

## Constituency Table Meeting

June 12, 2014 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

5945 Kathleen, Burnaby – 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Centre

### DRAFT AGENDA

Regrets: Brenda Prosen

#	ITEM	WHO	TIME
1.	Welcome, Acknowledge Aboriginal territory, Introductions, Visitors	Chair	8:30 (10)
2.	Adoption of Agenda	Chair	
3.	Adoption of the Minutes of March 13, 2014	Chair	
4.	<b>RSCH Reports &amp; Action Updates</b>		
4.1	RSCH Chair	Deb B	8:40
	a) Chair announcement ◀		(5)
	b) Election - nominations from the floor		(15)
	c) RSCH Strategic Planning – Discussion and way forward ◀		(10)
	d) <b>2014 Homeless Count Draft Final Report and Debrief</b> ◀	Debbie K	(30)
	e) 2014 Homeless Count Debriefing Report ◀		9:35 (10)
4.2	RSCH Funders Table	Deb B	9:50 (10)
	a) UWLM representative		
	b) Proposed meeting: June 12th, 7:30-8:30 am (prior to CT meeting)		
4.3	RSCH Finance & Audit Advisory Group		10:00
	a) Call for Proposals Advisory Group update	Jill A	(10)
	b) HPS Capacity Building CFP (June-Sep 2014) - update		
	c) HPS Open CFP (Oct 2014-Sep 2016) – update	Camille N	10:10(30)
	i. Terms of Reference ◀ to be provided		
	ii. Proposals to implement RSCH sub-Projects ◀ to be provided		
	iii. Proposal for HIFIS Community Coordinator ◀ to be provided		
<b>BREAK – 10:40-10:55</b>			
4.4	RSCH Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group	Alice S	10:55 (5)
	a) <b>RHP Draft Priorities &amp; Strategies to MV Mayors &amp; Councils</b> ◀	Debbie K	11:00 (5)
	b) <b>RHPAG Workshop to scope next phases of RHP</b>		(5)
	c) <b>Estimating the number of housing units needed to address homelessness</b>		(5)
			(15)
4.5	RSCH Regional Business Leadership Group – no update		
4.6	RSCH Regional Youth Engagement Strategy Group - update	Michelle S	11:30(5)
4.7	Community Homelessness Tables - update	Sandy B	11:35 (10)
	a) 2014 HAW - update		
4.8	RSCH Municipal Caucus – no update		
5.	<b>Partner Reports</b>		11:45
5.1	AHSC Reports- RSCH Regional Aboriginal Advisory Group - update	Patrick S	(10)
5.2	HPS Aboriginal Stream CE	Linda L	(10)
5.3	HPS Designated CE	Theresa H	12:05 (5)
	d) CE Agreement – update		
	e) HPS Community Plan – update		
5.4	Service Canada - update	Nora G	(5)
5.5	GVSS Extreme Weather Response Evaluation ◀ attached for information	Rebecca B	

6.	<b>New Business</b>	12:15
7.	Deb Bryant officially steps down from Chair	
8.	Next meeting Sept 11 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30am – 12:30 pm, 5945 Kathleen, Bby, 10th Flr	
9.	Adjournment	12:30

Red = motion required

◀ = attachment

*Greater Vancouver Regional Steering  
Committee on Homelessness*

Deb Bryant  
Director, Community Impact and Investment  
United Way of the Lower Mainland  
4543 Canada Way  
Burnaby, BC V5G 4T4

May 27, 2014

Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness  
C/O Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat  
4330 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4G8

Dear Colleagues:

It is with some regret that I must tender my resignation from the position of Chair, Funders Table and therefore Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH). I have accepted a new employment position as senior staff at the Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC (ANHBC) and therefore can no longer maintain my official role with the RSCH.

My last day at United Way of the Lower Mainland is June 13, 2014. I will be available to preside at the Constituency Table meeting scheduled for June 12, 2014. I understand that at that meeting the steps will be laid out for filling the position.

This has been an action-packed year for the Regional Steering Committee. Working to support such a remarkable group of people, so dedicated to tackling this important and intransigent issue has been humbling and rewarding for me. I assure you that I will continue to support the work set out in the regional plan with whatever capacity I can bring.

I wish you all the very best of luck on this journey.

Respectfully,



Deb

C.C. Brenda Prosen , General Manager, Community Services, City of Vancouver  
Patrick Stewart, Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee, Chair  
Paulette Seymour, Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee, Co-Chair  
Don Littleford, Director, Metro Vancouver Housing  
Nora Gibson, Service Canada, Senior Development Officer

## Agenda Item 4.1c

Report from the Chair – May 30, 2014

Progress on RSCH Strategic Planning

### **For discussion:**

Given that the Community Entity (Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat) is significantly more limited in the executive and project management support that it can provide the RSCH than in the past, and given that the allowable regional coordinating activities under that HPS fund cannot be directed by the CE or the RSCH due to conflict of interest, what is the action that the RSCH can take to develop and execute its own strategic plan and coordinate key activities around the region so as to support the Regional Homelessness Plan and the mission of ending homelessness in Greater Vancouver?

### **Background:**

The RSCH Governance Manual, adopted in December, 2013, specifies that, in order to achieve its mandate, the RSCH will develop an annual strategic plan. This strategic plan is meant to accompany the Regional Homeless Plan and the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) Community Plan. Its main objective is to support a coordinated response to homelessness in the region. The Governance Manual sets out some key strategies for achieving the goals of the RSCH, and the ad hoc committee has assumed that these are the starting place for developing a strategic plan.

The Governance Manual does not address in how the RSCH or its strategic plan should be resourced.

The HPS Community Plan, which is the investment plan for federal HPS dollars, funds only the activities of the Community Entity (CE) related to the fiduciary oversight of the HPS Community Plan.

Under the HPS Community Plan, the RSCH will be able to consider proposals for region-wide systems development – improving capital infrastructure, coordinating existing resources and leveraging new ones, improving data collection and use – in the 35% Non-Housing First portion of the funding formula. The governance structure does not allow for RSCH to directly manage these projects (referred to as sub-projects), to apply for the funds to operate them directly, or to target or coach a proponent so as to create a direct strategic link between the RSCH. In addition, HPS will not fund the executive or project management resources for RSCH to accomplish this strategic coordination.

### **Progress so far:**

At the December 2013 CT meeting an ad hoc group of RSCH CT members volunteered to develop the first strategic plan under the new governance structure, and were tasked to establish top priority goals and to identify the possible budget (at that time conceived to be resourced by an administrative portion of the HPS fund). This group was to be led by the RSCH Chair. Volunteer committee members were not noted in the December minutes, but they included Sandy Burpee, Caroline Bonesky, Patrick Stewart, and Arthur Mills.

The group did not meet before the CT reconvened on March 13, 2014. At the March 13 meeting a spirited discussion took place during which committee members grappled with the new terms and conditions of the HPS funds. In the past the Community Entity (CE) played an executive operational role in supporting the strategies of the RSCH (e.g. oversaw the development of the new governance structure, managed the contract for the “point in time” homeless count and oversaw Homeless Action Week activities and service contracts). RSCH members were operating under the assumption that this same level of support would be available. They reasoned that many of these key activities are spelled out in the governance manual and are necessary, or at least highly facilitative, of the HPS Community Plan, which is the basis for which HPS funds are granted to the region. However, Service Canada clarified at that meeting that the CE staff is now significantly more restricted in regards to providing secretariat and executive staff support to the RSCH.

On March 25, the chair, the CE senior staff, a Service Canada representative and an ad hoc committee member met to further clarify the HPS Terms and Conditions for the CE staff and explore other options for providing support to the strategic planning and priorities of the RSCH. The limited role of the CE was confirmed. It was explained that, to the extent that work done to support the strategic plan of the RSCH was necessary to achieving the HPS Community Plan, these activities would be allowed to be carried out by CE staff. In other words, there is an overlap between these activities and the broader scope of activities that the RSCH may want to undertake, but the staffing levels and actual work plan for the CE must reflect the narrower scope of the HPS-related activities.

A follow up meeting was held on March 26 between the chair and a committee member where an attempt was made to map the key strategies set out in the governance manual to the possible supports that could be provided by the CE. (That document has been further developed and is attached.) The document focuses on the **strategic and coordinating activities that may be undertaken by the RSCH itself in order to tie together the various elements of the HPS Community Plan**: developing and working with knowledge as a basis for action to address homelessness, coordinating, and developing local capacity.

In late May, the Call for Proposals Advisory Group met to establish the criteria for the HPS Call for Proposals for the 2.5 years of funding beginning October 1, 2014. During these meetings criteria were adopted for sub-projects (non-housing first) that will support the region-wide coordination of resources and leveraging of assets in the region and key partnerships and for improving the collection and use of data to better inform and measure progress. It was agreed that points would be given to applications that included one or more region-wide initiatives.

At the time of writing this briefing, it is still not resolved if and how the RSCH will be able to access additional support from the HPS fund beyond the scope of the CE to provide staff support to manage the strategic and coordinating activities in bold above. The chair has tried to determine if Metro Vancouver could qualify as a proponent for the subprojects which could at least allow for the activities to be coordinated and tied together by virtue of the fact that were managed by one organization. There is still some confusion about this.

Brief notes on RSCH strategic plan and resourcing  
May 2, 2014

Projects and tasks of the RSCH	CE?	Resourcing – comments and issues	HPS non-CE budget “sub-project”
Develop relevant <b>knowledge and basis for action</b> for addressing homelessness in the region (see sections below)			
<b>knowledge and basis for action</b> Develop and implement a regional plan to end homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete consultation and planning processes</li> <li>• Complete plan document</li> <li>• Communicate plan</li> <li>• Work with stakeholders to make sense of findings and conclusions</li> <li>• Develop action plans based on recommendations</li> <li>• Assign the work of these action plans</li> <li>• Monitor, evaluate and share learning</li> <li>• Revise plan on a schedule or as needed</li> </ul>	NO	A RSCH long-term multi-staged, iterative process of planning, engaging, and acting. More than a written plan that guides the regional priorities, it must be a living document that guides an approach to what could be significant change to current practices relationships  This could be a key element of the work of and action research/change leader team.  Are there models for structure and evaluation that could be drawn on - Collective Impact as an example.	YES “Coordination and Leveraging” (35%)
<b>knowledge and basis for action</b> Conduct the 2017 Homeless Count and report on findings	NO	Currently a term-limited project for one researcher. Must be reviewed.	YES “ Point in time counts” – 35%
<b>knowledge and basis for action</b> Engage stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define priority populations or groups</li> <li>• Develop the rationale, goals, methods, engagement protocols and approach to evaluating success of engagement strategies</li> <li>• Assign actions and responsibilities</li> </ul>	NO	This feeds into the Regional Homelessness Plan and likely to be an action outcome of that plan	YES “coordination and leveraging” – 35% -or- “Housing First Readiness” if landlord relationships. –

			65%
<b>knowledge and basis for action</b> Develop HPS Community Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● link with Regional Homelessness? Plan</li> <li>● develop process and framework for recommending projects</li> <li>● oversee HPS call for proposals</li> <li>● evaluate proposals and recommend funding</li> <li>● Support the development of regional systems and supports for the framework of the HPS</li> <li>● report back on investments and results</li> <li>● link findings to Regional Homelessness Plan</li> </ul>	YES	This piece can be supported by CE staff. Information management and data systems must be developed and managed by CE staff. Evaluation and report-back must serve the purposes of regional planning as well as Service Canada's accountability needs.	NO
<b>RSCH support</b> Develop an annual RSCH Strategic Plan	NO	This is the work of the Chair and CT volunteers	YES – if related to the Regional Homelessness Plan
<b>RSCH support</b> Provide administrative support for CT and all advisory and working groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organize meetings and attendance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Constituency Table</li> <li>○ Funders Table</li> <li>○ Finance and Audit Standing Advisory Group</li> <li>○ Homeless Action Week</li> <li>○ Governance Manual</li> <li>○ Regional Plan Advisory Group</li> <li>○ Business Engagement</li> <li>○ Aboriginal Engagement</li> <li>○ Community Homeless Table Council</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Work with chairs to develop agendas</li> <li>● Support the development of annual work plans</li> <li>● Support activities of the advisory groups</li> </ul>	YES, to work that is HPS-related NO, to work that is not HPS-related	Essential Support	Where there is a link to Stakeholder Engagement, Regional Plan, Count or other projects – YES – “coordination and leveraging” or “Point in time counts” as part of the project management structure - 35%
<b>RSCH support</b> Assess current state and develop a strategy for building the required capacity to end homelessness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify issues and priorities for</li> </ul>	YES, work that is HPS-	This relates to the implementation of the regional plan	YES – as related to Stakeholder engagement or Regional

<p>knowledge development and capacity building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a Community Development Strategy that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regional Homelessness? Plan strategies in the context of Aboriginal funding and incidence of homelessness in that populations</li> <li>○ Integrates capacity building approach with Aboriginal, business, and other priority stakeholder engagement strategies.</li> <li>○ Pursues regional partnerships for funding, research and community development</li> <li>○ Improves service delivery and community capacity as it relates to addressing homelessness, by expanding knowledge development opportunities to front line staff of community partners and service providers.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>related NO, to work that is not HPS-related</p>		<p>Homelessness Plan</p>
<p><b>RSCH Support</b></p> <p>Communicate with RSCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● maintain membership base</li> <li>● maintain website</li> <li>● develop and distribute periodic newsletters</li> <li>● host periodic information sessions, meetings, workshops with a goal of advancing the Regional Homelessness Plan</li> </ul>	<p>YES, Membership &amp; HPS related work NO, work not HPS related</p>		<p>Membership – NO. Otherwise YES – as relevant to HPS-funded projects with project information sharing component– 35%</p>
<p>Homelessness Action Week</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>Public education not eligible.</p>	<p>YES – “Improve Data Collection and Use” – 35% or if Housing First partnership development is a goal, “HF Readiness” – 65%</p>



**DRAFT**

Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness

# Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region

[Type the document subtitle]

# 1. Contents

1.	Key Findings .....	4
2.	Introduction .....	4
2.1	Purpose and Objectives .....	4
2.2	Definitions.....	4
2.3	Geographic Scope .....	4
2.4	Method .....	5
2.5	Limitations.....	5
2.6	Report Organization.....	5
3.	Number of Homeless Persons in the Metro Vancouver Region.....	6
3.1	Total Homeless Population Included in the Count .....	6
3.2	People Turned away from Emergency Shelters.....	7
4.	Profile of the Homeless Population in the Metro Vancouver Region.....	8
4.1	Gender .....	8
4.2	Age .....	9
4.3	Aboriginal Identity .....	11
4.4	Accompanying the Homeless.....	11
4.5	First Language .....	13
4.6	Newcomers to Canada.....	13
4.7	Military Service in Canadian Forces.....	14
4.8	Barriers to Housing .....	14
4.9	Sources of Income.....	16
4.10	Health Conditions.....	18
4.11	Length of Time Homeless.....	21
4.12	Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed .....	22
4.13	Episodically Homeless .....	23
5.	Patterns of Service Use .....	24
5.1	Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless .....	24
5.2	The Sheltered Homeless .....	26
5.3	Unsheltered Homeless.....	26
6.	Homelessness by Municipal Sub-Region.....	29
6.1	Total Homeless Found .....	29
6.2	Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population.....	30
6.3	Mobility of Homeless Population.....	31

6.4	Age .....	32
6.5	Aboriginal Status .....	33
	Appendix A – Homeless Count Volunteers .....	34
	Appendix B – No Fixed Address (NFA) Locations .....	35
	Appendix C – Shelter Facility Locations .....	36
	Appendix D - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population Found in Municipal Sub-Regions since 2008. ....	38
	Appendix E – Shelter Survey .....	39
	Appendix F – Street Survey .....	39

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# 1. Key Findings

To Come

## 2. Introduction

This document presents the findings of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region that took place March 12, 2014. It provides information about people who were identified as homeless on *one* day in March 2014 and compares the results with homeless counts that took place in 2002, 2005, 2008 and 2011, where comparable information is available. The report presents the information based on surveys conducted on Count Day.

Both the *2001 Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver* and the 2003 updated plan, *Three Ways to Home*, recommended that a regular homeless count be undertaken to obtain current information about the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region, identify trends, and help monitor the implementation of the homelessness plan.

Similar to all the previous homeless counts conducted in the Metro Vancouver region, the 2014 Homeless Count measured homelessness in the region at a point-in-time. A point-in-time count tells us how many homeless people were counted in one 24-hour period. It does not capture the number of people who move in and out of homelessness throughout the course of a year.

### 2.1 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Homeless Count is to.....

### 2.2 Definitions

A person was considered homeless for the purpose of this count if they did not have a place of their own where they could expect to stay for more than 30 days and if they did not pay rent. This included people who:

### 2.3 Geographic Scope

The Homeless Count was conducted in the following communities in the Metro Vancouver region:

- 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 Park)
- White Rock

## 2.4 Method

The 2014 Homeless Count included homeless people living on the street, people staying in emergency homeless shelters, youth safe houses, transition houses for women fleeing violence, and people with No Fixed Address (NFA) who were staying temporarily in a hospital, detox facility or jail on the night of March 11/12.

More to come.

## 2.5 Limitations

To come.

Note:

- Undercount
- Context of hidden homeless – refer to pilot studies
- At risk numbers for region
- As in past surveys - large non-response rate in the shelters

## 2.6 Report Organization

To come

### 3. Number of Homeless Persons in the Metro Vancouver Region

#### 3.1 Total Homeless Population Included in the Count

On March 12, 2014, a total of 2,777 homeless people were counted in the Metro Vancouver region. This included 2,689 adults and unaccompanied youth (under the age of 25) as well as 88 children (under the age of 19) who were with their parents during the count.

Two thirds of the homeless population (66%) were sheltered (1,820 individuals). This included 1,504 people staying in an emergency shelter and youth safe house, 116 people in transition houses for women fleeing violence, and 200 people with no fixed address who were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility on the night of March 11/12.<sup>1</sup>

One third of the homeless population (34%) was unsheltered (957 individuals). This included people living outside or staying temporarily with others (couch surfing) and using homelessness services on March 12.

**Table 1. Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population, 2014**

Homeless Category	Adults and Unaccompanied Youth		Accompanied Children		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sheltered Homeless	1,741	65%	79	90%	1,820	66%
Shelters/Safe Houses	1,465	54%	39	44%	1,504	54%
Transition Houses	76	3%	40	45%	116	4%
No Fixed Address	200	7%	0	0%	200	7%
Unsheltered Homeless	948	35%	9	10%	957	34%
<b>Total Homeless</b>	<b>2,689</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: Survey data and Shelter Occupancy Statistics.						

#### Trends

The number of homeless people identified in homeless counts in the region has remained fairly stable since 2008. While the number of homeless people identified in 2014 increased by 5% compared to 2011, the homeless population increased by only 4% between 2008 and 2014. This is less than the rate of increase for the population of Metro Vancouver as a whole, which increased by 8% from 2008 to 2013.<sup>2</sup> Another trend is that a higher proportion of the homeless population was sheltered in 2014 and 2011 compared to 2005 and 2008, as illustrated in Figure 1.

