HOMELESSNESS & SUPPORTIVE HOUSING STRATEGY

October 7th, 2020

Celine Mauboules,
Acting Managing Director
Homelessness Services and Affordable Housing Programs

Photo Credit: Lani Crumm
We acknowledge we are on the unceded territories of the Ṫəxʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.
• Overview of Homelessness in Vancouver (2020 Count)
• What We Have Learned
• A Systems-Based Approach
• Our Strategy
An Overview

Homelessness in Vancouver
2020 M E T R O V A N C O U V E R
H O M E L E S S C O U N T
M A R C H 3 , 4

• 24-hour Point-in-Time snapshot of people who are experiencing homelessness

• 2020 is the first time all the counts aligned – federal, provincial & regional in the same year

• Over 500 trained volunteers in Vancouver alone

• Provides a basic demographic profile & tracks trends over time

• Considered an undercount

• Took place before the provincial government declared a state of emergency on March 18th and related restrictions
2020 METRO VANCOUVER HOMELESS COUNT PARTNERS

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy:

With support from:

- Council of Community Homelessness Tables
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association
- Homelessness Services Association of BC
- Lu’ma Native Housing Society
- Vancity Community Foundation
2020 Homeless Count
Indigenous Partners

Lu’ma Native Housing Society & The Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee (IHSC)
2,095
PEOPLE IDENTIFIED AS HOMELESS IN VANCOUVER ON MARCH 4, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unscholetered</td>
<td>547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered</td>
<td>1,548</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slight decrease from last year (-5%) 

This is partly attributed to survey fatigue – only those who were approached and who gave consent were enumerated.
UNSHeltered inDiviDUALs bY Homeless couNT aReas

Note: The areas represent Count areas, which may not always match with known neighbourhood borders.
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: HOMELESSNESS IN METRO VANCOUVER

2017-2020 Change

- NORTH SHORE: +21%
- VANCOUVER: -2%
- BURNABY: +80%
- TRI-CITIES: +26%
- NEW WESTMINSTER: -8%
- RICHMOND: +21%
- DELTA: -28%
- SURREY: +7%
- WHITE ROCK: 28%
- RIDGE MEADOWS: -8%
- LANGLEY: +1%
MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN VANCOUVER when they found themselves without a home.

WAYS INTO HOMELESSNESS

- POVERTY
- LACK OF AFFORDABLE, SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING
- INTERPERSONAL & FAMILY ISSUES OR ABUSE
- LACK OF SUPPORTS
- SYSTEMIC RACISM & COLONIALISM
- SYSTEM FAILURES
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: CAUSE OF LOSING HOUSING

multiple responses possible

- Housing & financial issues: 69%
- Interpersonal & family issues: 39%
- Health or corrections: 39%
- Other: 19%

(n=1,054)
Almost half of the respondents reported being homeless less than a year. (n=1,077)
70% of people are experiencing chronic homelessness.

They have been homeless for 6 months or more in the last 12 months.
MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WERE LIVING IN VANCOUVER when they found themselves without a home.

84% from Vancouver

(n=1,027)
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: AGE

- Adults (25-54): 68%
- Seniors (55+): 23%
- Youth (<25): 9%

(n=1,096)
The number of Seniors 55+ experiencing homelessness is growing.
36% ARE/WERE IN THE CARE OF THE MINISTRY AS A CHILD OR YOUTH.

This shows the gaps in supports for youth aging out of care and the on-going impacts of systemic racism.
The chart shows the age when respondents first experienced homelessness.
21% identified as women.

It is believed that women are undercounted in the Point-In-Time count and are often living in unsafe situations where they are not encountered by count volunteers.

Photo Credit: Lani Brunn, used with permission for this slide.
5% identified as having transgender experience.

The chart shows the age profile of respondents with Trans experience.
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- Straight/Heterosexual: 904
- Bi-sexual: 43
- Gay: 28
- Multiple: 18
- Not listed: 13
- Pansexual: 6
- Asexual: 6
- Questioning: 6
- Two-spirit: 5
- Lesbian: 5
- Queer: 2
Over half the respondents report one or two health concerns.
People who are homeless consistently report a range of health issues.

- Learning disability or cognitive impairment: 23%
- Physical disability: 35%
- Medical condition/illness: 44%
- Mental health issue: 45%
- Addiction: 60%

(n=1,089)
26% of respondents reported having an acquired brain injury.

