>25. New partnerships have been created to implement the strategies and actions in this RHP.</p> <p>26. Networking, information exchange, and education among funders and service providers have increased as a result of events organized by the RSCH (at least one event per year).</p>
	Coordinate Funding	<p>27. Service providers have one set of reporting requirements for multiple funders/investors.</p> <p>28. Sustainable/long-term government and partnership funding (3 yrs +) is available for housing services and supports.</p> <p>29. RSCH Investors Table develops and supports implementation of an investment plan with input from service agencies.</p> <p>30. New private sector partners are investing resources to achieve the objectives and priorities of the RHP.</p>
	Enhance Our Understanding of Homelessness	<p>31. Stakeholders throughout the region use common language to describe homelessness and there is broad-based support for the definition of homelessness used in the RHP.</p> <p>32. Understanding and public awareness of homelessness in the region has increased, resulting in greater support for homelessness initiatives by the public, stakeholders and all levels of government.</p> <p>33. Coordinated advocacy by the RSCH, AHSC and Community Homelessness Tables has increased to support local community housing and homelessness projects.</p> <p>34. Research is undertaken in addition to tri-annual homeless counts on contributing factors and barriers that will help achieve the goal of this RHP.</p>

1. Introduction

1.1 About the RSCH

This draft Regional Homelessness Plan has been prepared by the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH).

The RSCH was established in 2000 to set priorities and recommend projects for funding under the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (currently the Homelessness Partnering Strategy). Over the years, the work and structure of the RSCH has changed significantly. Originally, the RSCH functioned as a committee with a maximum of 40 members that included providers of homelessness services, community based organizations and all three levels of government. All members were required to participate equally in meetings and working groups.

In 2013, the RSCH adopted a new membership structure that involved the delegation of decision-making on behalf of the RSCH to the Constituency Table (CT). The CT includes 26 senior staff of agencies serving the homeless population, including representatives from all levels of government, funders, Aboriginal organizations, emergency shelter operators, supportive/transitional housing providers, non-market housing operators, outreach, youth, women, seniors, families, newcomers, francophones, people living with addictions, mental illness and/or disabilities, and a representative of Community Homelessness Tables (CHTs).¹ In addition to the CT, the RSCH includes a general membership of more than 150 organizations and individuals.

The following sets out the RSCH Vision, Mission and Mandate:

Vision

- Eliminate homelessness in Metro Vancouver through the full implementation of the Regional Homelessness Plan.

Mission

- Inspire and lead a coordinated response to homelessness in the region.

Mandate

- Maintain, revise and coordinate implementation of the Regional Homelessness Plan;
- Recommend projects for funding under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS); and
- Develop a regional understanding of homelessness and its solutions.

In March 2013, the Government of Canada announced a 5-year extension of funding for the HPS at approximately \$8.2 million dollars per year for the period April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2019. The Greater Vancouver Regional District, in partnership with the RSCH, is responsible for soliciting applications for HPS funds to implement community priorities for eligible activities under the program.

1.2 Background

Homelessness has been a serious concern in Canada and the Metro Vancouver region since the 1980's. In 1999, the federal government launched the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative to address this issue. The purpose of the program was to reduce and prevent homelessness by providing direct support and funding to communities across Canada. To participate in this program, communities were required to develop a community plan.

¹CHTs are committees organized throughout the region that include a wide range of stakeholders working to address homelessness in their local communities.

The RSCH completed its first regional homelessness plan in 2001, following a year-long community-based planning process. The plan was updated in 2003 and became known as *3 Ways to Home*. It set broad policy directions for addressing homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region and identified gaps in the continuum of housing and services and strategies for action. The plan served as a template for sub-regional plans for community groups including municipalities and private foundations committed to a structured approach to addressing homelessness.

1.3 What Has the Regional Homelessness Plan Accomplished?

Much has been accomplished since the adoption of *3 Ways to Home* in 2003.

Housing

- The BC Government committed \$520 million to build more than 2,200 new supportive housing units for people who are homeless or at risk.
- Supportive and transitional housing units increased 156%, from 2,673 in 2003 to 6,843 units by year-end 2012.
- Portable supportive housing rent subsidies increased 194%, from 908 in 2003 to 2,670 subsidies by year-end 2012.
- Emergency shelter beds increased by 162%, from 943 in 2003 to 2,473 beds by year-end 2012. This includes permanent beds, seasonal/temporary beds and extra beds to accommodate an additional 645 people in extreme weather conditions.
- Second stage housing units for women and children fleeing violence increased by 86%, from 58 in 2003 to 108 units by year-end 2012.

Prevention and Support

- Two pilot projects were introduced to assist men and women leaving prison to plan for, find and retain long term housing.
- Rent banks were introduced in Vancouver and Surrey.
- There has been an increased focus on outreach to help people who are homeless access housing and services, and the number of outreach programs in the region has doubled.
- Withdrawal management/detox beds increased by 87%, from 86 in 2003 to 161 beds by year-end 2012.
- Addictions treatment and recovery beds increased by 37% from 907 in 2003 to 1,247 beds by year-end 2012.
- A Fraser Region ACT team was created and staffed in 2012 for Surrey and this service was doubled in early 2013 with the start of a second ACT team serving New Westminister/Tri-Cities. These teams are currently serving up to 200 eligible clients (100 in Surrey and 100 in New Westminister/Tri-Cities).

Capacity Building

- As recommended in both the 2001 Regional Homelessness Plan and *3 Ways to Home*, the RSCH has conducted a homeless count in the region every three years since 2002 to obtain current data and identify trends in the homeless population.
- *3 Ways to Home* reported that homelessness and housing planning committees had been developed in 5 sub-regions. The RSCH worked with these committees over the years to help them strengthen their networks and increase local capacity to address homelessness. Nine Community Homelessness Tables (CHTs) are now operating in the region. They created the Council of Community Homelessness Tables to work collaboratively together and have a seat at the RSCH Constituency Table.
- The RSCH established the Investors Table that includes all levels of government and private and philanthropic foundations to work towards increasing investment in initiatives to end homelessness.

- The RSCH helped support Homelessness Action Week every year since 2006 to increase awareness about homelessness in the region, organize efforts and resources of communities to address homelessness, showcase best practices in ending homelessness, and identify gaps in community services.

1.4 The Homelessness Challenge

The results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region show that the number of homeless people in the region increased significantly between 2002 and 2008 (137%), but has remained fairly stable since 2008 – increasing by 4% between 2008 and 2014. This is less than the rate of increase for the population of the Metro Vancouver region as a whole, which increased by 9% from 2008 to 2014.² The increase in numbers from 2002 to 2005 could, to some extent, be a function of an improved count methodology, including more volunteers; however, there is consensus in the region that homelessness did increase significantly after 2002 and that the cumulative work of all stakeholders has been responsible for the relative stability since 2008.