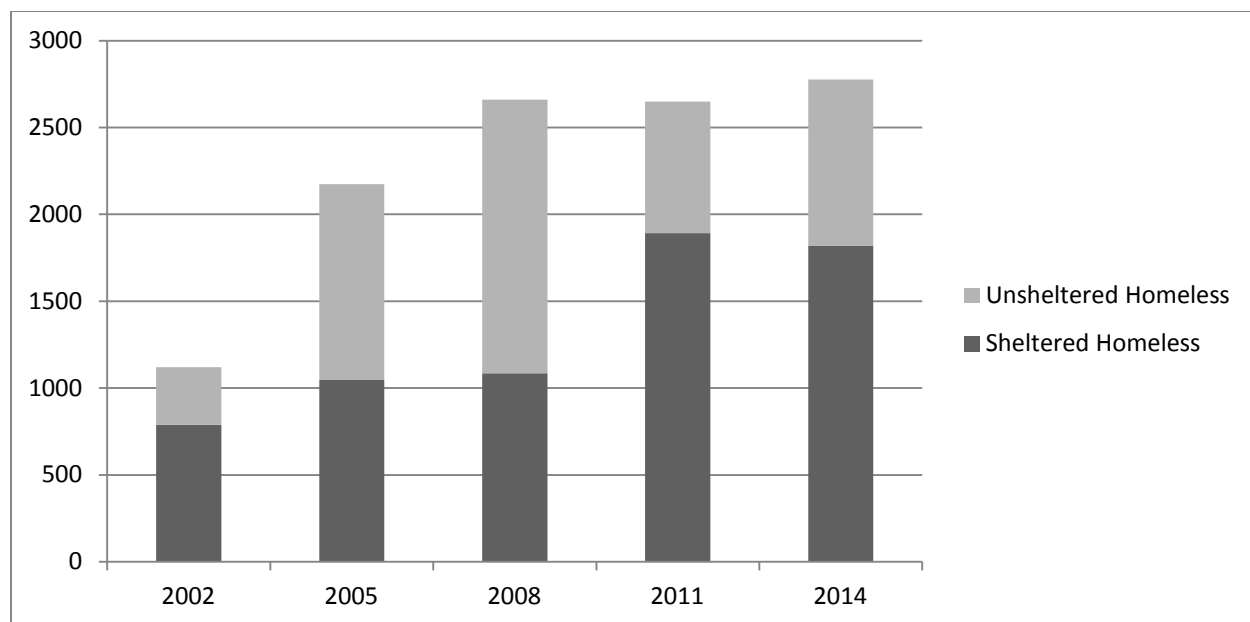
**Table 3. Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Number of Homeless	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014	Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	#	#	#	#	#	% Change
Sheltered Homeless	788	1,047	1,086	1,892	1,820	-72	-4%
Unsheltered Homeless	333	1,127	1,574	758	957	199	26%
<b>Total Homeless</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>2,660</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>5%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Among those with No Fixed Address, 100 were in a detox facility, 93 were in a hospital, and 7 were in jail.

<sup>2</sup> Insert Metro Vancouver population number 2008 and 2013.

**Figure 1. Proportion of Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless (2002 to 2014)**



### 3.2 People Turned away from Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters, safe houses and transition houses were asked to report on how many people were turned away the night of the count (March 11/12), either because the shelter was full or the individual seeking shelter was not appropriate for their facility.<sup>3</sup> They reported that they turned away a total of 317 adults, youth and children. Most of the people turned away were attempting to access beds in shelters and safe houses (88%). Some of the people turned away may have been counted on the street on March 12 and may be included in the street count as part of the unsheltered homeless or they may have found accommodation in another shelter. Therefore, they are not added to the total homeless count of 2,777.

**Table 2. People Turned Away from Emergency Shelters, Safe Houses, and Transition Houses, 2014**

Shelter Category	Total Adults, Youth and Children	
	#	%
Shelters/Safe Houses	278	88%
Transition Houses	39	12%
<b>Total Turnaways</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: Shelter Occupancy Statistics		

<sup>3</sup> Either they were not eligible for the facility or could not be accommodated.

## 4. Profile of the Homeless Population in the Metro Vancouver Region

### 4.1 Gender

Men represented about three quarters of the homeless population identified in the 2014 homeless count and women represented about one quarter. However, women tend to be part of the hidden homeless population, often doubling up with families and friends or staying in unsafe situations rather than staying on the street or accessing services for the homeless, and are likely undercounted.<sup>4</sup> Nine people identified as transgendered in 2014.

**Table 4. Gender - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Gender	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Men	733	72%	686	73%	1,419	73%
Women	279	27%	248	26%	527	27%
Transgendered	6	1%	3	0%	9	0%
Total Respondents	1,018	100%	937	100%	1,955	100%
No Answer	802		20		822	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

Over the years, the proportion of men and women identified in homeless counts has remained about the same, with women making up between one quarter and one third of the region's homeless population. It should be noted that the large number of people for whom there is no data about gender in 2014, compared to previous years, could mean that the actual proportion of men, women, and transgendered persons could be slightly different. [Need to explain data sources].

**Table 5. Gender - Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Gender	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Men	700	68%	1,483	73%	1,679	72%	1,452	69%	1,419	73%	-33	-2%
Women	333	32%	534	26%	619	27%	652	31%	527	27%	-125	-19%
Transgendered	N/A		9	0%	22	1%	8	0%	9	0%	1	13%
Total Respondents	1,033		2,026		2,320		2,112		1,955			
No Answer	88		148		340		538		822			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

<sup>4</sup> Among the homeless respondents, 33% of men reported staying at someone else's place while 57% of women reported staying at someone else's place.



## 4.2 Age

In 2014, adults aged 45 to 54 comprised the largest group among the homeless (25%), followed by adults aged 35 to 44 (20%) and youth under the age of 25 (20%). A total of 410 homeless youth were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12. This included 88 children who were accompanied by a parent. Unlike the other age categories, a higher proportion of youth 19 to 24 were identified as unsheltered rather than sheltered. However, a higher proportion of youth (56%) reported staying at someone else's place compared to adults (34%).<sup>5</sup> A total of 371 homeless seniors (55 and older) were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12.

**Table 6. Age - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Age groups	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19[1]	106	10%	85	9%	<b>191</b>	9%
19-24	86	8%	133	14%	<b>219</b>	11%
25-34	178	16%	154	16%	<b>332</b>	16%
35-44	220	20%	193	20%	<b>413</b>	20%
45-54	279	26%	233	25%	<b>512</b>	25%
55-64	169	16%	112	12%	<b>281</b>	14%
65+	52	5%	38	4%	<b>90</b>	4%
Total Respondents	1,090	100%	948	100%	<b>2,038</b>	100%
No Answer	730		9		<b>739</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

[1] Includes 79 sheltered children and 9 unsheltered children accompanied by a parent.

### Trends

As noted above, a total of 410 homeless youth (under the age of 25) were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014. This was a 3% increase compared to 2011. Youth represented 20% of the homeless population in 2014 compared to 24% in 2011 and 15% in 2008. The number of homeless youth who have been identified in homeless counts has increased steadily over the years.

**Table 7. Age - Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Age Groups	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Under 25 Years	343	32%	370	18%	364	15%	397	24%	410	20%	13	3%
25-34 Years	216	20%	435	21%	436	18%	275	17%	332	16%	-57	-21%
35-44 Years	299	28%	634	31%	726	30%	328	20%	413	20%	85	26%
45-54 Years	151	14%	443	22%	661	28%	397	24%	512	25%	115	29%
55-64 Years	37	3%	139	7%	180	8%	210	13%	281	14%	71	34%
65+ Years	14	1%	32	2%	32	1%	58	3%	90	4%	32	55%
Total Respondents	1,060	100%	2,053	100%	2,399	100%	1,665	100%	2,038	100%		
No Answer	61		121		261		985		739			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

<sup>5</sup> 78% of youth under 19 were couch surfing while 44% of youth 19 to 24 years old were couch surfing.

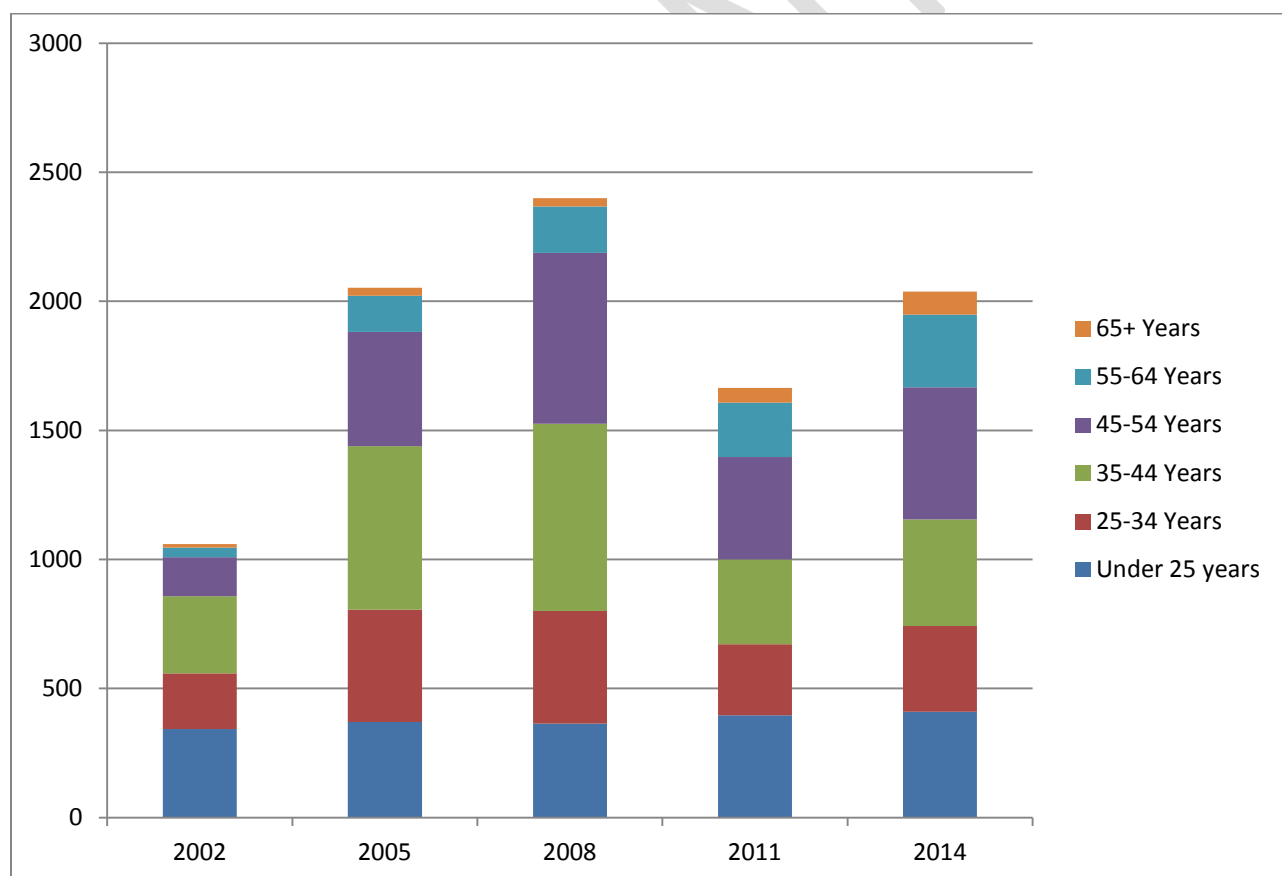
The number of children under the age of 19 with their parents who identified as homeless in the Metro Vancouver region continues to be a concern with 88 children counted in 2014. While this represents a slight improvement compared to 2008 when 94 children were identified, the number of children is higher compared to the other homeless counts in 2002, 2005 and 2011.

**Table 8. Homeless Children with Parents (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Children with Parents	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014
	#	#	#	#	#
Sheltered	69	52	80	68	79
Unsheltered	2	22	14	6	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>88</b>

Seniors (55 years and older) are an increasing proportion of the total homeless population. A total of 371 homeless seniors were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014, representing a 38% increase compared to 2011 when 268 seniors were identified and a 75% increase compared to 2008 when 212 seniors were identified.

**Figure 2. Changes in the Age of the Homeless Population (2002 to 2014)**



### 4.3 Aboriginal Identity

A total of 582 homeless people identified as Aboriginal in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014 representing about one third of the total homeless population in the region. Aboriginal Peoples are over-represented in the region's homeless population given they represent 2% of the Metro Vancouver population. Table 9 shows that most homeless Aboriginal Peoples are not accessing the shelter system. A higher proportion of Aboriginal Peoples was unsheltered, whereas the opposite was true for the homeless population that did not identify as Aboriginal.

**Table 9. Aboriginal Identity - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Aboriginal identity	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal	235	25%	347	38%	582	31%
Not Aboriginal	724	75%	558	62%	1,282	69%
Total Respondents	959	100%	905	100%	1,864	100%
No Answer	861		52		913	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

#### Trends

The proportion of the homeless population that identifies as Aboriginal has remained virtually unchanged at about one third since 2005. While the number of people who identified as Aboriginal increased by 48% in 2014 compared to 2011, this may be partly due to a higher response rate to this question in 2014.

**Table 10. Aboriginal Identity - Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - trends**

Aboriginal Identity	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Aboriginal	515	30%	688	32%	394	27%	582	31%	188	48%
Not Aboriginal	1,205	70%	1,453	68%	1074	73%	1282	69%	208	19%
Total Respondents	1,720	100%	2,141	100%	1468	100%	1864	100%		
No Answer	454		519		1182		913			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			
The question about Aboriginal identity was not asked in 2002 and so data for that year is not included.										

### 4.4 Accompanying the Homeless

Participants in the homeless count were asked if there was anyone with them. If they were with someone, they were asked to identify who. The purpose of this question was to determine if homeless people are alone or accompanied by others. Overall, 79% of the homeless population who responded to this question reported that they were alone.

Homeless people who were alone were more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered, and parents with children were also more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered. Some individuals may have been

unsheltered because they could not be accommodated in a shelter, for example individuals who were with a partner/spouse (8%) or pet (3%).

**Table 11. Accompanying the Homeless - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Accompanying the Homeless (more than 1 response possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Alone	796	87%	655	71%	1,451	79%
With Partner/Spouse	34	4%	71	8%	105	6%
With Children	34	4%	7	1%	41	2%
With Friends	30	3%	152	16%	182	10%
With Relative	8	1%	16	2%	24	1%
With Pet	7	1%	24	3%	31	2%
With Other	13	1%	18	2%	31	2%
Total Respondents <sup>6</sup>	915		924		1,839	
No Answer	905		33		938	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

The proportion of homeless people who were alone was higher in 2014 than in 2011 and 2008. The proportion with a partner/spouse was lower compared to all the previous counts while the number and proportion of parents with children was less than in 2011 but similar to 2008 and 2005. The proportion of homeless people with pets in 2014 was the same as in 2011 and 2005, but less than in 2008.

*[Insights from CT or CHTs to explain why?]*

**Table 12. Accompanying the Homeless - Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - trends**

Accompanying the Homeless (more than 1 response possible)	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Alone	1,502	82%	1,670	76%	1,122	75%	1,451	79%	329	29%
With Partner/Spouse	178	10%	243	11%	113	8%	105	6%	-8	-7%
With Children[1]	40	2%	43	2%	55	4%	41	2%	-14	-25%
With Pet	34	2%	59	3%	31	2%	31	2%	0	0%
With Other	76	4%	229	10%	178	12%	237	13%	59	33%
Total Respondents	1,830		2,200		1,504		1,839			
No Answer	344		460		1,146		938			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

<sup>6</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100 because respondents could have selected more than one answer e.g. a partner and children.

## 4.5 First Language

A new question was asked in 2014 to learn about the first language of respondents – meaning the first language spoken at birth, or “mother tongue”. The vast majority of respondents reported English as their first language, while 4% of respondents reported that French was their first language. The most common first languages reported other than English and French were a First Nations language, Spanish, and Chinese.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 13. First Language – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

First Language	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	771	86%	798	89%	1,569	87%
French	32	4%	32	4%	64	4%
Other	98	11%	68	8%	166	9%
Total Respondents	901	100%	898	100%	1,799	100%
No Answer	919		59		978	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.6 Newcomers to Canada

This question was also introduced in 2014 to learn to what extent the homeless population included people who were new to Canada within the last 5 years.<sup>8</sup> As can be seen in Table 14, almost all the respondents to this question answered that they have been in Canada at least 5 years. Respondents who said they were new to Canada were from Asia, Africa, Europe, the United States, the Caribbean, and South America.

**Table 14. Newcomers to Canada – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

New To Canada within last 5 years	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not New to Canada	794	97%	716	97%	1,510	97%
New to Canada	26	3%	20	3%	46	3%
Total Respondents	820	100%	736	100%	1,556	100%
No Answer	1,000		221		1,221	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>7</sup> The 2014 survey did not ask respondents to self-identify their ethnic or cultural group because it was reported that this was a difficult question to answer given that many people are of mixed ethnicity or identify as “Canadian”. In previous reports it had been suggested that findings from this question be treated with caution given a high non-response rate, especially from the unsheltered homeless population.

<sup>8</sup> Note – replaced previous question.

## 4.7 Military Service in Canadian Forces

Another new question in 2014 asked survey participants if they had any military service in the Canadian Forces. This was the same question used in Toronto's homeless count in 2013. It is interesting to note that the response in the Metro Vancouver region was exactly the same as in Toronto, with 7% of the homeless population saying they had some experience in the Canadian Forces. The Toronto report states that studies in the United States indicate that roughly 7% of that country's homeless are veterans, while in the United Kingdom 6% are veterans. [Q: What is proportion for general population?]

**Table 15. Military Service in the Canadian Forces – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Military service in Canadian Forces	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No	842	94%	826	93%	1,668	93%
Yes	58	6%	60	7%	118	7%
Total Respondents	900	100%	886	100%	1,786	100%
No Answer	920		71		991	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.8 Barriers to Housing

In 2014, survey participants were asked, "What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own". Table 16 identifies the range of barriers identified by respondents. Low income (47%) and high rents (42%) were reported as the main barriers to housing. These were the main barriers cited by both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless, although a higher proportion of the sheltered homeless cited these reasons than the unsheltered. Respondents also identified having no income (21%) as one of the barriers to finding a place.

Addiction (27%) was reported as the third main barrier to finding a place, for both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless. Other barriers included family breakdown/abuse/conflict (17%), poor housing condition (17%) mental health issue (15%), discrimination (14%) evicted (11%), conflict with the law (7%) and pets (4%).

In general, the barriers to finding a place were similar for the sheltered and unsheltered homeless except that discrimination and being evicted were reported by a higher proportion of the unsheltered homeless compared to the sheltered homeless.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the shelter survey included 'health or disability issue' on the list of possible responses, but this was inadvertently omitted from the street survey. Among the sheltered homeless, 20% of respondents identified health or disability as a barrier to housing. Although it was not listed on the survey, 2% of unsheltered respondents identified this as a barrier. It is likely that this percentage would have been higher if the response had been included on the list of possible responses on the survey.

**Table 16. Barriers to Housing – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Barriers to Housing	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Income too low	441	49%	428	46%	869	47%
No income/no income assistance	179	20%	197	21%	376	21%
Rent too high	410	45%	351	38%	761	42%
Addiction	240	26%	261	28%	501	27%
Family breakdown/abuse/conflict	155	17%	155	17%	310	17%
Poor housing condition	142	16%	171	19%	313	17%
Mental health Issue	138	15%	142	15%	280	15%
Conflict with the law	55	6%	75	8%	130	7%
Evicted	80	9%	117	13%	197	11%
Pets	33	4%	46	5%	79	4%
Discrimination	93	10%	156	17%	249	14%
Other	222	24%	241	26%	463	25%
Total Respondents	909		922		1,831	
No Answer	911		35		946	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

Table 17 compares the responses in 2014 with 2011. The barriers to housing in 2014 are in the same order of priority as in 2011, however, the extent to which these barriers were identified, was different. This may be due to the inclusion of additional issues on the list, such as pets and discrimination. The top three barriers to having their own place were low income, high rents, and addiction.

It is not possible to compare the 2014 and 2011 results with previous years because the questions were different. In 2008, respondents were asked: “What are the *main* reasons you do not have your own place.” In addition, the surveys in 2011 and 2014 provided a list of possible responses, whereas a list was not provided in 2008 which could affect the comparability of the results.

**Table 17. Barriers to Housing – Total Homeless (2011 to 2014) - trends**

Barriers to Housing (more than 1 possible)	2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Income too low	857	58%	869	47%	12	1%
No income/no income assistance	331	22%	376	21%	45	14%
Rent too high	803	54%	761	42%	-42	-5%
Addiction	473	32%	501	27%	28	6%
Family breakdown/abuse/conflict	375	25%	310	17%	-65	-17%
Poor housing condition	350	24%	313	17%	-37	-11%
Mental health Issue	277	19%	280	15%	3	1%
Conflict with the law	228	15%	130	7%	-98	-43%
Evicted	201	13%	197	11%	-4	-2%
Pets	N/A	N/A	79	4%	N/A	N/A
Discrimination	N/A	N/A	249	14%	N/A	N/A
Other	370	25%	463	25%		
Total Respondents	1,489		1,831			
No Answer	1,161		946			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

## 4.9 Sources of Income

Respondents were asked to identify their sources of income. They could identify more than one source. The sources of income respondents identified most were income assistance (43%), disability benefit (21%), part-time employment (16%), and binning/bottle collecting (14%).

