

This information was released to the public on
September 17, 2024.

**CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024**

Homelessness Prevention Planning

The following information was released to the public from the Closed Council meeting of September 9, 2024:

- A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan;
- Surrey Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan: Situation Report; and
- Surrey Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan: What We Heard Engagement Summary Report.

A Pathway to Home

Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan



September 2024



PREPARED BY

CitySpaces Consulting Limited

585 – 1111 West Hastings Street

Vancouver BC V6E 2J3

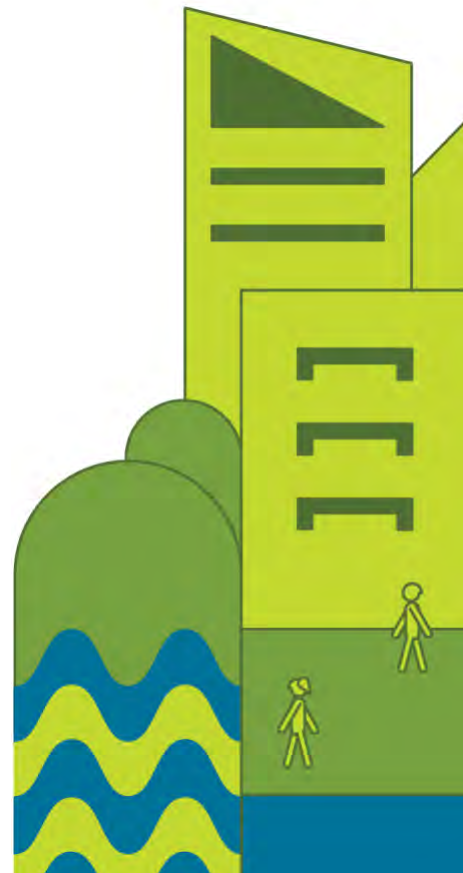


TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Plan At-A-Glance..... i

INTRODUCTION..... 1

 Vision 4

 Guiding Principles 4

BACKGROUND CONTEXT + ANALYSIS..... 7

 Background..... 7

 Policy Context..... 8

 Declining Rental Affordability 10

 Increasing Incidence of Homelessness 11

 Inventory Analysis..... 12

 Indigenous Homelessness..... 14

ENGAGEMENT 16

 Engagement Process..... 16

 What We Heard – Highlights 18

 Pathways into Homelessness..... 20

GAPS + TARGETS..... 22

GOALS 28

IMPLEMENTATION + EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 52

APPENDIX A – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPENDIX B – SURREY NON-MARKET HOUSING INVENTORY

APPENDIX C – SITUATION REPORT

APPENDIX D – WHAT WE HEARD ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Housing Network.....	1
Figure 2: Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan Structure	2
Figure 3: Project Timeline.....	3
Figure 4: Non-Market Units per Resident in Surrey and Metro Vancouver	7
Figure 5: Surrey's Housing Policy Context	8
Figure 6: Inflation Adjusted Average Rent by Unit Size (City of Surrey, 1993-2023).....	10
Figure 7: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness, City of Surrey (2005-2023)	11
Figure 8: Total Point-in-Time Count with Forecast, Surrey (2005-2023).....	12
Figure 9: Engagement Workshop Images, Summer – Fall 2023	16
Figure 10: Engagement at-a-Glance	17

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Annual Unit Targets by Facility or Housing Type (including closures)	24
Table 2: 2025–2029 Total Targets by Age Range and Facility / Housing Type (excluding closures)	25
Table 3: City of Surrey Implementation + Evaluation Framework.....	53





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, unceded territories of Semiahmoo, Kwantlen, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations who have cared for these lands since time immemorial.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report has been made possible through the collaborative efforts of those who shared their valuable knowledge, time, and expertise. The City of Surrey thanks all participants in the Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan process.

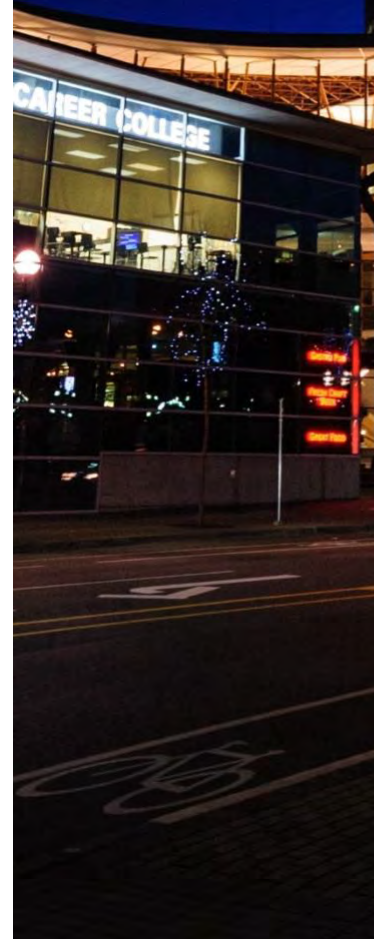
MESSAGE FROM MAYOR + COUNCIL

Housing for All is one of the key priorities of the City of Surrey. As a Mayor and Council, we are committed to building a robust housing network that provides appropriate and affordable homes for Surrey's large and diverse population, both today and in the future.

A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan will play an important role toward achieving housing for all. The most recent Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, conducted in 2023, showed a **65% increase in homelessness in Surrey since 2020**. This new Plan is focused on this population, the most vulnerable people and families in our community who struggle with homelessness.

A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan takes a focused approach to understand and address homelessness and housing insecurity in Surrey. We recognize that the current lack of affordable and supportive housing options impacts the ability of some of our residents to find and maintain appropriate housing. We also appreciate that different individuals and households have vastly different housing needs. This is why we will focus on protecting, increasing and diversifying our non-market housing stock to meet the needs of priority populations, including Indigenous residents, who continue to be overrepresented amongst those experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness is not a simple problem and providing housing units alone will not be enough to address the problem. Understanding the complex, interrelated challenges that some individuals face is a reminder that we need innovative solutions that address both the health and housing needs of



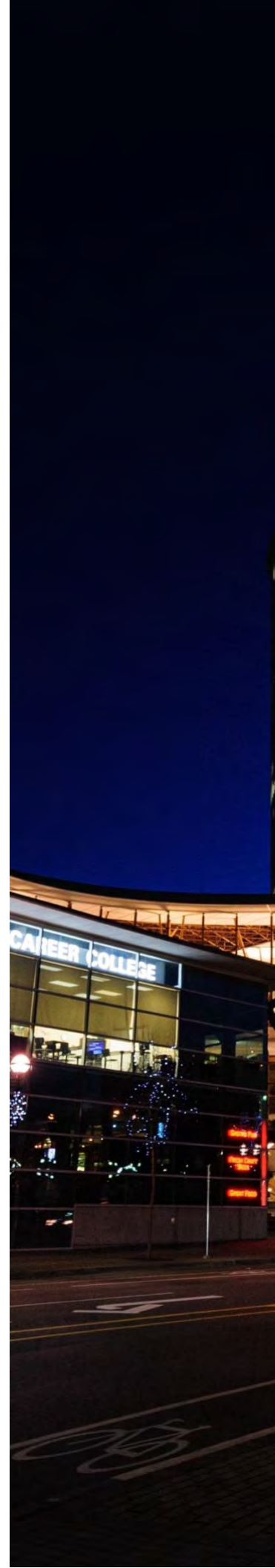
individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We need to focus on services that will support people through transitions in their lives, provide individual, rather than one-size-fits-all solutions, and ensure housing and services are culturally appropriate and safe.

The City of Surrey is committed to championing our vision of a functional end to homelessness. In this Plan, we have articulated a bold set of actions to achieve our goals. But we cannot do it alone. Partnerships and funding commitments with the **Provincial and Federal governments, BC Housing and the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and the many non-profit housing and service providers that operate in Surrey are key for the Plan's success.**

I want to express my gratitude to everyone who shared their voice and guided the development of **A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan**, including those with lived and living experience of homelessness, individuals who provide direct care for our community, and the agencies and organizations that are critical to advancing positive change across the housing network. Together, we can work to achieve a functional end to homelessness in Surrey.

Mayor Brenda Locke

City of Surrey



THE PLAN AT-A-GLANCE

VISION

THE CITY OF SURREY ASPIRES TO ACHIEVE A FUNCTIONAL END TO HOMELESSNESS IN SURREY.

Achieving functional zero means homelessness in Surrey is no longer recurring or long-lasting. When prevention efforts are not successful, those who experience homelessness can be quickly connected to the right mix of affordable housing and coordinated support services so that their experience is brief.

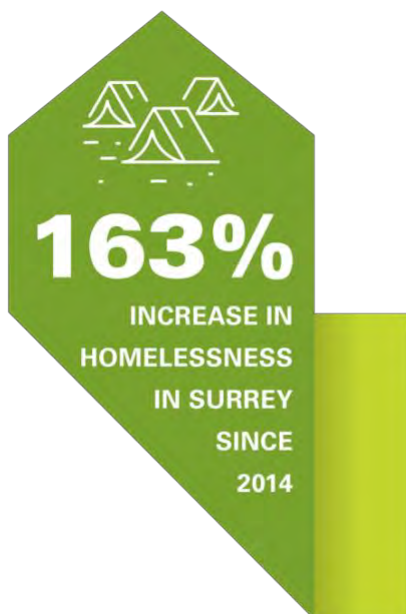
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Housing for All
2. The City as Champion
3. Government-level Partnerships are Key for the Plan's success
4. Prioritization of Reconciliation + Indigenous-Led Housing Solutions
5. A Coordinated Response across the Housing and Homelessness Network is Essential
6. Approaches + Solutions are Data and Evidence Driven
7. Focus on Prevention + Early Intervention to Stop the Flow
8. A Person-centred Approach
9. Ongoing Monitoring of Implementation Progress

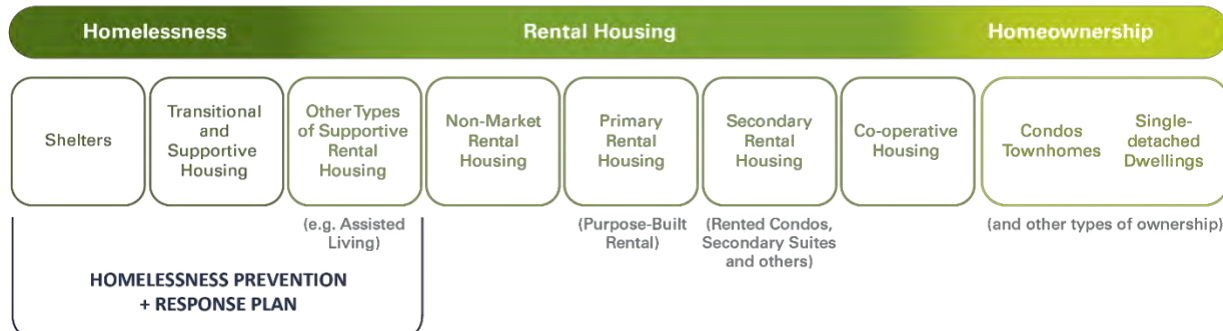
BACKGROUND

A Pathway to Home: City of Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan steers the City's actions and decisions over the next five years, working towards a **vision of a future Surrey with a functional end to homelessness.**

The aim of the Plan is to **create clear pathways out of homelessness towards stable, permanent housing options.** Within the housing network, the Plan concentrates on non-market housing solutions – emergency shelters, supportive housing, transitional housing, and independent living – to ensure diverse housing options are available for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.



HOUSING NETWORK AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION + RESPONSE PLAN SCOPE



HOMELESSNESS IN SURREY

Surrey has the second highest prevalence of homelessness in the region and is underserved in non-market housing units. The number of people experiencing homelessness has increased significantly and this trend is expected to continue with the persistently high and increasing cost of housing.



HOUSING

- Pathways into homelessness are varied, complex, and interrelated
- Emergency shelters are not long-term housing solutions
- There is a lack of all housing types across the network and in all Surrey communities



INTEGRATED HEALTH + HOUSING

- People experiencing or at-risk of homelessness face barriers accessing health services
- A new model of assisted living is needed for those with complex health needs
- A range of health services are needed in shelters and supportive housing



SUPPORT SERVICES

- There are gaps in other key support services
- Culturally-sensitive supports are needed
- Service sector staff and frontline workers experience daily stresses

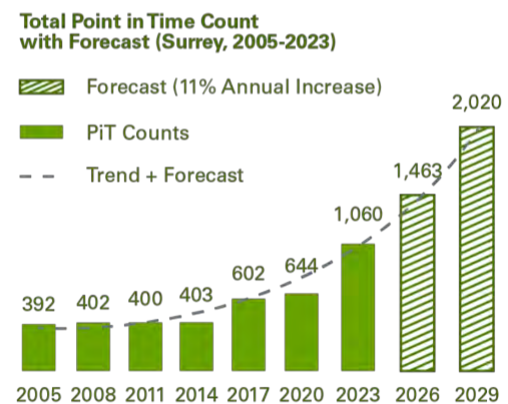
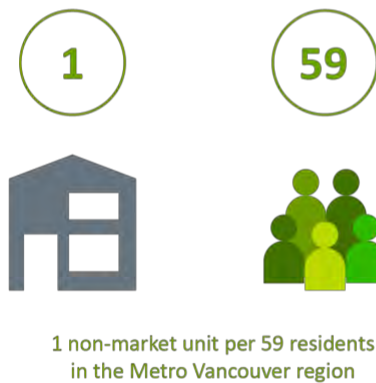
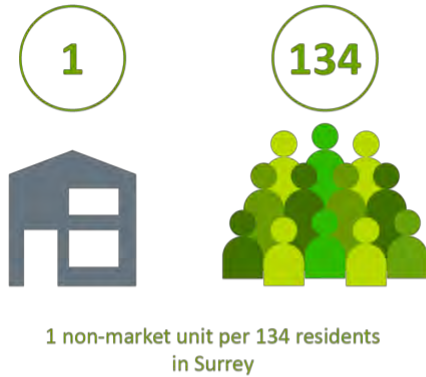


PREVENTION

- People are most vulnerable and at-risk of homelessness during transitions in their lives
- People struggle to navigate the system to access housing and support services

GAPS + TARGETS

Targets to address the needs of people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness were developed to address upcoming closures of existing facilities, individuals counted in the most recent point-in-time count, and to accommodate a future estimate of growing need through 2029 based on recent trends recent trends.



Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.

It is estimated 2,326 new spaces / units are required in Surrey by 2029. Categorized by facility or housing type, the targets include:



TOTAL UNITS/SPACES: 2,326

Replace Impending Closures
304 spaces / units

Address Current + Projected Homelessness Population
2,022 spaces / units



THE PLAN – 7 GOALS + 60 ACTIONS

The Plan includes seven goals and related sub objectives that provide a framework for implementation. 60 actions have been identified across four areas of implementation – Policy, Process, Partnership, and Support.

GOAL 1:
Increase Supply of Non-Market Housing in Surrey.

GOAL 2:
Build Culturally Safe Housing and Support Services for Indigenous Peoples.

GOAL 3:
Diversify non-market Supportive and independent Affordable rental housing to meet the unique needs of Priority Populations.

GOAL 4:
Ensure Emergency Response Solutions are Effective, Client-Centred, and Short-Term.

GOAL 5:
Encourage Prevention-Driven Solutions, Especially During Transitions.

GOAL 6:
Improve Access to Health and Other Support Services.

GOAL 7:
Understand the Scale and Complexity of Community Need.



ACTIONS



IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation + evaluation of the plan is necessary to ensure City of Surrey and partners deliver the strategic goals over the next five years. The framework should be adapted as needed, continuously integrating feedback, monitoring performance, and improving the actions.



Introduction

“Home is any place where you make it.

Being in your own space, making it your own.

A place I’m comfortable... a place where there is equality.”

– Person with lived experience



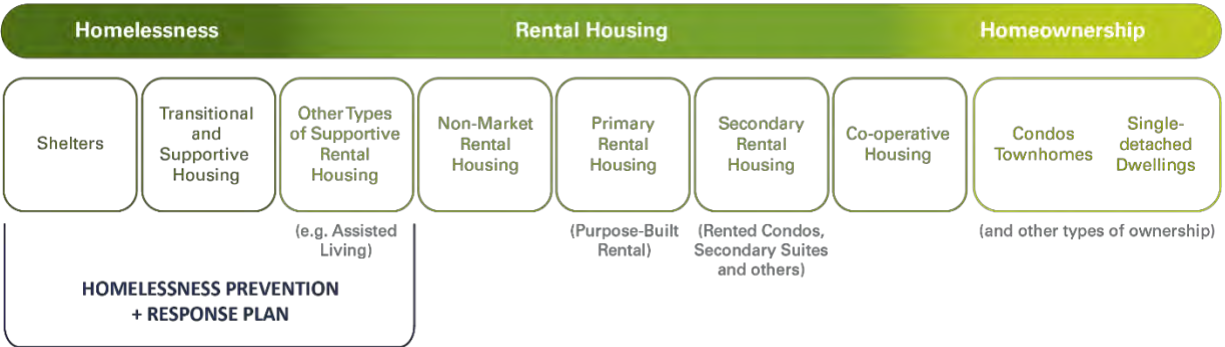
Introduction

More than 1,000 individuals were found to be unhoused in Surrey as part of the regional Point-in-Time Count in 2023 – a 65% increase since 2020. Surrey has the second highest prevalence of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region. As Surrey’s population grows, this upward trend will continue unless action is taken.

A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan is Surrey’s homelessness strategy and response to this situation. It will steer the City’s actions and decisions over the next five years, working towards a vision of a future Surrey with a functional end to homelessness.

The aim of this Plan is creating clear pathways from homelessness to stable, permanent housing options. Within the housing network, this Plan concentrates on non-market housing and spaces, including shelters, transitional and supportive housing, and independent non-market rental housing, to ensure diverse housing options are available for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. A shortage in supply anywhere across the housing network, particularly for households in low- and moderate-income brackets, can lead to increasing incidences of homelessness or housing insecurity as households have limited options that fit their budget. Focusing efforts on creating more supportive and independent non-market rental housing options in Surrey will help more people achieve long-term housing stability.