Brain injuries have cognitive, psychological and physical impacts including trouble concentrating, feeling confused, problems with words and speech, depression, balance issues, etc.
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: SOURCES OF INCOME

- Income assistance: 76%
- Binning, panhandling, vending: 44%
- FT/PT/casual employment: 26%
- No income: 7%

Multiple responses possible (n=1,074)
2020 HOMELESS COUNT: INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE OVER-REPRESENTED

- % Indigenous in population experiencing homelessness: 39%
- % Indigenous/Aboriginal in General Population: 2%
BLACK PEOPLE ARE SIGNIFICANTLY OVERREPRESENTED IN THE POPULATION EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.

They are 3.7 times more likely to experience homelessness compared to their presence in the general population would predict.

Arabs are 1.7 times and Hispanics and Latin Americans are 1.4 times more likely to experience homelessness.
This is the first-time race-based data has been collected in Metro Vancouver.

79% of respondents identified as white.

Note: Our data indicates that due to the sequence of questions, some respondents may not be adequately represented in this question.
Our Strategy

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED
These services come at not only a public cost, but using this number of services is distressing and exhausting for the person experiencing homelessness.

(2020 Homeless Count: Services Accessed in the Past 12 Months)

(n=1,011)
The solution to homelessness is housing.

Affordable, safe and stable housing with the appropriate supports and services will keep people housed.
THE COST OF HOMELESSNESS VS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

On average, a person experiencing homelessness with addictions and/or mental illness used $55,000 per year in health care and/or corrections services.

On average, a person in supportive housing with addictions and/or mental illness used $37,000 per year in health care and/or corrections services.

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Every dollar invested in supportive housing creates $4-5 in social and/or economic value.

Supportive housing residents were 64% less likely than shelter clients to use ambulance services.

Average hospital stay for supportive housing residents was 50% less than shelter clients.

BC Housing: Community Benefits of Supportive Housing
THE DEMONSTRATED BENEFITS OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

After Six Months:

- 94% of supportive housing residents remained housed
- 84% of supportive housing survey respondents reported improved overall well-being
- 54% of supportive housing survey respondents reported improved access to employment opportunities
- 39% of supportive housing survey respondents reported improvement in addiction issues

City of Vancouver & BC Housing: Modular Supportive Housing Research
2021 HOMELESS COUNT

We recommend an alternative approach to collecting data on homelessness next year.

The Point-In-Time homeless count may not be the best method for 2021.

- Respondents are experiencing survey fatigue
- Overall consistent results between consecutive years
- Methodology has limitations in capturing hidden homelessness
- Public health concerns with COVID-19 pandemic
A BETTER APPROACH FOR 2021

Aligning with triennial regional count (2023)

Sources of data on homelessness:

- HIFIS Database used by shelters and outreach
- Outreach office meets with 80 to 100 clients each day
- DTESWC survey on hidden homelessness
- We are evaluating additional options
OUR STRATEGY
A SYSTEMS BASED APPROACH
PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

- Health Support
- Renters Services
- Rent Supplements
- Jobs & Community Connections
- Cultural & Community Support
- Supportive & Social Housing
- Protect SROS & Low-Income Housing

System Support & Policy
Outreach teams & peers are key to supporting people to find housing, keeping homelessness brief.
KEEPING PEOPLE HOUSED

- Health Support
- Renters Services
- Rent Supplements
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- System Support & Policy
- Cultural & Community Support
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THE INTERSECTING CRISES

- OVERDOSE CRISIS
- COVID-19 CRISIS
- HOUSING CRISIS
- RACISM
Recognizing the historical and contemporary impacts of colonialism and structural racism on systems and practices within the City -

We are listening, unlearning, and moving towards changing systems to be more equitable for groups who experience the most barriers.

Photo Credit: Lani Brunn
We need to do this together.

- The City
- The Provincial and Federal governments
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Non-profit societies and advocates
- Vancouver citizens
The role of the City.

• Land use Regulation and Policy

• Providing land for social and supportive housing

• Granting programs

• Advocating for partnerships

• Providing outreach services

• Managing housing
The role of other levels of government.

- A variety of funding programs for capital and operational assistance for non-market housing and shelters
- National Housing Strategy
- Rent supplements and income supplement (COVID-19) programs
- Housing, health and social supports
- Funding for health programs and outreach programs
“Over 11 years I was sleeping on the streets. The (outreach) staff knew me and helped me get a place.”

- Todd,
Supportive Housing Resident
COFFEE PROGRAM

Served from: Monday - Friday

8AM - 12NOON

Enjoy a Cup!

Photo Credit: Lani Brunn
QUESTIONS?
END
Outreach teams & peers are key to supporting people to find housing, keeping homelessness brief.
“I am proud of who I am. But on the street, I am invisible.”

- Jeff, First Nations and sleeping on the street for two years