



2021 Year in Review North Shore Homelessness Task Force

Overview

Homelessness continues to be a reality on the North Shore and a pressing issue that requires ongoing action. The North Shore Homelessness Task Force (NSHTF) was formed 1998 to provide coordinated, collaborative leadership and action on this issue. Since homelessness is a systemic issue, the NSHTF will continue to exist as long as it is considered necessary. The NSHTF meets as an open service network on a quarterly basis to address issues relating to homelessness and poverty on the North Shore. The NSHTF focuses on areas related to support services, communications and information, and advocacy. Members of the NSHTF include municipal employees, Vancouver Coastal Health, service providers, faith community members, and more.

Highlight of Activities

Issues surrounding homelessness and housing continued to be exacerbated by the pandemic in 2021. In response, the NSHTF coordinated and participated in many activities to further broaden our understanding of the needs in our community. Through the shift to online meetings and correspondence, we were happy to note an increased level of participation and membership throughout the year. We are so inspired by all of the work so many folks were putting back into our community on the North Shore this year. Here is a highlight of our activities:

- Hosted 4 quarterly meetings
- Launched and completed the North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy
- Complete [website](#) update
- Completed previous 10 year plan (2008-2018)
- Relaunched Connect Day
- Supported launch of Strengthening Communities Grant
- Supported the Emergency Weather Response
- Supported the Poverty Reduction Strategy grant application



North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy

The [North Shore Homelessness Community Action Strategy](#) was an initiative generously funded by the Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia (SPARCBC). This Strategy provided \$25,000 in funding to help create a community-informed plan for reducing the impacts of poverty and homelessness in the North Shore. Through the support of Roots and Rivers and Oakunsheyld Consulting, the NSHTF collected and synthesized diverse perspectives and knowledges surrounding homelessness on the North Shore.

These insights allowed the NSHTF to identify existing barriers, gaps, opportunities, and strengths on the North Shore for responding to homelessness. This work was completed between April and December of 2021. The work included a Process Design and kick off period between April and June; a [Situational Analysis](#) with insights from research and conversations with key stakeholders, including [engagement with homeless community members](#) and [service providers](#), between June and October; a Targeted Engagement and Workshop with the NSHTF through September to November; and the development of a [Strategic Plan](#) in November and December.

Thanks to the knowledge gained from both homeless community members and service providers, the NSHTF has been mobilized to elevate the direction and capacity of their work with clearer intention, as outlined through our [Operational Plan](#). This project was a fantastic opportunity and provided a great deal of reflection on the NSHTF's work in the past, and to come.

Connect Day

After a year's hiatus due to COVID-19, [Connect Day](#) was back on the North Shore in 2021! The goal was to provide services, information, a meal, and community support to unhoused and at-risk community members who had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

This year, St. Andrew's United Church graciously donated space to host the event. The combination of the outdoor and indoor space, along with masks and sanitization, allowed the event to proceed safely during the pandemic. North Shore Neighbourhood House provided volunteers and tents for the dreary day. Thanks to Vancity, the City of North Vancouver, the Council of Community Homelessness Table, and SPARC BC's financial contributions, the event included grocery store gift cards and care items to distribute. More than 18 organizations and service providers attended, and were able to distribute food, safety items, immunizations, and plentiful information about the services offered on the North Shore to nearly 100 guests. A lunch was also provided by St. Andrew's United Church.