Figure 1: Housing Network



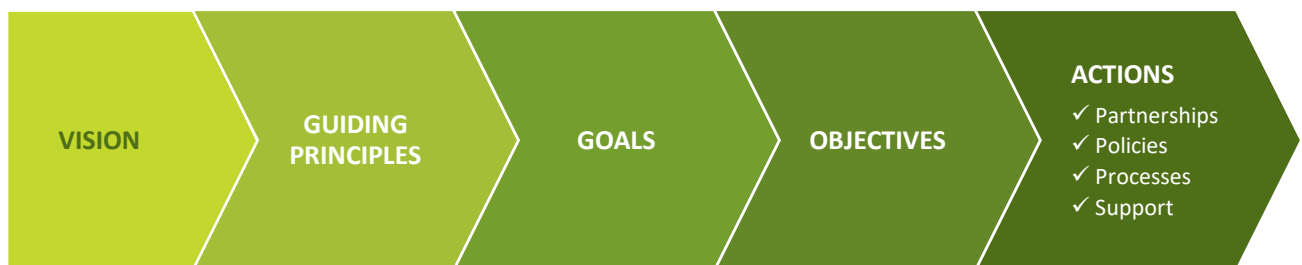
PLAN STRUCTURE

The Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan is comprised of three reports:



The recent research conducted by the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) in *Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey* (2022) and Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' Working Group (SVWG) in *In Their Own Words: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey* (2023) has been woven into the Plan and informs its recommendations and actions.

Figure 2: Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan Structure



PROJECT TIMELINE

In 2022, Council approved the Strategic Approach to the *Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan*, committing the City to its role as champion. Work towards this Plan commenced in March 2023, with background research, quantitative data collection and analysis, and engagement strategy preparation. Engagement activities were then conducted in the Summer and Fall 2023, providing valuable insights that shaped the recommendations and actions incorporated into the draft plan.



Throughout the process, feedback was provided from an Advisory Committee comprised of non-profit organizations delivering homelessness services and supportive housing in Surrey. City staff from across multiple departments (Social Infrastructure & Community Investments, Planning and Development, and Engineering) met with the project team during the process to inform the recommendations and actions.

Figure 3: Project Timeline





Vision

THE CITY OF SURREY ASPIRES TO ACHIEVE A FUNCTIONAL END TO HOMELESSNESS IN SURREY

Achieving a functional end to homelessness means homelessness in Surrey would no longer be recurring or long-lasting. When the vision is achieved, those who experience homelessness will be quickly connected to the right mix of affordable housing and coordinated support services.

Guiding Principles

Nine guiding principles provide a framework for the actions and approaches that underlie the delivery of the *Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan*:

1. HOUSING FOR ALL

Housing is a basic necessity and human right. All people have the right to live in security, peace, and dignity. It is also important to achieve an adequate standard of living for everyone that meets basic standards of safety, health, and comfort.

2. THE CITY AS CHAMPION

Achieving the vision of a functional end to homelessness is built on a continuing commitment by the City to the creation of a mix of housing and support services in all six Surrey communities.

3. GOVERNMENT LEVEL PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY FOR THE PLAN'S SUCCESS

The City cannot address homelessness alone. Partnership with senior government partners, as well as collaboration across the homelessness, housing, health and social sectors is required. Partnerships and multi-year funding commitments are required to develop emergency response solutions and to deliver the affordable and supportive housing needed to address and prevent homelessness in Surrey.



4. PRIORITIZATION OF RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS-LED HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Listening and learning from Indigenous partners to understand Indigenous experiences and definitions of homelessness is crucial to creating culturally safe and appropriate solutions. Indigenous people should design and deliver Indigenous housing and services. Success will involve continued capacity building of Indigenous organizations to deliver services to Indigenous people.

5. A COORDINATED RESPONSE ACROSS THE HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS NETWORK IS ESSENTIAL

Coordination of all levels of government, First Nations, the non-profit sector, housing and health authorities, Indigenous partners, academics, and people with lived expertise is essential to a successful response.

6. APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS ARE DATA AND EVIDENCE DRIVEN

A data-driven approach is critical to developing efficient and equitable solutions and understanding who needs supports, and the type of housing and services required to meet their needs. This will include the consideration of evidence from promising practices within other communities.

7. FOCUS ON PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION TO STOP THE FLOW

Proactive rather than reactive measures are needed to prevent instances of homelessness before they occur. Through early intervention, people at-risk of homelessness will receive the support necessary to remain stably housed.

8. A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

All people should be treated with dignity and respect. Decisions should be guided by people's individual preferences, values, and needs, to provide care that is respectful and responsive, and gives people the capacity for growth and self-determination.

9. ONGOING MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

To fulfill the goals outlined in the Plan, the City will monitor the implementation of the actions on an ongoing basis and respond to changing circumstances and updated information as new data becomes available.

Background Context + Analysis

“There really is nowhere to go. I can’t stay in a field. The cops come and make everyone move and they take your stuff. It’s so hot outside right now... and there is no temporary housing available.”

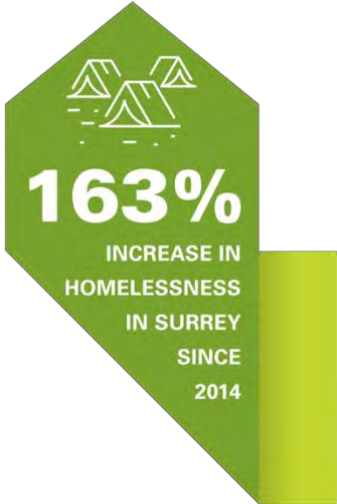
– Lived Experience Interview



Background Context + Analysis

BACKGROUND

The City of Surrey is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Metro Vancouver and projected to become the largest City in British Columbia by 2030. The incidence of homelessness has been increasing across Metro Vancouver. Surrey has been notably impacted – homelessness has risen by 163% (an 11% annual growth rate) since 2005.

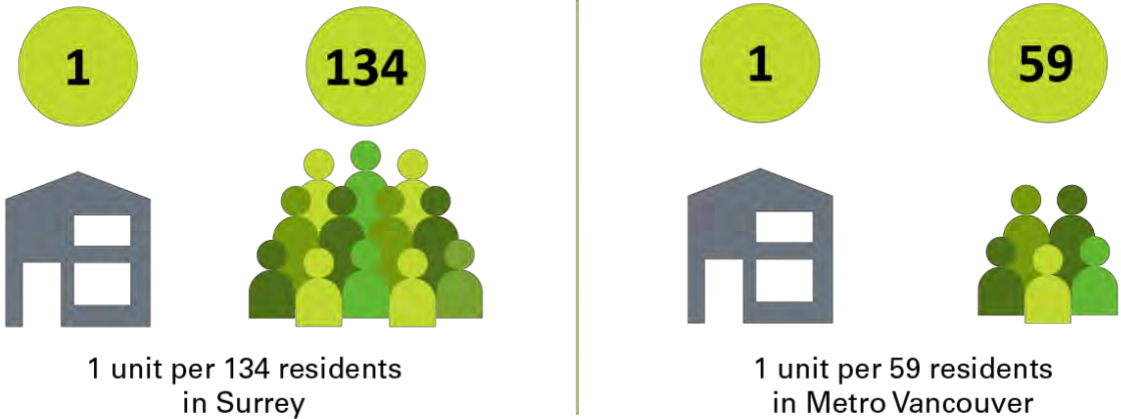


Surrey has the second highest prevalence of homelessness in the region. According to the 2023 Point-in-Time Count, a minimum of 1,060 people in Surrey were in urgent need of housing and experiencing homelessness, including 301 people (28% of people counted) sleeping in spaces unsuitable for human habitation and 109 who were in an overnight Extreme Weather Response shelter on the night of the Count.

Despite the significant increase in the rates of homelessness, Surrey remains underserved in terms of non-market housing units per capita compared to the Metro Vancouver region. The region has an average of one non-market unit per 59 residents, whereas Surrey has less than half the proportion of non-market units per resident at one non-market unit per 134 residents.

Figure 4: Non-Market Units per Resident in Surrey and Metro Vancouver

Source: BC Housing, Unit Count Reporting Model, March 31, 2023



POLICY CONTEXT

Figure 5: Surrey's Housing Policy Context



The following plans form the **City of Surrey housing policy context**:

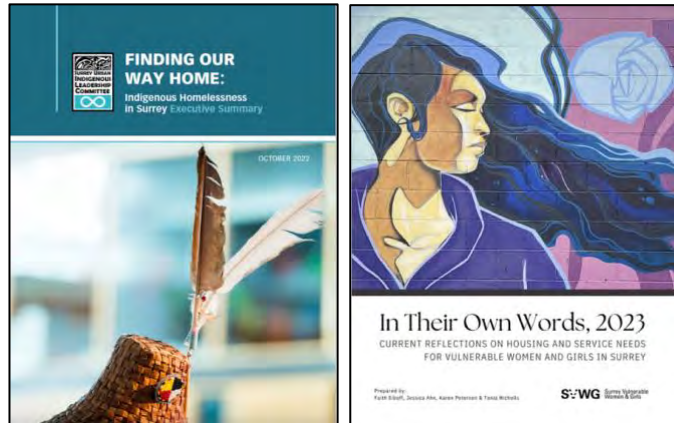
- **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless (2013)** identified and responded to the needs for long-term housing and support services for people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness. This will now be replaced by the A Pathway Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan (2024).
- **Official Community Plan (2014)** outlines the City's long-term plan for community development and identifies objectives and policies to achieve the Plan. The Official Community Plan (OCP) will be updated by end of 2025 to align with new provincial legislative requirements, creating an opportunity for the update to further support the direction of A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan.



- **Affordable Housing Strategy (2018)** sets out strategies and actions to increase housing affordability in Surrey, with a focus on purpose-built market and non-market rental housing.
- **Housing Needs Report (2022)** provides an overview of current and future housing needs in Surrey to inform planning processes and policies. The report will be updated by the end of 2024 to align with new provincial legislative requirements.

In addition, recent research has informed this plan, including:

- Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee: **Finding Our Way Home Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022)**; and
- Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group: **In Their Own Words: Current Reflections on Housing And Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey. (2023)**.



Relevant provincial and federal plans that form Surrey’s wider housing policy context include:

- Province of British Columbia: *Belonging in BC: A collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness (2023)*;
- Province of British Columbia: *BC Housing Action Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25 (2022)*;
- Aboriginal Housing Management Association: *BC Indigenous Homelessness Strategy (2022)*;
- Province of British Columbia: *TogetherBC: British Columbia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy (2019)*; and
- Government of Canada: *Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy (2019) & National Housing Strategy (2017)*.



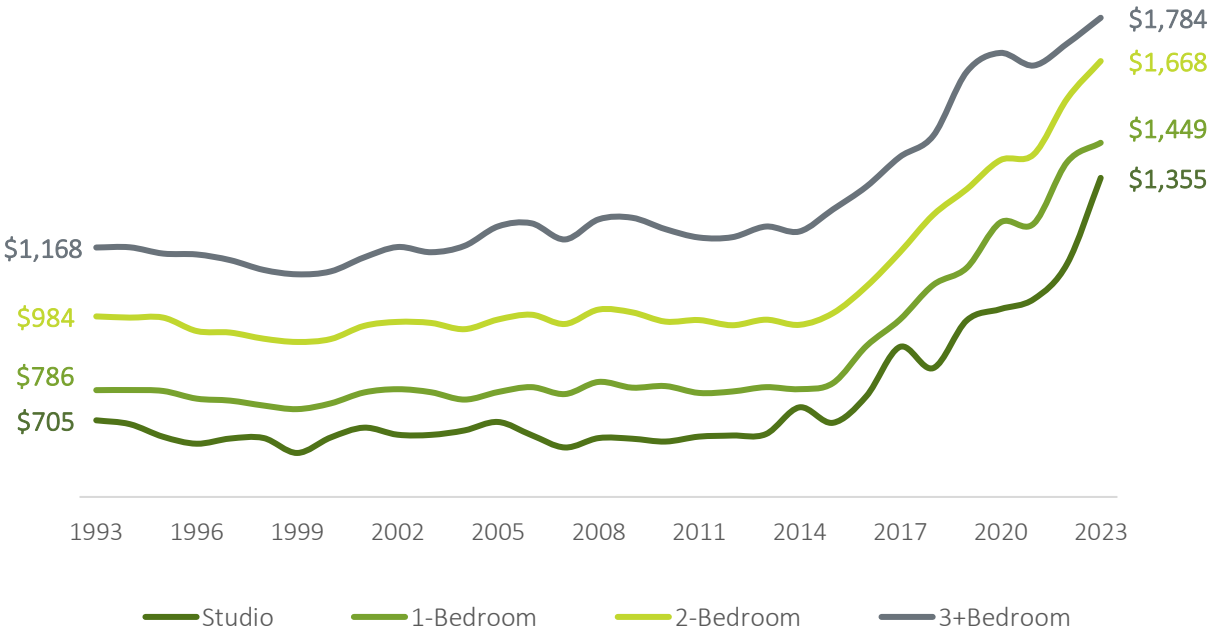
DECLINING RENTAL AFFORDABILITY

AFFORDABILITY OF RENTAL UNITS

- **Renter households are most at-risk** of experiencing homelessness, particularly if they do not have any equity or savings to help with the transition if they are forced to move.
- The cost of rental housing has been increasing year-over-year since 2014. **Average rents increased** by 74% between 2015 and 2023.
- **Vacancy rates have remained below 2% since 2015.** In October 2023, the vacancy rate was 1.5% and median rent increased 8.1% since the previous October. A balanced vacancy rate is between 3% and 4%, which allows for existing residents options to move between units.
- **Vacant units in Surrey are 28% more expensive than occupied units.** Considering all unit types, the median rent for vacant units in Surrey is \$2,015 compared to \$1,542 for rented units.
- More than half of renters cannot afford the average rent of a new 1-bedroom tenancy.

Figure 6: Inflation Adjusted Average Rent by Unit Size (City of Surrey, 1993-2023)

Source: Market Rental Survey. CMHC. 1993-2023



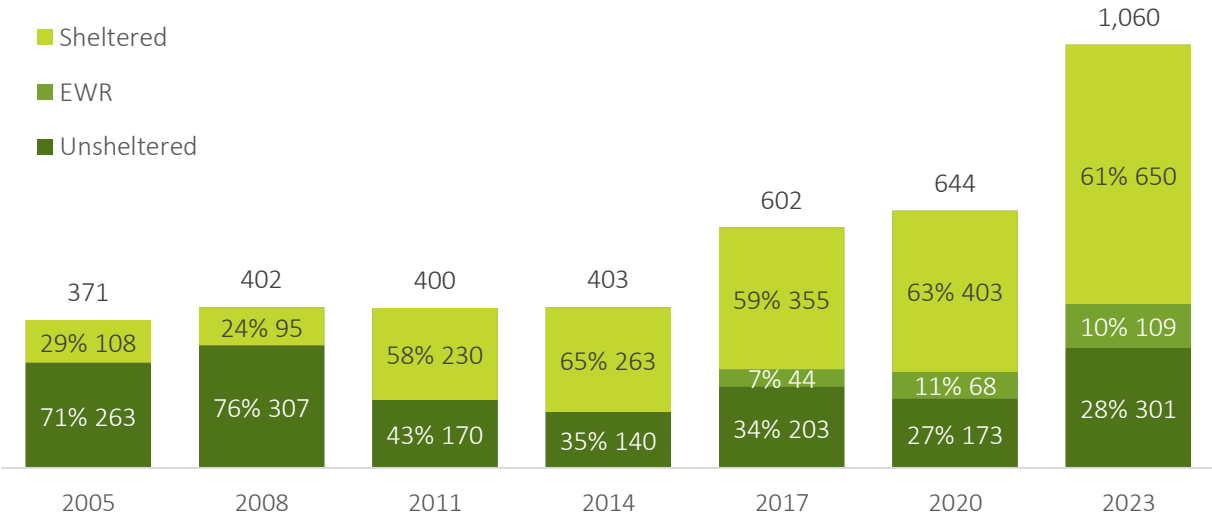
INCREASING INCIDENCE OF HOMELESSNESS

POINT-IN-TIME (PiT) COUNT DATA 2023

- Across Metro Vancouver, there was a 122% increase in people experiencing homelessness between 2005 and 2023 – from 2,174 to 4,821 over the 18-year period.
- In Surrey, there was a significant surge in the number of people counted in 2023, with a **65% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness since 2020**.
- In 2023, a total of **1,060 people experiencing homelessness in Surrey** were counted.
 - 61% of people experiencing homelessness were sheltered.
 - Surrey’s regional share of the PiT Count increased to 22%.
 - Not having enough income for housing is the most common reason for homelessness.
 - Most peoples’ first experience of homelessness occurs in youth (younger than 25; 42%) or adulthood (25-54; 49%), with the remainder being seniors (55+, 10%).
 - Most individuals reported at least two health concerns (61%) – addictions (70%) and mental health challenges (47%) were the most reported.
 - People of working age, people of colour, Indigenous peoples, people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ (particularly youth), and increasingly seniors are all disproportionately represented in the population experiencing homelessness.

