



December 2015 Newsletter

Peninsula Homeless to Housing Task Force

Our Mission is to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on the South Surrey White Rock Peninsula to live in safe and appropriate housing

NEXT MEETING: Friday, December 4th at 9:45am
White Rock Baptist Church, 1657-140th St. Surrey.
Please circulate to contacts.

Follow-up All-Candidates Forum

An issue that was raised at the PH2H All Candidates Forum by a long term volunteer of the First United Church extreme weather shelter was the lack of services for men at risk living on the Peninsula. This is an issue that many who sit on the PH2H Task Force can attest to. While lack of shelter is an issue for both men and women, men also do not have a comparable support services available to them as women do through SOURCES Women's Place. Counselling, clothing exchange, meals, and in general a place to go and find resources that can make a difference in the life of someone who is homeless or could prevent another who may be at risk. It was mentioned that Women's Place started in a church with a few people wanting better conditions for women. A separate but similar space for men – a drop-in space to just be – would be a valuable community asset. It would seem that to create a "Men's Place" in the White Rock/South Surrey area would not only be a benefit to men but also one of the prevention steps needed to address homelessness on the Peninsula.

Draft Regional Affordable Housing Strategy

Metro Vancouver is receiving comments on its draft Regional Affordable Housing Strategy (RAHS) until mid-December. The web link to see a copy of draft is at the end of this article. There are also updated housing demand estimates available. The current draft discussed the link between housing cost and transit. We've notice a few items that we feel need either additional clarification or inclusion.

In the discussion of the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) it is not stated that the program is unavailable to people on welfare or disability or are receiving any Provincial monies of any kind. This means that the RAP isn't available for those that are in the greatest core need which should be explicitly recognized in 2.6 The Funding Gap - page 19.

On page 32, under proposed Provincial actions, these could include reviewing regulations and policies within the RTA to protect people in transitional and supportive housing, prevention being a key intervention with homelessness.

On page 32, there is a reference to the HPS Advisory Board (RSCH) implementing a private landlord

engagement initiative. Is the RAHS suggesting the RSCH has made a commitment to engage with private landlords and link them with homeless serving agencies? This should be clarified.

The chart on Page 17 shows people earning less than \$50,000 pay 70% on housing and transit, and of course that percentage increases with less income. At extreme core need it can become a choice between housing or transit costs. It would be useful for the *Regional Affordable Housing Strategy* to specifically reference the *Transportation and Transit Plan of Metro Vancouver* and *Regional Transportation Strategy* with a recommendation that given the high transit demand in low-income households (page 9) that regional transportation plans acknowledge the transit access needs of low-income households when they are subject to renewal/updating.

For a copy of the report please see this link:

<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/housing-affordability/strategy/Pages/default.aspx>

In the News

We have noticed numerous cities in the USA have recently declared 'States of Emergency' regarding their homeless numbers. We don't know what this means but it does raise the question: What does the current real estate price escalation mean for homelessness in Metro Vancouver?

Seattle State of Emergency On Homeless Crisis

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/...>

L.A. to declare 'state of emergency' on homelessness, commit \$100 million

<http://www.latimes.com/local/1...>

Hawaii follows Los Angeles in declaring state of emergency over homelessness

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-...>

Portland Mayor: Homeless State Of Emergency

<https://www.popularresistance...>

Support Challenge for PH2H – A local congregation has extended a challenge to the community to make a donation to PH2H for its modest operating budget of \$5,000. Donations will be matched up to \$2,500 for up to 4 years. Cheques would be made out to Sources (fund manager) for PH2H.

Please circulate our newsletter to your congregations and members. Send feedback/news items to: ph2htaskforce@gmail.com