The sheltered homeless were more likely to report receiving disability benefits (24%), part-time employment (17%), CPP/pension (9%), and OAS/GIS (3%) compared to the unsheltered homeless. Whereas the unsheltered homeless were more likely to report receiving income from full-time employment (22%) binning/bottle collecting (22%), and panhandling (19%) compared to the unsheltered homeless.

Altogether, 73% of respondents reported receiving income from government transfers - 78% of the sheltered homeless and 69% of the unsheltered homeless. It is interesting that a higher proportion of the unsheltered homeless reported income assistance (45%) as a source of income compared to the sheltered homeless (40%). These are exactly the same proportions as in 2008. In 2011, however, the proportions were reversed, and a higher proportion of the sheltered homeless reported income assistance (53%) compared to the unsheltered homeless (51%).

*[Insights from CT or CHTs to explain why?]*

Altogether, 20% of respondents reported receiving income from employment. It is surprising that a higher proportion of the unsheltered homeless reported income from full-time employment (22%) compared to the sheltered homeless (7%), whereas in 2011, a higher proportion of the sheltered homeless reported full-time employment (but only 7%) and only 1% of the unsheltered homeless reported full-time employment.



Nine percent of the sheltered homeless and 10 percent of the unsheltered homeless reported receiving no income. Seven respondents reported receiving income through a Youth Agreement.

**Table 18. Sources of Income – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Sources of income (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Government transfers</b>						
Income assistance	364	40%	413	45%	777	43%
Disability benefit	216	24%	160	18%	376	21%
OAS/GIS	31	3%	11	1%	42	2%
CPP or Other Pension	86	9%	29	3%	115	6%
Employment Insurance	19	2%	8	1%	27	1%
Youth Agreement	1	0%	6	1%	7	0%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>78%</b>		<b>69%</b>		<b>73%</b>
<b>Employment</b>						
Part-time employment	156	17%	131	14%	287	16%
Full-time employment	68	7%	14	22%	82	4%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>24%</b>		<b>36%</b>		<b>73%</b>
<b>Other sources</b>						
Binning, bottle collecting	53	6%	199	22%	252	14%
Panhandling	30	3%	173	19%	203	11%
Friends/family	49	5%	80	9%	129	7%
Other	69	8%	135	15%	204	11%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>22%</b>		<b>65%</b>		<b>43%</b>
<b>No Income</b>	80	9%	91	10%	171	9%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	910		913		1,823	
No Answer	910		44		954	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## Trends

Table 19 shows that the proportion of homeless respondents who reported income from government transfers increased from 64% in 2008 to 79% in 2011 and declined to 73% in 2014. The proportion of respondents receiving income assistance also increased from 43% in 2008, to 52% in 2011 but dropped back to 43% again in 2014. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of respondents receiving disability benefits over the three counts. The proportion of respondents receiving OAS/GIS/ CPP benefits increased significantly between 2011 and 2014, consistent with a greater proportion of seniors among the homeless.

The number and proportion of respondents reporting income from full-time employment fell from 19% to 16% in 2011, but increased beyond the 2008 level up to 20% in 2014. There was no distinction between part-time and full-time employment in 2008.

*[Insights from CT or CHTs to explain why?]*

While the proportion of respondents reporting no income seemed to decline from 8% in 2008 to 6% in 2011, the proportion of respondents reporting no income increased beyond the 2008 level up to 9% in 2014.

It is not possible to compare 2014 responses with responses prior to 2008 because the question was changed in 2008 to allow multiple responses rather than just the main source of income.

**Table 19. Sources of Income – Total Homeless (2008 to 2014) - trends**

Sources of Income (more than 1 possible)	2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
<b>Government transfers</b>								
Income assistance	960	43%	789	52%	777	43%	-12	-2%
Disability benefit	403	18%	296	20%	376	21%	80	27%
OAS/GIS/PPP	53	2%	53	4%	157	9%	104	196%
Employment Insurance	26	1%	45	3%	27	1%	-18	-40%
Youth Agreement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	0%	N/A	N/A
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>64%</b>		<b>79%</b>		<b>73%</b>		
<b>Employment</b>								
Part-time employment			177	12%	287	16%	110	62%
Full-time employment	421	19%	63	4%	82	4%	19	30%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>19%</b>		<b>16%</b>		<b>20%</b>		
<b>Other sources</b>								
Binning, bottle collecting	478	22%	306	20%	252	14%	-54	-18%
Panhandling	277	12%	188	12%	203	11%	15	8%
Friends/family	60	3%	216	14%	129	7%	-87	-40%
Other	372	17%	247	16%	204	11%	-43	-17%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>54%</b>		<b>62%</b>		<b>43%</b>		
<b>No Income</b>	182	8%	97	6%	171	9%	74	76%
Total Respondents	2,219		1,513		1,823			
No Answer	441		1,137		954			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

## 4.10 Health Conditions

### *Incidence of Health Conditions*

As in previous counts, the surveys asked respondents about their health, and specifically whether they had a medical condition, physical disability, addiction, and mental illness. Medical condition refers to chronic problems like asthma and diabetes, while physical disability refers to a condition affecting mobility or movement. The information about health in 2014 includes health conditions self-reported by respondents as well as health conditions observed by interviewers. Very few observations were recorded on the surveys.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This is similar to the 2013 Vancouver Homeless Count, where perceived health conditions accounted for a small share of total positive answers, mostly among the unsheltered homeless. .

Table 20 shows that 35% of respondents reported one health condition, 45% reported two or more health conditions, and 20% reported no health conditions.

**Table 20. Incidence of Health Conditions – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Health condition	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Health Conditions	194	22%	166	19%	360	20%
One Health Condition	297	33%	317	36%	614	35%
Two or More Health Conditions	403	45%	398	45%	801	45%
Total Respondents	894	100%	881	100%	1,775	100%
No Answer	926		76		1,002	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

In reviewing data from the previous homeless counts, it appears that the health of the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region has been getting worse. The number of respondents with no health conditions has declined since 2005 while the proportion with two or more health conditions has increased.<sup>11</sup> We do not know if persons who first become homeless have more health issues at the time they become homeless, compared to the newly homeless people in the previous counts, or if individuals who are chronically homeless are experiencing a decline in their health over time, or if homeless people with two or more health conditions are facing greater barriers to accessing housing compared to homeless people with one or no health issue.

*[Insights from CT or CHTs to explain why?]*

**Table 21. Incidence of Health Conditions – Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - trends**

Health condition	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
No Health Conditions	445	26%	616	28%	3	0%	360	20%	357	11,900%
One Health Condition	666	39%	601	27%	426	38%	614	35%	189	44%
Two or More Health Conditions	608	35%	1,016	45%	694	62%	801	45%	107	15%
Total Respondents	1,719	100%	2,233		1,123	100%	1,775	100%		
No Answer	455		427		1,527		1,002			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

<sup>11</sup> It appears that only three respondents in 2011 reported that they had no health conditions.

## Types of Health Conditions

Nearly half the respondents in 2014 reported an addiction (49%). The next most common health issue was a medical condition (41%), while about one third (34%) reported a mental illness. According to the data, 21% of respondents reported a concurrent disorder (mental illness and addiction) (to be confirmed).

While the sheltered homeless were more likely to report a medical condition (44%) and physical disability (30%) compared to the unsheltered homeless, the unsheltered homeless were more likely to report an addiction (55%) and mental illness (36%).

*[Insights from CT or CHTs?]*

The most common medical condition reported by respondents in 2014 was Hepatitis C, followed by diabetes, arthritis, spine and back problems, HIV, and heart problems, as well as brain injury, asthma, respiratory problems and cancer.

**Table 22. Types of Health Conditions – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Health condition (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Addiction	390	44%	481	55%	871	49%
Medical Condition	395	44%	328	37%	723	41%
Mental Illness	296	33%	314	36%	610	34%
Physical Disability	272	30%	235	27%	507	29%
Total Respondents	894		881		1,775	
No Answer	926		76		2,270	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## Trends

Table 23 shows that the health of the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region was worse in 2014 compared to 2002 and 2005, but improved since 2008. The proportion of respondents with an addiction has decreased since 2008, from 61% in 2008 to 49% in 2014 - although the *number* of respondents reporting an addiction increased between 2011 and 2014 by 22%.

The proportion of respondents reporting a medical condition was the same in 2008 and 2011 (46%) and decreased to 41% in 2014. The proportion of respondents with a mental illness has remained fairly consistent over the years with about one-third of the homeless population reporting or being observed as having a mental illness. However, the *number* of respondents who reported a mental illness increased between 2011 and 2014 by 32%. The proportion of respondents with a physical disability also increased from 31% in 2008 to 36% in 2011 and markedly decreased to 29% in 2014.

**Table 23. Types of Health Conditions – Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Health condition (more than 1 possible)	Total homeless 2002		Total homeless 2005		Total homeless 2008		Total homeless 2011		Total homeless 2014		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% change
Addiction	337	39%	838	48%	1,365	61%	712	54%	871	49%	159	22%
Medical Condition	256	30%	601	35%	1,023	46%	608	46%	723	41%	115	19%
Mental Illness	195	23%	389	22%	725	33%	463	35%	610	34%	147	32%
Physical Disability	132	15%	364	21%	699	31%	470	36%	507	29%	37	8%
Total Respondents	864		1,731		2,229		1,314		1,775			
No Answer	257		443		431		1,336		1,002			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

#### 4.11 Length of Time Homeless

About half of the respondents who provided information on the length of time they were homeless had been homeless for at least six months to one year or more (49%). A total of 751 individuals, representing 41% of respondents reported being homeless for one year or more. The unsheltered homeless were more likely to have been homeless for one year or more (45%) compared to the sheltered homeless (37%).

*[Insights from CT or CHTs?]*

About one fifth of respondents (19%) were newly homeless (less than one month). A higher proportion of the sheltered homeless had been homeless for less than a month (23%) compared to the unsheltered homeless (14%).

**Table 24. Length of Time Homeless – Sheltered and Unsheltered, 2014**

Length of time homeless	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 week	34	4%	31	3%	65	4%
1 week to under 1 month	167	19%	105	11%	272	15%
1 month to under 6 months	302	34%	282	31%	584	32%
6 months to under 1 year	61	7%	84	9%	145	8%
1 year or more	336	37%	415	45%	751	41%
Total Respondents	900	100%	917	100%	1,817	100%
No Answer	920		40		960	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

#### Trends

Table 25 indicates that the proportion of respondents who reported being homeless for one year or more dropped from 48% in 2008 to 40% in 2011. Between 2011 and 2014, the proportion of respondents who reported being homeless one year or more did not change significantly although the

number of people who reported being homeless for one year or more increased by 23%. However, the proportion of respondents who reported being homeless 6 months or more declined from 15% in 2011 to 8% in 2014, and the number of people also decreased by 35%.

The number and proportion of respondents considered newly homeless (less than one month) has increased steadily since 2008, from 13% in 2008 to 15% in 2011 and 19% in 2014. This shows that at every count, there was an average of 300 people who had become newly homeless within the month – and that there is a steady flow of new people who become homeless in the region.

**Table 25. Length of Time Homeless – Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Length of time homeless	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Less than 1 week	98	12%	149	8%	105	5%	233	15%	65	4%	104	45%
1 week to under 1 month	222	26%	275	16%	167	8%			272	15%		
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>320</b>		<b>424</b>		<b>272</b>		<b>233</b>		<b>337</b>			
1 month to under 6 months	253	30%	460	26%	556	26%	452	30%	584	32%	132	29%
6 months to under 1 year	100	12%	262	15%	271	13%	222	15%	145	8%	-77	-35%
1 year or more	166	20%	628	35%	1,017	48%	610	40%	751	41%	141	23%
Total Respondents	839	100%	1,774	100%	2,116	100%	1,517	100%	1,817	100%		
No Answer	282		400		544		1,133		960			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

Note: In 2011, data was not provided on the number of people who had been homeless for less than 1 week.

## 4.12 Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed

Table 26 shows that the homeless population may not be as transient as is commonly believed. Among respondents who reported on the length of time they had lived in the city where they were interviewed, 79% reported living there for one year or more, and half the respondents (51%) reported living there 10 years or more. Some individuals reported that they had lived in the city where they were interviewed their whole lives. This level of stability is greater among the unsheltered than sheltered homeless population, with 55% of the unsheltered homeless reporting that they had lived in the city 10 years or more compared to 48% for the sheltered homeless. It may be that people who wanted to stay in a shelter needed to move to another community to access a bed.

Very few individuals (2%) reported having just moved to the city where they were interviewed less than a week before the homeless count – which would seem to contradict the idea that many people moved to another municipality on the day of the count.

**Table 26. Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Length of time in city interviewed	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 week	21	2%	11	1%	32	2%
1 week to less than 1 year	202	23%	139	16%	341	19%
1 year to under 5 years	139	16%	157	18%	296	17%
5 years to under 10 years	94	11%	95	11%	189	11%
10 years or more	424	48%	487	55%	911	51%
Total Respondents	880	100%	889	100%	1,769	100%
No Answer	940		68		1,008	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

The degree of stability among the homeless population in 2014 is consistent with previous counts that also showed the vast majority of the respondents were not new to the municipality where they were interviewed. The results of 2014 show that the homeless population was even more stable compared to 2011, with 79% of respondents reported having lived in the municipality for one year or more in 2014 compared to 75% of respondents in 2011.

**Table 27. Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed – Total Homeless (2008 – 2014) - Trends**

Length of time homeless	Total homeless 2008		Total homeless 2011		Total homeless 2014		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Less than 1 year	416	20%	379	25%	373	21%	-6	-2%
1 year to under 5 years	409	19%	296	19%	296	17%	0	0%
5 years to under 10 years	312	15%	198	13%	189	11%	-9	-5%
10 years or more	972	46%	645	42%	911	51%	266	41%
Total Respondents	2,109	100%	1,518	100%	1,769	100%		
No Answer	551		1,132		1,008			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

### 4.13 Episodically Homeless

To be determined if data can be used.

## 5. Patterns of Service Use

### 5.1 Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless

Homeless count participants were asked what services they have used in the past 12 months. Table 28 shows that overall, the top three services used by the homeless were meal programs (46%), hospital emergency rooms (42%), and drop-in centres (40%).

*[Insights from CT or CHTs?]*

The unsheltered homeless were more likely to use meal programs, drop-in centres, outreach services food banks, ambulance, and parole services than the sheltered homeless, while the sheltered homeless were more likely to use health clinics, hospitals (non-emergency), employment, dental, mental health, and transitional housing than the unsheltered homeless.

**Table 28. Services Used – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Services used (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Meal Programs/Soup Kitchens	385	43%	440	50%	825	46%
Emergency Room	381	42%	365	42%	746	42%
Drop-Ins	301	33%	414	47%	715	40%
Health Clinic	382	42%	302	34%	684	38%
Outreach	263	29%	346	39%	609	34%
Hospital (non-emergency)	300	33%	273	31%	573	32%
Food Banks	218	24%	317	36%	535	30%
Ambulance	258	29%	272	31%	530	30%
Addiction	218	24%	207	24%	425	24%
Employment/Job Help	242	27%	172	20%	414	23%
Dental	194	22%	141	16%	335	19%
Mental Health	193	21%	142	16%	335	19%
Legal	113	13%	124	14%	237	13%
Housing Help/Eviction Prevention	113	13%	113	13%	226	13%
Transitional Housing	121	13%	56	6%	177	10%
Parole/Services for Ex-Offenders	46	5%	78	9%	124	7%
Budgeting/Trusteeship	22	2%	23	3%	45	3%
Newcomer Services	11	1%	18	2%	29	2%
Other	121	13%	90	10%	211	12%
None	57	6%	55	6%	112	6%
Total Respondents	900		878		1,778	
No Answer	920		79		999	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	



## Trends

Table 29 shows that homeless count respondents used similar services in 2014 compared to 2011. Whereas in 2014, the top three services respondents said they used were meal programs (46%), hospital emergency rooms (42%) and drop-in centres (40%), in 2011, the top three services respondents said they used were meal programs (53%), health clinics (49%), and drop-in centres (48%).

It appears that respondents used more emergency health services in 2014 compared to 2011 and less non-emergency health services. While 49% of respondents reported using health clinics in 2011, only 38% of respondents reported using this service in 2014. As well, a smaller proportion of respondents reported accessing dental, mental health, and addiction services in 2014 compared to 2011. At the same time, an increased proportion of respondents reported using ambulance services in 2014 (30%) compared to 2011 (27%). The proportion of respondents who used hospital emergency rooms remained the same for both years (42%).

A smaller proportion and number of respondents reported using food banks, employment, legal, housing help/eviction, parole, newcomer services and transitional housing in 2014 compared to 2011.

**Table 29. Services Used – Total Homeless (2011 to 2014) - Trends**

Services Used (more than 1 possible)	2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
Meal Programs/Soup Kitchens	783	53%	825	46%	42	5%
Emergency Room	617	42%	746	42%	129	21%
Drop-Ins	706	48%	715	40%	9	1%
Health Clinic	722	49%	684	38%	-38	-5%
Outreach	537	36%	609	34%	72	13%
Hospital (non-emergency)	518	35%	573	32%	55	11%
Food Banks	612	41%	535	30%	-77	-13%
Ambulance	400	27%	530	30%	130	33%
Addiction	388	26%	425	24%	37	10%
Employment/Job Help	464	31%	414	23%	-50	-11%
Dental	387	26%	335	19%	-52	-13%
Mental Health	325	22%	335	19%	10	3%
Legal	261	18%	237	13%	-24	-9%
Housing Help/Eviction Prevention	244	16%	226	13%	-18	-7%
Transitional Housing	201	14%	177	10%	-24	-12%
Parole/Services for Ex-Offenders	144	10%	124	7%	-20	-14%
Budgeting/Trusteeship	45	3%	45	3%	0	0%
Newcomer Services	39	3%	29	2%	-10	-26%
Other	127	9%	211	12%	84	66%
None	63	4%	112	6%	49	78%
Total Respondents	1484		1,778			
No Answer	1,166		999			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>			

## 5.2 The Sheltered Homeless

The sheltered homeless were asked how many nights in a row they had stayed at the shelter where they were being surveyed. A similar question was asked in 2011. As in 2011, Table 30 shows that the majority of respondents (68%) spent less than one month at the shelter. This is higher than the proportion of respondents who reported staying in a shelter for one month in 2011 (55%). Information is not available as to why more shelter users stayed for a shorter length of time – (e.g. did they find housing or were they unable/unwilling to stay longer?)

*[Insights from CT or CHTs?]*

In 2014, 69 respondents reported staying at the shelter only one night, while a total of 302 individuals had been there for one week. Table could be revised to show this – but info not available for 2011].

**Table 30. Number of Days in Shelter – Sheltered Homeless (2011 to 2014)**

Number of days in the shelter	2011		2014		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	% Change
1 to 30 days	437	55%	590	68%	153	35%
31 to 90 days	174	22%	157	18%	-17	-10%
91 to 180 days	99	13%	70	8%	-29	-29%
181 to 365 days	71	9%	20	2%	-51	-72%
More than 365 days	10	1%	25	3%	15	150%
Total Respondents	791	100%	862	100%	71	
No Answer	1,101		958			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,892</b>		<b>1,820</b>			

## 5.3 Unsheltered Homeless

### *Where the Unsheltered Homeless Stayed*

As part of the street count survey, interviewers asked the people they approached where they had stayed the previous night. The purpose was to determine if the individual ‘screened in’ (i.e. met the definition of homeless being used for the count) and qualified for the rest of the survey. Individuals who reported staying in a shelter, safe house, transition house, detox, or hospital were screened out because they should have been included as part of the sheltered homeless. People who stayed at someone else’s place were considered homeless and ‘screened in’ – except youth under the age of 25 who were living with a parent were not considered homeless in the count.<sup>12</sup>

Table 31 shows that among the unsheltered homeless population, more than half (56%) had spent the previous night outside or in a vehicle, while 40% stayed at someone else’s place. Other locations included a 24-hour restaurant (e.g. McDonalds and Tim Hortons), an abandoned building or squat, or being in an exploitive situation - with a pimp or client.