Figure 7: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness, City of Surrey (2005-2023)

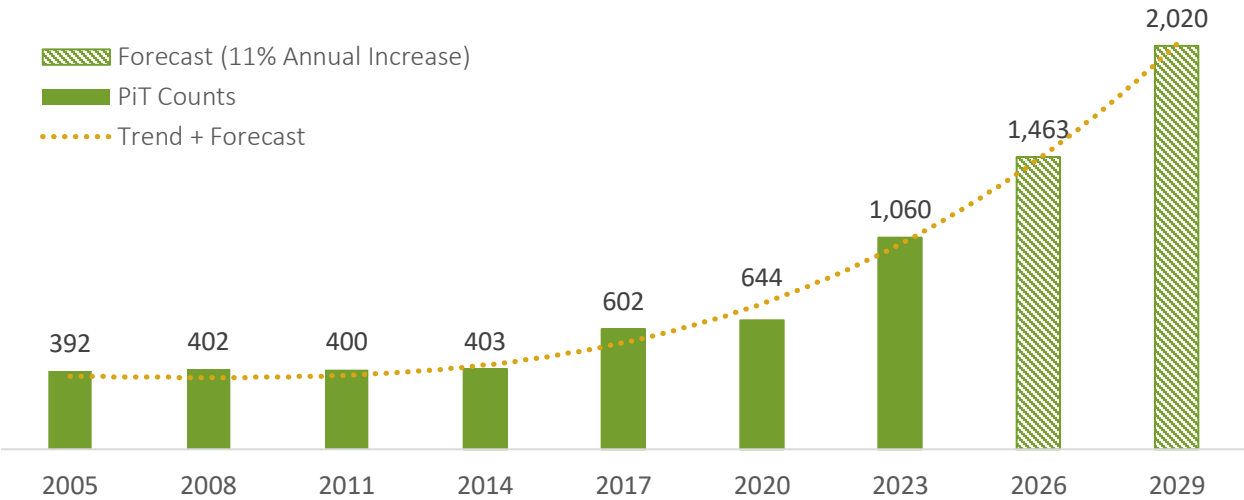
Source: Lu’ma Native BCH Housing Society – Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy, 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



- Between June 2016 and December 2023, an average of 43 patients were **unable to be discharged from the Surrey Memorial Hospital** each month because they had no fixed address or had health or mobility limitations requiring a higher level of care than was available.
- If the annual growth rate calculated since 2014 of 11% continues, **it is estimated that by the Point-in-Time Count in 2026, 1,463 people will be experiencing homelessness** in Surrey – an increase of 403 people since 2023 (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Total Point-in-Time Count with Forecast, Surrey (2005-2023)

Source: Lu’ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



INVENTORY ANALYSIS

SHELTER, TRANSITIONAL, AND SUPPORTIVE

Surrey has 1,620 units / beds for people experiencing homelessness or requiring supports, including shelter and safe house beds, and transitional and supportive housing units.¹

- **Increasing demand outpaces supply.** Most housing currently operating opened after 2010. Despite efforts to create non-market housing units since 2010, demand has continued to rise. More units are needed to bridge the gap.
- **Most of Surrey shelters are in non-purpose-built facilities, almost half of which have expiring leases.** Permanent solutions are needed.

¹ See Appendix B for the full Surrey Non-Market Housing Inventory (2024).



- **Youth and seniors are under-served.** Two thirds of spaces serve adult clients aged 19+ (69%), only 1.3% of spaces are youth-specific, and seniors and people with mobility or other significant health challenges have few options.
- **Distribution of supportive housing and shelter spaces is inequitable across Surrey’s six communities.** The largest share of shelter spaces and supportive housing units is located in City Centre (44%), followed by Whalley (22%) and Newton (13%).
- **The current Extreme Weather Response (EWR) in Surrey is inadequate.** Seven Extreme Weather Response (EWR) facilities were open through the 2023/2024 season, with a total of 147 spaces. Four of the seven facilities operated at or above 100% capacity at least half the nights they were open. Improvements to the EWR model are also needed.

BC Housing tracks an inventory of beds / units in projects it supports financially. In Surrey, this includes 4,631 shelter beds, transitional and supportive housing units, and affordable rental units – Surrey is under-served compared to the rest of Metro Vancouver. Surrey currently has 1 non-market unit per 134 residents compared to 1 non-market unit per 59 residents in Metro Vancouver.

SUPPORTS + SERVICES

- **There is an unequal distribution of support services across Surrey’s six communities.** Most services (60%) are located in City Centre.
- **Surrey has a range of support services**, such as drop-in centres, outreach, health services, meals, harm reduction, access to hygiene services, crisis support, counselling, and other services. Surrey has 21 centres or programs offering support services, including services targeting supports to women (1), women and children (5), women and youth (2), youth (3), and an Indigenous drop-in centre. The two services for women and youth are mobile, in addition to one mobile outreach program for mixed populations.
- There were 745 fewer Surrey residents receiving rent supplements in 2023 (3,087) than in 2021 (3,832). Reductions were seen in the Rental Assistance Program (-532) and Shelter Aid For Elderly Renters (-221). Since 2021, the Canada Housing Benefit has been distributed, representing approximately 5% of all subsidies (163 recipients in 2023).





INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

The City of Surrey recognizes the complex, layered and unique experiences of Indigenous peoples that has led to the over representation of Indigenous people among the homeless population.

Addressing Indigenous homelessness requires an understanding of the colonial history and the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Final Report describes the acts of Canada’s policies toward Indigenous peoples in Canada as “cultural genocide” and specifically states that “for over a century, the central goals of Canada’s Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada.”

Indigenous homelessness encompasses a broader perspective of homelessness, beyond simply lacking a housing structure. The following definition is referenced in the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee report: Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey.

“To be Indigenous of the land and to be homeless does not make sense. How can that be?”

– Skookum Surrey Guide Group member

“Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, and appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means, or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include individuals, families, and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally, or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.” (Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012).

There is an urgent need to address Indigenous homelessness in Surrey.



Engagement

“The cycle of homelessness has to end, moving from shelter to shelter is really hard on a lot of families.”

– Lived Experience Interview



Engagement

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Community engagement is critical to develop a comprehensive and relevant plan which effectively prevents and responds to homelessness in Surrey. An Engagement Framework was devised to ensure a diverse range of perspectives were captured to inform the plan. This included social service providers, government partners, direct care staff and outreach workers, people with living or lived experience of homelessness, and the business community.



The *Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan: What We Heard Engagement Summary Report* provides a detailed account of the engagement process and highlights feedback received from individuals engaged.

Figure 9: Engagement Workshop Images, Summer – Fall 2023



Figure 10: Engagement at-a-Glance



WHAT WE HEARD – HIGHLIGHTS



HOUSING

- The rising cost of rent means housing has become **unaffordable** for many people, especially for those earning fixed incomes or that rely on benefits.
- More people are staying at shelters or hospitals for extended periods due to a lack of transitional housing options and reluctance or inability to move on. **Shelters are not a long-term housing solution.**
- **Pathways into homelessness are varied, complex, and interrelated**, including family conflict, depression or trauma, separation from a partner or marriage breakdown, domestic violence, rent increases, surgery, pressure by landlords, substance use, mental illness, fraud, and building fire damage.
- **There is a lack of all housing types across the network.** Diverse housing types are needed, including non-market housing, shelters, supportive housing, transitional housing, and market rental. Housing is needed to accommodate diverse households including families, urban Indigenous households, women and children, seniors, people with complex health needs, youth, and low-income immigrants/refugees.
- **Non-market housing is needed in all Surrey neighbourhoods**, not only in City Centre.
- **Accessibility to transit and proximity to services** is a vital consideration when locating new housing.
- **Stigma and NIMBYism is prevalent** and represents a barrier to people accessing housing and services.
- **Collaborative solutions and partnerships are recommended** to facilitate more housing.



INTEGRATED HEALTH AND HOUSING

- People experiencing or at-risk of homelessness face **barriers to accessing health services** and are more likely to access in-house or mobile services.
- **A new model of assisted living is needed** for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness who use substances and have health needs which cannot be supported in shelters or supportive housing.

- A range of **health services are needed in shelters and supportive housing** including medication support, mental health services, general health check-ups, youth-specific clinics, sexual health, substance use support, psychiatrist, dental, physiotherapy, pre-natal and post-natal support, and physical health and nutrition programs.
- Adopting a **client-centred, trauma-informed approach** is recommended for housing with embedded health supports.
- **More collaboration** is needed between health, housing, and other related sectors.



SUPPORT SERVICES

- In addition to health service gaps noted, there are **gaps in other key support services** in Surrey including a lack of social infrastructure, counselling, tenant support including rent and eviction support, transit passes, life skills, food security, and employment programs.
- **Culturally-sensitive supports** are needed that acknowledge the needs of diverse populations.
- Service sector staff and direct care staff experience daily stress due to **lack of experience, limited training, and inadequate support**.
- **Service hubs should be located in every neighbourhood** – offering a range of services including housing and health supports. Collaboration with multiple organizations and partners will be needed to implement service hubs.



PREVENTION

- **People are most vulnerable and at-risk of homelessness during transitions in their lives.** Greater involvement, support, and communication is needed between different organizations, youth and adult services, and ministries to ensure a smooth transition.
- **People struggle to navigate the system to access housing and support services.** A straightforward system where information is centralized would help people access resources faster.



PATHWAYS INTO HOMELESSNESS



Gaps + Targets

“For every 1-unit we have available,
there are 10-people put forward;
9-people don’t get housing.”

– Social Service Provider
Key Informant Interview



Gaps + Targets

INTERIM TARGET DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive targets to address the needs of residents experiencing or at-risk of homelessness have been developed. This includes targets for the following spaces or unit types:²

- 1. Shelter spaces
- 2. Transitional housing
- 3. Supportive housing
- 4. Independent non-market housing³

Recognizing individual housing, service, or support needs will vary for people of different ages, these four categories have been allocated to three age ranges, representing different life stages:

< 25 YEARS	25 – 55 YEARS	55+ YEARS
------------	---------------	-----------

These interim targets are informed by the Point-In-Time (PiT) counts, both to assess and project a trend in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey through 2029.

Demographic information from these counts also informed how the overall targets are allocated between the four housing or facility types.

Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts have been undertaken in Surrey every three years since 2005, including 2023. Completed in a single day, it is an attempt to count every person experiencing homelessness at one point in time. While valuable information to understand trends, the count results are widely recognized as an undercount and miss certain groups or populations, such as women and youth, more than others. Many people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness are ‘hidden,’ staying with friends or in other temporary situations, and PiT counts often miss them.

2. See – Glossary for space and unit type definitions.
3. Independent social housing with rents at the shelter component of social assistance or rent geared to income (RGI). These units are intended to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness over and above any other housing targets for the general population.



Recognizing PiT count limitations, the initial targets for 2025–2029 are *interim* until more comprehensive and verifiable information is available. There are two key stages to update the targets following the next PiT count:⁴

- Interim targets will be reviewed against the new count and revised as necessary.
- If feasible, a By-Name List or equivalent system will be established to track housing need for those experiencing homelessness on an individual level. After establishment, the list will be actively maintained and continuously updated.

The interim targets are structured to address: a) replacement of temporary spaces scheduled for closure in the next two years (304 spaces), b) the number of individuals counted during the 2023 PiT homelessness count (1,060 people), plus c) a 10-year trend conservatively projected (+11%/year) to estimate future need (960 additional spaces). This represents **a total of 2,326 new spaces or units in Surrey.**⁵



TARGETS BY FACILITY OR HOUSING TYPE

Categorized by facility or housing type, the targets include:



4. The next PiT Count is anticipated to take place in 2026.

5. New units or spaces created in 2024 would be counted against the 2025-2026 target.

Table 1 summarizes the estimated number of spaces or units required for the 2025-2029 period, including scheduled closures for replacement (in the first two years only).

Table 1: Annual Unit Targets by Facility or Housing Type (including closures)

Source: Consultant Calculations. CitySpaces Consulting. Based on Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.

YEAR	HOUSING TYPE				TOTAL	DUE TO CLOSURES
	SHELTER	SUPPORTIVE	TRANSITIONAL	INDEPENDENT		
2025	128	204	62	175	569	164
2026	154	144	72	175	544	140
2027	24	144	62	175	404	
2028	24	144	62	175	404	
2029	24	144	62	175	404	
Total	354	780	319⁶	873	2,326	304
Share	15%	34%	14%	38%		

TARGETS BY AGE RANGE AND FACILITY OR HOUSING TYPE

Based on current trends, the age group expected to have the highest need is adults (25 to 55 years old) – with 1,408 new spaces / units needed by 2029 (or 70% of total).⁷ Table 2 provides an estimated distribution by three age groups for new spaces or units through 2029 (excluding the closures). These allocations are based on interpreting demographic data from the PiT count, including the distribution of age in the count, the reasons for loss of housing, physical and mental health challenges, addictions issues, or 2SLGBTQIA+ identity. Recognizing people of different ages may have specific and unique housing or support needs, the targets have been allocated by age ranges associated with different life stages to each of the housing types.

6. Numbers do not add up due to rounding.

7. This is compared to 42% of the total population in the 25-55 age group in 2021.



Table 2: 2025–2029 Total Targets by Age Range and Facility / Housing Type (excluding closures)

Source: Consultant Calculations. CitySpaces Consulting. Based on Lu’ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.

AGE RANGE (YEARS)	HOUSING TYPE				TOTAL	
	SHELTER	SUPPORTIVE	TRANSITIONAL	INDEPENDENT	#	%
<25	29	25	52	59	164	8%
25-55	70	493	211	634	1,408	70%
55+	22	202	45	180	450	22%
Total	121	720	308	872	2,022	100%
Share	6%	36%	15%	43%	100%	

Demographic assessment of the PiT count also found 5%-10% of spaces may need to be for people with 2SLGBTQIA+ identities, particularly for youth (with a potential need for 30%+ of youth spaces). All individuals with sexual or gender diverse identities may not need specialized housing, but need housing that is welcoming and supportive of these identities. A total of 20 individuals with a transgender experience were counted in 2023, but the true number is likely higher than what was captured. This group may need specialized services or considerations.



Goals

“Surrey is so big. It’s not a one size fits all everywhere.

The only way we can find a solution is if we all work together.”

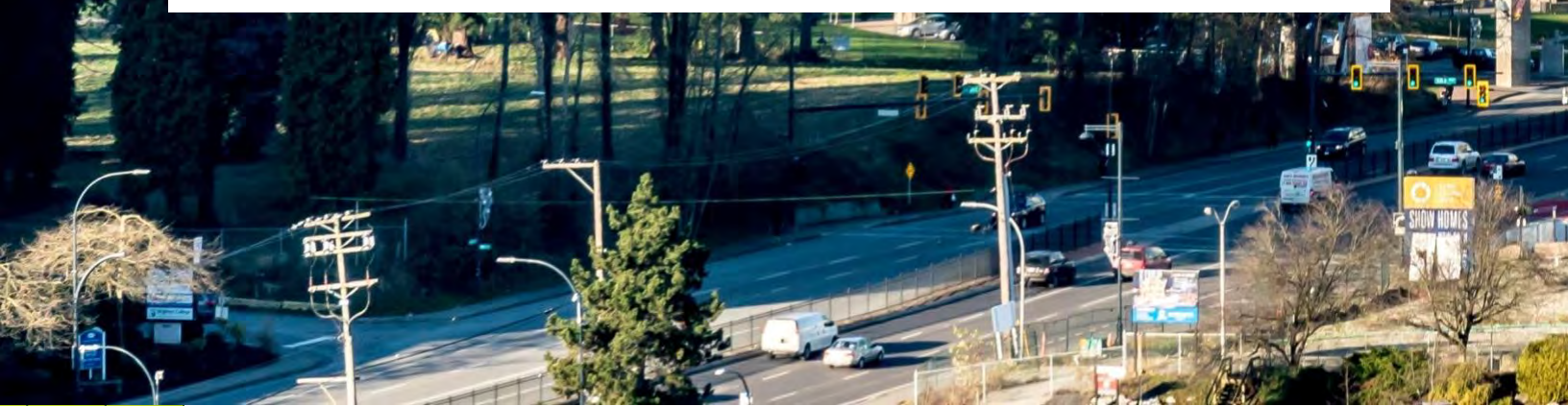
– Business Community Focus Group



VISION

City of Surrey aspires to achieve a functional end to homelessness in Surrey.

Achieving a functional end to homelessness means homelessness in Surrey would no longer be recurring or long-lasting. When the vision is achieved, those who experience homelessness will be quickly connected to the right mix of affordable housing and coordinated support services."



Goals

The Vision will be delivered through seven goals, which form the Plan structure:



GOAL 1
Increase Supply of Non-Market Housing in Surrey.



GOAL 2
Build Culturally Safe Housing and Support Services for Indigenous Peoples.



GOAL 3
Diversify Non-Market Supportive and Independent Affordable Rental Housing to Meet the Unique Needs of Priority Populations.



GOAL 4
Ensure Emergency Response Solutions are Effective, Client-Centred, and Short-Term.



GOAL 5
Encourage Prevention-Driven Solutions, Especially During Transitions.



GOAL 6
Improve Access to Health and Other Support Services.



GOAL 7
Understand the Scale and Complexity of Community Need.



The recommended City-led actions in this Plan comprise four categories:



POLICY

Actions that establish or amend a policy or regulation.



PROCESS

Actions that amend or establish a system or practice to create a new outcome.



PARTNERSHIP

Actions that involve City collaboration with external organizations, First Nations, or other levels of governments.



SUPPORT

Actions where the City supports external efforts or encourages involvement by other organizations or governments.

GOAL 1: INCREASE SUPPLY OF NON-MARKET HOUSING




OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Increase the number of non-market housing units built for a range of households including low-income families, seniors, and singles.
- ▶ Contribute to the creation of inclusive and diverse communities throughout Surrey by supporting the development of non-market housing in each of Surrey’s six communities.

Part of a coordinated response includes rapidly increasing the supply of non-market housing with and without supports that meet the diverse needs of residents.

ACTIONS

 POLICY	1	Ensure policies and procedures support the development of non-market housing.
	1A	Ensure the Official Community Plan supports the development of non-market housing in each of Surrey’s six communities where it is aligned with permitted land use and density. Each Surrey community should provide a diversity of housing to meet the needs of all residents.
	1B	Update the Affordable Housing Strategy (2018) to explore more ways to support the development of non-market housing, including housing for low- and moderate-income households, such as subsidized employer-led housing and the co-op housing model. Policy tools to consider include pre-zoning, parking relaxations, and other regulatory practices.





POLICY

1C

Update policies regarding contributions to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund and develop criteria on how the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund is used. The review will need to ensure alignment with the new Provincial legislation (Bill 16, 2024) including inclusionary zoning policies. The criteria for the allocation of the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund should further leverage and support new non-market housing. Regular market analysis would be needed to inform policy updates.



PROCESS

2

Enhance current processes to support the development of more non-market housing.

2A

Expedite non-market housing projects by having dedicated City staff to shepherd projects through the approval process, build capacity of the sector, and share information about preferred processes and best practices.



POLICY

3

Implement financial incentives to support non-market housing, such as:

3A

Deliver the Non-Market Rental Housing Development Incentive Program through the Housing Accelerator Fund to provide fee and permit discounts for projects with a significant affordable housing component.

3B

Provide Development Cost Charge (DCC) waivers for non-market rental projects.

3C

Develop permissive tax exemptions for non-market housing providers.





PROCESS

4

Consider leasing existing City-owned land and/or make strategic purchases of land that could be leased on a long-term basis for non-market housing.



POLICY +
PROCESS

5

Co-locate new civic facilities with non-market housing.