Table 1: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless (2002 to 2014)

Number of Homeless	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014
	#	#	#	#	#
Sheltered Homeless	788	1,047	1,086	1,892	1,820
Unsheltered Homeless	333	1,127	1,574	758	957
Total Homeless	1,121	2,174	2,660	2,650	2,777
Source: Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. (2014). <i>Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region.</i>					

Point-in-time homeless counts estimate the number of sheltered and unsheltered people who are homeless during a 24-hour period. This is not the same as estimating the number of people who move in and out of homelessness throughout the course of a **year**. Many more people experience homelessness in a year than can be counted on any given day. Over the course of a year, some people will become homeless for the first time, some will exit homelessness, and others will cycle in and out of homelessness. The 2014 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver found that 43% of survey respondents had been homeless more than once in the previous year, while 41% of survey respondents reported being homeless for one year or more. A study of 124 people who were homeless and vulnerably housed in Surrey found that participants commonly reported shifting between periods of homelessness and living in rental accommodation.³

In the U.S., the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) developed a formula to estimate the number of people who are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year based on a point-in-time homeless count.⁴ This approach has been used by several communities in the U.S. and has been approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a method for calculating the annual estimate of homeless individuals based on a point-in-time count. In Vancouver, the Streethome Foundation used a modified version of the CSH approach in 2009 to develop targets for its

² Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Division. 2014. Metro Vancouver’s population was 2,259,000 in 2008 and is estimated to be 2,468,000 in 2014.

³ Lyon, David, Stephen Dooley and Nathalie Gagnon. 2014. *The Homeless and the Vulnerably Housed in Surrey: Exploring Variations in Needs and Experiences*. Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

⁴ Burt, Martha and Carol Wilkins. 2005. *Estimating the Need: Projecting from Point-in-Time to Annual Estimates of the Number of Homeless People in a Community and Using this Information to Plan for Permanent Supportive Housing*. Washington, DC: Corporation for Supportive Housing.

10-Year Community Homelessness Plan. Based on the formula used by Streethome, while the 2014 Homeless Count identified 2,777 homeless individuals in the Metro Vancouver region on the evening of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014, it is estimated that about 5,900 individuals in the region are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year. The calculation is shown in Appendix 1.

The Regional Homelessness Plan estimates a need for at least 6,200 housing units to address homelessness over the next 10 years. This is based on data from the 2014 Homeless Count and the annual prevalence formula. It also considers average household size among the homeless population and population growth for the Metro Vancouver region which is expected to increase by 17% over the next 10 years. Background information and the calculation are provided in Appendix 2.

The Homeless Count includes only one segment of the homeless population that is sometimes referred to as the 'visible' homeless. This population is shown above the waterline in Figure 1, using the example of an iceberg.⁵ As can be seen, the visible homeless are just the tip of the iceberg – only a small part of the population in the homeless continuum that includes the hidden homeless and population at risk of homelessness.

The hidden homeless includes people who do not have a regular address of their own where they have security of tenure and who are staying temporarily in another household – often called “couch surfing”. Homeless counts include people who are couch surfing only if they are found during the count and complete a survey – which is only a very small proportion of the total hidden homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region. For example, a total of 381 individuals in the 2014 count were identified as couch surfing. However, a 2009 pilot study in the Metro Vancouver region estimated that about 9,000 individuals were hidden homeless at the time of the survey and about 23,500 persons had been hidden homeless in the previous year.⁶

Based on 2006 census data, about 56,000 Metro Vancouver households are in core housing need⁷ and spending at least 50% of their income on shelter and are considered to be at risk of homelessness.⁸

This Regional Homelessness Plan identifies a number of population groups who are vulnerable to poverty and homelessness as a result of systemic issues, and who require housing and support services specifically designed to meet their needs. These population groups include: youth, seniors, women, families, Aboriginal Peoples, people with mental health, addictions and/or other health issues, people with disabilities, francophones, the LGBT2Q population, newcomers and refugees.

⁵ Adapted from the Wellesley Institute's Precarious Housing Iceberg. Wellesley Institute. 2010. *Precarious Housing in Canada*.

⁶ Margaret Eberle et al. 2009. *Results of the pilot study to estimate the size of the hidden homeless population in Metro Vancouver*. Note: the margin of error is 7,650 at the 95% confidence level, which means that 95 times out of 100, the interval from 1,545 persons to 16,846 persons includes the actual number of hidden homeless individuals in Metro Vancouver.

⁷ A household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability, standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards).

http://cmhc.beyond2020.com/HiCODefinitions_EN.html

⁸ Metro Vancouver. 2014. *Regional Affordable Housing Strategy Update – Discussion Paper March 2014*. Note: Core housing need figures for 2011 are not yet available.

Figure 1: Precarious Housing Iceberg Paradigm



1.5 Why Update the Regional Homelessness Plan?

The regional landscape of homelessness has changed since 2003. Not only has there been a change in the homeless population, there has also been an increased level of governmental involvement in addressing homelessness, and even greater involvement by community agencies, private foundations and the private sector. Knowledge and information about best practices in addressing homelessness has also increased based on research and experience with new programs and approaches. These shifts, coupled with the ten year time lapse since the last plan revision, necessitate a new plan that will:

- Continue to provide a basis for regional discussions about homelessness and the search for solutions to homelessness;
- Continue to provide a framework for the planning, coordination and development of housing, services and supports for people who are homeless;
- Reflect current research and best practices;
- Reflect the views of all key stakeholders; and
- Increase stakeholder and public support and promote new partnerships to end and prevent homelessness.

A need was also identified for a new plan that would identify measurable outcomes, indicators, and timelines to determine to what extent the plan is achieving its goal to end homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region.

1.6 Community Input

The RSCH Constituency Table is responsible for overseeing the development of the Regional Homelessness Plan, and the Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group is responsible for guiding the necessary work.⁹

In September 2013, following a series of meetings with Community Homelessness Tables and other key stakeholders, the RSCH Constituency Table approved Terms of Reference for the new Regional Homelessness Plan.

Between October and November 2013, the RSCH and CitySpaces Consulting hosted a series of consultation sessions with community stakeholders, known as *Let's Talk Ending Homelessness*, to explore key issues and identify priorities and strategies that would inform both the new Regional Homelessness Plan and HPS Community Plan.¹⁰ These included:

- 3 sub-regional workshops
- 4 ideas sessions/focus groups with agencies that serve youth, women, seniors and Aboriginal people
- 2 meetings with the Greater Vancouver Shelter Society and RSCH Investors Table (formerly the Funders Table)
- 10 one-on-one interviews with people with lived experience

Nearly 600 individuals were invited to attend a consultation session and more than 170 people, representing 75 housing and homelessness organizations in the region participated.