<sup>12</sup> Youth under the age of 25 who were living with a parent were not considered homeless, whereas an adult living with a parent was considered homeless. This was based on the expectation that a youth was more likely to be able to remain living at home with their parents than an adult.

The proportion of homeless people who were couch surfing in 2014 (40%) was lower compared to 2011 when 49% of respondents reported staying at someone else's place. It was, however, significantly higher compared to 2008 when 23% of the unsheltered respondents reported staying at someone else's place and in 2005 when 24% reported staying at someone else's place.

**Table 31. Where the Unsheltered Homeless Stayed, 2014**

Location	2014 Unsheltered Homeless	
	#	%
Outside or in a vehicle	536	56%
Someone else's place	381	40%
Other	40	4%
Total Respondents	957	100%
No Answer	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>957</b>	

### *Reason Unsheltered Did Not Stay in Shelter*

The street survey included a question to ask the unsheltered homeless the main reason they did not stay in a shelter the previous night. The most frequent reason was that the individual was able to stay with a friend (27%). This is consistent with the responses given when asked where they stayed the night before the count. The second main reason respondents gave for not staying in a shelter was that they dislike them (21%). Many reasons were given for disliking a shelter, including being uncomfortable with the other people, the rules, theft/violence, finding them dirty/smelly, and preferring to be outside.

Other reasons for not staying in a shelter included not wanting to separate from their spouse/partner or pet, and having an addiction.

**Table 32. Reasons for Not Staying in a Shelter (2008 to 2014)**

Reason (select only one)	2008		2011		2014		Change 2011 to 2014	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	#	% Change
Able to stay with friend	215	15%	274	39%	206	27%	-68	-25%
Dislike	450	32%	169	24%	159	21%	-10	-6%
Turned away - full	225	16%	28	4%	97	13%	69	246%
Don't feel safe	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	59	8%	N/A	N/A
Turned away - other reason	36	3%	15	2%	29	4%	14	93%
Bedbugs/pests	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	3%	N/A	N/A
Can't get to shelter	99	7%	13	2%	13	2%	0	0%
Didn't know about shelters	48	3%	11	2%	10	1%	-1	-9%
Other	322	23%	192	27%	167	22%	-25	-13%
Total Respondents	1,395	100%	702	100%	763	100%		
No Answer	179		56		194			
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>		<b>758</b>		<b>957</b>			

## Trends

It is difficult to compare the responses provided in 2014 because the list of possible responses included on the survey has changed over time. Nevertheless, a few observations can be made. It appears that the proportion of respondents who reported disliking shelters decreased from 32% in 2008 to 24% in 2011 and 21% in 2014. The proportion of respondents who reported not being able to get to a shelter and not knowing about shelters has also decreased since 2008.

In 2014, a significant proportion of respondents (13%) said they did not stay in a shelter because they were turned away. This was much higher compared to 2011 (4%) although less than in 2008 (16%). In 2014, the list of possible reasons for not staying in a shelter included “don’t feel safe” and “bedbugs/pests”. The 2011 report identified bedbugs as a main reason why a person did not stay in a shelter, but the report did not include the actual proportion of respondents.

### *Previous Use of Shelter*

In 2014 and 2008, the street survey asked the unsheltered homeless if they had stayed in a shelter in the last 12 months. This is an important question to determine if the unsheltered homeless *ever* use a shelter. More than half the unsheltered homeless (54%) reported having stayed in a shelter at some point in last 12 months. At the same time, close to half the respondents (46%) reported they did not stay in a shelter. This indicates that gathering information on the homeless population using only shelter data would miss a significant proportion of the homeless population who do not use shelters.

## Trends

The proportion of the homeless population who reported ever staying in a shelter in the previous year in 2014 is virtually the same as in 2008: 53% of respondents reported having stayed in a shelter at some point in the preceding year.

**Table 33. Previous Stay in a Shelter (2008, 2014)**

Did Person Stay in a Shelter in Past Year	2008 Unsheltered Homeless		2014 Unsheltered Homeless	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	790	53%	485	54%
No	689	47%	420	46%
Total Respondents	1,479	100%	905	100%
No Answer	95		52	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>		<b>957</b>	

## 6. Homelessness by Municipal Sub-Region

This section presents the Homeless Count results by municipal sub-regions within the Metro Vancouver region.

### 6.1 Total Homeless Found

A total of 2,777 homeless people were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014. Table 34 shows the distribution of this population according to the municipal sub-region where they were found. As can be seen, 80% of the homeless people were found in Vancouver and Surrey, with Vancouver having the largest concentration (65%), followed by Surrey (15%). The rest of the homeless people were found across the other municipal sub-regions.

**Table 34. Total Homeless by Municipal Sub-Region Found, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless			Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	Adults and Unaccompanied youth	Accompanied children	No Fixed Address	Adults and Unaccompanied youth	Accompanied children	# Homeless	% of Homeless
Burnaby	9	4	1	44	0	58	2%
Delta	10	0	0	5	0	15	1%
Langley	34	1	3	54	0	92	3%
Ridge Meadows	43	0	2	39	0	84	3%
New Westminster	58	12	2	31	3	106	4%
North Shore	51	3	5	59	1	119	4%
Richmond	11	0	5	22	0	38	1%
Surrey	195	15	53	140	0	403	15%
Tri-Cities	27	4	1	21	2	55	2%
Vancouver	1,103	40	124	533	3	1,803	65%
White Rock	0	0	4	0	0	4	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>200<sup>13</sup></b>	<b>948</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Trends

The number of homeless people identified in homeless counts in the region has remained fairly stable since 2008. While the number of homeless people identified in 2014 increased by 5% compared to 2011, between 2008 and 2014, the homeless population increased by only 4%. This is less than the rate of increase for the total Metro Vancouver population, which increased by 8% from 2008 to 2013.

As well, the number of people who were found homeless in each municipal sub-region did not change significantly in 2014 compared to previous years. The number of people who were homeless in the region has remained fairly stable. It is not known whether this is due to greater success in helping people to exit homelessness or if fewer individuals are becoming homeless. A notable 222 more homeless people were identified in Vancouver in 2014 compared to 2011 – further research is needed to determine why.

<sup>13</sup> Among the individuals with No Fixed Address, 100 were in a detox facility, 93 were in a hospital, and 7 were in jail.

**Table 35. Total Homeless by Municipal Sub-Region Found (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2002 Total Homeless	2005 Total Homeless	2008 Total Homeless	2011 Total Homeless	2014 Total Homeless	Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	#	#	#	#	#	%
Burnaby	18	42	86	78	58	-20	-26%
Delta/White Rock	11	12	17	14	19	5	36%
Langley	18	57	86	103	92	-11	-11%
Ridge Meadows	66	44	90	110	84	-26	-24%
New Westminster	74	97	124	132	106	-26	-20%
North Shore	47	90	127	122	119	-3	-2%
Richmond	31	35	56	49	38	-11	-22%
Surrey	171	392	402	400	403	3	1%
Tri-Cities	14	40	94	48	55	7	15%
Vancouver	670	1,364	1,576	1,581	1,803	222	14%
Unspecified	1	1	2	13	0	-13	-100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>2,660</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>5%</b>

## 6.2 Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population

As shown in Table 36, the distribution of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless shows that Vancouver was home to 70% of the total sheltered homeless population, where most of the shelter facilities are located. Although the actual percentages have not been calculated, Table 36 also shows that a higher proportion of the homeless population in Vancouver was sheltered rather than unsheltered, as was the case in Surrey, New Westminster, Ridge Meadows, and the Tri-Cities. On the other hand, in Burnaby, Langley, the North Shore and Richmond, a higher proportion of the homeless people found in these communities was unsheltered rather than sheltered. Appendix D provides additional tables on the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population found in municipal sub-regions since 2008.

**Table 36. Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless by Municipality Found, 2014**

Homeless population by municipality found	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	14	1%	44	5%	58	2%
Delta	10	1%	5	1%	15	1%
Langley	38	2%	54	6%	92	3%
Ridge Meadows	45	2%	39	4%	84	3%
New Westminster	72	4%	34	4%	106	4%
North Shore	59	3%	60	6%	119	4%
Richmond	16	1%	22	2%	38	1%
Surrey	263	14%	140	15%	403	15%
Tri-Cities	32	2%	23	2%	55	2%
Vancouver	1,267	70%	536	56%	1,803	65%
White Rock	4	0%	0	0%	4	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6.3 Mobility of Homeless Population

### *Length of Time in Municipality Found*

One of the key questions of interest to municipalities is the extent that people who are homeless move to other municipalities within the region.

Table 37 shows that 79% of respondents who reported on the length of time they had lived in the city where they were interviewed had lived there for one year or more, and half of them (51%) reported living there 10 years or more. Some individuals reported that they had lived in the city their whole lives. This level of stability is fairly consistent across all the municipal sub-regions although less than half the respondents in Delta/White Rock, Langley, New Westminster, Richmond and the Tri-Cities reported having lived in the city where they were found 10 years or more.

Very few respondents (2%) reported having moved to the city where they were interviewed less than a week before the homeless count. Langley showed the highest percentage of homeless people who had just moved to the city where they were interviewed prior to the homeless count.

**Table 37. Length of Time in Municipality Found, 2014**

Length of time in municipality found	Less than 1 Week		1 Week to under 1 Year		1 Year to under 5 Years		5 Years to under 10 Years		10 Years or More		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	1	2%	7	15%	10	22%	3	7%	25	54%	46	100%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	5	42%	0	0%	3	25%	4	33%	12	100%
Langley	9	12%	23	31%	15	20%	7	9%	21	28%	75	100%
Ridge Meadows	0	0%	11	16%	9	13%	6	9%	42	62%	68	100%
New Westminster	2	3%	23	39%	9	15%	7	12%	18	31%	59	100%
North Shore	2	2%	8	10%	14	17%	4	5%	53	65%	81	100%
Richmond	0	0%	4	14%	8	29%	4	14%	12	43%	28	100%
Surrey	2	1%	45	17%	41	15%	40	15%	144	53%	272	100%
Tri-Cities	0	0%	11	26%	6	14%	5	12%	20	48%	42	100%
Vancouver	16	1%	204	19%	184	17%	110	10%	572	53%	1,086	100%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>100%</b>

### *Where From*

Another key question of interest to municipalities is where people who are homeless come from if they are new to their municipality (i.e. have lived there for less than one year). Table 38 shows that in most municipal sub-regions: Burnaby, Delta/White Rock, Langley, Ridge Meadows, Richmond and Surrey, at least 50% of the homeless people who moved there were from another community within the Metro Vancouver region.

It is interesting to note that most of the homeless people who moved to the Tri-Cities within the year were from another part of BC, and that in Vancouver and the North Shore, most of the homeless people who moved there were from another part of Canada. On the North Shore, this represented 5 individuals. In Vancouver, we see that 117 respondents who had lived in the City for less than one year were from the rest of Canada. It appears that Richmond had the largest proportion of individuals from

another country outside Canada, but this was only one individual out of the 4 respondents who reported being in Richmond for less than one year.

**Table 38. Where From if New to Community Found < 1 year, 2014**

Where from if new to community found < 1 year	Within Metro Vancouver Region		Rest of BC		Rest of Canada		Outside Canada		Total Responses	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	4	57%	1	14%	2	29%	0	0%	7	100%
Delta/White Rock	5	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Langley	18	56%	9	28%	5	16%	0	0%	32	100%
Ridge Meadows	6	60%	3	30%	1	10%	0	0%	10	100%
New Westminster	13	65%	1	5%	6	30%	0	0%	20	100%
North Shore	2	20%	3	30%	5	50%	0	0%	10	100%
Richmond	2	50%	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%	4	100%
Surrey	21	50%	13	31%	8	19%	0	0%	42	100%
Tri-Cities	4	36%	6	55%	1	9%	0	0%	11	100%
Vancouver	30	14%	55	26%	117	56%	6	3%	208	100%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6.4 Age

### Youth

A total of 410 homeless youth (under the age of 25) were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12.<sup>14</sup> Most of these youth were found in Vancouver (62%) followed by Surrey (13%). Region-wide, a higher proportion of youth were unsheltered rather than sheltered, and this was the situation in Burnaby, Langley, Ridge Meadows, Surrey and Vancouver.

**Table 39. Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Youth in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	4	2%	5	2%	9	2%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Langley	2	1%	18	8%	20	5%
Ridge Meadows	7	4%	8	4%	15	4%
New Westminster	16	8%	8	4%	24	6%
North Shore	14	7%	10	5%	24	6%
Richmond	2	1%	0	0%	2	0%
Surrey	25	13%	27	12%	52	13%
Tri-Cities	6	3%	3	1%	9	2%
Vancouver	116	60%	139	64%	255	62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>14</sup> This includes 88 children under the age of 19 with their parents who identified as homeless.



## Seniors

A total of 371 homeless seniors (55 and older) were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12. While most of these seniors were found in Vancouver (55%) and Surrey (17%), a significant proportion was found on the North Shore (8%). In contrast to the findings for homeless youth, region-wide, a higher proportion of seniors were sheltered rather than unsheltered. However, that was not the case in Burnaby, Langley, New Westminster, the North Shore, and Richmond, where most of the homeless seniors were unsheltered.

**Table 40. Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Seniors in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	2	1%	8	5%	10	3%
Delta/White Rock	4	2%	1	1%	5	1%
Langley	6	3%	8	5%	14	4%
Ridge Meadows	9	4%	6	4%	15	4%
New Westminster	5	2%	6	4%	11	3%
North Shore	8	4%	23	15%	31	8%
Richmond	4	2%	7	5%	11	3%
Surrey	45	20%	19	13%	64	17%
Tri-Cities	3	1%	2	1%	5	1%
Vancouver	135	61%	70	47%	205	55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6.5 Aboriginal Status

A total of 582 homeless people identified as Aboriginal in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12. Most of the Aboriginal Peoples were in Vancouver (71%) and Surrey (12%). A higher proportion of Aboriginal Peoples were unsheltered rather than sheltered, and this was the case throughout the region. *[Insights from AHSC?]*

**Table 41. Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Aboriginal People in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	2	1%	11	3%	13	2%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Langley	2	1%	13	4%	15	3%
Ridge Meadows	7	3%	14	4%	21	4%
New Westminster	7	3%	9	3%	16	3%
North Shore	10	4%	13	4%	23	4%
Richmond	0	0%	6	2%	6	1%
Surrey	27	11%	40	12%	67	12%
Tri-Cities	2	1%	4	1%	6	1%
Vancouver	178	76%	237	68%	415	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix A – Homeless Count Volunteers

A total of 954 individuals completed an on-line registration form for the Homeless Count in 2014, while 915 completed a training session and signed waivers to participate. This was a 32% increase compared to 2011, although only a 14% increase compared to 2008. In 2005, 300 volunteers participated throughout the region.

[Need to confirm Aboriginal volunteers].

**Table A1. Total Homeless Count Volunteers (2008 to 2014)**

Sub-Region	2008 Volunteers	2011 Volunteers	2014 Volunteers	Change 2011 to 2014	
				#	% Change
Burnaby	58	99	90	-9	-9%
Delta	0	16	8	-8	-50%
Langley	42	37	45	8	22%
Ridge Meadows	18	33	40	7	21%
New Westminster	48	70	36	-34	-49%
North Shore	60	19	51	32	168%
Richmond	51	39	54	15	38%
Surrey/White Rock	125*	77	162	85	110%
Tri-Cities	45	52	39	-13	-25%
Vancouver	252**	173	330	157	91%
Aboriginal Strategy	71	76	60*	-16	-21%
Shelter Volunteers	36				
<b>Total</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>32%</b>

\*Includes Delta

\*\*Includes volunteers for Pacific Spirit Regional Park, in Electoral Area A.

## Appendix B – No Fixed Address (NFA) Locations

Municipal Sub-Region	No Fixed Address Locations		
	Hospitals	Detox	Jails
Burnaby	Burnaby Hospital	PLEA Youth Detox (Coquitlam and Burnaby)	Burnaby RCMP
Delta	Delta Hospital		
White Rock	Peace Arch Hospital		
Langley	Langley Memorial		Langley RCMP
Ridge Meadows	Ridge Meadows Hospital		
New Westminster	Royal Columbian Hospital		New West Police Department
North Shore	Lions Gate Hospital		West Vancouver Police Department
North Shore	Magnolia House		North Vancouver RCMP
Richmond	Richmond Hospital		Richmond RCMP
Richmond	Bridge House		
Surrey	Yale Road Centre	Creekside Withdrawal Management	Surrey RCMP
Surrey	Surrey Memorial	Quibble Creek Sobering and Assessment Centre	
Tri-Cities	Eagle Ridge Hospital	PLEA Youth Detox (Coquitlam and Burnaby)	Port Moody Police
Tri-Cities			Coquitlam RCMP
Vancouver	UBC Hospital	FSGV Youth Detox	Vancouver Police Department
Vancouver	Vancouver General Hospital	Salvation Army Cordova Detox (Harbourlight)	
Vancouver	St. Paul's Hospital	Vancouver Detox	
Vancouver	Mt. St. Joseph's Hospital		
Vancouver	BC Women's and Children's Hospital		

## Appendix C – Shelter Facility Locations

Surveyed Shelters, Safe Houses and Transition Houses	Municipality	Type	Capacity
Burnaby EWS	Burnaby	Shelter	27
Fraserdale Short Stay Shelter	Burnaby	Shelter	10
Dixon House	Burnaby	Transition	10
Scottsdale House	Delta	Shelter	10
Salvation Army Gateway of Hope	Langley	Shelter	32
Ishtar Transition House	Langley	Transition	6
Iron Horse Youth Safe House	Maple Ridge	Safe	5
Salvation Army Caring Place	Maple Ridge	Shelter	40
Cythera Transition House - CLOSED	Maple Ridge	Transition	0
Elizabeth Gurney House	New West	Shelter	8
Fraserside Family Shelter	New West	Shelter	12
New West EWS	New West	Shelter	27
Russell Housing	New West	Shelter	16
Stevenson House, Salvation Army	New West	Shelter	14
Monarch Place	New West	Transition	8
North Shore Youth Safe House	North Vancouver	Safe	8
North Shore Shelter - Lookout	North Vancouver	Shelter	45
Sage Transition House	North Vancouver	Transition	18
Joys Place Transition House	Port Coquitlam	Transition	6
Bridge Shelter/Hope for Freedom	Port Moody	Shelter	30
Richmond House, Salvation Army	Richmond	Shelter	10
Nova Transition House	Richmond	Transition	10
All Nations Youth Safe House	Surrey	Safe	6
Servants Anonymous	Surrey	Safe	21
Cynthias Place	Surrey	Shelter	14
Hyland House - Cloverdale	Surrey	Shelter	10
Hyland House - Newton	Surrey	Shelter	35
Keys Gateway	Surrey	Shelter	40
Maxxine Wright Shelter	Surrey	Shelter	12
Sheenas Place (Family)	Surrey	Shelter	12
SUMS EWS	Surrey	Shelter	60
Ama Transition House	Surrey	Transition	7
Durrant House	Surrey	Transition	10
Evergreen Transition House	Surrey	Transition	10
Shimai Transition House	Surrey	Transition	10
Virginia Sam - CLOSED	Surrey	Transition	0
Aboriginal Youth Safe House	Vancouver	Safe	7
Walden Safe House -FSGV	Vancouver	Safe	9
201 Central St Aboriginal Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	100
412 Womens Emergency Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	50
Anderson Lodge	Vancouver	Shelter	10
Belkin House	Vancouver	Shelter	72
Belkin House Downtown Community Court	Vancouver	Shelter	11

Catholic Charities	Vancouver	Shelter	102
Covenant House Drake	Vancouver	Shelter	24
Covenant House Pender	Vancouver	Shelter	30
First Baptist Church	Vancouver	Shelter	25
First United Church	Vancouver	Shelter	60
Lookout Downtown	Vancouver	Shelter	47
Lookout Yukon	Vancouver	Shelter	71
New Fountain, PHS	Vancouver	Shelter	46
Powell Place, Bloom	Vancouver	Shelter	52
Raincity Ontario	Vancouver	Shelter	45
Raincity Richards	Vancouver	Shelter	37
Raincity Triage	Vancouver	Shelter	28
SA Beacon	Vancouver	Shelter	60
SA Crosswalk	Vancouver	Shelter	36
SA Have	Vancouver	Shelter	40
Salvation Army Anchor of Hope	Vancouver	Shelter	40
Springhouse Bloom	Vancouver	Shelter	32
Union Gospel Mission	Vancouver	Shelter	72
Union Gospel Mission Day Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	20
Vi Fineday	Vancouver	Shelter	18
Helping Spirit Lodge	Vancouver	Transition	12
Kate Booth Transition House	Vancouver	Transition	25
Vancouver Rape Relief	Vancouver	Transition	7

## Appendix D - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population Found in Municipal Sub-Regions since 2008.