Civic facilities refer to any property, facility, structure, or building, owned or controlled by the City. Examples may include (but are not limited to) public libraries, community or recreation centres, police departments, fire halls, conference or event centres, museums, or arts centres.



SUPPORT
+ PROCESS

6

Utilize City-owned land and acquire sites to deliver creative and innovative pilot projects and rapid response actions such as modular, mass timber, prefabricated, or 3D printed.

City of Rossland constructed 37 affordable workforce housing units above its new City Hall building, on City-owned land. Municipal offices are located on the ground floor, with three-storeys of residential apartments above. BC Housing, Columbia Basin Trust, and Federation of Canadian Municipalities funded the affordable housing.

Source: rossland.ca



GOAL 2: BUILD CULTURALLY SAFE HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Recognize and continue working to understand and address Indigenous homelessness and the unique housing needs of Indigenous people.
- ▶ Increase the number of Indigenous-led non-market housing units and projects.
- ▶ Improve access to culturally safe and appropriate supports, including the provision of dedicated support services for Indigenous people. Make efforts to remove barriers caused by anti-Indigenous racism.
- ▶ Prevent incidences of Indigenous homelessness in Surrey.

ACTIONS



PARTNERSHIP

1

Increase stock of Indigenous housing through partnerships with the local land-based First Nations and Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) and creatively problem-solve, identify solutions, and coordinate efforts.

Work with the land-based nations and representatives from Indigenous housing providers to develop a specific plan to address Indigenous homelessness. Collaboration will be guided by the needs of the land-based nations and could include setting up a committee or other forum for meeting. For example, explore how the City can work with Sacred Waters, the economic development partnership owned jointly by the Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo Nations, to develop a housing project that includes a gathering space for the Indigenous community.





PARTNERSHIP

2

Partner with Indigenous housing providers to create more opportunities for Indigenous-led housing.

Indigenous-focused housing developments recognize the need to strengthen Indigenous identity, build community, support healing and create pathways to recovery. The City can support Indigenous organizations and increase Indigenous-led housing developments through actions such as identifying opportunities for securing long-term funding, leasing land, or facilitating partnerships with other organizations.



SUPPORT

3

Support the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee's (SUILC) call to action to build 800 deeply affordable housing units for single parent Indigenous households by 2031.

SUILC's Finding our Way Home (2022) report identified single-parent Indigenous families as the highest need Indigenous population in Surrey.

In 2023, the Siksika Nation in Alberta partnered with an Ontario-based construction company and University of Calgary for the design and build of 16 one-bedroom units for members at-risk of homelessness, created using 3D-print technology.

Source: www.siksikahousing.com



4

Work with the non-profit sector to support the provision of culturally safe and appropriate services that address Indigenous homelessness.

The Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homeless defines Indigenous homelessness beyond lacking a structure of habitation, and includes individuals, families, and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities. Service providers that understand Indigenous homelessness can best support the needs of Indigenous people. This may include providing opportunities for cultural reconnection, family-oriented supports for Indigenous households, regular access to Elders, Indigenous ceremony and spirituality, and Indigenous specific activities such as traditional craft classes. Areas of priority need include mental health, trauma, and addictions counselling, support for Indigenous children in government care, and subsidized childcare.

5

Support local efforts to increase retention, staff training and employment opportunities for Indigenous workers in the non-profit sector.

Indigenous representation within Surrey's organizations serving people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness is crucial for increasing trust and comfort.



POLICY

6

Acknowledge Indigenous housing needs and apply a culturally-informed lens of Indigenous homelessness into the City’s housing policies and plan updates.

This would include the Official Community Plan (OCP), zoning bylaw, and all policies and plans that inform housing development and approvals – to ensure the policy responds to the current housing needs of Indigenous people. Where possible, amplify the housing-related recommendations of the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership in City documents.



SUPPORT

7

Support the expansion of services for Indigenous youth, including youth transitioning out of government care.

Services would include the creation of a drop-in Indigenous youth centre or dedicated Indigenous youth services.

Kwum Kwum Lelum (House of Courage) offers safe, supported homes for Indigenous Peoples experiencing homelessness in Victoria. Offering a dual model of housing care with Culturally Supportive Housing alongside Decolonized Harm Reduction. Services and supports focus on strengthening Indigenous self-identity and building community while supporting healing and recovery.

Source: BC Housing, House of Courage is Open (2023)



GOAL 3: DIVERSIFY NON-MARKET HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PRIORITY POPULATIONS





OBJECTIVE

- Support the development of a greater range of non-market housing to better serve the needs of population groups experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, including people with complex health issues, low-income seniors and Elders, young adults, Indigenous people, women and children, people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+, and low-income newcomers.

People with Complex Health Issues may experience complex mental health or substance use issues and may also be living with other challenges such as acquired brain injury, developmental disability, or histories of trauma.

Source: Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

ACTIONS

 <p>SUPPORT + PARTNERSHIP</p>	<p>1 Partner with BC Housing and Fraser Health Authority to implement new housing models for people experiencing and at-risk of homelessness, including seniors, Elders, and those with complex health needs living with substance use and mental health challenges, who require more or different supports than currently provided in shelters or supportive housing.</p>
 <p>SUPPORT</p>	<p>2 Support efforts to increase options for individual's ineligible for supportive housing. For example, many individuals find themselves ineligible for assisted living due to their substance use but have complex health needs preventing them from living independently. Adults with an Acquired Brain Injury are often ineligible for particular housing due to age or diagnosis.</p>





PROCESS

3

Prioritize the development of safe houses and transitional housing for youth and young adults.

Continue to build partnerships with key agencies to facilitate the development of youth-specific housing options with wrap-around services in a safe, supportive environment, to facilitate a positive transition to adulthood.

4

Prioritize projects that increase the number of units dedicated to single women, families, senior women and Elders, and women with children.

A variety of female-specific housing options are needed in Surrey, including independent housing for low-income female-led households, as well as supportive and transitional housing, and shelter options. This includes medium to high barrier housing intended for women with children and no/low-barrier options.

Pacific Community Resources Society is partnered with City of Surrey, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and BC Housing to provide 30-units of transitional housing for young adults in Surrey.

The housing complex provides young adults with safe, affordable housing for two-years while they transition to adulthood and independence.

Source: pcrs.ca



PARTNERSHIP

5

Facilitate partnerships between settlement serving agencies and non-market housing providers.

More bridging is needed between settlement serving agencies and non-market housing providers to help low-income newcomers, especially refugees, find safe and affordable housing that meets their needs.



National Occupancy Standards, used to determine the suitability of housing based on the number of occupants and bedrooms, do not consider cultural norms of immigrant / refugee and Indigenous families. Multiple family members sharing a room is considered acceptable in many cultures; this can create housing barriers for households who are deemed ineligible for available social housing units, putting them at greater risk of homelessness. More inclusive standards are needed for priority population groups.



GOAL 4: ENSURE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SOLUTIONS ARE EFFECTIVE, CLIENT-CENTRED, AND RAPID



OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Ensure emergency solutions are responsive to the specific needs of different population groups.
- ▶ Provide appropriate services through client-centred case planning and support.
- ▶ Facilitate better access to stable, permanent housing with fewer instances of people living for long periods in shelters.

ACTIONS



PROCESS +
PARTNERSHIP

1

Identify opportunities for new shelter beds to ensure there is no net loss of spaces until permanent housing solutions are established.

Several shelters located on leased land are at-risk of closure due to expiring leases and/or awaiting redevelopment. Replacement sites will need to be secured in the short- to medium-term. While an increase in shelters is not the long-term goal – as shelters are intended to offer short-term, temporary accommodation for people in crisis – increasing the number of shelter beds is a necessary part of the interim solution until longer term housing can be completed.



PARTNERSHIP

2

Support community partner agencies to provide Extreme Weather Response shelters (EWR) and/or Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS), to ensure there are spaces available in all Surrey communities including South Surrey.

- 3 Advocate for permanent, stable housing solutions to accommodate the unhoused population and reduce the need for stand-alone shelters, Extreme Weather Response shelters (EWR) and Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS).**

For example, support the provision of flexible spaces to offer additional beds as required in purpose-built buildings co-located with other housing and/or services.

- 4 Support actions to improve the safety of youth, women, and families.**

A range of actions are needed to respond to concerns around intimate partner violence, safety on the streets especially for women involved in sex work, safety in shelters for youth, women, and children. This includes establishing additional shelter and drop-in spaces dedicated to youth, women, and families.

- 5 Support the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS).**

Continue supporting the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS) in raising funds and distributing grants that support projects to reduce homelessness. The SHHS is an important local resource that supports the community to address homelessness.

Shelters provide emergency, temporary, short-term accommodation for individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. Shelters may offer other services such as food, clothing, or counselling.

Extreme Weather Response shelters (EWR) provide temporary overnight, emergency shelter spaces only during periods of extreme winter weather for people who are unsheltered, unlike shelters which are open 24/7 all year.

Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS) are open nightly during the months mid-October to mid-April to provide additional shelter capacity for unhoused people.

Shelters, EWRs, and TWSs are short-term solutions to the housing problem. Shelters may provide help to individuals to stabilize and transition into more stable living situations.



GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE PREVENTION-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS, ESPECIALLY DURING TRANSITIONS



OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Prevent incidences of people becoming homeless, specifically around points of transition in their life.
- ▶ Reduce the number of tenants being evicted, placing them at-risk of homelessness.

People experiencing transitions who may be at greater risk of homelessness include youth aging out of care, adults approaching 65 whose income assistance transitions to pensions, people with no fixed address being discharged from hospital, women and children fleeing violence, people being released from the criminal justice system, and refugee claimants arriving in Canada.

ACTIONS



- 1** Establish working groups to address barriers to accessing income, housing, or supports for individuals being discharged from correctional facilities, youth aging out of care, patients with no fixed address being discharged from hospital, refugee claimants, seniors and Elders, and other situations.

This may include supporting social service agency engagement and providing space for working groups at City Hall for the following new or existing coalitions or tables noted in 1A through 1F below.

- 1A** Establish a working group to focus on a prevention approach that specifically targets people aged 64 whose benefits will be transitioning to Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), or Canada Pension Plan (CPP). A support service is needed for people on income assistance who are homeless or at risk, approaching 65 to help with application submissions and tax returns, to ensure seniors and Elders continue receiving financial support.





SUPPORT +
PARTNERSHIP

- 1B** Facilitate collaboration between the Surrey Local Immigration Partnership and/or settlement agencies and housing providers to prevent instances of low-income newcomer households experiencing homelessness. Given emerging concerns in other parts of the region and country about high numbers of refugee claimants accessing shelter beds, the number of refugee claimants accessing the shelter system in Surrey needs to be monitored to inform whether or not more appropriate responses need to be developed in partnership with the federal and provincial governments.
- 1C** Partner with the Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls (SVWG) Working Group to identify specific local issues affecting women and families and solutions to preventing homelessness.
- 1D** Partner with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and organizations that support youth aging out of care to identify solutions to prevent youth from becoming homeless.
- 1E** Support Fraser Health’s initiatives to transition patients out of hospital into the community with appropriate supports. Greater support is needed for those without a fixed address and those unable to be discharged from hospitals and at risk of homelessness.
- 1F** Convene stakeholders involved in the criminal justice system to explore solutions for preventing people being released from correctional facilities transitioning into homelessness.



POLICY

2

Update Policy O-61 – Rental Housing Redevelopment: Rental Replacement and Tenant Relocation Assistance and develop a Tenant Protection Bylaw as permitted under Provincial Bill 16.

Policy O-61 currently requires landlords to replace rental units and provide relocation support to tenants in purpose-built rental units within multi-family residential buildings. The policy was adopted in 2018 and needs to be updated to reflect legislative changes and current market conditions. Expanding this coverage could be explored, and new Bill 16 powers allow for tenant protection of any renter with a signed tenancy agreement.



3

Identify ways the City can support renters at risk of eviction, such as energy assistance payments to help with the cost of utilities, rent supplements, legal services, or other tools.



4

Adopt bylaws to protect the rental housing stock in Surrey over the long term.

This could include extending rental housing agreements for new purpose-built market rental buildings to 60 years or longer and exploring the use of rental tenure zoning.

Eviction Prevention in the Community Pilot Program (EPIC) Toronto, ON

A one-year wrap around eviction prevention service to help tenants facing imminent risk of eviction using a blended model of direct and contracted community agency service delivery. Clients were assigned to community agencies based on geography and caseload capacity. The program was effective in preventing evictions and stabilizing clients in their current housing. Of 97 program clients, 90% were stabilized in their housing, 8% were rehoused, and 2% exited homelessness

Source: Homeless Hub



GOAL 6: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES



OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Improve the integration of health and other services in shelters, transitional, and supportive housing in Surrey.
- ▶ Ensure there are adequate substance use services to support people requiring harm reduction and/or treatment and recovery services.
- ▶ Increase the availability and range of health services for homeless and at-risk residents across the city.
- ▶ Improve access to culturally safe and appropriate supports for diverse populations including Indigenous people, people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+, women, youth, and low-income newcomers.

ACTIONS



PROCESS +
PARTNERSHIP

1

Develop service hubs in each town centre.

Service hubs would provide a range of support services and involve a collaborative approach between multiple agencies and community service providers.

Additional homelessness services in Surrey could include coordinated access and systems-wide solutions, mental health and substance use services, primary health care, income supports, food and employment services, newcomer supports, and other wrap-around support services.



SUPPORT

2

Advocate to senior levels of government for additional services to address homelessness.

This includes playing a lead role in identifying sites and securing ongoing funding for service hubs through partnerships with Fraser Health and other partner agencies.



SUPPORT

3

Facilitate staff training, trauma informed care, and self-care support for direct care staff.



PROCESS

4

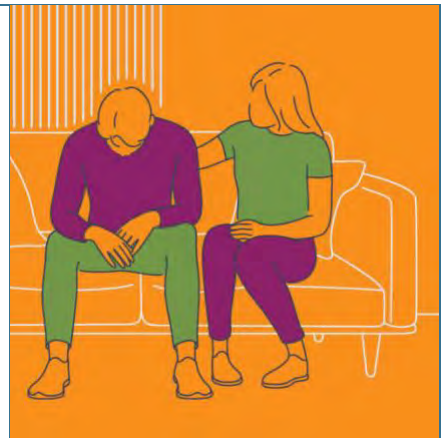
Identify opportunities for mobile services, crisis line solutions, and enhanced homelessness outreach.

5

Pilot new approaches for responding to mental health issues which offer trauma-informed and culturally safe support.

For instance, providing an emergency response from mental health professionals where appropriate instead of police or ambulance services.

Peer Assisted Care Team (PACT) is a Canadian Mental Health Association BC project being piloted in North and West Vancouver, New Westminister, and Victoria. It provides mobile emergency response to crisis calls related to mental health and/or substance use. Teams comprising mental health professionals and peer workers respond alongside or instead of police to help de-escalate situations and provide support.



PARTNERSHIP

6

Partner with local support service providers to deliver a wide range of services throughout the City and within service hubs for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including but not limited to the organizations listed in 6A through 6F below.

6A

Organizations for people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+.

6B

Indigenous organizations that provide culturally-safe services including mental health, trauma, and addictions counselling, support for Indigenous children in government care, and subsidized childcare.



PARTNERSHIP

- 6C** Organizations that provide free and low barrier ID services (e.g. BC Services or ICBC). Without ID, individuals are unable to access services including income supports, banking, health care, housing, employment, and food programs.
- 6D** **Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group (SVWG)** to identify safe, dedicated women- and girl-only services that are needed. This includes considerations of mobile, drop-in and night-time services where staff are trained to support vulnerable women and youth.
- 6E** **Youth-serving organizations** to provide supports including youth-specific clinics, life skills, schooling options, mental health counselling, and other services.
- 6F** **Newcomer-serving agencies** that provide supports to low-income immigrants and refugees, including housing assistance, employment counselling, language training, immigration support, and health services.



SUPPORT

- 7** **Advocate for the continued delivery of harm-reduction services and facilitate dialogue with the local community and businesses.**




GOAL 7: UNDERSTAND THE SCALE AND COMPLEXITY OF COMMUNITY NEED



OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Facilitate improved coordination between housing and service providers.
- ▶ Improve access to data and data sharing to enhance understanding of the needs of people experiencing homelessness.
- ▶ Achieve greater community awareness and support for homelessness services and solutions.

ACTIONS

 SUPPORT + PROCESS	<p>1 Explore the development of a Local By-Name List or another process to provide an up-to-date and comprehensive understanding of the current needs of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey.</p> <p>This may include advocating to BC Housing and Fraser Health to inform a centralized By-Name List. This would allow for more comprehensive data collection with more immediacy and frequency than Point-in-Time counts and ensure that housing solutions meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.</p>
	<p>2 Convene a Homelessness Forum and/or an Implementation Sector Table with members from across all sectors.</p>
	<p>3 Explore setting up a Digital Services Hub and/or print resources that are current to facilitate people navigating resources and services on their own. This should include consideration of the BC 211 service.</p>
 SUPPORT	<p>4 Advocate for service coordination partnerships and data sharing agreements between housing, health, and support service organizations, to allow for client-based sharing of information.</p>
 PROCESS	<p>5 Share information on the City’s website and social media about shelter openings/EWRs.</p>





PROCESS

6

Compile data and information from Statistics Canada, CMHC, BC Housing, or other relevant government agencies, as well as academic and other researchers, to provide a more detailed understanding of trends in homelessness.

This includes data to understand the trends relating to the extent of hidden homelessness and promising approaches and practices. This will ensure that decisions and actions are based on current and emerging evidence.



SUPPORT +
PARTNERSHIP

7

Address stigma and foster community buy-in for non-market housing developments.



Implementation + Evaluation Framework

“What’s made a difference for me is the people. When the right people are connected, good things happen. People are amazing... they’ve helped me so many times. When they really have a heart and fight for us... it makes such a difference.”

– Lived Experience Interview



Implementation + Evaluation Framework

The Implementation + Evaluation Framework serves as a structured roadmap to guide the City of Surrey and partners to deliver the strategic goals over the next five years; this is intended to move Surrey towards its vision of achieving a functional end to homelessness in Surrey.

Each action identifies a City Division as lead and, where required, other essential partners critical to delivering the action. A timeline is specified for each action, with implementation phases:



The Implementation + Evaluation Framework will require regular updates (led by the Housing and Social Development Division). The framework should be adapted as needed, continuously integrating feedback, monitoring performance, and improving the actions.