In December, the RSCH sent a report summarizing the consultations (Consultation Summary Report, 2013) and an online survey to all individuals who were invited to participate in the consultations. The purpose of the survey was to obtain feedback from community stakeholders to help rank the priorities and strategies identified during the consultations. Altogether, 141 surveys were completed and submitted by organizations that serve adults, women, families, youth, seniors and Aboriginal clients.

Based on the input from community stakeholders and the Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group, CitySpaces prepared a Priorities and Strategies report in January 2014, which included priorities and strategies to end and prevent homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region. The report also included recommendations to support these strategies. In March 2014, the RSCH Constituency Table approved priorities and strategies to inform the next stages of work to develop the Regional Homelessness Plan. A copy of the final Priorities and Strategies report prepared by CitySpaces was sent to RSCH members and community stakeholders in April 2014 and to the Mayors and Members of Council in July 2014.

The Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group invited members of the Constituency Table, Investors Table, Municipal Caucus, Community Homelessness Tables, and Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee to a workshop on July 24, 2014. The purpose was to obtain feedback on the proposed goal, objectives and targets for the new plan, and identify key partners and strategic actions to achieve success. Close to 30 individuals participated. Feedback from the workshop was considered by the Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group in developing this plan.

⁹ The Constituency Table is the decision-making group of the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness.

¹⁰ The HPS Community Plan is a document required by the federal government to guide decisions on the allocation of federal funding through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Priorities identified through the HPS Community Plan are based on the specific parameters of the HPS program. The Regional Homelessness Plan sets out a wide range of priorities and actions to end homelessness, and these priorities and actions are not limited to what is eligible for federal funding under the HPS.

2. Scope of the Plan

As with *3 Ways to Home*, the scope of this Regional Homelessness Plan includes people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region.

The strategies and initiatives for services in this plan are directed to people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, while the housing initiatives are directed primarily to people who are homeless. The RSCH recognizes the need for a full range of affordable housing options for people who are at risk of homelessness; however, the housing needs of this group are beyond the scope of this plan. Metro Vancouver's Regional Affordable Housing Strategy, which is currently being updated, includes housing options for households unable to afford market housing.

In March, 2014, Metro Vancouver issued a discussion paper to begin the process of updating its Regional Affordable Housing Strategy (RAHS) that had been adopted in 2007. The discussion paper notes that since 2007, the number of dwelling units has kept up with demand in terms of the quantity of units, but not in terms of price or affordability. Proposed goals for the updated RAHS include maximizing housing diversity and affordability, locating affordable housing close to public transit, expanding the supply of rental housing, including mixed income housing for low and moderate income households, sustaining the existing purpose built rental housing stock, where possible, and meeting the needs of low and moderate income renters. Consistent with the draft Regional Homelessness Plan, the discussion paper includes a proposed goal to end homelessness. Stakeholder consultation is taking place mid-September 2014 to obtain input on the preliminary goals and directions of the RAHS. A feedback report will subsequently be released.

Metro Vancouver staff, the Regional Planning and Advisory Committee Housing Subcommittee and the RSCH have been collaborating so that the Regional Homelessness Plan and Regional Affordable Housing Strategy complement each other. The Regional Homelessness Plan will focus on housing options for people who are homeless, while the RAHS will address the issue of housing diversity and affordability to meet a range of needs, including rental housing for low and moderate income households.

2.1 Definition of Homelessness

This Regional Homelessness Plan (RHP) is using the definition of homelessness applied by the RSCH in *3 Ways to Home*, which has been modified over the years. It also includes the definition of Aboriginal homelessness according to the *2001 Aboriginal Homelessness Study* developed for the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC) and included in *3 Ways to Home*. These definitions are included in Appendix 3.

In summary, people are considered homeless if they:

- Have no security of tenure beyond a 30-day period;
- Are living 'outside', including in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles;
- Are staying in emergency shelters for the homeless, transition houses for women and children fleeing abuse, and safe houses for youth; or
- Are staying temporarily with another household and do not have a regular address of their own.

The RSCH considers people to be at risk of homelessness if they are living in spaces or situations that do not meet basic health and safety standards, do not provide security of tenure or personal safety, and are not affordable (i.e. are in core housing need and spending at least 50% of their income on housing).

2.2 Geographic Scope of the Plan

The Regional Homelessness Plan includes municipalities in the Metro Vancouver region, which have been organized according to the following municipal sub-regions:

- Burnaby
- Delta
- Langley (City and Township)
- New Westminster
- North Shore (City and District of North Vancouver and West Vancouver)
- Richmond
- Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows)
- Surrey
- Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody)
- Vancouver (City and Pacific Spirit Regional Park)
- White Rock

3. Plan Overview

The figure below shows the overall structure of this RHP.

Figure 2: Regional Homelessness Plan Overview



3.1 Goal

The goal of this RHP is to end homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region.

3.2 Focus Areas

Reflecting input from the community consultations and regional context, the Regional Homelessness Plan is focused on 3 areas to achieve the plan’s goal: Housing, Prevention + Support, and Capacity Building.

Housing	Prevention + Support	Capacity Building
Refers to both the supply of new units and access to existing units. This includes increasing the number of non-market housing units; maintaining and improving existing non-market housing units; and supporting households to access and maintain market housing. This is consistent with “Housing First” approaches that offer people choice and direct access to permanent housing, along with the services they need and want to maintain their housing.	Refers to programs or services aimed at helping to prevent people from becoming homeless and to prevent housing loss. This includes designing programs, services and systems to identify the signs and risk factors of being at-risk of homelessness and being able to connect households with appropriate health and social services.	An ongoing process to strengthen the ability of individuals, agencies, networks and the broader community to develop a meaningful and sustainable response to homelessness. Capacity-building gives people the skills, ability and confidence to take a leading and supportive role in the development of their community, and provides them with the information, understanding and training that enable them to perform effectively to bring about desired change. ¹¹

3.4 Objectives

Housing	Prevention + Support	Capacity Building
Housing options are expanded to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region.	Support services are expanded to prevent people from becoming homeless and help people maintain their housing.	Funding and other resources, advocacy, and community capacity are expanded to implement the Regional Homelessness Plan.

