



North Shore Homelessness Task Force Key Messages

Good Community. Good Health. Good Business.

North Shore citizens want to live in communities in which all of its residents have adequate affordable housing options and support services.¹

- Homelessness is a problem that exists on the North Shore and affects hundreds of North Shore residents.²
- Case study evidence shows that housing the homeless is a cost-effective approach to addressing the problem. By being proactive rather than reactive, we can greatly decrease the strain and financial costs on our shelters, healthcare system, law enforcement, the criminal justice system, and many other services in the community.³
- Access to a broad range of adequate support services plays an essential role in helping those affected by homelessness to overcome their barriers to independence. Barriers include adversity, poverty, safety and security, physical and mental health, addictions and hopelessness, among others.

North shore citizens have an important role to play in supporting initiatives to prevent homelessness.

- Homelessness and risk of homelessness presents a significant health and safety risk to all of those involved, and this risk is preventable. Poor health and isolation affects the community as a whole, prevents residents from reaching their fullest potential, and creates division amongst the community.

North Shore citizens recognize that it is good business and makes economic sense to solve homelessness.

- Homelessness negatively affects commercial activity, harms tourism and deters investment. Solving homelessness will increase the financial well being of North Shore residents and businesses across the economic spectrum.⁴

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¹ A May 2012 survey conducted by the *Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness* found that Seventy-one per cent of people in Metro Vancouver say that they agree with the idea that it is possible to have a community in which there will be a home for everyone.

² The 2011 *Metro Vancouver* homeless count puts the North Shore's homeless population at 122, which is understood as a bare minimum number. Many outreach workers on the north shore identify that number as 300+.

³ For example, *The Canadian Centre For Policy Alternatives* 2012 report "The Cost of Poverty in BC" estimates the cost of an effective provincial poverty reduction strategy at 3 to 4 billion, compared to the 8 to 9 billion dollar annual cost of dealing with the symptoms of poverty.

⁴ In 2010, the *Canadian Chamber of Commerce* passed a motion but forward by the Burnaby Board of Trade recognizing that homelessness deters customers, damages employee recruitment and retention, harms tourism and discourages companies from setting up offices in areas with a visible homeless population. Chamber members pledged to be a part of the solution.