Table 3: City of Surrey Implementation + Evaluation Framework

GOAL 1: INCREASE SUPPLY OF NON-MARKET HOUSING						 TERM		
#	ACTION	CITY LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME				
1	Ensure policies and procedures support the development of non-market housing.	Housing and Social Development	Community Planning	Policies are created to support non-market housing development.	ONGOING			
1a	Ensure the Official Community Plan (OCP) supports the development of non-market housing in each of Surrey's six communities.	Community Planning	Housing and Social Development	OCP review updates.				
1b	Update the Affordable Housing Strategy (AHS)	Housing and Social Development	Community Planning	The AHS is updated.				
1c	Update policies regarding contributions to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund and develop criteria to identify how the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund is used.	Housing and Social Development	Community Planning	Policies regarding contributions to the AHRF are updated and AHRF criteria is developed.				
2	Enhance current processes to support the development of more non-market housing.	Housing and Social Development	Development Planning & Building	New processes are established to support non-market housing development.	ONGOING			
2a	Expedite non-market housing projects by having dedicated City staff to shepherd projects through the approval process.	Housing and Social Development	Development Planning & Building	A staff member is assigned with monitoring non-market housing projects and working with non-profits.				
3	Implement financial incentives to support non-market housing.	Housing and Social Development		Financial incentives are implemented to support non-market housing.	ONGOING			
3a	Deliver the Non-Market Rental Housing Development Incentive Program through the Housing Accelerator Fund.	Development Planning	Housing and Social Development	The Non-Market Rental Housing Development Incentive Program is delivered through the Housing Accelerator Fund to provide discounts for projects with a significant affordable housing component.				
3b	Provide Development Cost Charge (DCC) waivers for non-market rental projects.	Engineering	Housing and Social Development	Non-market rental projects have DCC fees waived.				
3c	Develop permissive tax exemptions for non-market housing providers.	Housing and Social Development		Permissive tax exemptions of 5 years or more are supported for non-market housing providers.				
4	Consider leasing existing City-owned land and/or make strategic purchases of land that could be leased on a long-term basis for non-market housing.	Housing and Social Development	Realty	The City makes strategic purchases or leases existing land for non-market housing.	ONGOING			
5	Co-locate new civic facilities with non-market housing.	Strategic Initiatives and Investments, Housing and Social Development	Parks, Recreation & Culture Libraries Fire Services	New civic facilities in Surrey are built combining a non-market housing component.				
6	Utilize City-owned land and acquire sites to deliver creative and innovative pilot projects and rapid response actions such as modular, mass timber, prefabricated, or 3D printed.	Housing and Social Development	Building	Alternative creative solutions are researched and considered for future non-market housing in Surrey.				



GOAL 2: BUILD CULTURALLY SAFE HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Increase stock of Indigenous housing through partnerships with the local land-based First Nations and Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) and creatively problem-solve, identify solutions, and coordinate efforts.	Housing and Social Development	SUILC	New creative solutions to Indigenous homelessness are identified.			
2	Partner with Indigenous housing providers to create more opportunities for Indigenous-led housing.	Housing and Social Development	Indigenous Housing Providers	Partnerships are formed with Indigenous housing providers and new Indigenous-led housing projects are developed in Surrey.			
3	Support the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee's (SUILC) call to action to build 800 deeply affordable housing units for single parent Indigenous households by 2031.	Housing and Social Development	SUILC	SUILC's call to action is achieved with 800 deeply affordable housing units built by 2031.			
4	Work with the non-profit sector to support the provision of culturally safe and appropriate services that address the needs of Indigenous people.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profit and service agencies	Culturally safe and appropriate services for Indigenous people are available in Surrey.			
5	Support local efforts to increase staff retention, training and employment opportunities for Indigenous workers in the non-profit sector.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profit and service agencies	More employment and staff training opportunities available for Indigenous people.			
6	Acknowledge Indigenous housing needs and apply a culturally-informed lens of Indigenous homelessness into the City's housing policies and plan updates.	Community Planning, Housing and Social Development		Plans and policies are updated to acknowledge Indigenous housing need and cultural safety.			ONGOING
7	Support the expansion of services for Indigenous youth, including youth transitioning out of government care.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profit and service agencies	More services are available for Indigenous youth.			ONGOING



GOAL 3: DIVERSIFY NON-MARKET HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PRIORITY POPULATIONS



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Partner with BC Housing and Fraser Health Authority to implement new housing models for people experiencing and at-risk of homelessness, including seniors, Elders, and those with complex health needs living with substance use and mental health challenges, who require more or different supports than currently provided in shelters or supportive housing.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health	New mixed-use service hubs incorporating supportive housing, shelters, health and other services are built in Surrey.			
2	Support efforts to increase options for individuals ineligible for supportive housing.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health	More housing options are available for those ineligible for assisted living who have complex health needs but use substances and Adults with an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI).			
3	Prioritize the development of safe houses and transitional housing for youth and young adults.	Housing and Social Development	Youth-serving agencies	Development of more youth-specific housing options with wrap-around services.			
4	Prioritize projects that increase the number of units dedicated to single women, families, senior women and Elders, and women with children.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' WG	An increase in the number of dedicated units for single women, families, senior women and Elders, and women with children.			
5	Facilitate partnerships between settlement serving agencies and non-market housing providers.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Local Immigration Partnership, non-market housing providers	Collaboration between sectors to address the housing needs of low-income newcomers.			



GOAL 4: ENSURE EMERGENCY RESPONSE SOLUTIONS ARE EFFECTIVE, CLIENT-CENTRED, AND RAPID



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Identify opportunities for new shelter beds to ensure there is no net loss of spaces until permanent housing solutions are established.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing	There is no net loss in shelter beds as existing leases expire.			
2	Support community partner agencies to provide Extreme Weather Response shelters (EWR) and/or Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS), to ensure there are spaces available in all Surrey communities including South Surrey.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Homelessness Services Association of BC	EWR and TWS sites are identified in all six Surrey communities.			
3	Advocate for permanent, stable housing solutions to accommodate the unhoused population and reduce the need for stand-alone shelters, Extreme Weather Response shelters (EWR) and Temporary Winter Shelters (TWS).	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing	Increase in opportunities for permanent, stable housing solutions are developed, with fewer people relying on EWR and TWS.			
4	Support actions to improve the safety of youth, women, and families.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' WG	A range of actions are developed including establishing additional shelter and drop-in spaces dedicated to youth, women, and families.			
5	Continue to support the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS)	Housing and Social Development, Legal Services, Finance Department	Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS)	Programs to reduce homelessness, and community initiatives are supported by funds and grants.			ONGOING



GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE PREVENTION-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS ESPECIALLY DURING TRANSITIONS



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Establish or support existing working groups to explore policy and procedural barriers to accessing income, housing, or supports for individuals being discharged from correctional facilities, youth aging out of care, patients with no fixed address being discharged from hospital, refugee claimants, seniors and Elders, and other situations.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health, Corrections, Non-profit and service agencies	Working groups are formed across the housing and homelessness sector. Solutions are identified to address policy and procedural barriers faced by priority populations.			
1A	Establish a working group to focus on a prevention approach that specifically targets people aged 64 whose benefits will be transitioning to Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), or Canada Pension Plan (CPP).	Housing and Social Development	Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Senior-serving agencies	A working group is formed and prevention approaches are identified for people aged 64 who rely on benefits to pay rent.			
1B	Facilitate collaboration between the Surrey Local Immigration Partnership and/or settlement agencies and housing providers to prevent instances of low-income newcomer households experiencing homelessness.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Local Immigration Partnership	Collaboration between agencies to prevent newcomer households from experiencing homelessness.			
1C	Partner with the Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls (SVWG) Working Group to identify specific local issues affecting women and families and solutions to preventing homelessness.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' WG	Specific local issues affecting women and families fleeing violence are identified and actions formulated.			
1D	Partner with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and organizations that support youth aging out of care to identify solutions to prevent youth from becoming homeless.	Housing and Social Development	Ministry of Children and Family Development, Youth-serving agencies	Solutions are identified to prevent youth from becoming homeless.			
1E	Support Fraser Health's initiatives to transition patients out of hospital into the community with appropriate supports.	Housing and Social Development	Fraser Health, BC Housing	Patients are discharged from hospital with appropriate supports.		ONGOING	
1F	Convene stakeholders involved in the criminal justice system to explore solutions for preventing people being released from correctional facilities transitioning into homelessness.	Housing and Social Development	Criminal Justice agencies and relevant service agencies	Specific solutions are identified for people being released from custody and sometimes requiring specific conditions.			
2	Update Policy O-61 – Rental Housing Redevelopment: Rental Replacement and Tenant Relocation Assistance and develop a Tenant Protection Bylaw as permitted under Provincial Bill 16.	Housing and Social Development	Community Planning, Development Planning	Policy O-61 is reviewed and updated.			
3	Identify ways the City can support renters at risk of eviction, such as energy assistance payments to help with the cost of utilities, rent supplements, legal services, or other tools.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Non-profit service agencies	Best practices research is undertaken to identify approaches to support renters at risk of eviction.			
4	Adopt bylaws to protect the rental housing stock in Surrey over the long term.	Housing and Social Development, Bylaws	Residential Tenancy Branch	New tools are identified and implemented to protect the rental housing stock.			



GOAL 6: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Develop service hubs in each town centre.	Housing and Social Development	Fraser Health	Service hubs are developed in different communities which combine health and other support services.			
2	Advocate to senior levels of government for additional services to address homelessness.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health, other partner service agencies	Regular communication with senior government. Funding for additional services to address homelessness is secured.	ONGOING		
3	Facilitate staff training, trauma informed care, and self-care support for direct care staff.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profit agencies	More training opportunities and support is established for direct care staff.			
4	Identify opportunities for mobile services, crisis line solutions, and enhanced homelessness outreach.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing Fraser Health Other government ministries	New mobile services, crisis line solutions, and enhanced homelessness outreach services are identified.			
5	Pilot new approaches for responding to mental health issues which offer trauma-informed and culturally safe support.	Housing and Social Development	Fraser Health, Bylaws, Surrey Police	Best practices research and communication with experts is conducted to explore new approaches for responding to mental health issues.			
6	Partner with local support service providers to deliver a wide range of services throughout the City and within service hubs for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including but not limited to the organizations listed in 6A through 6F below.	Housing and Social Development	See 6A-F below	A wider range of services are available serving priority populations.	ONGOING		
6A	Organizations for people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profits providing services for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community	A range of services are available for people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+.	ONGOING		
6B	Indigenous organizations that provide culturally-safe services including mental health, trauma, and addictions counselling, support for Indigenous children in government care, and subsidized childcare.	Housing and Social Development	Indigenous service providers	A range of culturally-safe services are available for Indigenous people.	ONGOING		
6C	Organizations that provide free and low barrier ID services (e.g. BC Services or ICBC).	Housing and Social Development	ID services	Processes to obtain or replace ID cards are streamlined for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.	ONGOING		



GOAL 6: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM
6D	Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' Working Group (SVWG) to identify safe, dedicated women- and girl-only services that are needed.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls' WG	A range of drop-in and night-time services are available where staff are trained to support vulnerable women and youth.	ONGOING
6E	Youth-serving organizations to provide supports including youth-specific clinics, life skills, schooling options, mental health counselling, and other services.	Housing and Social Development	Youth-serving agencies	A range of youth services are available.	ONGOING
6F	Newcomer-serving agencies that provide supports to low-income immigrants and refugees, including housing assistance, employment counselling, language training, immigration support, and health services.	Housing and Social Development	Surrey Local Immigration Partnership	A range of support services are available for newcomers.	ONGOING
7	Advocate for the continued delivery of harm-reduction services and facilitate dialogue with the local community and businesses.	Housing and Social Development	Non-profit service agencies, local business community, + Surrey Police	Harm-reduction services continue to be delivered in Surrey, advocated by the City.	ONGOING



GOAL 7: UNDERSTAND THE SCALE AND COMPLEXITY OF COMMUNITY NEED



#	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNER	OUTCOME	TERM		
1	Explore the development of a Local By-Name List or another process to provide an up-to-date and comprehensive understanding of the current needs of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health, Non-profit service agencies	A Local By-Name List or other similar process is established.			
2	Convene a Homelessness Forum and/or an Implementation Sector Table with members from across all sectors.	Housing and Social Development		A Homelessness Prevention Forum and/or an Implementation Sector Table is formed with regular scheduled meetings.			
3	Explore setting up a Digital Services Hub and/or print resources that are current to facilitate people navigating resources and services on their own.	Housing and Social Development	Libraries	A Digital Services Hub is created and/or resources are printed to provide information to help people navigate resources and services.			
4	Advocate for service coordination partnerships and data sharing agreements between housing, health, and support service organizations, to allow for client-based sharing of information.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health, Non-profit service agencies	Client data is shared between organizations through service coordination partnerships and data sharing agreements.			
5	Share information on the City's website and social media about shelter openings/EWRs.	Housing and Social Development		City website and social media is regularly updated.			ONGOING
6	Compile data and information from Statistics Canada, CMHC, BC Housing, or other relevant government agencies, as well as academic and other researchers, to provide a more detailed understanding of trends in homelessness.	Housing and Social Development		Trends in homelessness are monitored through data and information sources.			ONGOING
7	Address stigma and foster community buy-in for non-market housing developments.	Housing and Social Development	BC Housing, Fraser Health, Non-profit housing providers	Community support and buy-in for new non-market housing developments.			ONGOING



APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



The terms below define key topics and terms relating to homelessness as well as best and emerging practices for addressing homelessness.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In Canada, housing is typically considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate and suitable shelter. Affordable housing encompasses housing provided by the private, public, and non-profit sectors across all housing tenures.

Affordable housing comprises any part of the housing network from temporary shelters through transition housing, supportive housing, non-market rental housing, market rental housing, or market homeownership. In Surrey, there is a particular need for affordable rental housing. Vacancy rates are at an all-time low and there is an increasing gap between rental rates and incomes.

In Surrey in 2021, 5.2% of households (or 9,595 individuals) were in Extreme Core Housing Need, spending more than 50% of household income on shelter and being most at-risk of experiencing homelessness (Statistics Canada, 2021).*

*2021 Census data includes pandemic financial supports which are a statistical anomaly, and the 2021 Core Housing Need indicators may underestimate housing needs given benefit programs have since expired.

AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

People who are not experiencing homelessness, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards.

BY-NAME LISTS

By-Name Lists are real-time lists of all known people experiencing homelessness in a community. There are two levels of data: person-specific, to support individuals access to housing and supports as quickly as possible; and system-level, to identify and measure progress towards functional zero (defined below). Data is updated weekly and never static, identifying homeless inflow and outflow at a systems level. Identifying information is only added to a By-Name List with a person's consent and shared with identified service providers on a need-to-know basis to



support access to housing support options. There are three different models of data sharing and collection used to facilitate By-Name Lists:

- **Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS):** A web-enabled, comprehensive data collection, reporting, and case management system that supports the day-to-day operations of housing and homelessness response service providers. HIFIS allows multiple service providers from the same geographic area to implement coordinated access using real-time information about people experiencing homelessness and the resources needed to find and keep a home.
- **Coordinated Access:** A community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports. Core components include a Housing First approach, real-time data about the supply of and demand for housing resources, and a standardized workflow for triage and assessment, prioritization, vacancy matching, and referral.
- **Data Dashboards:** A place-specific online dashboard containing data about the state of homelessness (highlighting the inflow and outflow of people to and from the shelter system) and access to affordable housing, which represents a snapshot in time and is updated monthly or quarterly.

Surrey does not currently have a By-Name List and BC Housing's HIFIS license provided to homelessness services providers across the province does not support coordinated access and data-sharing features are disabled.

Built for Zero Canada is an initiative led by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) to support communities across Canada establish their own By-Name Lists (Built for Zero, 2023).

In BC, Kelowna and Penticton are developing By-Name Lists through Built for Zero. Municipalities in other provinces have established By-Name Lists and data dashboards, including Medicine Hat, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, and Red Deer in Alberta. Currently Built for Zero is not accepting application from new communities as their capacity is limited by funding.



The CAEH has identified a ten-step process to create a By-Name List:

1. Learn the “what” and “why” of By-Name Lists;
2. Form a local team and clarify scope;
3. Engage with providers and build community will;
4. Develop data infrastructure and implement data sharing agreements;
5. Create a common consent form and intake questions;
6. Develop key By-Name List policies and protocols;
7. Complete a registry event or build on an existing list or client data;
8. Use the By-Name List to coordinate access to housing resources and support individual-level outcomes;
9. Achieve a quality By-Name List and continue to sustain and improve it; and
10. Use the By-Name List for system-level monitoring and improvement.

COMPLEX CARE HOUSING

A new housing model designed to address the needs of people with overlapping mental-health challenges, substance-use challenges, trauma and acquired brain injuries, and often left to experience homelessness. The program provides an enhanced level of integrated health and social supports that serve people where they live. Some examples of health and social supports include education, training, and employment opportunities, meals, substance use services, and help accessing income assistance, pension/disability benefits, identification, or a bank account.

Surrey has one of the first four complex care housing sites under the Complex Care Program in the province. As of March 2023, 155 people were receiving complex care housing services within the Fraser Health Authority area.



COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS

People with Complex Health Needs may experience complex mental health or substance use challenges and may also be living with other challenges such as acquired brain injury, developmental disability, or histories of trauma.

CORE HOUSING NEED

A household is in Core Housing Need when its housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability, or suitability, and the household would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable.

Adequacy means housing does not require major repairs.

Suitability means housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household.

Affordability means shelter costs are less than 30% of total before-tax household income.

FUNCTIONAL ZERO

An end to chronic homelessness means having no one experiencing long-term homelessness in a community. It focuses on meeting four criteria – that homelessness is rare, brief, nonrecurring, and addresses inequities. Functional zero sets a goal for communities to reach three or less people experiencing chronic homelessness sustained over three or more months. Prevention efforts are achieved through By-Name Lists and focused to understand why people are entering homelessness, who is actively experiencing homelessness, and tracking outflow to understand how quickly people are moving out of the system – measuring progress over time.

HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS

Hidden homelessness refers to people who live ‘temporarily with others but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing’ such as couch surfing. This population is considered to be ‘hidden’ because they usually do not access



homeless supports and services even though they are improperly or inadequately housed. Because they do not access services, they do not become evident on standard statistics regarding homelessness.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect, means, nor ability to acquire such housing. Homelessness is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end and being insecurely housed at the other end.