3.5 RSCH Role

“To inspire and lead a coordinated response to homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region”

Implementation of this RHP will require partnerships, collaboration, and commitment among a wide variety of partners, including all levels of government and the private and non-profit sectors, as described below. This RHP assumes that the RSCH will continue its mission – to inspire and lead a coordinated response to homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region. The following strategic actions have been identified for the RSCH to carry out its mission and achieve the goal of this RHP – to end homelessness:

1. Identify sources of funding for the RSCH to coordinate, facilitate and monitor implementation of the RHP; and
2. Engage and develop relationships with all partners and stakeholders to build support for the RHP and create opportunities to work together to implement the RHP.

¹¹ Ignite Consultancy. 2013. *Delivering integrated service responses to Homelessness: Best Practice Review of Leading Communities for the Building Community Capacity Project in the Comox Valley, Vancouver Island BC.* Prepared for the Comox Valley Community Capacity Initiative Collective.

3.6 Partners for Success

The following partners and stakeholders have been identified as key to success in implementing the Regional Homelessness Plan.

Public Sector	Private Sector	Non-Profit Sector
<p>Federal Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada • Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation • Corrections Canada • Employment and Social Development Canada • Health Canada • Service Canada • Veterans Affairs <p>BC Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Housing • Health Authorities • Ministry of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation ○ Children and Family Development (MCFD) ○ Community Living BC ○ Health ○ Justice ○ Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI) ○ Health • Residential Tenancy Branch <p>Local Governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver • Local municipalities • Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) <p>Education/Academic Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities and Colleges 	<p>Financial Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banks & Credit Unions <p>Business Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boards of Trade • Business Improvement Associations • Canadian Home Builders Association • Chambers of Commerce • Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association • LandlordBC • Real Estate Institute of BC • Urban Development Institute (UDI) <p>Real Estate & Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builders • Construction industry • Developers • Landlords <p>The media</p>	<p>Aboriginal organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC) • Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) <p>Non-Profit Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Non-Profit Housing Association • BC Poverty Reduction Coalition • Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives • Community Homelessness Tables • Inclusion BC • Cooperative Housing Federation of BC • Disability Alliance BC • Greater Vancouver Shelter Society (GVSS) • Rent Banks • Shelter Net BC • Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC) • Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC) <p>Charitable Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Estate Foundation of BC • Streethome Foundation • Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society • United Way • Vancity Community Foundation • Vancouver Foundation <p>Non-Profit housing providers</p> <p>People with Lived Experience</p> <p>Service Providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies that work with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness <p>The faith community and churches</p> <p>Unions</p>

3. Strategies + Indicators of Success + Targets

This section describes the strategies, indicators of success, targets and key actions for each of the 3 focus areas: Housing, Prevention + Support, and Capacity Building. The priorities and strategies are not presented in any particular order and should be considered of equal or similar importance in the Regional Homelessness Plan.

The RHP is intended to operate over a 10 year period and targets are identified for each phase of implementation as follows:

- Phase 1: 2015 - 2018
- Phase 2: 2019 - 2021
- Phase 3: 2022 - 2025

The indicators of success and targets in this RHP have been selected to help measure success in achieving the goal and objectives. It is proposed that the RHP be considered a 'living document' and that it be monitored every three years to determine if targets are being met and if they need to be revised.

4.1 Overall Plan Indicators of Success

Meeting the indicators of success and targets established in this RHP will achieve the following milestones by 2025:

1. Nobody is living on the streets in the Metro Vancouver region.
2. Nobody is turned away from emergency shelter.
3. Everyone in an emergency shelter is able to move along the path to safe, secure, and affordable housing with appropriate support within 30 days.

4.2 Focus Areas and Indicators of Success

Focus Area: Housing

Objective: Housing options are expanded to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region.

Priority 1. Increase Housing Units for People who are Homeless

Strategy: Provide more housing in the region to persons who are homeless through a combination of purpose-built, dedicated buildings as well as scattered site units with rent supplements in the private market. This includes providing a range of affordable housing options along the housing spectrum, from shelters to independent living options.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
1. At least 6,200 additional units are available for people who are homeless over the next 10 years.	1,400 units	2,400 units	2,400 units
2. The number of people identified as unsheltered in homeless counts has been reduced so that in 10 years, nobody is living on the streets in the Metro	No more than 640 unsheltered	No more than 320 unsheltered	No unsheltered homeless

Vancouver region. (2014 homeless count baseline: 957 unsheltered homeless people). ¹²	homeless people identified	homeless people identified	people identified
3. The incidence of shelter turnaways has been reduced so that in 10 years, nobody is turned away from emergency shelter. (2014 homeless count baseline: 317 turnaways).	No more than 210 turnaways	No more than 105 turnaways	No turnaways
4. Everyone in an emergency shelter is able to move along the path to safe, secure, and affordable housing with appropriate support within 30 days. (2014 homeless count baseline: 68% of respondents had stayed in the shelter where they were interviewed ≤ 30 days).	At least 75% are in shelters ≤ 30 days	At least 85% are in shelters ≤ 30 days	100% are in shelters ≤ 30 days
5. People are homeless for shorter periods of time as a result of appropriate housing and supports so that in 10 years, nobody is homeless for 1 year or more. (2014 homeless count baseline: 41% of respondents were homeless 1 year or more.)	No more than 20% are homeless 1 year +	No more than 10% are homeless 1 year +	No person is homeless 1 year +

Priority 2. Provide Housing Specific to Priority Populations

Strategy: Provide housing throughout the region that meets the needs of specific priority populations, such as housing specific to homeless youth, seniors, women, families, Aboriginal Peoples, people with mental health, addictions and/or other health issues, people with disabilities, francophones, the LGBT2Q population, newcomers and refugees.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
6. At least 31% of all 6,200 housing units are developed and managed by Aboriginal Peoples for Aboriginal Peoples (at least 1,900 units).	400 units	750 units	750 units
7. Housing units are targeted to homeless families (2%), youth (16%), seniors (19%), and other adults (63%) based on the proportion of people identified in the 2014 and subsequent homeless counts or research. Communities develop additional targets to meet diverse needs within these population groups (see Appendix 2).	In progress	In progress	Families: 125 Youth: 998 Seniors: 1,185 Other adults: 3,929

¹² Note: 576 were outside or “other” and 381 were couch surfing.

Priority 3. Protect and Improve the Existing Housing Stock

Strategy: Prevent the loss of affordable rental housing units and improve the quality of older rental housing stock (e.g. renovate older buildings in poor condition).