**Table D1. Sheltered Homeless in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2008 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2008 Sheltered Homeless		2011 Sheltered Homeless		2014 Sheltered Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% change
Burnaby	9	1%	8	0%	14	1%	6	75%
Delta/White Rock*	6	1%	1	0%	14	1%	13	1300%
Langley	12	1%	43	2%	38	2%	-5	-12%
Ridge Meadows	50	5%	47	2%	45	2%	-2	-4%
New Westminster	52	5%	91	5%	72	4%	-19	-21%
North Shore	60	6%	67	4%	59	3%	-8	-12%
Richmond	19	2%	15	1%	16	1%	1	7%
Surrey	95	9%	170	9%	263	14%	93	55%
Tri-Cities	18	2%	20	1%	32	2%	12	60%
Vancouver	765	70%	1,427	75%	1267	70%	-160	-11%
Unspecified	0	0%	3	0%	0	0%	-3	-100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-72</b>	<b>-4%</b>

**Table D2. Unsheltered Homeless in Metro Vancouver by Sub-Region (2008 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2008 Unsheltered Homeless		2011 Unsheltered Homeless		2014 Unsheltered Homeless		Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	% change
Burnaby	77	5%	70	9%	44	5%	-26	-37%
Delta/White Rock	11	1%	13	2%	5	1%	-8	-62%
Langley	74	5%	60	8%	54	6%	-6	-10%
Ridge Meadows	40	3%	63	8%	39	4%	-24	-38%
New Westminster	72	5%	41	5%	34	4%	-7	-17%
North Shore	67	4%	55	7%	60	6%	5	9%
Richmond	37	2%	34	4%	22	2%	-12	-35%
Surrey	307	20%	230	30%	140	15%	-90	-39%
Tri-Cities	76	5%	28	4%	23	2%	-5	-18%
Vancouver	811	52%	154	20%	536	56%	382	248%
Unspecified	2	0%	10	1%	0	0%	-10	-100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>26%</b>

## **Appendix E – Shelter Survey**

## **Appendix F – Street Survey**

CONFIDENTIAL

## Agenda Item 4.1d

RSCH Constituency Table Meeting Date: June 12, 2014

To: RSCH Constituency Table

From: Deborah Kraus, Project Manager, Homeless Count

Date: May 30, 2013

Subject: **2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region – draft final report and debrief**

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*Recommendations:*

1. That the RSCH Constituency Table review the draft report on the results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region and provide feedback at the meeting.
  2. That the RSCH Constituency Table approve the draft report on the results of the 2014 Homeless Count subject to the feedback provided at the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and to final review and approval by the CT Chair.
  3. That the RSCH Constituency Table review the attached report on comments and suggestions received to date on the homeless count and provide additional input and feedback at the meeting.
- 

### 1. PURPOSE

To provide the RSCH with the following two draft reports for feedback and discussion:

- Draft Report on the Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region
- 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region - Process Review: Comments and Suggestions

### 2. CONTEXT

The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH) has been responsible for overseeing the implementation of regional homeless counts. In 2014, the homeless count was a deliverable under the work program provided by Metro Vancouver to Service Canada under the HPS funding.

The homeless count was conducted on March 12, 2014 and the preliminary results were released April 23, 2014. The final report is scheduled to be released by the end of July 2014.

The Terms of Reference for the homeless count, approved by the RSCH Constituency Table (CT) on June 13, 2013, provided for a post-count evaluation to be conducted with key participants, including community volunteers, partners and staff. It was noted that the instruments of the evaluation would include an electronic survey and personal interviews.



### **3. DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Draft Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region**

The attached draft report is being presented to the CT to provide an early opportunity for discussion before a final report is prepared for release in July.

#### **3.2 Feedback on the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region**

The CT meeting presents an opportunity for discussion about the homeless count and for CT members to provide input that can assist with future planning. The attached report is a summary of community feedback received to date and presents a starting point for discussion. It is based primarily on debriefing meetings with members of the homeless count Implementation Committee, including Area, Shelter and Youth Strategy Coordinators and the Youth Steering Committee.

Overall, participants in the debriefing meetings and surveys expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the 2014 Homeless Count. However, there was also a high degree of dissatisfaction with the results of the count - that the numbers do not provide an accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the region.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

The Constituency Table is asked to review the attached documents for discussion at the meeting on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

The CT is also asked to approve the draft report on the Homeless Count, subject to the feedback provided at the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and to final review and approval by the CT Chair.

#### **Attachments:**

- 1) DRAFT report on the Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region
- 2) 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region - Process Review: Comments and Suggestions, May 23, 2014.

### **2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region Process Review: Comments and Suggestions, May 23, 2014**

#### **Background**

This report summarizes community feedback received to date on the methodology and process to implement the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region. The report is based on a debriefing meeting with homeless count coordinators, including the Area, Shelter, and Youth Strategy Coordinators and volunteers from Community Homelessness Tables, as well as a debriefing meeting with members of the homeless count Youth Steering Committee. A complete list of homeless count coordinators is attached (Appendix A) and a list of Youth Steering Committee (YSC) members is also attached (Appendix B). The YSC included a mix of representatives from organizations that work with youth who are homeless and at risk as well as young people affiliated with these organizations.

This report also includes quantitative results of a brief online survey sent to the coordinators (Appendix C) and preliminary quantitative results of a survey sent to volunteers who signed up to participate in the homeless count (Appendix D). A review of qualitative responses to questions about what volunteers enjoyed most and least about participating in the count as well as comments and suggestions will be provided in a future report.

This report does not include a debriefing with the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee about the Aboriginal Strategy for the Homeless Count. A debriefing meeting should be held in the near future.

#### **Summary**

Overall, participants in the debriefing meetings and surveys expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the 2014 Homeless Count. However, there was also a high degree of dissatisfaction with the results of the count – that the numbers do not provide an accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the region.

More than 900 volunteers participated in the homeless count. Most volunteers reported that they felt the training session they attended prepared them for the count, they understood their role in the count, they were able to adequately cover their assigned routes during the count, and they felt safe during their shifts.

#### **Discussion Points**

- There is a serious mismatch between agency perceptions about the number of homeless people they serve and the number of homeless people identified in the count.
- Communities have expressed concerns and frustration that the homeless count does not provide an accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the Metro

Vancouver region. However, if significant changes are made to the methodology, this will affect the ability to identify trends.

- Several suggestions have been identified to assist in planning for future counts.
- A debriefing session needs to be held with the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee and Infocus Consulting for feedback on the Aboriginal Strategy.

## **Feedback on the 2014 Homeless Count, Metro Vancouver Region**

### **A. Homeless Count Coordinators – Implementation Committee**

#### **Overall Methodology**

According to homeless count coordinators who participated in the debriefing meeting on April 11, 2014 and responded to the survey, the process to implement the 2014 homeless count was as good as it could possibly be. Committee members said they appreciated the support they received from the Homelessness Secretariat and were satisfied that the Secretariat had addressed community concerns identified with the 2011 Homeless Count. They felt that the count was well organized.

Nevertheless, several committee members expressed frustration that no matter how good a job they do with the count and regardless of their 'extraordinary efforts' to implement the count, the results do not provide an accurate estimate of the number of people who are homelessness in the community. It was reported that this may be especially true in suburban communities with low density and large park areas. Committee members identified several specific concerns which they said may make their communities question the value of point-in-time homeless counts and whether communities will continue to support homeless counts if they continue to follow the same methodology. It was suggested that if concerns with the count methodology are not addressed, it may be difficult to recruit participants in future counts. Committee members identified several specific concerns with the count methodology described below.

- 1. The numbers do not reflect the true extent of homelessness.** Concern was expressed that homeless count numbers are lower than the actual number of people who are homeless because many people who are homeless do not want to be identified and prefer to remain hidden. It was also suggested that people who are homeless may be tired of being surveyed since they may not see any benefits as a result of participating in past counts and they are often asked to participate in surveys. On the night of the count, homeless people were being asked to participate in a much longer survey commissioned by another agency. It was also observed that it can be difficult to locate people who are homeless – "even if we know the people who are homeless in our community and we know they are out there". It was suggested that finding a person who is homeless can be like finding a needle in a haystack, and that interviewers could miss a person who is only a block away.
- 2. A number of factors may affect the results in a homeless count - although it is difficult to determine to the exact impact.** For the 2014 Homeless Count, it was suggested that because of the great weather that day, some people may have stayed outside instead of using shelters. Agencies reported that fewer people accessed services on the day of the count than usual, and this too may have been because of the great weather. It was also noted that movies were being filmed in Fort

Langley and at a park in Maple Ridge, which could have displaced some people who were homeless. As well, one community had a greater police presence than usual (due to a previous crime in the neighbourhood), which could have displaced some people who were homeless.

3. **Homeless count numbers are not consistent with community perceptions based on the number of people agencies are serving on a daily basis.** It was reported that in some communities where count numbers were down, agencies are finding an increase in the demand for their services. This contributes to frustrations with the count – that it does not provide an accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless and does not reflect the demand for services. In some communities, experienced outreach workers did not find a single homeless person – although they found evidence of camps – which contributes to their assessment that the count does not reflect the true number of people who are homeless in a community.
4. **Homeless count results may be used against community efforts to address homelessness.** It was noted that homeless count results can be used to justify *not* taking action to address the problem – if the numbers are considered too small – or are going down. On the other hand, if numbers are up, communities may be criticized for not doing enough.
5. **Homeless count numbers are used “as is” regardless of limitations with the methodology.** Concern was expressed that even though reports clearly state that the count is an undercount, everyone still uses the count numbers for policy and planning. “People don’t hear ‘undercount’”, but just see the numbers in the reports.
6. **Does the homeless count have any impact on services to address homelessness?** It was reported that there is growing concern and frustration in some communities that the count is not having an impact on services and despite demonstrated need, people who have been homeless for years are still unable to access housing and services. In one community, a memorial service was recently held for a person who had been included in the last 3 counts. On the other hand, one community reported that identifying a large number of homeless youth in one count had resulted in increased services.

The following suggestions were made to implement alternatives to the Count and to improve the methodology to achieve a more accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the region:

1. Utilize existing data from social service agencies to provide more comprehensive data on the homeless population.
2. Update and utilize pre-existing pilot studies that have implemented a methodology to estimate the extent of hidden homelessness.
3. **Conduct more research and consultation on ways to obtain more accurate information about the homeless population and improve the count methodology.** Consideration should be given to the following:

- Conduct the count on several occasions at different times of the day to see what impact these differences have on the results (e.g. like a parking study).
  - Conduct the count over a longer period of time.
  - Conduct the count at specific, more targeted times during the day when it is more likely to find people who are homeless (e.g. early in the morning).
  - Conduct phone surveys - many people who are homeless have cell phones, and this could work well for youth and women.
4. **Engage the Aboriginal community and organizations earlier on.** Further work is necessary to support Aboriginal organizations to help with the count and make it culturally appropriate.
  5. **Revise the suggested introduction to the survey.** Volunteers should say they are doing a survey about housing instead of saying they are a volunteer working on the 2014 Homeless Count.

### Training Sessions

Altogether, the Homelessness Secretariat worked with the Area and Shelter Coordinators to organize 16 training sessions throughout the region. This included a designated training session for volunteers with the Aboriginal Strategy in Vancouver. In addition, the Youth Coordinator provided on-site training to many groups around the region, the Surrey coordinators organized a special session for city staff, and the Tri-Cities coordinator held an additional session for volunteers who signed up after the initial training session in that community. These additional sessions worked well and made it possible for more agencies and volunteers to participate in the count. Committee members identified the following issues to be addressed with future training for the Homeless count.

1. **Alternatives need to be considered for professional staff who work with people who are homeless.** Comments were made that requiring training for professional staff who work directly with people who are homeless created barriers to their participation in the count. On the other hand, it was felt that these individuals should attend training to complete the survey properly and that it was good for all participants in the count to receive the same training on both the survey and how to approach people who are homeless. It was also noted that there was some benefit to providing an opportunity for professional staff to chat with community volunteers at a training session and that it worked well to have shelter staff meet with their volunteers before the count. A number of ideas were suggested for future consideration, including providing online training for professionals and providing more local/small group sessions.
2. **Enable volunteers to register for a training session when they first sign up to be a volunteer.** Committee members reported that the count lost some volunteers because they were unable to attend a training session. Two of the main concerns were that volunteers didn't know the training dates when they first signed up and it was complicated for volunteers to get back into the website to register for training after they had completed the initial sign-up. It was recommended that all the training dates and locations be determined before volunteers are recruited so that volunteers are aware of all the training dates and can register for a training session when they sign up to be a volunteer.

- 3. Enable volunteers to choose the training session they want when they sign up.** Committee members identified several advantages to having volunteers attend a training session in their community. This provided an opportunity for them to meet their coordinator, ask questions about their particular shift, and meet their count partner. It was also observed that it was ideal to have shelter volunteers attend a training session designed for them, where they could meet their shelter coordinator, shelter staff in their community and the other volunteers they would be working with in the shelter. However, it was recognized that it would not be realistic to hold two separate workshops for shelter and non-shelter volunteers in each community outside Vancouver and that some volunteers signed up to work in a shelter as well as on the street. Nevertheless, it was agreed that it worked well where shelter staff and volunteers were able to meet during training.

In general, there was consensus that volunteers should be able to register for the training session that works best for them, regardless of whether or not it is in their community or whether it is specifically for shelter volunteers rather than street volunteers. In practice, about 85 to 90 percent of volunteers went to a training session in their own community.

- 4. Hold the training sessions as late as possible before the count and provide greater flexibility for local groups to conduct their own training.** One of the training goals for 2014 included organizing sessions throughout the region to accommodate all the volunteers. At the same time, communities thought it would be good to have the Project Manager and an outreach expert (i.e. Judy Graves) to attend as many sessions as possible to they could deliver consistent messages to all volunteers.

Given these objectives, it was not possible for all the sessions to be held in the last week before the count. However, it was felt that some of the earlier sessions were too early – since volunteers were still signing up – and as a result, it was necessary to add another session later. Some of the communities also identified a need for additional small group sessions. It was suggested that in the future, local coordinators be trained to conduct sessions in their communities without the Project Manager – so more sessions could be held in the last week before the count.

- 5. Other.** Other suggestions included:

- Consider potential differences among communities and that some recommended practices/suggestions may be different from the usual practice in the community.
- Provide an opportunity to role-play and practice asking the survey questions during the training session.

### **Special events for people who are homeless**

A number of communities organized special events – at considerable effort – to facilitate participation in the Homeless Count. The question was raised as to whether or not these were effective. One community reported that there were 5 events and they were not well attended by people who were homeless. Questions were raised as to whether this was due to the great weather.

### **Shelter count**

The Shelter Coordinator for all the sub-regions, (except Vancouver which coordinated all volunteers within the city), reported that all the shelters participated in the count. Staff played a key role in supporting volunteers and all the volunteers showed up for their shifts. There was a perception among

shelter staff that the number of people seeking a shelter bed may have been less than usual and that this may have been because of the great weather. It was noted that the Shelter Occupancy Form provided to shelter operators should be on coloured paper so it doesn't get lost with all the other printed materials.

### **Supplies and incentives**

In some communities, it was reported that cigarettes were a big hit. However, the Shelter Coordinator said that many of the shelters would prefer that the Homeless Count not provide cigarettes. For youth, the bus tickets were a great alternative to cigarettes this year. Alternatives to cigarettes are recommended for the next count.

### **Administration**

The following comments and suggestions were made for future counts:

- Make sure the software/process makes a distinction between true volunteers and professional staff who are participating in the count as part of their employment.
- Address inequities in funding among communities. Surrey should have an additional coordinator. It was noted that the Tri-Cities includes 3 different municipalities that requires meetings with 3 sets of by-law officers.
- Organizing/implementing the count is tedious and time consuming work. It is important for communities to track the actual amount of time it takes to implement the count.
- At least half the coordinators put in more hours than they were compensated for, and this will need to be addressed in future counts.
- The waivers and attendance sheets were very helpful for coordinators to track if their volunteers had attended a training session and signed the waiver – although this required a great deal of administration time.
- It was complicated if a person signed up for both the shelter and street count – because area coordinators didn't know if they could use the volunteer or not.
- Municipal support to create maps was very helpful and much appreciated. It was noted that it would be great if all municipalities could provide this support.

## **B. Youth Steering Committee**

### **Overall Youth Strategy**

Participants at the Youth Steering Committee (YSC) debriefing meeting on April 11, 2014 agreed that the Youth Strategy worked very well. This included creating the YSC and revising the strategy to include both a youth outreach component and on-site interviews.<sup>1</sup> Participants agreed that the YSC played a key role in developing the overall strategy, getting the message out for youth to 'count themselves in', and suggesting the use of bus tickets as an ice-breaker for survey participants. There was consensus that the posters and cards developed through the initiative of the Youth Strategy were very well received by everyone involved in the count. YSC members also reported that information-sharing with youth agencies was much better compared to previous counts. This gave agencies more time to prepare for the count and enabled more staff to participate in the count.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2011 the focus was on encouraging youth to come to designated 'hub' locations.

YSC members congratulated the Youth Coordinator for her efforts – particularly for working with and listening to the youth agencies, providing on-site training, attending numerous networking meetings throughout the region to engage youth service professionals and front-line workers and explain the importance of the count and relevance to their organizations, and completing a tremendous amount of work in a very short period of time. The YSC considered several issues regarding the count methodology and implementation process described below.

1. **The outreach and youth ‘hubs’ approach worked well.** YSC members agreed that it worked well to have both an outreach focus - where youth outreach workers went out on count day to conduct interviews with youth – as well as a ‘hub’ focus that involved activities and on-site volunteers to conduct interviews with the youth. In addition, it worked well for agencies to build on regular activities that were already taking place during the count – rather than creating new events to attract youth who wouldn’t otherwise be planning to come to the agency during the count.
2. **The numbers do not reflect the true extent of youth homelessness.** Concern was expressed that homeless counts don’t reflect the actual number of youth who are homeless - or who need help and services to end and prevent homelessness. YSC members pointed out that homeless youth are not the same as homeless adults. They are much less visible. And homelessness for youth can take many forms: living in unsafe situations, couch surfing – staying temporarily with friends, as well as being out on the streets. It was also observed that many young people don’t consider themselves homeless or want to admit they are homeless. Agency members on the YSC reported that many of the young people they normally see didn’t come in on the day of the count and suggested that this may have been due to the great weather that day.
3. **Consider new approaches to reach youth.** It was noted that young people like on-line surveys and that this approach should be considered for reaching youth who are homeless. It was also observed that most young people have cell phones and it would be helpful if youth workers could call the youth they are working with during the count. The question was raised as to whether youth could have the option to fill out their own surveys.
4. **The survey should consider the different nature of homelessness for youth.** It was pointed out that the definition of homeless used for the survey may not work well for young people. The definition is problematic for youth because they usually don’t pay rent, and many people believe that a young person living in an SRO should be considered homeless. The definition of homelessness to be used for youth should be more clear (i.e. if staying with a friend, parent or relative – are they homeless or not).<sup>2</sup> In addition, in some communities, a young person may be living at home, but without their parents. They have a roof over their heads, but is this really a home? It was suggested that the survey should ask young people, “What does homelessness mean for you?” and should be much more comprehensive. On the other hand, it was suggested that we need to respect the purpose of the count - to obtain objective data and be able to identify trends, and that the survey was long enough.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: In 2014, youth were considered homeless if they were staying with a friend or relative. They were not considered homeless if they were staying with their parent.