AT-RISK: People not currently experiencing homelessness but whose current economic and/or housing situation is dangerously lacking security or stability.

CHRONIC: Individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g., chronic physical or mental illness, substance use problems), currently experiencing homelessness and have experienced homelessness for six months or more in the past year.

EPISODIC: Individuals, often with disabling conditions, currently experiencing homelessness with three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.

TRANSITIONAL: People living in interim housing at the in-between stage of unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing.

HOUSING FIRST

Housing First involves moving people experiencing homelessness (particularly chronic homelessness) rapidly from the streets or shelters into stable, long-term housing with supports. Housing is provided first, with supports then provided including physical and mental health, education, employment, substance use, and community connections. Key to the Housing First philosophy is that individuals and families are not required to first demonstrate that they are 'ready' for housing.



INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals, families, or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect, means, or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include individuals, families, and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally, or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.

Due to the ongoing impacts of colonialism, at least 635 Indigenous individuals are estimated to have experienced homelessness in Surrey as of 2020 – meaning 1 in 26 Indigenous people living in Surrey experiences homelessness compared to 1 in 239 non-Indigenous people. According to SUILC’s Skookum Housing Lab Report (2020), Surrey is home to an estimated 16,000 urban Indigenous people.

Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee. 2022.
Finding Our Way Home: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey

LOW-BARRIER HOUSING

Low-barrier housing refers to shelters and supportive housing with minimal requirements for entry, for example not requiring sobriety from substances. Low-barrier housing ensures those who are most vulnerable have access, although is not always appropriate for everyone, such as youth, families, or refugees/immigrants.

NON-MARKET HOUSING

Non-market housing covers a range of housing types with and without supports for low- or moderate-income households that are owned/and operated by a public agency (e.g. BC



Housing or Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation), non-profit society, or housing co-operative. This includes:

Shelter: Facilities providing emergency, temporary, short-term accommodation for individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. Shelters may offer other services such as food, clothing, or counselling.

Transitional: Supportive, temporary accommodation meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, support, life skills, education, etc.

- **Safe Houses:** Short-term shelter and other supports for women fleeing violence and youth, often apartments, hotel/motel rooms, or a secure room in a private home. Maximum length of stay is typically 30-days. Many of these are residential homes in confidential locations where women and families live communally.
- **Second Stage Housing:** Provides safe, low-cost, temporary housing for women fleeing violence to live independently with staff available for support, typically for 6-months to 2-years.
- **Supportive Housing:** Subsidized self-contained units with on-site supports for single adults, seniors, and people with disabilities at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, operated by non-profits.
- **Supportive Recovery:** Transitional housing that provides supports for people seeking assistance with substance use, including Licensed Addiction Treatment facilities.
- **Registered Mental Health:** Housing that provides supports for people living with mental health challenges to build skills to live with an optimal level of independence.

Independent: Housing for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness who don't need supports but require housing at rents lower than market rates. This may include subsidized deeply affordable housing at the shelter rate of social assistance or Rent Geared to Income (RGI).

POVERTY

The condition of an individual, family, or community deprived of the resources, means, choices, and power necessary to acquire and maintain a basic level of living standards and facilitate integration and participation in society. Some groups, such as Indigenous people, people with



disabilities, recent immigrants, single parents, unattached (single) individuals aged 45-64, and children are more likely to experience poverty.

RENT GEARED TO INCOME

A type of subsidized housing in which a housing provider ensures affordability by matching rental fees to income (30% of household total gross income, subject to minimum rent based on household size).

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

The social determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence health and wellbeing; they are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies, and political systems.

SYSTEMS APPROACH TO HOMELESSNESS

A 'system of care' for working with individuals with complex needs to deliver services differently to help people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. The approach aims to prevent homelessness from occurring by addressing the systems and structures that allow it to occur and provide early intervention to reduce chronic homelessness.

WOMEN'S HOMELESSNESS

The causes and conditions of homelessness are unique for women and girls, with intimate partner and/or family violence being a key pathway into homelessness. Women are more likely to experience hidden homelessness but less likely to appear in shelters, drop-ins, public spaces, or social services, meaning women are undercounted in data and their supports and housing need is less understood.

WRAP-AROUND SERVICES

Wrap-around service delivery is a team-based, collaborative case management approach. A case management approach represents a point-of-delivery, rather than a system-level, approach to coordination. The concept of wrap-around programming is used to describe any program that is



flexible, family, or person-oriented. The approach typically involves several organizations working together to provide a holistic program of supports.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Young people between the ages of 13 and 24 living independently of parents and/or caregivers and, importantly, lack many of the social supports deemed necessary for the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Definitions have been adapted from the following sources: Homelessness Hub, Glossary of Important Terms, 2021; Women’s National Housing & Homelessness Network, Women & Girls’ Homelessness in Canada, 2024; World Health Organization, Social Determinants of Health, 2024; Government of BC, Housing Glossary, 2021; CMHC, The National Housing Strategy Glossary of Common Terms, 2022; Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions , Complex Care Housing Fact Sheet.



APPENDIX B

SURREY NON-MARKET HOUSING INVENTORY



Surrey Non-Market Housing Inventory

UPDATED JUNE 2024



Table of Contents

LIST OF SHELTERS, SAFE HOUSES, SUPPORTIVE, TRANSITIONAL, AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
Emergency Shelters and Women + Youth Safe Houses / Transition Houses.....	1
Transitional + Supportive Housing	4
Co-op Housing	9
Non-Profit Housing	11
Indigenous Non-Profit Housing	14
Non-Profit Seniors Independent Housing	16
Non-Profit Seniors Supportive Housing.....	18
MAP OF EMERGENCY SHELTER, SAFE HOUSE, TRANSITIONAL + SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SITES.....	20
MAP OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITES.....	21
HOUSING GLOSSARY.....	22
General Terms	22
Housing Network and Associated Terms.....	24



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



EMERGENCY SHELTERS + SAFE HOUSES/TRANSITION HOUSES FOR WOMEN + YOUTH

PURPOSE-BUILT SHELTERS⁵⁵

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
1	Hyland House	6595 King George Blvd	Newton	Options Community Services	All 19+	35
2	Bill Reid Place	17752 Colebrook Rd	Cloverdale	Options Community Services	All 19+	16
3	Foxglove	9810 Foxglove Dr	Whalley	Raincity Housing	All 19+	31
4	Rosewood Shelter	9683 137 St	City Centre	Elizabeth Fry Society	Women & Children	60

Total Purpose-built Shelter Units

142

WOMEN'S SAFE HOUSES / TRANSITION HOUSES

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
–	Women's Safe / Transition Houses	Confidential	Various	Various (Atira, Options, PICS, Nisa Homes)	Women / Women & Children	72

⁵⁵ Purpose-built shelters all include transition or supportive housing units as well as the shelter beds.



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

YOUTH SAFE HOUSES

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
–	Youth Safe Houses	Confidential	Newton	Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association	Youth (Aged 16-18)	6

NON-PURPOSE-BUILT SHELTERS*

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
5	Gateway Shelter	10667 135A St	City Centre	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	40
–	Cynthia's Place	Confidential	Guildford	Elizabeth Fry Society	Women	14
–	Sheena's Place	Confidential	Whalley	Elizabeth Fry Society	Women & Children	12
6	Parkway Shelter	10660 City Parkway	City Centre	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	40
7	SUMS Overnight Shelter	10776 King George Blvd	City Centre	Surrey Urban Mission Society	All 19+	50
8	Guildford Shelter	14716 104 Ave	Guildford	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	40

*Non-purpose-built shelters are retrofitted commercial spaces or houses and some are situated on privately owned land.



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
9	The Cove Shelter	10607 King George Blvd	City Centre	Surrey Urban Mission Society	All 19+	42
10	The Olive Branch	10732 City Parkway	City Centre	Surrey Urban Mission Society	All 19+	46
11	Surrey Welcome Hub	13545 King George Blvd	City Centre	Surrey Urban Mission Society	All 19+	16
Total Non-purpose-built Shelter Units						300

TEMPORARY MATS

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
12	Hyland House	6595 King George Blvd	Newton	Options Community Services	All 19+	10
13	Guildford Shelter	14716 104 Ave	Guildford	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	6
Total Temporary Mats						16

TOTAL NUMBER OF EMERGENCY BEDS + MATS					536
--	--	--	--	--	------------



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



TRANSITIONAL + SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
14	Hyland House	6593/6595 King George Blvd	Newton	Options Community Services	All 19+	20
15	Bill Reid Memorial Shelter	17752 Colebrook Rd	Cloverdale	Options Community Services	All 19+	12
Total Transition Housing Units						32

POST-CORRECTIONS

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
16	Hobden House	12817/12819 104 Ave	Whalley	Connective	Men	17
17	Phoenix Rising Sun Villas	13969 100 Ave	City Centre	Phoenix Society	Men	29
Total Post-Corrections Units						46



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

WOMEN'S SECOND STAGE

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
-	Women's Second Stage	Confidential	Various	Various (Atira, YWCA, PICS)	Women & Children	63

YOUTH TRANSITIONAL

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
-	Youth Transition Houses	Confidential	Newton	Various	Youth aged 16-18	13
18	The 1.1.2.	13102 112a Ave	Whalley	PCRS	Youth aged 19-24	30
Total Youth Transition Units						43

LONG-TERM SUPPORTIVE

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
19	Len Shepherd	15090 101 Ave	Guildford	BC Housing	Seniors Or Disability	25
20	Peterson Place	13245/3259 King George	Whalley	Fraserside Community Services Society	All 19+	55



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

21	Peterson Place Modular	13241 King George Blvd	Whalley	Fraserside Community Services Society	All 19+	38
22	Alder Gardens	13788 71 Ave	Newton	YWCA Metro Vancouver	Women & Children	28
23	Timber Grove Apartments	13922 101 Ave	City Centre	Coast Mental Health	Seniors or Disability	52
24	Little's Place	9150 135a St	Whalley	Atira Women's Resource Society	Women	22
25	Little's Too (Modular)	9151 King George Blvd	Whalley	Atira Women's Resource Society	Women	44
26	The Nest (Modular)	13620 80 Ave	Newton	Phoenix Society	All 19+	24
27	Baird Blackstone	14706 104 Ave	Guildford	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	61
28	Foxglove*	9810 Foxglove Dr	Whalley	Raincity Housing	All 19+	99
29	Rosewood*	9683 137 St	City Centre	Elizabeth Fry Society & FRAFCA	Women & Children	57
30	Elmbrook	13939 104 Ave	City Centre	Connective	All 19+	26
31	Safe Sleep	13425 107a Ave	City Centre	Surrey Urban Mission Society	All 19+	60
Total Long-Term Supportive Units						591

*Building also includes shelter beds.



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORTIVE RECOVERY

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
32	Phoenix Centre	13686 94A Ave	City Centre	Phoenix Society	Men	36
33	Phoenix Rising Sun Villas	13969 100 Ave	City Centre	Phoenix Society	All 19+	23
34	The Nest	13620 80 Ave	Newton	Phoenix Society	All 19+	16
Total Transitional Supportive Recovery Units						75

LICENSED ADDICTIONS TREATMENT + SUPPORTIVE RECOVERY SERVICES

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
35	Path to Freedom	19030 56 Ave	Cloverdale	Hardev Randhawa	Men 19+	10
36	Phoenix Centre	13686 94A Ave	City Centre	Phoenix Society	Men 19+	28
37	Phoenix Quibble Creek	13670 94A Ave	City Centre	Phoenix	Men 19+	67
38	Phoenix House	9942 127A St	City Centre	Phoenix	Men 19+	10
39	Crawford Manor	10008 128 St	Whalley	Lookout Housing & Health Society	Men 19 to 35	12
40	Ellendale	11187 Ellendale Dr	Guildford	Elizabeth Fry Society	Women	10
41	Ellendale Cradle	11187 Ellendale Dr	Guildford	Elizabeth Fry Society	Women	12



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

Total Licensed Treatment & Supportive Recovery Services Units

149

REGISTERED MENTAL HEALTH

MA P #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
42	Bear Creek House	13799 88 Ave	Whalley	Fraserside Community Services Society	All 19+	5
43	Blair House	7902 139A St	Newton	Options Community Services Society	Youth (age 19-30)	6
44	Carr's Place	13802/13804 Grosvenor Rd	City Centre	Lookout Housing & Health Society	All 19+	10
45	Garden Lodge	15196 86 Ave	Fleetwood	MERD Antonio Group Ltd	All 19+	6
46	Maria Sol House	14129/14131 Grosvenor Rd	Whalley	Horizon Health Care Ltd	All 19+	10
47	Nichol Place	8048 140 St	Newton	Options Community Services Society	All 19+	48

Total Registered Assisted Living Residences – Mental Health Units

85

TOTAL TRANSITIONAL + SUPPORTIVE HOUSING UNITS						1,084
--	--	--	--	--	--	--------------



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



CO-OP HOUSING

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
48	Hawthorne Housing	13820 72 Ave	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	59
49	Valley Village Housing	7110 138 St	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	131
50	Sunshine Housing	10744 133 St	City Centre	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	39
51	Birch Housing	7062 138 St	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	54
52	Common Ground	1707 130 St	South Surrey	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	46
53	Waldon Place Housing	12173 82 Ave	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	40
54	Spruce Housing	9240 121 St	Whalley	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	101
55	Mayflower Housing	13435 104 Ave	City Centre	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	92



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

56	Arboretum Housing	15350 105 Ave	Guildford	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	34
57	Guildtown Housing	10125 156 St	Guildford	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	62
58	Solstice Housing	12102 92 Ave	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	34
59	Sandpiper Housing	12158 82 Ave	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	49
60	La Casa Housing	17222 57 Ave	Cloverdale	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	40
61	Hunter Hill Housing	6935 122 St	Newton	Co-operative Housing Federation of BC	All	40
Total Co-op Units						821



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



NON-PROFIT HOUSING

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
62	Greenbrook	6957 135 St	Newton	BC Housing	Families	126
63	Kingston Gardens 4	15356 100 Ave	Guildford	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	48
64	Guildford Glen	14890 101a Ave	Guildford	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	All	79
65	Kingston Gardens 1	15271 99 Ave	Guildford	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	48
66	Kingston Gardens 2	15343 99 Ave	Guildford	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	48
67	Kingston Gardens 3	9977 154 St	Guildford	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	48
68	Epsom Downs	13699 76 Ave	Newton	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	108
69	Somerset Gardens	1821, 1851,1881	South Surrey	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	All	166



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
		Southmere Cr E				
70	The Orchard	9858 151 St	Guildford	Union Gospel Mission Housing Society	Families	75
71	Friendship Village	6526 135 St	Newton		All	56
72	Sutton Place	13834 102 Ave	City Centre	Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation	Families	83
73	Peninsula Estates	15077 20 Ave	South Surrey	Peninsula Estates Housing Society	All	70
74	Glyn Haven	13262 72 Ave	Newton	Red Door Housing Society	Families	46
75	Jennings Place	7775 120a St	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	52
76	Cougar Creek Family Housing	6880 121 St	Newton	Red Door Housing Society	Families	45
77	Chelsea Place	13871 Laurel Dr	City Centre	New Chelsea Society	Families	36
78	Jessica Place	9883 140 St	City Centre	Entre Nous Femme Housing Society	Families	40
79	Evelyn Estates	9155 136a St	Whalley	Entre Nous Femme Housing Society	Families	36



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
80	Kinsmen Ravine Estates	11030 Ravine Rd	City Centre	Newton Kinsmen Housing Society	Families	30
81	Johnston Court	9699 152b St	Guildford	Affordable Housing Society	Families	30
82	Sunset Grove	6445 121 St	Newton	Habitat Housing Society	Families	25
83	Stoney Creek	6438 King George	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	28
84	Hyland Village Park 1	13927 68 Ave	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	33
85	Rosemary Green	2880 152 St	South Surrey	Entre Nous Femme Housing Society	Families	38
86	Hyland Village Park 2	13947 68 Ave	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	43
87	Rodeo Park Place	17445 57 Ave	Cloverdale	Affordable Housing Society	Families	61
88	Kwantlen Park	12615 72 Ave	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	39
89	Newton Green	12725 63 Ave	Newton	Entre Nous Femme Housing Society)	Families	52
90	Salamat Housing	12689 72 Ave	Newton	Salamat Housing Society	Families	34
91	Strawberry Hill Apartments	7555 120a St	Newton	Affordable Housing Society	Families	64
92	Chorus	2358 153 St	South Surrey	Peninsula Estates Housing Society	All	71



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
93	Julian House	10689 135a St	City Centre	Lookout Housing & Health Society	People With HIV/AIDS	6
94	Legion Veterans Village	10626 City Pky	City Centre	VRS Communities Society	Veterans	91
95	Habitat At 81st	13583 81 Ave	Newton	Options / Habitat Housing Society	All	100
Total Non-Profit Housing Units						1,955



INDIGENOUS NON-PROFIT HOUSING

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
96	Kechi-o-wekwin	9537 Prince Charles Blvd	Whalley	Kekinow Native Housing Society	Indigenous	31
97	Wa-cuy-gunan	6455 121 St	Newton	Kekinow Native Housing Society	Indigenous	36
98	Ama-huuwilp	14145 103 Ave	Whalley	Kekinow Native Housing Society	Indigenous	22



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

99	Aleleng	7420 121a St	Newton	Kekinow Native Housing Society	Indigenous	33
100	Sohkeyah Phase 1	7561 140 St	Newton	Kekinow Native Housing Society	Indigenous	72
Total Indigenous Non-Profit Housing Units						194

TOTAL CO-OP AND NON-PROFIT HOUSING UNITS						2,970
---	--	--	--	--	--	--------------



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



NON-PROFIT SENIORS INDEPENDENT HOUSING

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
101	Amos Ferguson Manor	8243 152 St	Fleetwood	Amos Ferguson Memorial Society	Independent Seniors	51
102	Hoffman Manor	17660 60 Ave	Cloverdale	Senior Citizens Housing of South Surrey	Independent Seniors	43
103	Ted Kuhn Tower	13350/13352 Old Yale Rd	City Centre	Options Community Services	Independent Seniors	241
104	Ted Kuhn Tower Extension	13350/13352 Old Yale Rd	City Centre	Options Community Services	Independent Seniors	186
105	Len Shepherd Manor	15090 101 Ave	Guildford	BC Housing	Independent Seniors	74
106	Southdale Manor I & II	5956 176A St	Cloverdale	Senior Citizens Housing of South Surrey	Independent Seniors	50
107	Sunnyside Villas I	15008 26 Ave	South Surrey	Sunnyside Villas Society	Independent Seniors	20
108	Sunnyside Villas II	15110 26 Ave	South Surrey	Sunnyside Villas Society	Independent Seniors	20