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
8. All Metro Vancouver municipalities have adopted an affordable housing strategy or action plan that addresses homelessness. ¹³	75% of municipalities	90% of municipalities	100% of municipalities
9. All tenants who are displaced as a result of renovations and/or redevelopment have been offered a viable affordable housing option.	100% of tenants	100% of tenants	100% of tenants
10. No non-profit and co-op housing units have been lost as a result of the expiry of operating agreements (i.e. units are not converted to market rents or rents do not increase substantially).	No units lost	No units lost	No units lost
11. All non-profit housing projects that have reached the end of their useful life have been redeveloped and no affordable housing units have been lost.	No units lost	No units lost	No units lost

Strategic Actions to achieve success: Housing

The RSCH to coordinate and facilitate the following actions:

1. Partners and stakeholders increase collaboration and relationship-building to increase housing options to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region.
2. Municipalities adopt policies to increase the full range of affordable housing options along the housing spectrum, prevent the loss of affordable rental housing, improve the quality of older rental housing, and protect tenants in the event of renovations and/or redevelopment.
3. Partners and stakeholders work together locally to develop community targets for the number and types of units needed for at-risk populations identified in the RHP, and develop strategies to achieve these targets.
4. Partners and stakeholders develop strategies to support the development of new housing on a **site-by-site** or **project by project** basis.
5. Partners and stakeholders prepare 'vision' papers, power-point presentations, key messages and other briefing materials:
 - For all levels of government to make the business case for more affordable housing, point out the high costs of homelessness, and demonstrate the broad base of support for housing options to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region.
 - For municipalities – on ways to create funds and generate revenue for affordable housing, and how to use existing tools to facilitate the development of affordable housing.

¹³ At present, out of 17 municipalities, 11 have an affordable housing strategy or action plan, 5 have an affordable housing strategy or action plan that is pending. Further research is needed to determine if these strategies and plans address homelessness.

- For all partners and stakeholders – to highlight the benefits of increased housing options to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region and generate support for these housing options.
6. Key partners (e.g. Metro Vancouver, BC Housing, BCNPHA, CMHC, and the development industry) work together to build on existing resources and develop more tools to increase capacity and facilitate the development of affordable housing to meet the needs of all people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region.
 7. Federal and provincial governments, including the Residential Tenancy Branch, work together and with local governments to develop policies and programs to protect the existing affordable housing stock and protect tenants from evictions (e.g. through continued rent subsidies). This includes protecting tenants in social housing as operating agreements expire.

Focus Area: Prevention + Support

Objective: *Support services are expanded to prevent people from becoming homeless and help people maintain their housing.*

Priority 4. Improve Income and Financial Stability

Strategy: Improve the situation of people who are homeless and at-risk of homelessness by increasing employment opportunities and making financial assistance and subsidy programs accessible and adequate.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
12. No one is evicted or loses their housing due to lack of financial means and/or relevant support services.	Inventory is prepared of programs to prevent evictions	Target has been developed in consultation with agencies to measure progress in preventing evictions	Target is achieved
13. All homeless persons report receiving some form of income in the next homeless count. (2014 homeless count baseline: 9% of respondents reported receiving no income).	All homeless persons are receiving income	All homeless persons are receiving income	All homeless persons are receiving income
14. All homeless persons report receiving income through some form of government transfer payment in the next homeless count. (2014 homeless count baseline: 43% of respondents reported receiving Income Assistance, 21% reported Disability Benefit, 9% reported OAS/GIS/CPP, 1% reported Employment Insurance, and < 1% reported Youth Agreement).	Increased percentage of respondents in the homeless count report receiving income through some form of government	Increased percentage of respondents in the homeless count report receiving income through some form of government	All homeless persons report receiving income through some form of government transfer payment

	transfer payment	transfer payment	
15. Agencies that provide employment services for people who are homeless report increased success in clients obtaining jobs, participating in employment training and education programs, and accessing income assistance (if eligible).	TBD	TBD	TBD

Priority 5. Enhance Outreach and Support Services

Strategy: Increase, enhance and update outreach and support services so they can be more flexible, responsive and inclusive in their approach.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
16. Appropriate support services and levels of support are in place so that at least 80% of clients who are housed through programs that receive government funding remain housed for at least 6 months. For example, outreach teams have sufficient resources to support clients as needed, including evenings and weekends.	80% of clients remain housed for at least 6 months	80% of clients remain housed for at least 6 months	80% of clients remain housed for at least 6 months
17. All people who are homeless were offered housing within the last 30 days. (The Homeless Count survey could ask respondents if they have been offered a housing option within the last 30 days).	All homeless persons were offered housing within the last 30 days	All homeless persons were offered housing within the last 30 days	All homeless persons were offered housing within the last 30 days
18. Local committees of service providers are in place to improve coordination of services to people and facilitate access to services.	Local committees improve coordination of services to meet identified needs	Local committees continue to improve coordination of services to meet identified needs	Local committees continue to improve coordination of services to meet identified needs
19. Nobody experiences more than one episode of homelessness in a year. (2014 homeless count baseline: 669 people (43% of respondents) indicated that they had experienced more than one episode of homelessness in a year).	No more than 25% experience more than one episode in a year	No more than 10% experience more than one episode in a year	No person experiences more than one homeless episode in a year
20. All hospitals, jails, and treatment centres have partnerships and protocols in place with community agencies to work with persons identified as having No Fixed Address to develop discharge plans so that no persons are discharged into homelessness.	No persons are discharged into homelessness	No persons are discharged into homelessness	No persons are discharged into homelessness

Priority 6. Provide Support Services Specific to Priority Populations

Strategy: Provide a range of support services throughout the region that are specific to priority populations, such as services specific to youth, seniors, women, families, Aboriginal Peoples, people with mental health, addictions and/or other health issues, people with disabilities, francophones, the LGBTQ population, newcomers and refugees.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
21. Appropriate health and social services are in place for all priority populations at risk of homelessness to prevent them from becoming homeless.	Fewer people are homeless compared to 2014 homeless count	Fewer people are homeless compared to 2014 homeless count	Fewer people are homeless compared to 2014 homeless count
22. All youth who transition out of foster care have a housing and support plan in place.	Surveys find no homeless youth who were in foster care	Surveys find no homeless youth who were in foster care	Surveys find no homeless youth who were in foster care
23. No families with children are homeless.	Homeless count finds no homeless families with children	Homeless count finds no homeless families with children	Homeless count finds no homeless families with children

Strategic Actions to achieve success: Prevention + Support

The RSCH to coordinate and facilitate the following actions:

1. Partners and stakeholders increase collaboration and relationship-building to increase health and social support services to prevent people from becoming homeless.
2. Partners and stakeholders work with government partners to analyze income support and housing needs and current levels of assistance available through income assistance and rent subsidy programs, including SAFER and RAP.
3. Partners and stakeholders develop strategies to increase access to income assistance (e.g. seven days maximum for someone who is homeless) and increase access to rent subsidies, including SAFER and RAP.
4. Partners and stakeholders work together to provide seamless and flexible funding, support and programs for youth (16 to 25), including youth aging out of foster care, and teen parents.
5. Partners and stakeholders work together locally to prioritize programs and services for people who are homeless and at risk of homelessness, develop community targets for the types of services needed, and develop strategies to achieve these targets. This includes:
 - Considering homeless count data to determine populations most at risk; and
 - Developing strategies to identify people who are hidden homeless, including newcomers and refugees.