5. **Some changes should be made to the survey.** It was suggested that the introduction to the survey should talk about doing a housing survey instead of a homeless count and that the question about the number of times a person was homeless was very confusing. One person thought the survey was repetitive - especially the health questions that required asking about each individual type of health condition.
6. **More time is needed to plan and implement the youth strategy.** It was reported that the Youth Coordinator was engaged the first week in January and the YSC met for the first time on January 17<sup>th</sup>. [Note funding was approved mid-December]. Concern was expressed that this was not enough time for the work that needed to be done, that planning for the youth strategy was too rushed and that there was not enough time to implement some of the good suggestions that had been made.<sup>3</sup> It was noted that it takes time to identify all the youth agencies and networks in the region, to coordinate and set up meetings with them, to engage with them, and for the agencies to do their own planning and engagement for the count. It takes even more time in communities where youth agencies are not organized. Some organizations funded by MCFD had been concerned about using staff time to work on the count. It was suggested that a lead agency should be identified in each community to coordinate with the youth agencies to assist with setting up meetings, training, distributing survey packages, and collecting completed surveys.
7. **Providing food to young people that they enjoy is an effective way to encourage participation.** It was reported that different agencies used their food budget (\$5/person) in different ways and that this flexibility worked very well. As one youth volunteer said, “good food is really important!” One agency ordered in Thai food, which was very well received, at another agency, some young people baked cupcakes, while another agency purchased Tim Horton’s cards. It was reported that each of these initiatives ‘got a great response’ from the youth and helped volunteers and outreach workers connect with more young people. YSC members believe this enabled more surveys to be completed than would have been possible without the food.
8. **Further consultation with the youth sector is needed about the appropriate role for youth volunteers in the count and how to engage youth in the count.** It was found that while the youth agencies did a good job engaging their staff to participate in the count, it was more challenging to engage youth volunteers. It was suggested that the agencies needed more time to engage young people. A key challenge was for the agencies to identify appropriate roles for the youth. For example, outreach staff generally work in pairs. They have set protocols and a safety plan, and it was unclear how including a youth volunteer would work with this. Nevertheless, a few outreach workers did include a youth volunteer. Concerns were also expressed about the potential for youth to be put in situations where they would be interviewing youth that they knew. It was also noted that the count requires volunteers to be 19 and over – which limited the number of potential youth volunteers. It was suggested that some options be considered for future counts – and that perhaps youth under the age of 19 could be teamed-up with an older youth. While there weren’t as many youth volunteers involved in conducting surveys as had been anticipated, there was consensus that the youth who were involved did a great job and enjoyed the experience.

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<sup>3</sup> This included making a video to explain to young people why it is important to ‘count themselves in’ and why the count matters.

## **Training**

There was consensus that the on-site training provided by the Youth Coordinator made it easier for more agencies to participate in the count. There was also some positive feedback about the regular training sessions – that they worked well and volunteers felt well-prepared after the training. However, it was suggested that some of the stereotypes provided about how to identify homeless adults didn't fit the youth experience. It was suggested that if training about homeless youth is to be part of the mainstream training sessions, there should be a designated speaker with experience working with homeless youth. In addition, the training sessions need to recognize the difference between youth and adults who are homeless. They should also take into account that some homeless youth will be attending the training sessions and that homeless youth who are volunteering for the count do not need to be told how to approach homeless youth. There was consensus that the youth strategy should also provide for youth-specific training sessions – separate from the mainstream training sessions, and that youth should be involved in providing training for youth volunteers. It was also suggested that a video training package be created for professional volunteers on how to complete the survey.

## **Administration and Information**

The following comments and suggestions were made for future counts:

- Engage the Youth Coordinator at least 6 months in advance to facilitate improved information and engagement and attendance at network meetings.
- Ensure that a Youth Steering Committee is created to plan and prepare for the count.
- Clearly separate the administration of youth count volunteers from adult count volunteers. There should be a separate sign-up process for these volunteers.
- Create a youth-oriented video about the homeless count and why it is important for youth to participate.
- Prepare count posters and cards ready at least 2 to 3 months before the count.
- Find ways to limit trips to agencies by combining information meetings, training and the delivery of count packages.
- Allow for more time to collect and return survey packages (1 to 2 weeks).
- Enter into a partnership with a courier company – ask them to donate their time for a good cause.

## **C. Aboriginal Strategy**

A debriefing meeting should be scheduled.

## **D. Volunteers**

To Come. A brief survey was distributed to 959 individuals. By May 19, 200 responses were received. May 23<sup>rd</sup> is the deadline for responses. See Appendix B for quantitative responses to date.

## Appendix A – Homeless Count Coordinators

<b>Municipal Sub-Region</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>
Burnaby	Don Rock
Burnaby	Wanda Mulholland (Volunteer)
Delta	Barbara Westlake
Langley	Gaye Tims
Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows	Jessie Mather-Lingley
New Westminster	Linda Asgeirsson
North Shore	Lynne Henshaw
Richmond	Lynda Brummit
Surrey/White Rock	Jacopo Miro
Surrey/White Rock	Susan Keeping
Surrey/White Rock	Jonquil Hallgate (Volunteer)
Tri-Cities	Polly Krier
Vancouver	Liza Jimenez
Shelters - Vancouver	Jennifer Hales
Shelters - Outside Vancouver	Michelle Ninow
Aboriginal Strategy	Infocus Consulting
Youth Strategy	Cynthia Farnsworth
Metro Vancouver	Debbie Kraus (Project Manager)
Metro Vancouver	Leanne Carmichael (Administrator)
Metro Vancouver	Margaret Eberle (Advisor)

## Appendix B -2014 Homeless Count Youth Steering Committee

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Name</b>
Options Community Services	Heather Lynch and Joe Woodworth
McCreary Centre Society	Annie Smith
Pacific Community Resources Society(PCRS)	Michelle Shaw
Vancouver Foundation	Kris Archie
Youth Representative	Wioletta Krason
Youth Representative	Sarah Perrin
Youth Representative	Chris Tait
Youth Representative	Ashley Crossan
Youth Representative	Shawnee Gaffney
Youth Representative	Kali Sedgemore
Youth Strategy Coordinator	Cynthia Farnsworth
Project Manager	Debbie Kraus

## Appendix C – Survey Responses from Coordinators

The survey was sent to the Shelter, Area, and Youth Coordinators and volunteers from a few of the Community Homelessness Tables (total of 15).

1. I received enough information from the Homelessness Secretariat to understand what I was expected to do to implement the count (e.g. my tasks/responsibilities).

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Number	0	0	0	5	8	13
Percent	0%	0%	0%	38%	62%	100%

2. I received prompt answers to my questions from the Homelessness Secretariat to implement the count.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Number	0	0	0	2	11	13
Percent	0%	0%	0%	15%	85%	100%

3. The time period (number of weeks/months) to complete my work to prepare for the count was adequate.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Number	0	3	0	5	5	13
Percent	0%	23%	0%	38%	38%	100%

4. The number of hours estimated for my position was adequate to implement the count.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Number	2	7	0	4	0	13
Percent	15%	54%	0%	31%	0%	100%

5. I received adequate support from the Homelessness Secretariat for the training sessions.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Number	0	0	1	5	7	13
Percent	0%	0%	8%	38%	54%	100%

6. I received sufficient supplies for the volunteer packages (e.g. enough packages, surveys etc.)

Answer Options	Not enough		Enough		Too much	Total
Number	0	0	4	6	3	13
Percent	0%	0%	31%	46%	23%	100%

## Appendix D – Survey Responses from Volunteers – to date

1. Overall, I felt the training session I attended prepared me for the Homeless Count.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	No Answer
Number	4	5	13	95	80	197	3
Percent	2%	3%	7%	48%	41%	100%	

2. I understood the expectations of my role in the Homeless Count.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	No Answer
Number	4	1	0	102	89	196	4
Percent	2%	1%	0%	52%	45%	100%	

3. I was able to adequately cover my assigned area/route in the time allotted for the Homeless Count.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	No Answer
Number	5	13	10	86	84	198	2
Percent	3%	7%	5%	43%	42%	100%	

4. I felt safe during my assigned shift.

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Rating Average	No Answer
Number	3	5	8	78	104	198	2
Percent	2%	3%	4%	39%	53%	100%	

## Agenda Item 4.4

RSCH Constituency Table Meeting Date: June 12, 2014

To: RSCH Constituency Table

From: Alice Sundberg, Chair, Regional Homelessness Plan Advisory Group

Date: May 29, 2014

Subject: **Regional Homelessness Plan – Draft Priorities and Strategies**

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*Recommendations:*

1. That the RSCH Constituency Table approves a recommendation from the Regional Homelessness Plan (RHP) Advisory Group for the RSCH to send a letter to the Mayors and Members of Council within Metro Vancouver along with a copy of the Priorities and Strategies report prepared by CitySpaces in January, 2014.

2. That the RSCH Constituency Table approves a recommendation from the RHP Advisory Group to invite members of the Constituency Table, the Funders Table, the Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) Housing, Social Issues Subcommittees and/or Municipal Council, and representatives from the Community Homelessness Tables and Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee to a workshop with the RHP Advisory Group as described in this report.

3. That the RSCH Constituency Table receives this report from the RHP Advisory Group for information.

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### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to:

- Obtain approval from the RSCH Constituency Table to send a letter to the Mayors and Members of Council within Metro Vancouver along with a copy of the Priorities and Strategies report prepared by CitySpaces Consulting in January, 2014.
- Update the RSCH Constituency Table on the meeting of the Regional Homelessness Plan (RHP) Advisory Group held May 22, 2014.
- Obtain approval from the RSCH Constituency Table to invite members of the Constituency Table, the Funders Table, the Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) Housing, Social Issues Subcommittees and/or Municipal Council, and representatives from the Community Homelessness Tables and Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee to a workshop with the RHP Advisory Group to develop the draft Regional Homelessness Plan on July 24, 2014.

## **2. CONTEXT**

In the fall of 2013, the RSCH began the process of preparing a new Regional Homelessness Plan to replace the current plan, known as *3 Ways to Home*. This work was a deliverable under the work program provided by Metro Vancouver to Service Canada under HPS funding. The RSCH is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the Regional Homelessness Plan. This work is being guided by the RHP Advisory Group.

The RSCH Constituency Table (CT) approved Terms of Reference for developing a new Regional Homelessness Plan on September 19, 2013. It approved priorities and strategies to inform the next stages of work to develop the new Regional Homelessness Plan on March 13, 2014.

The RHP Advisory Group met on Thursday, May 22, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to review what has been accomplished to date in moving forward to develop a new Regional Homelessness Plan and to discuss next steps. Issues addressed by the Advisory Group are presented below.

## **3. DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Distribution of the Priorities and Strategies report to Mayors and Members of Council**

At its meeting on March 13, the CT approved the priorities and strategies outlined in the Priorities and Strategies report prepared by CitySpaces, with one amendment, and agreed to circulate the revised report to RSCH members and community stakeholders who were invited to participate in the Let's Talk Ending Homelessness consultations, for information. This report was sent to RSCH members and community stakeholders on April 11, 2014.

At its meeting on April 3, 2014, the Housing Subcommittee of the Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) asked for the Priorities and Strategies report to be sent to municipalities, including the Mayors and members of Council. The RHP Advisory Group was asked to consider this issue and make a recommendation to the CT because the previous motion in March did not specifically include sending the report to the Mayors and members of Council.

The RHP Advisory Group agreed to recommend that the RSCH send a letter to the Mayors and members of Council along with the Priorities and Strategies report. It was noted that municipalities will eventually be asked to endorse the new Plan and that municipalities should be kept informed at key stages in the process. It was further agreed that the letter should note that the Community Homelessness Tables are engaged in developing the new Plan and that a copy of the letter should be sent to the Chair of the Council of the Community Homelessness Tables. A draft of this letter is attached.

### **3.2 Progress to date in developing the Regional Homelessness Plan**

The following documents have been completed as part of the process to develop the new Regional Homelessness Plan and are posted on the <http://stophomelessness.ca> website:

- Terms of Reference for a new Regional Homelessness Plan for the Metro Vancouver region, September 2013
- Priorities and Strategies Report, January 2014
- Regional Inventory of Facilities and Services to Address Homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region, May 2014

### **3.3 Planning Workshop and Next steps to develop the draft Regional Homelessness Plan**

It was noted that the goal is to provide a draft plan for approval by the CT at its September meeting. The following next steps were identified to accomplish this.



**a) Review and Highlight Changes in the Inventory of Facilities and Services since 2003**

RHP Advisory Group members reviewed a draft summary of changes in the housing inventory since 2003 and suggested some changes. A revised draft is attached.

**b) Estimate Housing Units needed in the Region to address Homelessness**

D. Kraus advised that she was working with a definition developed by the Corporation for Supportive Housing in the U.S. to use the Homeless Count data to estimate the number of people who would be considered homeless in a year. This information would be used to help develop an estimate of the number of housing units needed for people who are homeless. It was agreed that the RHP Advisory Group would meet by Conference Call before the CT meeting to prepare additional information and recommendations to the CT meeting on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**c) Workshop to Develop the Draft Plan**

The workplan and schedule to develop the draft plan for approval by the CT in September includes planning for a workshop to accomplish the following:

- Clarify goals, priorities, strategies and actions
- Identify outcomes and indicators for success
- Identify timelines, resources and responsibilities to implement the plan
- Discuss community consultation and engagement strategies

It was agreed that:

- This workshop will be planned for July 24<sup>th</sup>
- D. Kraus will prepare a framework paper to discuss at the workshop
- T. Harding will facilitate the workshop
- Participants will include RHP Advisory Group members. The CT, Housing and/or Social issues Subcommittees of the Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC), and Funders Table will also be invited to participate as well as representatives from the Community Homelessness Tables and Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee.

**4. CONCLUSIONS**

The RSCH Constituency Table is asked to approve the recommendations in this report.

**Attachments:**

- 1) Draft Letter to Mayors and Members of Council
- 2) Regional Inventory of Facilities and Services to Address Homelessness in Metro Vancouver: Housing Review (revised draft)

## Attachment 1: Draft Letter to Mayors and Members of Council

June 12, 2014

Dear Mayor and Members of Council

### **Re: Development of New Regional Homelessness Plan**

On behalf of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH), I am pleased to enclose the Priorities and Strategies report prepared for the RSCH. This report identifies priorities and strategies for addressing homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region and the RSCH will use this report to inform our work to develop a new Regional Homelessness Plan.

In the fall of 2013, the RSCH began a process to prepare a new Regional Homelessness Plan to replace the current plan, known as *3 Ways to Home*. We engaged CitySpaces Consulting to organize consultation sessions with community stakeholders, explore key issues and identify priorities and strategies to end and prevent homelessness.

Between October and November, the RSCH and CitySpaces invited nearly 600 individuals to attend consultation sessions that included three sub-regional workshops, focus groups, and personal interviews with people with lived experience. More than 170 people participated, representing 75 housing and homelessness organizations in the region. We are continuing to work with municipal planners through the Housing and Social Issues Sub-Committees of Metro Vancouver's Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) as well as with Community Homelessness Tables throughout the region.

A draft Regional Homelessness Plan should be available in September 2014. After that, we will organize a further round of consultations with municipalities and community stakeholders to obtain feedback on the draft plan. We look forward to working with your staff as we prepare the new plan and to presenting this plan to your municipality for endorsement early in 2015.

If you have any questions regarding the Regional Homelessness Plan, please contact Deborah Kraus at [deborah.kraus@metrovancover.org](mailto:deborah.kraus@metrovancover.org) or 604.436.6724.

Sincerely

Deb Bryant, Chair, Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness

cc. Sandy Burpee, Chair, Council of the Community Homelessness Tables

## Regional Inventory of Facilities and Services to Address Homelessness in Metro Vancouver: Housing Review

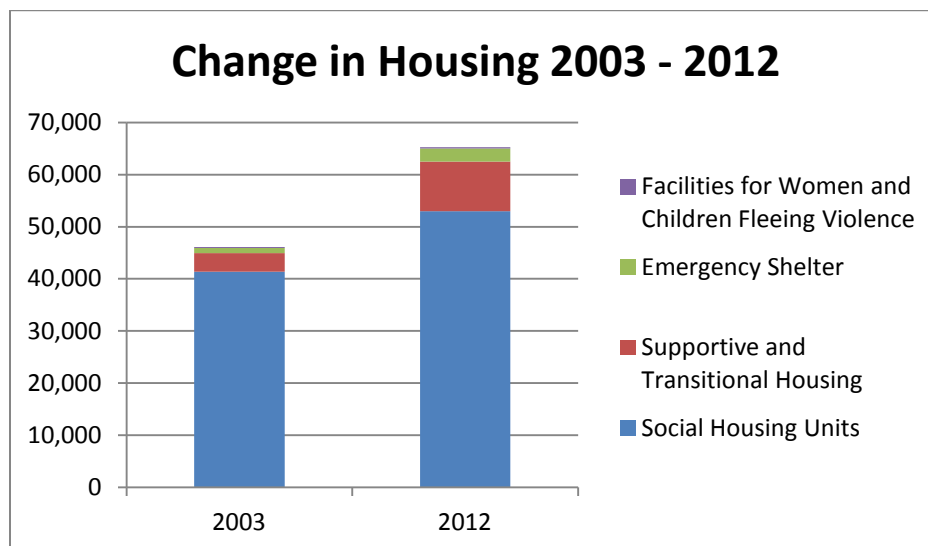
The following table shows changes in the number of housing unit between 2003 and December 31, 2012.

Type of Housing	2003	2012	Change #	Change %
<b>Social Housing for People able to live Independently</b>				
Permanent Social Housing Units*	41,386	38,306	-3,080	-7%
Rental Assistance in the Private Market for Families and Seniors	N/A	14,645	N/A	N/A
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>41,386</b>	<b>52,951</b>	<b>11,565</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Supportive and Transitional Housing</b>				
Supportive Housing Non-Profit Units	2,366	5,648	3,282	139%
Supportive Housing Portable Rent Subsidies	908	2,670	1,762	194%
Transitional Housing Units	307	1,240	933	304%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>9,558</b>	<b>5,977</b>	<b>167%</b>
<b>Emergency Shelter Beds</b>				
Emergency Shelters - Permanent Beds	723	1,148	425	59%
Emergency Shelters – Seasonal/Temporary	220	680	460	209%
Emergency Shelters - Extreme Weather	N/A	645	645	N/A
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>2,473</b>	<b>1,530</b>	<b>162%</b>
<b>Facilities for Women and Children Fleeing Violence</b>				
Transition Houses for Women + Children Fleeing Violence (beds)	164	185	21	13%
Second Stage Housing for Women + Children Fleeing Violence (units)	58	108	50	86%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>32%</b>

Source: BC Housing and Regional Inventory of Facilities and Services to Address Homelessness prepared in 2003 and 2013.

\*Changes are most likely a result of changes in the database rather than loss of units.

Note: Housing is for all population groups – unless stated otherwise.





# Greater Vancouver Extreme Weather Response: 2013-14 Evaluation

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Prepared by James Pratt Consulting  
For the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy Society

April 30, 2014

# Executive Summary

## *Introduction*

The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the provision of the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) services across Greater Vancouver, and to support continuous improvement and evolution of EWR programs.

## *Activities*

EWR activities at the community level continued to include: service planning and budget development; recruitment and training of volunteers and staff; preparation of site logistics and supplies; fundraising and collection of donated goods; monitoring weather and calling alerts as required; communicating service availability to homeless people and relevant agencies; delivery of overnight sheltering and food services; referrals to needed services; and collection and reporting of statistics.

The Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy Society (GVSS) continued to provide regional coordination covering Burnaby, Langley, New Westminister, the North Shore, Richmond and the Tri-Cities, along with sub-regional EWR coordination in Surrey/White Rock and Vancouver. Coordination services included: planning support; needs assessment; coordination and provision of training; development of tools and resources; media relations; coordination and information sharing during EWR implementation; post- season debriefing; evaluation and reporting.

## *Inputs*

EWR coordination costs were a total of \$86,900, including contributions of \$52,800 from BC Housing and \$34,100 from Service Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The EWR program continued to rely heavily on in-kind contributions, for an estimated total value of more than \$237,700.

## *Outputs*

Across the region there were 8 community EWR plans in place in 2013-14, with 24 sites having total capacity of 604 spaces. The 19 EWR sites that were needed offered a total of 474 spaces.

Communities provided a grand total of 9,260 person-nights of EWR service in 2013-14, with some sites opening as many as 61 nights. This total was an all-time record, substantially exceeding the past record of 8,699 in 2008-09.

Of the 9,260 person-nights of service, 8,038 were used by males (87%), 1,215 were used by females (13%), and 7 by people recorded as transgender (less than 1%). Of the 9,260 total, 63 were reported as being less than 19 years of age.

Records indicate 4 incidences of people turned away for lack of space, and 3 incidences for other reasons.

### **Outcomes**

Core EWR program outcomes were: reduced street homelessness during extreme weather; and reduced health and safety risk to homeless people related to extreme weather. The provision of EWR shelter spaces in Greater Vancouver resulted in 9,260 incidences of people not having to remain outdoors on the coldest nights of the 2013-14 winter season. Many of the homeless people who stayed at the EWR sheltering sites would likely have otherwise faced serious threats to their health and safety due to extreme weather exposure. The risks of illness, hypothermia and death were greatly reduced.

Additional outcomes were: improved coordination of sheltering services during extreme weather; improved understanding of local and regional needs during extreme weather; and increased public awareness of homelessness and EWR.

### **Recommendations**

The evaluator offers the following 5 renewed and updated recommendations.

1. Continue to seek resources to develop and implement a coordinated extreme hot weather response.
2. Continue to explore issues of EWR accessibility for people with disabilities, dementia, and other conditions.
3. Continue to strengthen linkages and referral capabilities between EWR sites and local services and resources.
4. Continue to seek resources to bring Langley into the Surrey/White Rock EWR sub-region to create a South of Fraser EWR coordination area.
5. Continue to seek renewed and expanded resources to sustain strong regional and sub-regional EWR coordination.

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Extreme Weather Task Group Members, 2013-2014</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Purpose and Objectives of Evaluation Report.....	6
Scope .....	6
Methodology .....	6
<b>Overview of Extreme Weather Response in Greater Vancouver</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Background.....	7
Purpose and Objectives of the Program .....	8
Program Logic Model.....	9
Activities .....	9
<b>Inputs: Resources Invested</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Outputs: Services Delivered</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Burnaby.....	14
Langley .....	14
New Westminster.....	14
North Shore .....	14
Richmond .....	14
Surrey / White Rock.....	14
Tri-Cities .....	15
Vancouver .....	15
<b>Outcomes</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Reduced street homelessness during extreme weather .....	16
Reduced health and safety risks to homeless people related to extreme weather .....	16
Improved coordination of sheltering services during extreme weather .....	17
Improved understanding of local and regional needs during extreme weather.....	18
Increased public awareness of homelessness and EWR.....	19
<b>Sustainability</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Local EWRs .....	21
Regional Extreme Weather Coordination.....	21
<b>Greater Vancouver EWR Strengths and Challenges</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Strengths.....	21
Challenges .....	22
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>23</b>

## Acknowledgements

Each year, the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) across Greater Vancouver has been made possible through the commitment and work of hundreds of community volunteers and shelter staff. Their dedication and nights of lost sleep have assisted thousands of homeless people to be safe and warm during times of extreme weather.

In addition to those who work directly in the shelter sites, there are many people who spend hours planning and preparing for the EWRs in their communities. Many do this work in addition to their regular tasks. Their commitment helps the EWR sites operate as smoothly as possible.

The EWR program has been facilitated with operational funding from BC Housing since 2005 (<http://www.bchousing.org/>). Despite the pressures and complexity of this program, BC Housing has proven their dedication to this area of their portfolio with flexibility and support to all communities involved in the EWR program.

The local EWR programs across Greater Vancouver have been supported through the Extreme Weather Task Group (EWTG) of the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy Society (<http://www.gvss.ca/>). It was the EWTG that originally developed a community planning template, and secured the federal funds to develop EWR plans. The EWTG has also provided support and guidance to the contractors serving as EWR coordinators.

## Extreme Weather Task Group Members, 2013-2014

- Rubina Bedford, *BC Housing*
- Rebecca Bell, *BC Housing*
- Matthew Colling, *Canadian Red Cross\**
- Peter Fedos, *Surrey EWR Coordinator*
- Jonquil Hallgate, *Surrey Urban Mission Society*
- Fraser Holland, *Stepping Stone Community Services Society*
- Irene Jaakson, *Vancouver EWR Coordinator*
- David Jones, *Environment Canada\**
- Les McAusland (Chair), *Salvation Army Gateway of Hope*
- Pastor Norman Oldham, *Burnaby Extreme Weather Committee*
- Karen O'Shannacery, *Lookout Emergency Aid Society*
- Kevan Oxley, *Lower Mainland Advocate and Outreach Group*
- Solana Perry, *Keys Housing and Health Solutions*
- James Pratt, *Greater Vancouver EWR Coordinator*
- Penny Rogers, *St Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church*
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\* Asterisk indicates Resource Person.



## Introduction

### Purpose and Objectives of Evaluation Report

2013-14 was the eleventh season of implementation for the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy Society (GVSS) Extreme Weather Response (EWR) program. EWR Coordination funding this past year came from BC Housing and the Homeless Partnering Strategy of the National Homelessness Initiative.

Past annual evaluation reports on the EWR program are available on the GVSS website: [www.gvss.ca](http://www.gvss.ca). This year's report includes information from the eight sub-regional communities that developed and carried out EWR shelter plans.

**The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the provision of EWR across Greater Vancouver, and to support continuous improvement and evolution of EWR programs.**

The evaluation has four objectives:

1. To provide an overview of the EWR planning and implementation;
2. To identify EWR inputs, outputs and outcomes;
3. To analyze the strengths and challenges of the EWR program;
4. To provide recommendations for consideration in ongoing development of the program.

### Scope

This evaluation covers the period from April 2013 through to March 2014. It includes statistical summaries of EWR sites throughout Greater Vancouver. The primary focus is on the regional and sub-regional levels, and detailed evaluation of specific sites is outside the scope.

### Methodology

This evaluation was created in collaboration with members of the Extreme Weather Task Group. Research methods were designed to be consistent with the objectives stated above.

The preparation of this report drew upon a number of sources, involving both qualitative and quantitative analysis, including: GVSS Extreme Weather Task Group documents; EWR program documents; service statistics collected and tabulated by BC Housing; 14 responses to an online survey of community partners, and 27 participants in EWR guest surveys and focus groups.

## Overview of Extreme Weather Response in Greater Vancouver

### Background

Grassroots and informal extreme weather responses began in and around Greater Vancouver many years ago. For the most part, activities were based on individual agencies responding to people standing and lying outside their doors on the coldest winter nights. Over the years, the City of Vancouver joined in and the ability to offer extra shelter sites during cold snaps was noticed in communities across the region.

Local steering committees in Surrey, Langley, Richmond, and New Westminster developed EWR plans by 2003, and Vancouver's response was documented. The community members involved in this planning process represented a broad array of organizations and agencies. These plans set the framework for expanding community resources for homeless persons during the winter months to prevent hardships from extreme winter weather conditions.

In 2004-05, the second year of operation, Richmond, Surrey, Langley and New Westminster continued to fine tune their EWR plans and these four communities, as well as Vancouver, implemented their plans. In addition, planning began in the North Shore (City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver), and Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Port Moody) as initial discussions on EWR planning started up in Burnaby.

During 2005-06, the North Shore implemented an EWR Plan. Burnaby and the Tri-Cities both finalized their plans, each with a critical difference: Burnaby required an appropriate shelter site, while the Tri-Cities required an organization that would supervise and schedule volunteer staff for their EWR shelter.

In 2006-07, formal agreements were developed, through EWR policy requirements from BC Housing – developed in consultation with, and input from, the GVSS/EW Task Group. The EWR now had structured funding and supports, and the communities were required to meet BC Housing Policies and Procedures to access funds.

In 2007-08, the GVSS worked with the eight sub-regions to meet BC Housing's policy requirements. In 2009-10 the GVSS worked with BC Housing and the sub-regions to implement the *Assistance to Shelter Act*, and undertook a major revamping of the EWR training manual. It also developed draft standards for EWR sheltering sites.

In 2010-11, Delta developed and implemented an EWR plan. This was the first ever homelessness service based there. Following 2012-13 Delta discontinued the EWR program due to low uptake.



Map 1: Communities of Greater Vancouver

### Purpose and Objectives of the Program

The overall purpose of the EWR is to protect homeless people in Greater Vancouver from contracting a critical illness, becoming hypothermic, or dying due to exposure to extreme winter weather.

The central objectives for the region's EWR program have been to:

1. Provide safe and adequate temporary shelter to homeless people during periods of extreme weather;
2. Coordinate community-based collaboration for all aspects of the EWR including shelter and meal provision, transportation, and communication;
3. Coordinate communication among communities implementing EWR;
4. Foster increased public awareness about homelessness in Greater Vancouver and the potential impacts of extreme weather on the homeless;
5. Develop trained volunteers to support the EWR;
6. Increase the sustainability of the EWR through further community development;
7. Provide daily updates during EWR implementation.

## Program Logic Model

The following logic model chart shows inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes for the regional EWR.

<b>Inputs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Funding provided by BC Housing - and the Government of Canada, Homelessness Partnering Strategy.</li> <li>2. Planning time given by staff and volunteers from non-profit service agencies, faith groups, municipalities and others - with support provided by GVSS coordinators.</li> <li>3. Community donations from individuals, corporations, service clubs, faith groups and others.</li> <li>4. In-kind contributions at the site level, including facility space, food, blankets, winter clothing, hygiene kits, and volunteer time.</li> </ol>
<b>Activities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review and revision of the nine EWR plans.</li> <li>2. EWR staff and volunteer training.</li> <li>3. Coordination of EWR implementation during periods of extreme weather.</li> <li>4. Statistical tracking through BC Housing.</li> <li>5. Media relations.</li> <li>6. Communication among EWR communities.</li> <li>7. Communication with funders.</li> <li>8. Development of information resources and tools for community partners.</li> </ol>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of EWR shelter spaces available.</li> <li>2. Number of nights EWR shelters opened, by site and by community.</li> <li>3. Number of nights of EWR usage, by community, by gender and by age group.</li> </ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduced street homelessness during extreme weather.</li> <li>2. Reduced health and safety risks to homeless people related to extreme weather.</li> <li>3. Improved coordination of sheltering services during extreme weather.</li> <li>4. Improved understanding of local and regional needs during extreme weather.</li> <li>5. Increased public awareness of homelessness and extreme weather.</li> </ol>

## Activities

EWR activities at the community level continued to include: service planning and budget development; recruitment and training of volunteers and staff; preparation of site logistics and supplies; fundraising and collection of donated goods; monitoring weather and calling alerts as

required; communicating service availability to homeless people and relevant agencies; delivery of overnight sheltering and food services; referrals to needed services; and collection and reporting of statistics.

The GVSS continued to provide sub-regional EWR coordination in Vancouver and Surrey/White Rock/Delta, as well as regional coordination covering Burnaby, Langley, New Westminster, the North Shore, Richmond and the Tri-Cities.

Coordination services included:

- ✓ Planning support – assisting each of the sub-regions to update their EWR plans and prepare for the coming season;
- ✓ Needs assessment – documenting the needs of each community for mats, blankets and training;
- ✓ Provision of EWR training – EWR training sessions delivered in Burnaby, Surrey and Vancouver (sites in other communities provided their own training, as needed). This training included guidelines for handling conflicts, protocol for ensuring a healthy environment, and guidance on the importance of genuine listening.
- ✓ Media relations – including wide distribution of a pre-season media briefing document; revision of this document mid-season and further distribution as needed; revision and updating of the ‘key messages’ document; and participation in numerous incidences of television, radio and print media interviews / information gathering;
- ✓ Coordination and information sharing during EWR implementation – including preparation and circulation of daily written updates on available services, distribution of updated service statistical summaries, and communication with EWR sites as needed;
- ✓ Post- season debriefing – design, coordination and facilitation of semi-structured dialogue sessions with members of local EWR Committees and EWR site operators, reviewing successes, challenges, and implications for the next season – and considering changes to EWR plans;
- ✓ Evaluation and reporting – analyzing and reporting out data on the EWR season, including this report and a variety of reporting activities required by Service Canada;
- ✓ Development of tools and resources – development of a weather resource information sheet (in partnership with Environment Canada); a focus group guide and survey tool for use with EWR site guests; and a template and release form for documenting stories of exceptional successes.

## Inputs: Resources Invested

### Funding

EWR coordination costs were a total of \$86,900. BC Housing provided \$52,800 for sub-regional coordination in Surrey / White Rock and Vancouver, while Service Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy provided \$34,100 for Greater Vancouver regional coordination.<sup>1</sup>

### In-Kind

The EWR program relied heavily on in-kind contributions, for an estimated total value of more than \$237,700. Implementation of community EWR plans continued to rely upon volunteers and donated services and resources, including everything from facility costs to food, clothing, blankets and volunteers.

Volunteer time and pro bono professional services represent a massive community donation in 2013-14. An estimated 4,000 volunteer service hours, conservatively valued at \$15/hour, which represents approximately \$60,000. Approximately 2,500 hours of EWR planning, service delivery and other contributed professional services, conservatively valued at \$30/hour, represents \$75,000. James Pratt Consulting, the contractor serving as GVSS EWR Coordinator for Metro Vancouver, contributed \$15,000 in pro bono services.

In addition, the GVSS Extreme Weather Task Group members contributed approximately 190 hours of professional services in the form of committee attendance and related participation. Also conservatively valued at \$30/hour, that represents \$5,700 in pro bono services. Combined, the volunteer and contributed services total \$155,700.

Local EWR site operators donated facilities for a conservatively estimated value of \$82,000 in 2013-14. For example, the North Shore shelter alone contributed \$15,300 in facilities (\$340/night \* 45 nights of operation).

In addition, the Canadian Red Cross provided 270 wool blankets, with delivery to EWR sites matching the specific numbers requested.

Note that these in kind figures do not include tracking of donated food, clothing and other goods at the local community level, given that tracking of these by the GVSS had been problematic to measure the quantities and value of such goods. In addition, many sites had difficulty tracking which goods were for the EWR program versus for their other programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures for BC Housing funding to providers of Greater Vancouver front line EWR services in 2013-14 were not yet available as of the deadline for this report.

## Outputs: Services Delivered

In 2013-14 Greater Vancouver had 8 EWR Plans in place, with 24 sites available and a total of 604 spaces. Of these sites, 19 opened and offered a total of 474 spaces at various points in the season. One independently funded site, Union Gospel Mission, opened but the EWR overflow spaces were not utilized. Therefore, a total of 18 sites were actually used.

### EWR Capacity in Greater Vancouver: 2013-14

Community	Sheltering Site <i>(Sites shown in italics not activated)</i>	Address	Hours	EWR spaces
Burnaby	Westminster Bible Chapel	7540 6 <sup>th</sup> St	7 pm - 7 am	27
	Burnaby Alliance Church Annex	8585 Armstrong	7 pm - 7 am	30
Langley	Gateway of Hope	5787 Langley Byp.	7 pm - 7 am	30
New West	Cliff Block	325 6 <sup>th</sup> St	7 pm - 7 am	30
North Shore	North Shore Shelter	705 West 2 <sup>nd</sup> St	24 hr, 9 am	20
	<i>North Shore Neighbourhood House</i>	<i>225 East 2<sup>nd</sup> St</i>	<i>8 pm - 8 am</i>	20
Richmond	Richmond House (men)	3111 Shell Rd	9 pm - 9 am	6
	St. Alban Anglican Church	7260 St. Alban Rd	7 pm - 8am	16
Surrey/ White Rock	Cloverdale Church	17802 66 Ave	8 pm - 8 am	15
	First United Church, White Rock	15385 Semiahmoo	11 pm - 7 am	15
	Hyland House, Newton	6595 King George	11 pm - 7 am	15
	Legacy, Church of the Nazarene	9012 160 St	11 pm - 7 am	20
	Surrey Urban Mission	13388 104 <sup>th</sup> Av	7 pm - 8 am	60
Tri Cities	Trinity United Church	2211 Prairie Ave	10 pm – 7 am	20
Vancouver	Catholic Charities	828 Cambie St	8 pm – 8 am	20
	Directions (youth under 25 yrs)	900 Pacific St	9 pm – 7 am	15
	First Baptist Church	969 Burrard St	9:30pm-7am	25
	<i>Evelyne Saller Centre</i>	<i>320 Alexander St</i>	<i>12:00-7 am</i>	40
	The Gathering Place	609 Helmcken St	12:00- 7 am	40
	<i>Salvation Army Belkin House</i>	<i>555 Homer St</i>	<i>11:30 pm</i>	20
	<i>Salvation Army Harbour Light</i>	<i>119 E. Cordova St</i>	<i>11:30 pm</i>	50
	St. Mark's	1805 Larch St	9:30 pm	25
	Tenth Church	10 <sup>th</sup> & Ontario	10 pm - 7 am	25
	Union Gospel Mission (men)	601 E. Hastings St	9pm – 6 am	20
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>604</b>



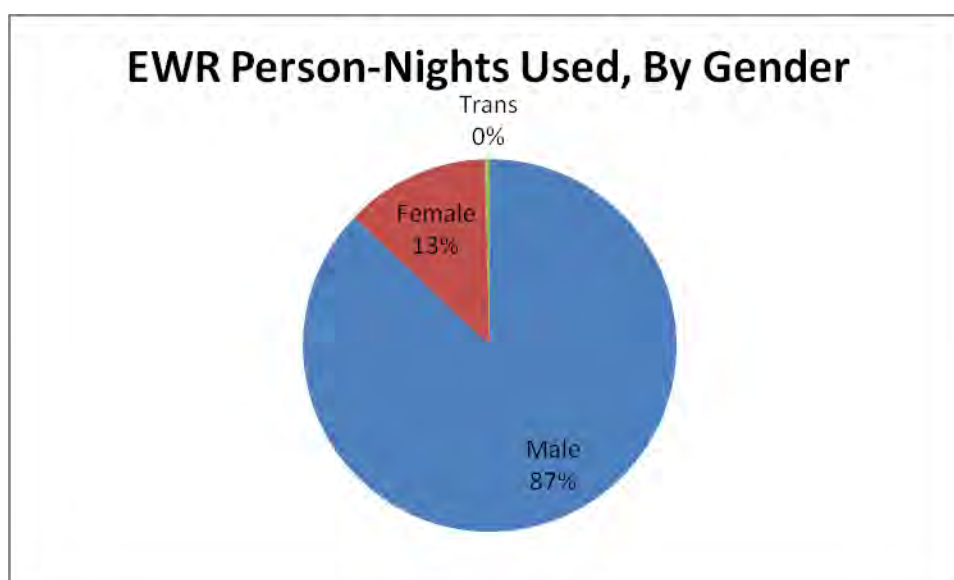
Communities provided a grand total of 9,260 person-nights of EWR service in 2013-14, with some sites opening as many as 61 nights. As shown in the table below, this volume of service was an all-time record, substantially exceeding the past record of 8,699 in 2008-09.

