

NORTH SHORE HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE
TERMS OF REFERENCE
Revised & Adopted September 20, 2007

Introduction

These revised Terms of Reference (ToR) were adopted by the North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF) at its September 20, 2007 meeting, and they replace the NSHTF's November 2006 ToR.

Definition of Homelessness

The term 'homelessness' is used to include the absolute homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless, as defined in the City of Vancouver's June 2005 Homeless Action Plan. The absolute homeless are people living on the street, in back lanes, parks, alcoves, and so on; and people who do not have a place of their own who stay with and move between friends and family. People at risk of becoming homeless include those living in places which are not safe, secure or affordable; and people such as those with disabilities who lose services that allow them to maintain their housing.

Formation, Commitment, Vision, Goal

The North Shore Homelessness Task Force was formed in 1998 to address homelessness and issues related to homelessness on the North Shore, and it continues to be committed to doing so. Its vision is a North Shore without homelessness. Its goal is to eliminate and prevent homelessness on the North Shore (the geographic area encompassed by the City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, and the District of West Vancouver).

Rationale for the Task Force

Homelessness continues to be a reality on the North Shore and a pressing issue that requires ongoing action. The NSHTF was formed to provide coordinated, collaborative leadership and action on this issue, and it is important and appropriate that one North Shore-wide entity continue to provide this collaborative leadership and coordinated action in relation to homelessness. Since homelessness is a systemic issue and will be with us for the foreseeable future, the NSHTF will continue to exist as long as it is considered necessary.

The NSHTF's Approach to Homelessness

The NSHTF has adopted a two-pronged approach to homelessness on the North Shore:

1. Establish and maintain a continuum of housing and support services for the homeless; and
2. Address the root causes of homelessness.

Functions & Purposes

The NSHTF has the following functions and purposes:

1. To serve as the one North Shore wide entity whose focus is homelessness on the North Shore
2. To provide collaborative leadership in relationship to homelessness and to advocate and lobby for the homeless on the North Shore
3. To pool the resources, expertise, and knowledge of all those who wish to play a role in addressing homelessness on the North Shore

4. To develop, adopt, implement, monitor, maintain, and promote a long term North Shore Homelessness Action Plan
5. To identify and prioritize program and service gaps for the homeless on the North Shore and coordinate, support, and advocate for actions to fill these gaps
6. To develop and maintain networking and a communication system among members of the Task Force and others to take advantage of funding, policy, and other opportunities in a timely manner that arise that can assist the homeless on the North Shore, and to collectively address cuts to or deterioration of existing programs and services for the homeless on the North Shore
7. To collect, house, generate, share, and disseminate information and statistics on homelessness on the North Shore
8. To educate and engage the public, politicians, all levels of government, and the North Shore community in general on all aspects of and issues related to homelessness on the North Shore
9. To work in collaboration with other homelessness initiatives in the Lower Mainland and elsewhere, and liaise with other related initiatives, that have an impact on homelessness on the North Shore
10. To seek endorsement of and administrative and operating resources and funding from its members, private and public institutions, levels of government, and other appropriate sources on the North Shore and elsewhere

Scope and Limitations

The NSHTF has the following scope and limitations:

1. The NSHTF will support but not provide programs and services to the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless on the North Shore
2. The NSHTF will support but not involve itself in the day-to-day operations of services and programs provided to the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless or the assessment of those programs and services
3. The NSHTF will support but not organize activities or events to raise funds for the provision of programs and services for the homeless
4. The NSHTF may hire consultants and other temporary assistance to carry out its functions as it sees fit

Structure and Operation of the NSHTF

The North Shore Homelessness Action Plan

- The NSHTF will develop, adopt and seek the appropriate endorsement of a 10 Year North Shore Homelessness Action Plan to provide all interested parties with a coordinated and focused approach to addressing homelessness across the North Shore
- The NSHTF is responsible for promoting, monitoring, providing regular progress reports on, and updating the plan on a regular basis

NSHTF Annual Action & Work Plan

- The NSHTF will develop an annual action and work plan to focus and guide its work each year, based on the 10 Year North Shore Homelessness Action Plan
- The annual action and work plan will set out its goals and objectives for the year, the activities it will undertake to achieve them, who will be responsible for achieving them within what time frame, and what resources will be required

NSHTF Annual Operating & Funding Plan

- The NSHTF will develop an annual operating and funding plan to each year, based on the NSHTF Annual Action & Work Plan
- The annual operating and funding plan will set out how the Task Force intends to organize its operations in the coming year, the funding and other resources it requires to function and achieve its annual action and work plan, and the sources of these funds and other resources

NSHTF Terms of Reference

- The NSHTF will maintain an up-to-date Terms of Reference to guide its structure and operations
- The Terms of Reference will set out the vision, goal, rationale, approach, functions and purposes, and limitations of the Task Force, and how it is structured and operates

Membership

- Membership in the NSHTF is voluntary and open to any individual, private organization, not-for-profit organization, or public agency or institution who supports the North Shore Homelessness Action Plan, and is committed to working collaboratively and actively to address the issue of homelessness on the North Shore
- By definition a task force is action oriented and it is expected that all NSHTF members will play an active role in ensuring the task force is able to accomplish its goals and achieve the results it is aiming for on behalf of the homeless on the North Shore and the North Shore community in general
- Those wishing to become a member of or withdraw their membership in the Task Force may do so by contacting the NSHTF Chair
- Organizations, agencies, and institutions who wish to become and maintain membership in the Task Force may appoint a representative to attend task force meetings and one or more representatives to participate on one or more working groups

Meetings of the Task Force

- The Task Force meets as a group on the North Shore for a morning on the third Thursday of January, April, July, and October, and decides to meet as a group in addition to these set meeting dates as appropriate
- The general purpose and agendas of the Task Force meetings is to determine the status of homelessness on the North Shore, the North Shore Homelessness Action Plan, the Task Force's current year's Annual Action & Work Plan, and the Task Force's current year's Annual Operating & Funding Plan, to have the working groups provide a status report on their activities, and make any adjustments and revisions as necessary to these items and the structure and operations of the Task Force
- The additional focus of the October meeting is to adopt the Task Force's coming year's Annual Action & Work Plan, the Task Force's coming year's Annual Operating & Funding Plan, and to make any adjustments to its Terms of Reference for the coming year

Working Groups

- The majority of the work of the Task Force is carried out by working groups
- In general, the working groups will be established at the meetings of the Task Force
- There may be times when working groups are formed to address immediate issues in a timely manner between meetings of the Task Force
- The working groups will meet and interact as they see fit to accomplish their goals and complete their assigned tasks
- The working groups will provide a written status report on their progress in MS Word as an e-mail attachment to the Task Force Chair 14 calendar days prior to each Task Force meeting

Chair of the Task Force

- The overall coordination of the Task Force and the setting of the agenda, organizing, chairing of Task Force meetings, and ensuring that Task Force meeting minutes are taken and distributed to Task Force members will be responsibility of the Chair of the Task Force
- The Chair of the Task Force will also be the designated spokesperson for the Task Force
- The Chair of the Task Force has the ability to delegate some of their responsibilities to other Task Force members from time to time as they see fit

Administrative Support for the Task Force

- Administrative support for the Task Force will be determined annually
- The purpose of the administrative support is to assist the Task Force Chair in the carryout of their duties