6. Partners and stakeholders, including front-line workers, meet together locally to improve local service coordination, collaboration and communication to make the best use of existing services and resources, facilitate access to services, share best practices, optimize opportunities for staff training and professional development, and identify sources of new funding.
7. Partners and stakeholders build on the success and lessons learned from the BC Homelessness Intervention Project and implement this approach in more communities.

Focus Area: Capacity Building

Objective: Funding and other resources, advocacy, and community capacity are expanded to implement the Regional Homelessness Plan.

Priority 7. Facilitate Collaboration

Strategy: Facilitate collaboration between local, regional, provincial and federal government agencies, housing and shelter providers, and health practitioners to increase the collective capacity to provide services, build consensus on new initiatives, and enhance support across communities.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
24. Local and sub-regional Tables are in place to identify and address local and sub-regional homelessness issues and strengthen the regional response to homelessness.	Local and sub-regional Tables function throughout the region	Local and sub-regional Tables continue to function throughout the region	Local and sub-regional Tables continue to function throughout the region
25. New partnerships have been created to implement the strategies and actions in this RHP.	New partners are involved to implement the RHP	New partners continue to be involved to implement the RHP	New partners continue to be involved to implement the RHP
26. Networking, information exchange, and education among funders and service providers have increased as a result of events organized by the RSCH (at least one event per year).	1 event per year	1 event per year	1 event per year

Priority 8. Coordinate Funding

Strategy: Encourage integration of services by coordinating funding providers, increasing access to funding, creating consistent criteria, and promoting collaboration among applicants for funding.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
27. Service providers have one set of reporting requirements for multiple funders/investors.	A meeting is held to start the discussion to reduce	Agreement is reached and plans are initiated to	One set of reporting requirements

	reporting requirements	create one set of reporting requirements	
28. Sustainable/long-term government and partnership funding (3 yrs +) is available for housing services and supports.	A meeting is held to start discussion on providing longer-term funding	Agreement is reached to provide longer-term funding	Longer-term funding in place for housing services and supports (3 yrs +)
29. RSCH Investors Table develops and supports implementation of an investment plan with input from service agencies.	A plan is in place	TBD: % or # of projects supported by members of Investors Table	TBD: % or # of projects supported by members of Investors Table
30. New private sector partners are investing resources to achieve the objectives and priorities of the RHP.	New partners are investing	New partners are investing	New partners are investing

Priority 9. Enhance Our Understanding of Homelessness

Strategy: Facilitate the sharing of knowledge and understanding of homelessness issues to the general public, organizations, and all levels of government.

Indicators of Success	Phase 1 Target	Phase 2 Target	Phase 3 Target
31. Stakeholders throughout the region use common language to describe homelessness and there is broad-based support for the definition of homelessness used in the RHP.	Support for RHP definition of homelessness during RHP consultations	Local reports use or are consistent with the RHP definition of homelessness	Local reports use or are consistent with the RHP definition of homelessness
32. Understanding and public awareness of homelessness in the region has increased, resulting in greater support for homelessness initiatives by the public, stakeholders and all levels of government.	Increased funding for initiatives	Increased funding for initiatives	Increased funding for initiatives
33. Coordinated advocacy by the RSCH, AHSC and Community Homelessness Tables has increased to support local community housing and homelessness projects.	Increased # of local initiatives are approved	Increased # of local initiatives are approved	Increased # of local initiatives are approved
34. Research is undertaken in addition to tri-annual homeless counts on contributing factors and barriers that will help achieve the goal of this RHP.	Homeless count and other research is conducted	Homeless count and other research is conducted	Homeless count and other research is conducted

Strategic Actions to achieve success: Capacity Building

The RSCH to coordinate and facilitate the following actions:

1. Partners and stakeholders increase collaboration and relationship-building to ensure financial and other resources and community capacity are expanded to implement the Regional Homelessness Plan.
2. Community Homelessness Tables promote alignment of local priorities with the RHP and propose a framework for membership and function of CHTs.
3. Investors Table to host/convene a gathering of all potential funders and investors to identify funding gaps (i.e. needed services that do not have sufficient funding) and devise a coordinated strategy for funding to achieve the goal and objectives of the RHP throughout the Region.
4. Community leaders from the public, private and non-profit sectors work together to harness community resources, including funding, expertise and innovation, to implement the RHP. This includes exploring opportunities with the Streethome Foundation to expand its operations to the entire Lower Mainland or provide expertise for alternative approaches.
5. Partners and stakeholders work together to identify sources of funding for Homelessness Action Week (HAW), and develop a media strategy for HAW and the RHP.
6. The RSCH, AHSC and Community Homelessness Tables work together to:
 - Develop common language to describe homelessness, based on the definition in the RHP;
 - Organize an annual public awareness campaign to increase understanding of homelessness; and
 - Advocate for support for community housing and homelessness projects.

4. Next Steps

Next steps to complete a final Regional Homelessness Plan include the following:

- Consult with stakeholders to obtain their feedback on the draft RHP and on concrete actions to implement the RHP;
- Estimate the cost to implement the RHP and potential sources of funding;
- Prepare an implementation plan that identifies lead agencies, actions and responsibilities; and
- Present the Regional Homelessness Plan to Metro Vancouver, local governments, and other stakeholders for endorsement.

Appendix 1. Annual Prevalence of Homelessness in the Metro Vancouver Region

The Annual Prevalence of Homelessness is the estimated number of people likely to experience homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region in a year.

The Corporation for Supportive Housing in the U.S. developed the following formula to estimate the annual prevalence of homelessness based on point-in-time homeless counts.

$$\text{Annual Prevalence} = A + [(B*51)*(1-C)]$$

A = Point-in-time count of currently homeless people, including adults and children, found in the street and shelter counts

B = Number of currently homeless adults and children who became homeless within the last 7 days of the count

C = Proportion (expressed in decimals) of currently homeless adults and children who had a previous homeless episode within the past 12 months of the count.

This formula was adjusted by the Streethome Foundation in 2009 when they developed their 10-Year Community Homelessness Plan because data on the episodically homeless was not available.

