

NEWS RELEASE

NORTH SHORE GETS FUNDING BOOST FOR MULTI-FACETED RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER, BC – AUGUST 13, 2021... Starting this fall, new and enhanced people centered services such as hygiene facilities, Indigenous outreach, new mobile services, and other supports will be delivered to unsheltered homeless people on the North Shore, through a multi-partner regional approach funded by \$1.97-million in federal and provincial Safe Restart funding.

The City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver and District of West Vancouver – joint recipients of the Strengthening Communities' Services grant, administered by the Union of B.C. Municipalities – will use the funds to partner with Squamish Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Lookout Housing and Health Society and North Vancouver City Library to improve the health and safety of unsheltered homeless people on the North Shore.

The pandemic has made it more difficult for unsheltered homeless people to access services and meet their basic needs with dignity. The project's approach is tailored to the needs of the North Shore, where the unsheltered homeless population tends to move between communities and receives support from a variety of agencies.

Work will begin in September on a series of initiatives intended to connect unsheltered homeless people with services and build the regional capacity and partnerships necessary to create a long-term impact.

Activities will include:

- An **Urban Indigenous Outreach Team** delivered through a partnership between Squamish Nation, Tsleil-Waututh Nation and Lookout Housing and Health Society, with dedicated staff providing culturally-appropriate services to all Indigenous individuals.
- A **Mobile Outreach and Services Team** delivered by Lookout Housing and Health Society, with a staffed mobile unit equipped with basic hygiene and health facilities providing access to services on a flexible basis.
- **Fixed-location services** delivered by the three municipalities and North Vancouver City Library based on area needs, such as sanitation for those living in vehicles and boats, basic hygiene facilities, and warming and cooling centres. These services may be new or a continuation/enhancement of existing arrangements.
- **Improved coordination, community engagement and training**, including temporary staffing to oversee initiatives and training in culturally safe and trauma-informed responses for front-line staff.

The new efforts will support and build on the work of the numerous partners currently working on the North Shore to support homeless and other vulnerable people.

QUOTES

Mayor Linda Buchanan, City of North Vancouver

“This pandemic has been hard on all of us, but for some in our community it has been harder than we can even imagine. That is why I am so pleased that we’ve received the Strengthening Communities’ Services grant to enhance our coordination and strengthen outreach services for people who are unsheltered or experiencing homelessness. With these funds in hand together we will be able to better support the health and wellbeing of all people.”

Mayor Mike Little, District of North Vancouver

“Strengthening Communities give us the tools to better support unsheltered residents living on the North Shore. Expanded outreach services will help to meet people where they are and provide them with the resources they need when they need them. This funding will help us improve the quality of life for our residents and, at the same time, deepen our community partnerships,” says Mayor Mike Little.

Mayor Mary-Ann Booth, District of West Vancouver

“Even though there is a common belief that all West Vancouver residents are affluent, this isn’t the case—homelessness exists here as well, as it does across the North Shore. We have residents with diverse economic realities, and the pandemic has brought this to the forefront. This grant will help North Shore municipalities, First Nations and community partners collaborate to support many of our community’s most vulnerable residents.”

Squamish Nation

“Indigenous people who have experienced past trauma and are currently homeless have been extremely vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic as resources have been reduced to a few key locations. The incoming funds will boost our capacity to provide resources across the region.”

Tseil-Waututh Nation

“Thank you to all the partners who made this possible. We’ve overcome a lot of obstacles and this initiative is something positive that will help people in our community in need.”

Shayne Williams, CEO, Lookout Housing and Health Society

“This funding will fast-track our ability to focus on individuals who are reluctant to use available services due to fears and disruptions associated with COVID-19. Lookout has extensive experience in delivering a time-limited, enhanced outreach services. We are confident in our ability to work with our partners to structure services, ensuring positive outcomes for individuals that will extend beyond the end of this grant funding.”

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