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
109	Sunnyside Villas III	2603 151 St	South Surrey	Sunnyside Villas Society	Independent Seniors	60
110	Kiwanis Park Place - South Building	12850 26 Ave	South Surrey	Crescent Housing Society	Independent Seniors	146
111	Bethshan Gardens	17528 59 Ave	Cloverdale	Cloverdale Senior Citizens Housing Society	Independent Seniors	71
Total Non-Profit Seniors Independent Housing						962



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing



NON-PROFIT SENIORS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

HOUSING FOR SENIORS WHO NEED ONGOING SUPPORTS AND SERVICES AND CANNOT LIVE INDEPENDENTLY

MAP #	NAME	ADDRESS	NEIGHBOURHOOD	OPERATOR	POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
112	Sunnyside Villas IV	15002 26 Ave	South Surrey	Sunnyside Villas Society	Seniors	30
113	Sunnyside Manor	15340 17th Ave	South Surrey	Unicare	Seniors	85
114	Guru Nanak Niwas	7566 120A St	Newton	Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society	Seniors	77
115	Gateway Assisted Living	13787 100 Ave	City Centre	Mosaic Seniors Care Society	Seniors	60
116	The Residence at Morgan Heights	15955 27 Ave	South Surrey	Morgan Heights Care Ltd	Seniors	36
117	Elim Village - Emerald Building	9080 159 St	Fleetwood	Elim Housing Society & Elim Christian Care Society	Seniors	53
118	Rosemary Heights Seniors Village	15240 34 Ave	South Surrey	Rosemary Heights Seniors Village 3 LLP	Seniors	42
119	PICS Assisted Living	12075 75A Ave	Newton	Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society	Seniors	49
120	Freedom Place	10342 148 St	Guildford	Strive Living Society	Seniors	20



Inventory of Shelters, Safe Houses, Supportive, Transitional + Non-Profit Housing

121	Fleetwood Villa	16028 83 Ave	Fleetwood	HCN-Revera Lessee (Fleetwood Villa) LP GP Inc	Seniors	3
122	Pacific Carlton	15366 17 Ave	South Surrey	VRS Communities Society	Seniors	81
123	Kinsmen Place Lodge	9650 137A St	City Centre	Whalley & District Senior Citizens Housing Society	Seniors	157
Total Non-Profit Seniors Supportive Housing						693
TOTAL INDEPENDENT AND SUPPORTIVE SENIORS HOUSING						1,655

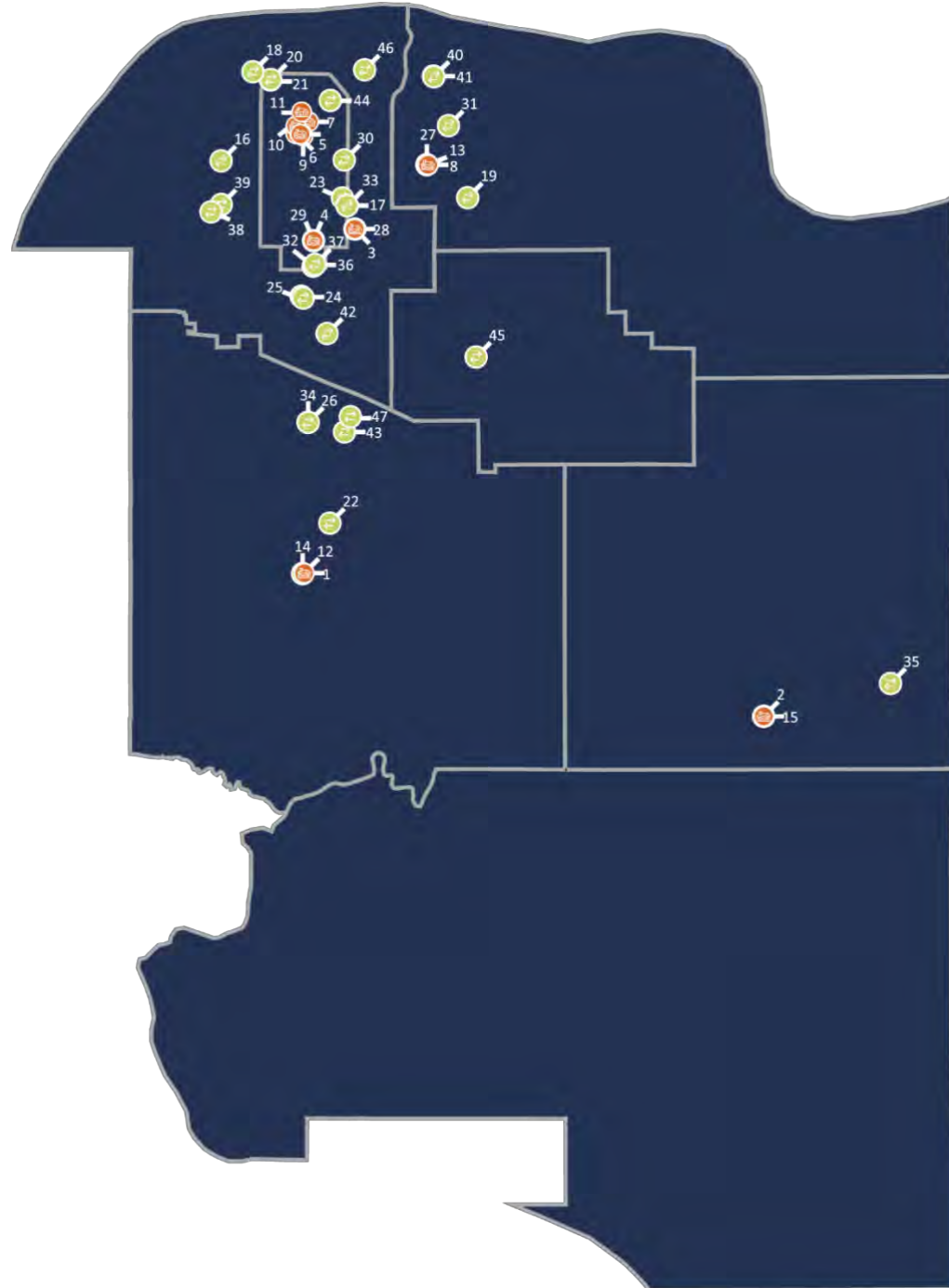


Map of Emergency Shelter, Safe House, Transitional + Supportive Housing Sites

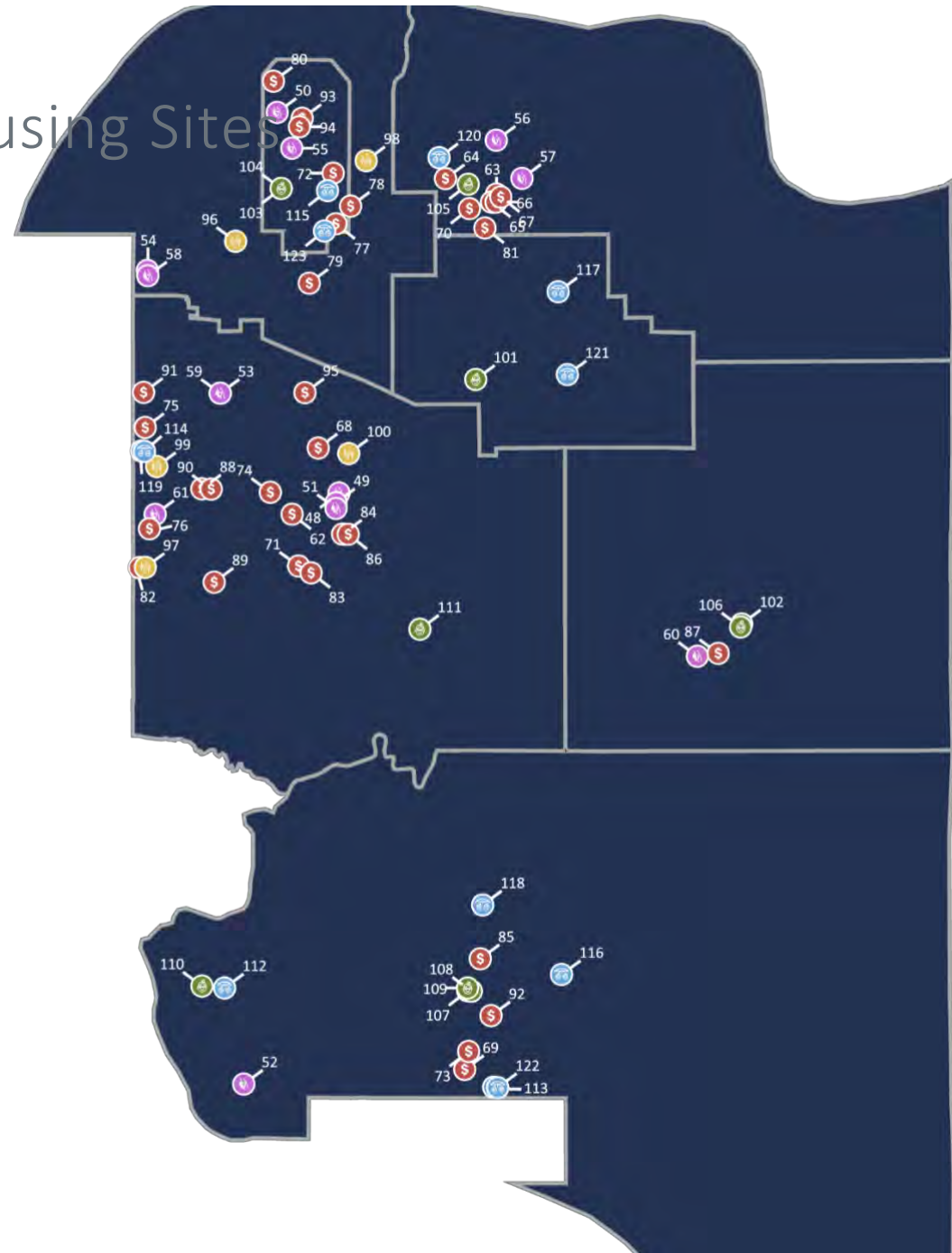
Note: This map excludes confidential locations, such as women's and youth safe / transition homes.



-  Emergency Shelters and Safe Houses
-  Transitional and Supportive Housing



Map of Affordable Housing Sites



Housing Glossary

Note: The meaning and use of these terms continues to change over time and different organizations may use these terms in different ways.

GENERAL TERMS

The following are general terms used to describe housing for low- and moderate-income households. Some of the housing may include support services required by vulnerable populations in order to live independently.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Definitions of what is considered “Affordable Housing” varies widely across jurisdictions. Housing affordability generally relates the cost of housing relative to income.

In Canada, housing is typically considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate and suitable shelter. Affordable housing encompasses housing provided by the private, public, and non-profit sectors across all housing tenures. Affordable housing includes non-market and market housing across the housing network.

The Government of Canada census data includes the following definitions:

- **Core Housing Need** refers to households whose housing falls below the norms of expectations in terms of either adequacy (condition), affordability (costs less than 30% of before-tax household income) or suitability (size) and who would have to spend more than 30% of before-tax household income to pay the median rent of alternative housing that would meet all three standards.
- **INALH households** (In Core Need and paying At Least Half of their income on housing) are a subset of households in core housing need and refers to those that are in need and spending at least half of income on shelter. (i.e. spending more than 50% of household income on housing).

(Statistics Canada)

Other definitions of affordable housing link affordability to market rents – for example, housing may be considered affordable if it is rented at 80% of market rents for a particular area.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate



housing or the immediate prospect, means, nor ability to acquire such housing. Homelessness is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end and being insecurely housed at the other end (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012).

- **AT-RISK:** People not currently experiencing homelessness but whose current economic and/or housing situation is dangerously lacking security or stability.
- **CHRONIC:** Individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g., chronic physical or mental illness, substance use challenges), currently experiencing homelessness and have experienced homelessness for six months or more in the past year.
- **EPISODIC:** Individuals, often with disabling conditions, currently experiencing homelessness with three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.
- **TRANSITIONAL:** People living in interim housing at the in-between stage of unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing.

- **Women's Homelessness:** The causes and conditions of homelessness are unique for women and girls, with intimate partner and/or family violence being a key pathway into homelessness. Women are more likely to experience hidden homelessness but less likely to appear in shelters, drop-ins, public spaces, or social services, meaning women are undercounted in data and their supports and housing need is less understood (Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network, 2023).
- **Youth Homelessness:** Young people between the ages of 13 and 24 living independently of parents and/or caregivers and, importantly, lack many of the social supports deemed necessary for the transition from childhood to adulthood.



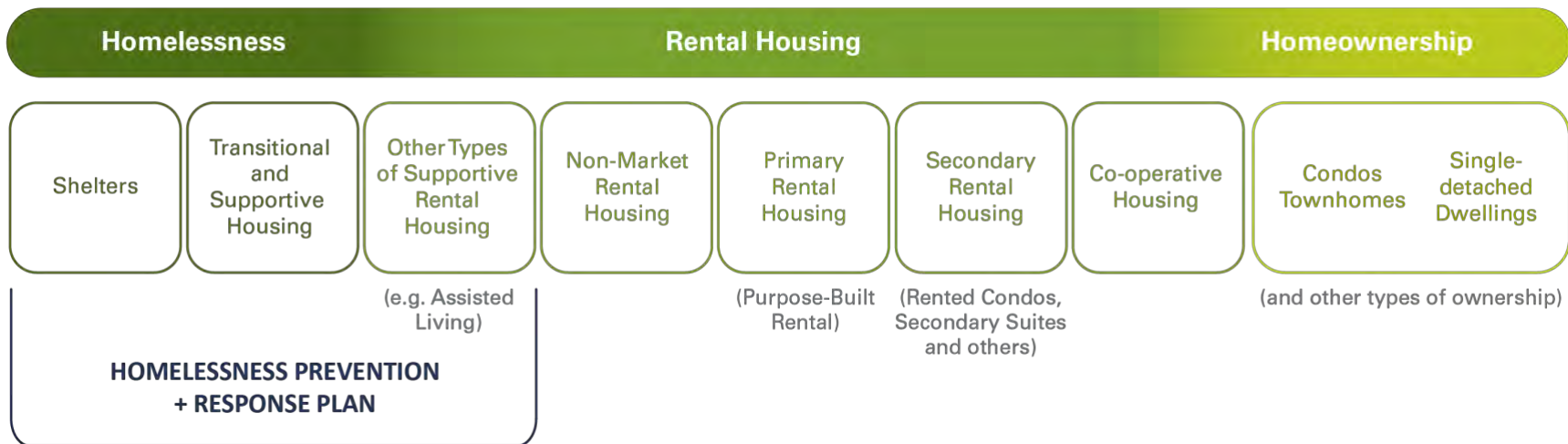
HOUSING NETWORK AND ASSOCIATED TERMS

HOUSING NETWORK

The housing network, sometimes referred to as a ‘housing continuum’ or ‘housing ecosystem’ describes the range of housing options available to diverse households – from people experiencing homelessness to homeowners.

The types of housing offered across the housing network can be associated with supports (ranging from different levels of social service supports to no supports offered in combination with the housing), income (very low income to high income), and tenure (rental / ownership).

Different ways and terms are used to describe a housing network; the example below is from *A Pathway To Home: City of Surrey Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan*.



SHELTERS

‘Shelters’ provide temporary, emergency, short-term accommodation for individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

- **‘Purpose-Built Shelters’** are permanent shelter spaces that operate on an on-going basis. They are generally open 24 hours a day, 7 days/week. Guests are provided with meals and connections to housing, health, and income services.
- **‘Non-Purpose-Built Shelters’** are temporary shelter spaces that BC Housing has opened in response to the increase in homelessness in BC. These shelters are in retrofitted commercial spaces or houses and may be on City land, leased private land, or non-profit owned. Typically, these shelters are open 24 hours a day, 7 days / week and guests are provided with meals and connections to services.
- **‘Temporary Mats’** are additional mats that are placed on the floor to add capacity to shelters overnight, year-round.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

‘Supportive Housing’ refers to housing that combines below-market rents and support services that help individuals or families stay housed. The housing may be offered to tenants for the short-term (ex. transitional housing) or long-term (ex. there

is no expectation that the tenants will eventually move on to independent housing).

- **‘Complex Care Housing’** refers to a new provincial housing model designed to address the needs of people with overlapping mental-health challenges, substance-use challenges, trauma and acquired brain injuries, and often left to experience homelessness. The program provides an enhanced level of integrated health and social supports that serve people where they live. Some examples of health and social supports include education, training, and employment opportunities, meals, substance use services, and help accessing income assistance, pension/disability benefits, identification, or a bank account.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

‘Transitional Housing’ is intended to help people move from homelessness or shelters to more stable, permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, support, life skills, education, etc. Transitional housing typically provides a time-limited stay, generally ranging from between 3 months to 3 years.

WOMEN’S TRANSITION HOUSING

‘Women’s Transition Housing’ provides temporary shelter/housing to single women or women with children who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing violence. There is



typically a heightened level of confidentiality with these facilities.

Facilities may be:

- **Women’s Safe Houses or Transition Houses:** these function in a crisis capacity, and offer safe, temporary shelter with support services. Maximum length of stay is typically 30-days. Many of these are residential homes in confidential locations where women and families live communally.
- **Women’s Second-Stage Housing:** these are typically low-cost rental units where women and their children can live independently, typically for 6-months to 2-years.

YOUTH TRANSITION HOUSING

‘Youth Transition Housing’ provides temporary shelter/ housing to youth who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. Facilities may be:

- **Youth Safe Houses:** these function in a crisis capacity, and offer safe, temporary shelter with support services. Maximum length of stay is typically 30-days. Many of these are residential homes in confidential locations where youth live communally.
- **Youth Transition Housing:** these are typically low-cost rental units where youth can live independently, typically for 6-months to 2-years. This form of housing generally includes

on-site recreational and vocational opportunities and a supportive peer environment.