The ratio used by Streethome to estimate annual prevalence was the number of people homeless one year or more/total number of homeless with information on length of time homeless.¹⁴

The following calculation was used to estimate the annual prevalence of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region based on the 2014 homeless count.

$$\text{Annual Estimate} = A + [(B*51)*(1-C)]$$

A = Total number of people identified as homeless in the point-in-time count =
2689 + 88 children = 2,777.

B = Number of individuals who were homeless within 7 days (i.e. up to and including 7 days) = 97 + 7 children = 104.

C = Proportion (expressed in decimals) of people homeless one year or more/total number of homeless with information on length of time homeless =

$$\frac{751 + 2 \text{ children}}{1817 + 55 \text{ children}} = \frac{753}{1872} = 0.4022435$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual Estimate} &= 2,777 + [(104*51)*(1-.4022435)] \\ &= 2,777 + [5304*.5977565] \\ &= 2,777+3171 \\ &= \mathbf{5,948} \end{aligned}$$

Conclusion

Based on the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region, it is estimated that 5,948 individuals in the region, including adults and children, are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year.

¹⁴ The CSH approach states that children should be included in this calculation. The Streethome calculation may not have included children.

¹⁵ Information on length of time homeless is available for 55 children who were accompanied by a parent.

Appendix 2. Method to Estimate the Number of Housing Units needed over 10 years

The following approach was used to estimate the number of **housing units** needed for people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region. The estimate is based on **Annual Prevalence of the 2014 Homeless Count** and **Average Household Size** as described below.

- Used the homeless count data to determine average household size by counting the number of people in each respondent’s household, adding the total number of people (2,052), and dividing this by the total number of respondents (1,839).¹⁶ As a result, average household size (=1.12). The following assumptions were used to determine the number of people in each household:
 - 1 person household: alone, with friend, with pet, or with pimp
 - 2 person household: with partner, with relative, with 1 child, or with other
 - 3 person household: with partner and 1 child, or with 2 children
 - 4 person household: with partner and 2 children, or with 3 children
- Used the total number of people identified in the homeless count, including children (2,777) to determine the total number of people likely to be homeless in a year (=5,948).
- Divided the total number of people likely to be homeless in a year (5,948) by average household size (1.12) to determine the total number of households (=5,331)
- Increased the total number of households (5,331) by 17% based on estimated population growth for the Metro Vancouver region over a 10-year period (=6,237). The Regional Homelessness Plan will cover a 10-year period and population growth for the Metro Vancouver region over 10 years is expected to increase by 17% (based on Metro Vancouver projections 2011 – 2021).

The following cautions are identified with this approach:

- 1) The homeless count underestimates the number of people who are homeless and therefore, a calculation based on the homeless count will underestimate the number of housing units needed.
- 2) This approach may underestimate the need for housing units because some of the respondents who were with another person may not wish to live with that person if they were offered housing (e.g. persons who were with a relative or “other” person). On the other hand, some people who are homeless may wish to live with another person who is homeless if they were offered appropriate housing.

Table 1. Regional Estimate over 10 years

Based on Average Household Size of Homeless Population	PIT Count (Total Homeless)	PIT Count %	Annual Prevalence # Total Homeless in a Year	Ave HH Size	# HH	# of Households <i>plus</i> estimated population growth (17%) over 10 years	Regional Growth Strategy: Low Income Rental Demand
Regional Estimate	2,777	100%	A = 2,777 B= 104 C = 753/1872 5,948	1.12	5,948/1.12 = 5,331	6,237	21,400 over 10 years

¹⁶These are homeless count respondents who answered the question, “Is there anybody with you today?”

Table 2 shows how the units could be estimated for municipal sub-regions, based on the percentage of adults and unaccompanied youth who were found during the count.

Table 2. Regional Estimate Applied to Municipal Sub-Regions over 10 years

Municipal Sub-Region	PIT Count # Adults and Youth	PIT Count %	Estimated population growth rate for each municipal sub-region ¹⁷	Proportion of people found in PIT Count applied to Annual Prevalence (5,331) plus estimated population growth rate for each municipal sub-region over 10 yrs ¹⁸	Regional Growth Strategy: Low Income Rental Demand
Burnaby	54	2%	18%	129	2,400
Delta	15	1%	9%	33	400
Langley (City + District)	91	3%	30%	240	1,700
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows	84	3%	16%	200	1,000
New Westminster	91	3%	17%	213	700
North Shore	115	4%	9%	256	1,000
Richmond	38	1%	17%	90	1,800
Surrey	388	14%	24%	976	5,600
Tri-Cities	49	2%	22%	121	2,700
Vancouver	1,760	65%	11%	3,970	3,800
White Rock	4	<1%	12%	9	200
Total	2,689	100%	17%	6,237	21,400

Note:

- Vancouver includes Electoral Area A
- North Shore includes Lions Bay, North Van City North Van District and West Vancouver
- Delta includes Tsawassen First Nation
- Tri-Cities includes Anmore and Belcarra

Table 3. Regional Estimate Applied to Priority Populations over 10 years

Target Population by Household Type	PIT Count #	PIT Count %	Estimated units needed based on PIT % and Regional Estimate (6,237)
Families with children	41	2%	125
Youth (unaccompanied and no children)	319	16%	998
Seniors (no children)	367	19%	1,185
Other Adults (no children)	1,223	63%	3,929
Total Respondents	1,950	100%	6,237
No Answer	739		
Total Adults	2,689		

The following additional priority populations require housing units specifically targeted to them and will need to be considered in developing the units in Table 3. Percentages are based on the 2014 Homeless Count.

- Aboriginal Peoples 31%
- Women 27%
- Persons with Addictions 49%
- Persons with Mental Illness 34%
- Persons with Physical Disabilities 29%

¹⁷ These estimates are based on data provided by the Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Division, June 2014. The population growth estimates are based on 2011 census data and were prepared in collaboration with member municipalities. The estimates include reserves in each of the member municipalities.

¹⁸ In the Excel program, the numbers didn't add up to 6,237 and there was a difference of 138 units. To address this, 138 was multiplied by each PIT % and added to the original total.

Appendix 3. Definitions of Homelessness used by the RSCH and AHSC

(1) RSCH Definition and Categories of Homelessness

The RSCH approach for defining and addressing homelessness includes two categories: people who are homeless and people at risk of homelessness. These are described below.

Homeless

The RSCH considers people to be homeless if they do not have a place of their own where they could expect to stay for more than 30 days and if they do not pay rent. This includes people in the categories below. In order to report on the number of people in these categories, the RSCH conducts a homeless count every 3 years.