#### EWR Person-Nights Used by Sub-Region: 2003-04 through 2013-14

Community	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Aboriginal -Van/Bby	212	1,744	412	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burnaby	-	-	-	249	787	1,175	13	156	175	130	323
Delta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	48	31	-
Langley	13	162	61	118	146	351	113	193	286	216	694
New Westminster	93	367	346	745	1,396	940	195	368	379	365	831
North Shore	-	11	71	122	416	373	191	211	216	215	378
Richmond	1	2	0	36	23	469	204	381	247	151	552
Surrey / White Rock	23	223	16	523	865	3,006	1,196	1,914	3,234	2,264	4,352
Tri-Cities	-	-	-	142	212	236	0	5	0	0	0
Vancouver	702	1,311	1,613	3,147	1,611	2,149	622	878	942	641	2,130
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,044</b>	<b>3,820</b>	<b>2,519</b>	<b>5,082</b>	<b>5,456</b>	<b>8,699</b>	<b>2,534</b>	<b>4,166</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>4,013</b>	<b>9,260</b>

#### Gender

Of the 9,260 person-nights of service, 8,038 were used by males (87%), 1,215 were used by females (13%), and 7 by people recorded as transgender (less than 1%).





## Age

Of the 9,260, 63 were reported as being less than 19 years of age (under 1%). Operators reported a total of 24 instances of families using an EWR shelter.

## Occupancy and Incidence of Turn Away

Average regional occupancy for the season was 52%, compared to 27% in 2012-13 and 36% in the prior year.<sup>2</sup>

Records indicate 4 incidences of people turned away for lack of space, and 3 incidences for other reasons.

## Burnaby

In 2013-14 **Westminster Bible Chapel** continued to serve as the primary Burnaby EWR site. The site offered 27 spaces for 43 nights, and provided a total of 323 person nights of service. Burnaby Alliance Church Annex (with space for up to 30 EWR guests) did not need to open.

## Langley

In 2013-14 **Gateway of Hope** offered 30 EWR spaces for 45 nights, and provided a total of 694 person nights of service.

## New Westminster

In 2013-14 Lookout Emergency Aid Society's Cliff Block residence provided EWR shelter for up to 30 guests. The site operated for 43 nights, and provided a total of 831 person nights of service.

## North Shore

In 2013-14 the **North Shore Shelter** offered 20 EWR spaces for 46 nights, and provided a total of 378 person nights of service. The overflow site, North Shore Neighbourhood House (with space for up to 25 EWR guests), once again did not need to open.

## Richmond

In 2013-14 Richmond continued to offer 2 EWR shelter sites: St. Alban Anglican Church with 16 spaces for all genders, and Salvation Army Richmond House with 6 spaces for men. **St. Alban** operated for 48 nights, and provided a total of 126 person nights of service. **Richmond House** also operated as an EWR site for 48 nights, and provided a total 466 person nights of service.

## Surrey / White Rock

In 2013-14 the Surrey / White Rock sub-region offered 6 EWR shelter sites: Cloverdale Church, Gateway Shelter, Legacy Church, Surrey Urban Mission, and White Rock First United Church.

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<sup>2</sup> Note that occupancy statistics in each year do not include Union Gospel Mission, which is not part of the BC Housing data tracking (due to being privately funded).

**Cloverdale Church** offered 15 EWR spaces for 58 nights, and provided 489 person nights of service.

**Gateway Shelter** offered 10 EWR spaces for 23 nights, and provided 88 person nights.

**Hyland House** offered 15 EWR spaces for 49 nights, and provided 240 person nights.

**Legacy Church** offered 20 EWR spaces for 25 nights, and provided 34 person nights.

**Surrey Urban Mission** offered 60 spaces for 61 nights, and provided 3,014 person nights. Once again, Surrey Urban mission had the highest volume of service of any EWR site in the region.

**White Rock First United** offered 15 spaces for 53 nights, and provided 243 person nights.

### Tri-Cities

In 2013-14 the **Trinity United Church**, located in Port Coquitlam, once again had 15 EWR spaces available should these be required. It did not need to open because the Tri-Cities Cold/Wet Weather Shelter did not reach 75% capacity. However, the EWR Community Representative for the Tri-Cities did call EWR alerts (without actually opening the EWR site) as a means to activate the *Assistance to Shelter Act*.

### Vancouver

In 2013-14 a total of 10 sites were prepared to provide EWR services in Vancouver: Catholic Charities, Directions Youth Services Centre (for youth under 25), Evelyne Saller Centre, First Baptist Church, The Gathering Place, Salvation Army Belkin House, Salvation Army Harbour Light, St. Mark's, Tenth Church, and Union Gospel Mission. Of these sites, 8 were used. Salvation Army Belkin House (with up to 25 spaces) and Evelyne Saller Centre (40 spaces) were not required. Directions replaced Covenant House as the only youth-specific EWR site in Metro Vancouver.

**Catholic Charities** offered 20 EWR spaces (for men) on 34 nights, and provided 390 person nights of service.

**Directions** offered 15 EWR spaces for 35 nights, and provided 272 person nights of service.

**First Baptist Church** offered 25 spaces for 17 nights, and provided 282 person nights of service.

**The Gathering Place** offered 40 spaces for 16 nights, and provided 98 person nights of service.

**Salvation Army Harbour Light**, operating as an "overflow site", offered 50 spaces for 25 nights, and provided 348 person nights of service.

**St. Mark's** offered 25 spaces for 34 nights, and provided 251 person nights of service.

**Tenth Church** offered 25 spaces for 34 nights, and provided 113 person nights of service.

**Union Gospel Mission** offered 20 spaces (for men) on 34 nights, and provided 60 person nights of service.

## Outcomes

The GVSS has identified 5 EWR program outcomes. The first 2 are of primary importance, and the last 3 are means to better achieve the others:

1. Reduced street homelessness during extreme weather.
2. Reduced health and safety risks to homeless people related to extreme weather.
3. Improved coordination of sheltering services during extreme weather.
4. Improved understanding of local and regional needs during extreme weather.
5. Increased public awareness of homelessness and extreme weather.

### Reduced street homelessness during extreme weather

The provision of EWR shelter spaces in Greater Vancouver resulted in 9,260 incidences of people not having to remain outdoors on the coldest nights of the 2013-14 winter season. There were just 7 reported incidences of a person being turned away from an EWR shelter site, of which 4 were due to lack of space.

Participants in EWR guest focus groups and surveys indicated that without these services they would have had to sleep in locations such as the following:

- Outdoors / on the street / in cardboard houses / in the bushes
- Vehicles
- Friends' homes
- Vacant buildings

### Reduced health and safety risks to homeless people related to extreme weather

Many of the homeless people who stayed at the Greater Vancouver EWR sheltering sites would likely have otherwise faced serious threats to their health and safety due to extreme weather exposure. The risks of illness, hypothermia and death were greatly reduced.

Health and safety were major themes in the EWR guest focus groups and surveys, and many participants emphasized the value of a warm place to sleep. Examples of comments included the following:

- *"Allowed me to sleep. Otherwise would have been awake all night."*
- *"Provides a warm place to get a good night's sleep."*
- *"A chance to sleep – warmth and security of the staff."*
- *"Decrease risk of hypothermia."*

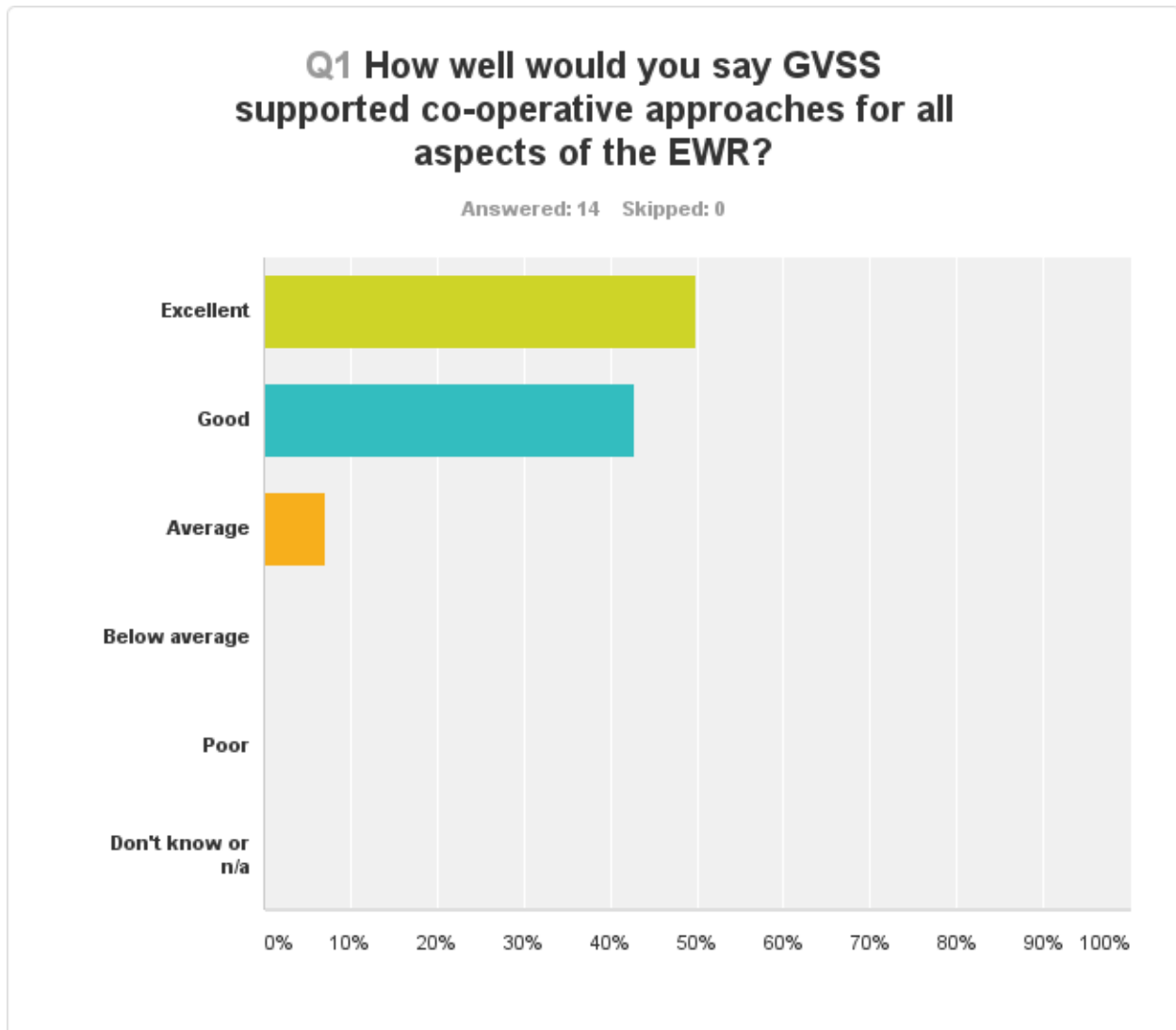
- *“Gives a place to unwind in a safe environment, and to think because of quiet.”*

Comments from female guests participating in focus groups suggest that safety outcomes were particularly important for them. One indicated to the facilitator, after the focus group was over, that without this service she would have traded sex for shelter.

### **Improved coordination of sheltering services during extreme weather**

During extreme weather periods, the Regional EWR Coordinator provided daily updates to BC Housing and partners across the region as needed. This timely information helped to coordinate the EWR services with the regular shelter services across the region.

As indicated in the graph below, online survey respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the GVSS support for “cooperative approaches for all aspects of the EWR”: 50% indicated “excellent”, 43% indicated “good”, 7% indicated “average” and none indicated “below average” or “poor”. Comments were also positive. For example, one said *“I found GVSS to be there when needed and James was quick to offer assistance if asked”*.



The continued provision of the two sub-regional EWR coordinators for Vancouver and Surrey had a significant impact, through communication and action to better meet the needs of the homeless in these more populous communities.

Additionally, the EWR planning groups in each community updated their contact lists and communication strategies to inform community based organizations, service providers, and others to help ensure that those in need of EWR shelters are able to access the available sites.

### **Improved understanding of local and regional needs during extreme weather**

Based on a region-wide needs assessment, the program was able to secure required resources, such as blankets, and coordinate distribution to local EWR sites.

The needs assessment also documented the numbers of new mats required, and provided a basis for informing BC Housing regarding this. While the BC Housing EWR program does not

cover capital costs such as mat purchases, the evidence generated through the needs assessment served as a basis for discussions over the summer about how this essential material requirement could be met in a timely, cost effective way.

At the local level, communications activities helped generate increased community contributions. Media interviews with the EWR coordinators frequently emphasized the needs for cash and materials such as warm winter clothes – along with the importance on contacting sites to confirm needs before bringing material donations.

### **Increased public awareness of homelessness and EWR**

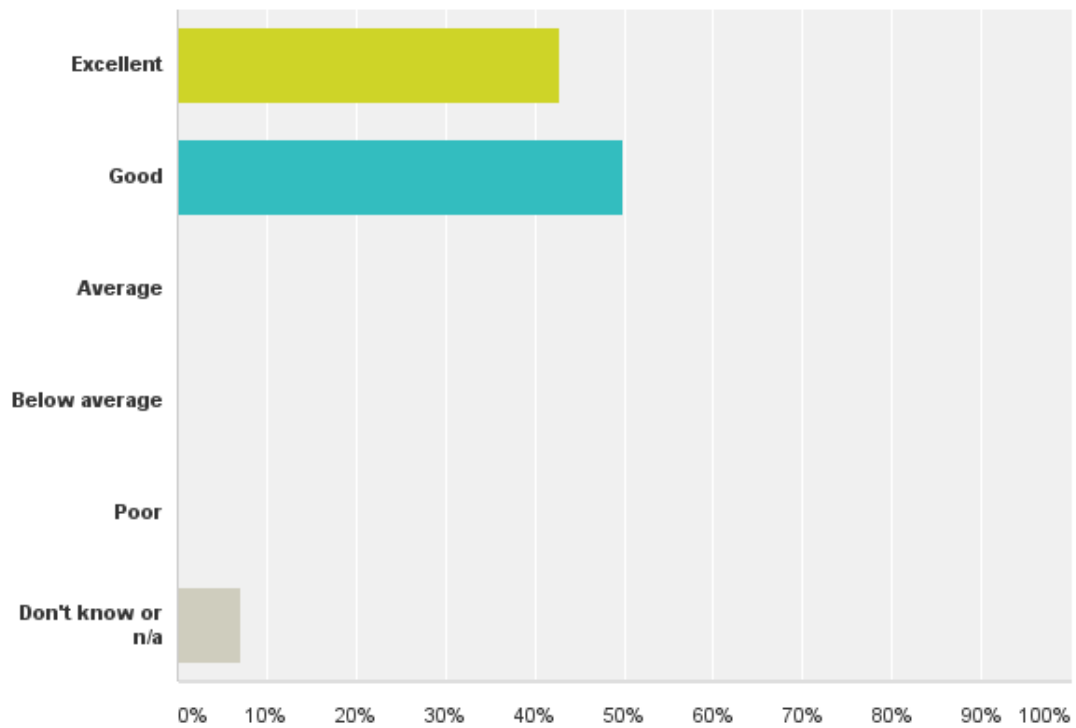
A pre-season media briefing on EWR in the region and ongoing media relations work in response to requests for interviews and information served as a means to get the message out to the public about homelessness in Greater Vancouver, the community-based EWR program, and the opportunity to donate. In addition, updating and distribution of an EWR media ‘cheat sheet’ served as a tool for partners in the program to participate in interviews with more consistent messaging.

2013-14 was a record for media coverage, with 29 stories documented compared to the prior record of 23 stories in the entire 2011/12 season. Media attention likely had multiple benefits. It tended to generate volunteers and other resources. Most importantly, it contributed to homeless people and concerned community members being aware of, and able to find, EWR shelter sites. Furthermore, it allowed the public to learn about the immense support of the volunteers in the local EWR communities and the need for longer-term solutions such as year round shelters, as well as affordable and supported housing.

As shown in the chart on the following page, online survey respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with GVSS management of media relations. The three comments offered were generally positive: for example, one said *“what I read on line and heard on the radio I would venture to say that GVSS were able to pass on information that was not only informative it was also easily understood.”*

## Q2 How well did the GVSS manage media relations?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0



## Sustainability

### Local EWRs

The financial sustainability of local EWR programs has been addressed by BC Housing's commitment to provide funding to communities that have an EWR Plan and that have negotiated a nightly operational budget with BC Housing. Communities have continued to complement this funding with massive volunteer time and in-kind contributions. The Canadian Red Cross has continued to provide wool blankets to meet local EWR needs.

### Regional Extreme Weather Coordination

The Regional EWR Coordinator has proven to be an important position to support community EWR programs as needed. The Regional Coordinator has served as a catalyst to EWR planning, provided support to the planning groups and served as a conduit for information exchange among the communities. These functions continued this past year, including through the two sub-regional coordinators, to assist all participating communities.

In addition, the EWR coordinators continued to serve as primary contacts for news media. This has eased the strain on local EWR partners at times when their time and energy needs to be focused on serving the homeless persons in their communities.

With the HPS funding shifting to prioritization of "Housing First" initiatives and services, there is significant concern about prospects for renewal of regional EWR coordination funding for 2014-15 and beyond.

## Greater Vancouver EWR Strengths and Challenges

### Strengths

Strengths of EWR programming in Greater Vancouver has included the following 10 areas:

1. **Community ownership.** The EWR program has remained true to its roots as a locally-driven initiative, with key organizations coming together in each sub-region to make decisions about the EWR plan and its implementation.
2. **Local partnerships.** Local governments, service providers, faith-based organizations, community groups, and caring individuals have continued to work together as partners in each of the 8 Greater Vancouver sub-regions with EWR services.
3. **Massive in-kind contributions.** Partly because of its community-driven nature, the program has been able to mobilize massive in-kind support. Including local and regional in-kind support, the total in-kind in 2013-14 was estimated to be over \$237,700. This figure does not include the massive donations of materials such as blankets, food and clothing.



4. **Provincial funding.** Availability of assured operational funding from BC Housing has supported communities to activate their EWR as required. Having this funding in place has enabled communities/sub-regions to respond appropriately, opening EWR sites as needed depending on local weather conditions.
5. **Regional support.** As documented in this evaluation, the GVSS has provided various tools and information services to support EWR activities at the community level. For example, region-wide communication via email during extreme weather events continued to work well and has helped to keep many people ‘in the loop.’
6. **Coordinated communication.** Having centralized media relations and common key messages helped to manage requests for news regarding access to services for the homeless at times of extreme weather.
7. **Coordinated statistical reporting.** BC Housing collection and tabulation of statistics from EWR sheltering sites, using a standardized form, facilitated timely reporting regarding services used.
8. **Stakeholder support.** Support for EWR in communities remained high, among those directly involved in planning and implementing the response, as well as among the public.
9. **Inter-community support.** Communities appreciated the exchange of information and resources from other EWR communities as this helped to minimize the workload and allowed them to take advantage of lessons learned in other communities.
10. **Surprising outcomes.** Experience of EWR in several communities has contributed to positive movement towards more permanent services for homeless people, including some moving directly into housing and/or accessing addiction recovery services.

## Challenges

The EWR program faced 7 areas of challenge in 2013-14:

1. Communication and outreach
2. Transportation
3. Site opening times
4. Accessibility, and capacity to offer low barrier services
5. Linkages with local services and resources
6. Funding
7. Time frame of EWR

## Recommendations

The evaluator offers the following 5 renewed recommendations for consideration by the GVSS and partner organizations.

1. **Continue to seek resources to develop and implement a coordinated extreme hot weather response.**
2. **Continue to explore issues of EWR accessibility for people with disabilities, dementia, and other conditions.** With an aging population, it will be important for EWR services to assess their capacity and to enhance facilities and staff training as required.
3. **Continue to strengthen linkages and referral capabilities between EWR sites and local services and resources.**
4. **Continue to seek resources to bring Langley and Delta into the Surrey/White Rock EWR sub-region to create a South of Fraser EWR coordination area.** The Delta EWR site logically fits with the Surrey/White Rock EWR response. Langley has an established site and may benefit from having a coordinator in relatively close proximity.
5. **Continue to review and address resource requirements to sustain strong regional and sub-regional EWR coordination.** As indicated in this report, the GVSS has a concern about the future of funding for regional coordination.