Unsheltered homeless. People living 'outside', including in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles.

Sheltered homeless. People staying in emergency shelters for the homeless, transition houses for women and children fleeing abuse, and safe houses for youth. This category also includes people with no fixed address who are in health, correction and recovery facilities on the night of the count.

Hidden homeless. People staying temporarily with another household who do not have a regular address of their own where they have security of tenure. They cannot stay with the household as long as they need in order to establish a residence of their own).¹⁹

At Risk of Homelessness

The RSCH considers people to be at risk of homelessness if they are living in spaces or situations that do not meet basic health and safety standards, do not provide security of tenure or personal safety, and are not affordable. To estimate the number of people at risk of homelessness in Metro Vancouver, the RSCH uses Census data to include households in core need and spending at least 50% of their income on housing.

¹⁹ A 2009 pilot study in Metro Vancouver estimated that more than 9,000 persons were hidden homeless at the time of the survey, and about 23,500 persons were hidden homeless in the previous year. (Margaret Eberle et al. 2009. *Results of the pilot study to estimate the size of the hidden homeless population in Metro Vancouver*).

(2) AHSC Definition and Categories of Homelessness

Aboriginal person: a person who identifies themselves as a North American Indian, Métis or Inuit.

Characteristics of an Urban Aboriginal Homeless Person (meets any of the criteria listed below):

- Those who have no security of tenure beyond a 30-day period
- Those who suffer from family violence or family breakdown and who have no security of tenure
- Those who 'couch surf' (frequently stay at the homes of friends or family for no more than a few days) for a period of more than thirty days with no security of tenure
- Those who are frequently living on the street
- Those who are living in inadequate, substandard and unsafe accommodations that do not meet the minimal housing standards established by the United Nations or other local government agency such as the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
- Those who rely on emergency shelters as primary residences
- Anyone released from a mental health facility or prison with no security of tenure
- Those who are prevented from leaving a mental health facility or prison because of lack of security of tenure (including those women and men who are unable to have children returned to them by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for want of decent affordable housing)
- Those who flee their home as a result of sexual abuse (regardless of age) and who have no security of tenure
- Those who alternate between sheltered and unsheltered (whether those shelters are hospitals, hostels, single room occupancy hotels or otherwise)
- Those who suffer from discrimination and cannot hold security of tenure for any reasonable period of time as a result of such discrimination

Characteristics of an Urban Aboriginal Person At-Risk of Being Homeless (meets any of the criteria listed below):

- Those who pay more than 25% of their income for accommodations (United Native Nations, 2001)
- Those who suffer from acute life crisis such as: family violence, divorce, eviction, release from institutions
- Those who are at-risk of losing their accommodations as a result of lack of income, overcrowding, redevelopment, or unemployment
- Those whose income is below the Low Income Cut-Off established by the Government of Canada
- Those whose education level would place them in social distress or poverty below the Low Income Cut-Off
- Those who suffer from substance abuse, mental illness, or structural or personal barriers that may lead to homelessness
- Those who are denied an opportunity to acquire social housing to meet their socio-economic needs
- Those who are hard to house for whatever reason
- Those whose income requires them to use food banks to supplement their income for prolonged periods of time
- Those who are entrenched in the sex trade on the streets
- Those who, because of systemic barriers, are unable to acquire accommodation of any kind

(Pranteau, 2001)

Appendix 4. Members of the CT and Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group

Abi Bond	City of Vancouver
Aileen Murphy	City of Surrey
Alice Sundberg	Past RSCH Co-Chair
Annie Mauboules	District of North Vancouver
Arthur Mills	YWCA Metro Vancouver
Becky Doherty	Fraser Health Authority
Bonnie Moriarty	The Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver
Bonnie Wilson	Vancouver Coastal Health
Brenda Proskan	City of Vancouver
Caroline Bonesky	Family Services of Greater Vancouver
Clifford White	Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council
Darrell Burnham	Coast Mental Health
Darrell Pilgrim	The Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows/Katzie Nation Community Network
David MacIntyre	MPA Society
David Poulette	Fraser Health Authority
David Woodland	The Salvation Army
Ethel Whitty	City of Vancouver
Fraser Holland	Stepping Stone Community Services Society
Jane Dyson	BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
Jill Atkey	BC Non-Profit Housing Association
Loren Balisky	Kinbrace Community Society
Lori Dennis	BC Housing
Margaret Eberle	Metro Vancouver, Regional Housing
Michelle Shaw	Pacific Community Resources Society
Nanette Taylor	Hollyburn Family Services Society
Nora Gibson	Service Canada
Patrick Stewart	Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee
Robin Loxton	BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
Sandy Burpee	Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group
Shayne Williams	Lookout Emergency Aid Society
Stephanie Ediger	Alouette Home Start Society
Tanniar Leba	La Boussole
Yasmin Jetha	Vancouver Coastal Health

Appendix 5. Glossary of terms

Annual prevalence of homelessness: The number of people who are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year based on a point-in-time homeless count.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT): A model of case management where a multi-disciplinary team of professionals provides services to clients on an outreach basis.

Core housing need: A household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability, standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three **housing standards**).

- Adequate housing is reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs.
- Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of total before-tax household income.
- Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements.

Emergency shelter: Provides accommodation to people who are homeless for 30 days or less. Includes emergency shelters that provide single or shared bedrooms or dorm-type sleeping arrangements, with varying levels of support to individuals.

Episodically homeless: In the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region, this included people who experienced more than one episode of homelessness within a year.

Hidden homeless: People who do not have a regular address of their own where they have security of tenure and who are staying temporarily in another household – often called ‘couch surfing’.

Housing First: An approach to ending homelessness that offers people choice and direct access to permanent housing, along with the services they need and want to maintain their housing.

Homeless Count: Refers to point-in-time homeless counts that provide information about people who are identified as homeless during a 24-hour period. These homeless counts have been undertaken in the Metro Vancouver region every three years since 2002 to estimate the number of people who are homeless, obtain a demographic profile of this population, and identify trends compared to previous counts.

Long-term homeless: In the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region, this included respondents who reported being homeless for one year or more.

Newly homeless: In the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region, this included respondents who reported being homeless for less than one month.

Transitional Housing: Time-limited housing where people may remain for 30 days to 2-3 years. Support services are generally provided to help people move towards independence and self-sufficiency. This includes second stage housing for women fleeing violence, as well as housing for youth and people with addictions.

Supportive Housing: Affordable housing with no limit on the length of stay. Provides ongoing supports and services to residents who cannot live independently and who are not expected to become fully self-sufficient. This form of housing may be located in a purpose-designed building or scattered site apartments.