SUPPORTIVE RECOVERY HOUSING

‘Supportive Recovery Housing’ refers to transitional housing that provides supports for people seeking assistance with substance use. The BC Ministry of Health’s Assisted Living Registrar regulates supportive recovery homes that fit their criteria as a ‘Mental Health and Substance Use Assisted Living Residence’.

- **‘Licensed Addiction Treatment’** are supportive recovery facilities that are regulated under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and are licensed and usually funded by Fraser Health.

REGISTERED MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING

‘Registered Mental Health Housing’ refers to housing that provides supports for people living with mental health challenges to build skills to live with an optimal level of independence. Residents cannot have current drug or alcohol use challenges. The BC Ministry of Health’s Assisted Living Registrar regulates registered mental health housing that fit their criteria as a **‘Mental Health and Substance Use Assisted Living Residence’**.



NON-MARKET HOUSING / SOCIAL HOUSING

‘Non-Market Housing’ or ‘Social Housing’ generally refers to housing for low- or moderate-income households that is owned/or and operated by a public agency (e.g. BC Housing or Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation), non-profit society, or housing co-operative.

NON-PROFIT HOUSING

‘Non-Profit Housing’ is housing units that are owned and/or operated by a non-profit society. These buildings may consist of a mix of low-income rental units and market rental units or 100% of the units may have subsidized rents.

CO-OP HOUSING

‘Co-operative Housing’ or ‘Co-op Housing’ are housing units that are owned and/or operated by a housing co-operative. Residents are members of the housing co-operative and pay a monthly housing charge instead of rent. Co-ops are generally more affordable than market rental buildings and may have subsidized units.

PRIMARY RENTAL MARKET

‘Primary Rental Market’ refers to apartment buildings constructed with the intent to be rented for the long-term in the private market, and not subdivided into co-op or strata condominium. This is also known as the ‘Purpose-Built Rental Market’.

SECONDARY MARKET RENTAL

The ‘Secondary Market Rental’ refers to rental units not in the primary rental market. This includes secondary suites, coach houses as well as condominiums and single-family dwellings rented out by owners.

HOMEOWNERSHIP

‘Homeownership’ refers to homes that are owned by those who live in them, either outright or with mortgageable interest. Forms of ownership include strata (such as condos, townhouses) and non-strata (such as single-detached dwellings) housing.





Social Infrastructure and Community Investments Department





A Pathway to Home:
Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan
SITUATION REPORT

JULY 2024

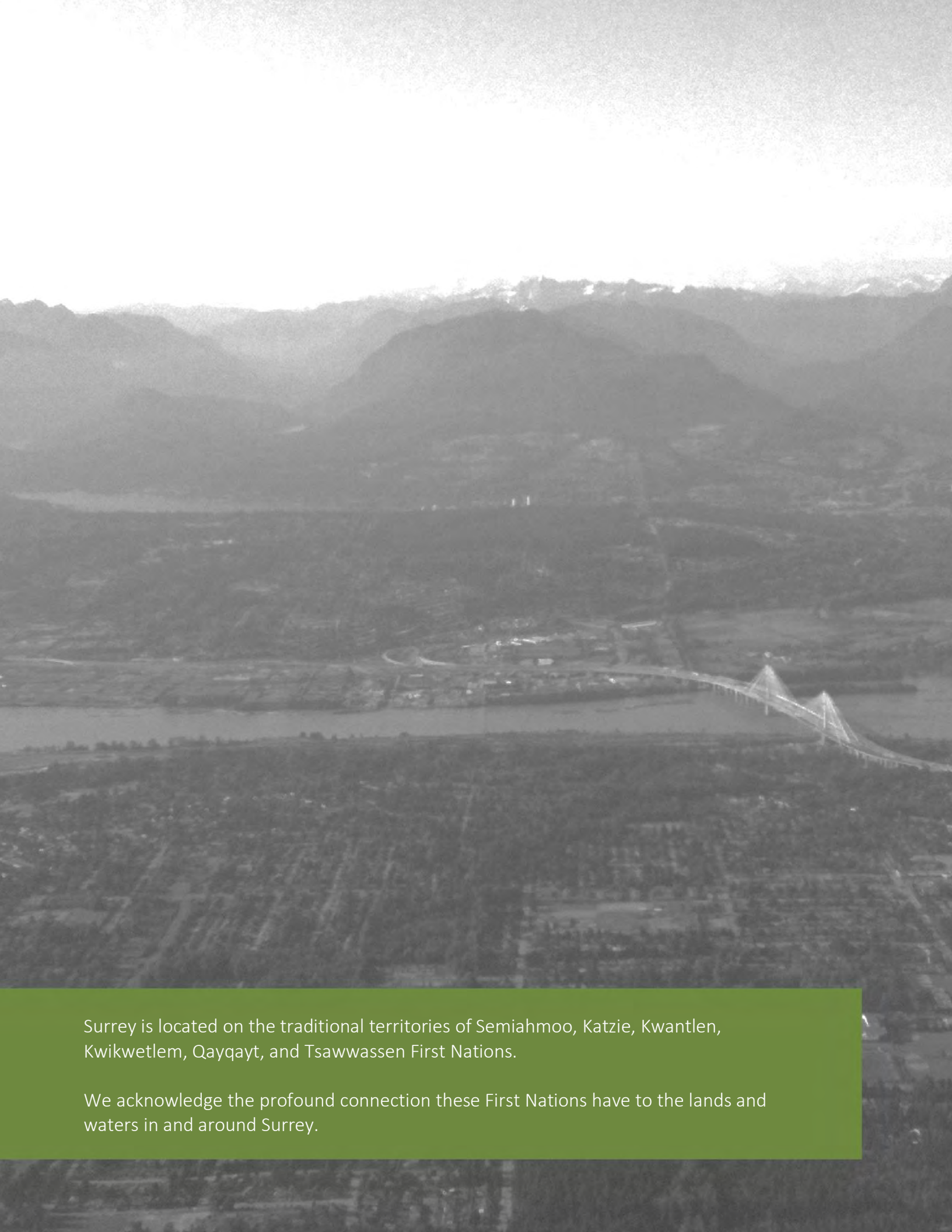
PREPARED BY

CitySpaces Consulting Limited

585 – 1111 West Hastings Street

Vancouver BC V6E 2J3





Surrey is located on the traditional territories of Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations.

We acknowledge the profound connection these First Nations have to the lands and waters in and around Surrey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Surrey Data at-a-Glance i
- INTRODUCTION 1**
 - Surrey Context 1
 - What is Homelessness? 3
- HOUSING POLICY CONTEXT 5**
 - Significant Research 8
 - Regional, Provincial, + National Plans 12
- DECLINING RENTAL AFFORDABILITY 15**
 - Affordability of Rental Units 15
 - Core Housing Need + Housing Standards 18
- INCREASING INCIDENCE OF HOMELESSNESS 21**
 - Point-in-Time Count Data 21
 - Demographics of People Experiencing Homelessness 25
 - Patients Unable to be Discharged from Hospital 31
- INVENTORY ANALYSIS 37**
 - BC Housing Inventory of Shelter, Transitional, and Supportive Housing 49
 - Extreme Weather Response + Temporary Winter Shelter Data 51
- CONCLUSION 54**



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Surrey Data At-a-Glance	i
Figure 2: Surrey Data At-a-Glance continued	ii
Figure 3: Emergency, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Spaces by Neighbourhood	iii
Figure 4: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey Executive Summary Extract (2022)	iv
Figure 5: Number of Shelter Spaces, Supportive, and Non-Market Units per Resident, Surrey and Metro Vancouver	2
Figure 6: Surrey's Housing Policy Context.....	13
Figure 7: Inflation Adjusted Average Rent by Unit Size (Surrey, 1993-2023)	15
Figure 8: Median All Units Rent and Primary Rental Vacancy Rate (Surrey, 1990-2023).....	16
Figure 9: Occupied and Vacant Average Rents, (Surrey, 2023)	17
Figure 10: Sheltered + Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (Surrey, 2005-2023)	22
Figure 11: Share of Metro Vancouver Count, Surrey + Metro Vancouver (2005-2023)	23
Figure 12: Top Ten Reasons for Loss of Housing (Surrey, 2023)	24
Figure 13: First Experienced Homelessness (Surrey, 2023).....	24
Figure 14: Number and Type of Health Concerns/Conditions (Surrey, 2023).....	25
Figure 15: Age Distribution of People Experiencing Homelessness, Metro Vancouver (2011-2023)	26
Figure 16: Share of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Age (Surrey, 2023)	27
Figure 17: Point in Time Count by Gender Identity – Sheltered and Unsheltered (Surrey, 2023)	28
Figure 18: Indigenous Identifying Individuals in Total Population and Point-in-Time Count (Surrey, 2021-2023).....	29
Figure 19: Indigenous Status of People Experiencing Homelessness (Surrey, 2023)	29
Figure 20: No Fixed Address Admissions, Surrey Memorial Hospital (2016-2023)	31
Figure 21: Total Point in Time Count with Forecast (Surrey, 2005-2023)	34
Figure 22: Shelter, Safe House, Transitional and Supportive Spaces by Year of Opening	43
Figure 23: Rent Supplements (Surrey, 2012 – 2023)	44
Figure 24: Shelter and Supportive / Transition Housing in Surrey by Type	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: City of Surrey Housing Plans + Policy Documents.....	6
Table 2: Income Quintile Distribution of Renter Households (Surrey, 2021).....	18
Table 3: Share of Households Below Housing Standards and in Core Housing Need (Surrey, 2006–2021)	19
Table 4: Homelessness by Racial Identity (Surrey, 2023)	30
Table 5: Emergency, Safe House, Transitional and Supportive Spaces by Facility Type/Subtype	38
Table 6: Shelter Beds by Population Served and Facility Stability	39
Table 7: Shelter Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Housing Units by Target Population	40
Table 8: Emergency Shelter Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Housing Units by Neighbourhood	41
Table 9: Emergency Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Units by Opening Year	42
Table 10: Surrey's Inventory of Non-Market Housing Units by Type (2024).....	47
Table 11: Surrey's Inventory of Non-Market Housing Units by Population (2024).....	48
Table 12: Shelter, Transitional, and Independent Social Housing Units / Spaces per 100 Residents, City of Vancouver and City of Surrey (2023)	50
Table 13: Extreme Weather Response Capacity and Usage (Surrey, 2023/2024 Season)	51
Table 14: Extreme Weather Response Mats (Surrey, 2019/2020 – 2023/2024).....	52
Table 15: Temporary Winter Shelter Data (Surrey, 2023/2024)	52



SURREY DATA AT-A-GLANCE

Figure 1: Surrey Data At-a-Glance

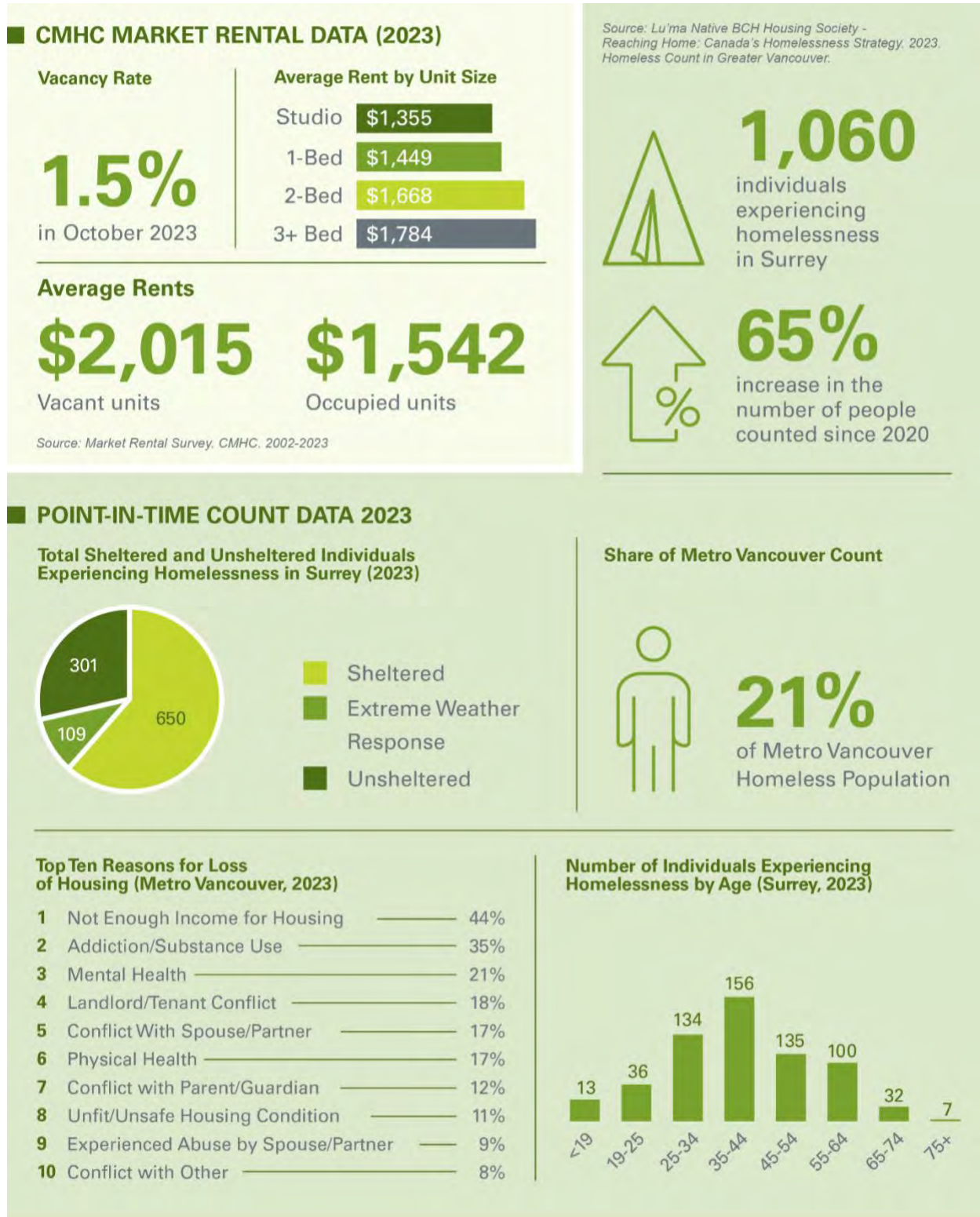


Figure 2: Surrey Data At-a-Glance continued

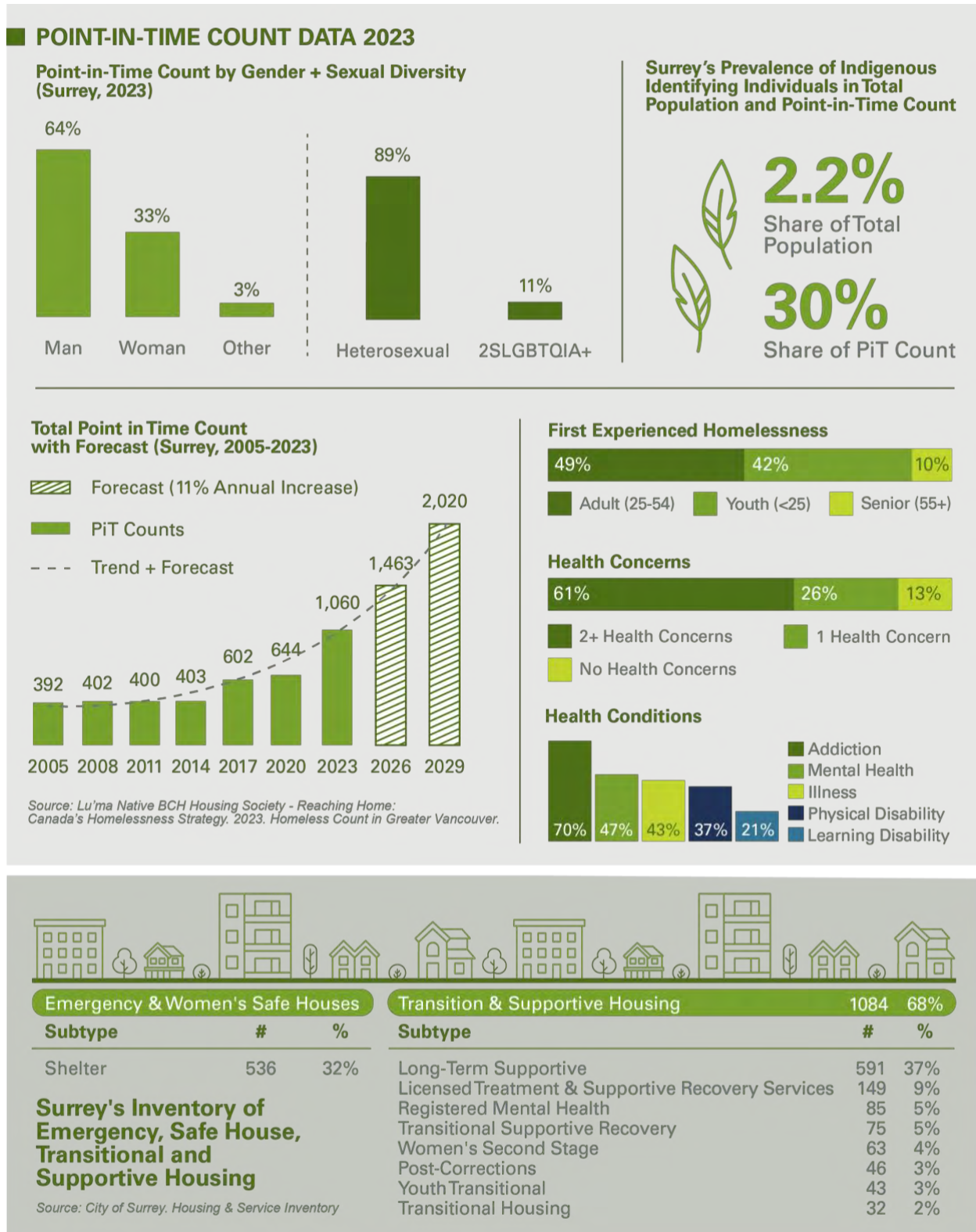


Figure 3: Emergency, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Spaces by Neighbourhood

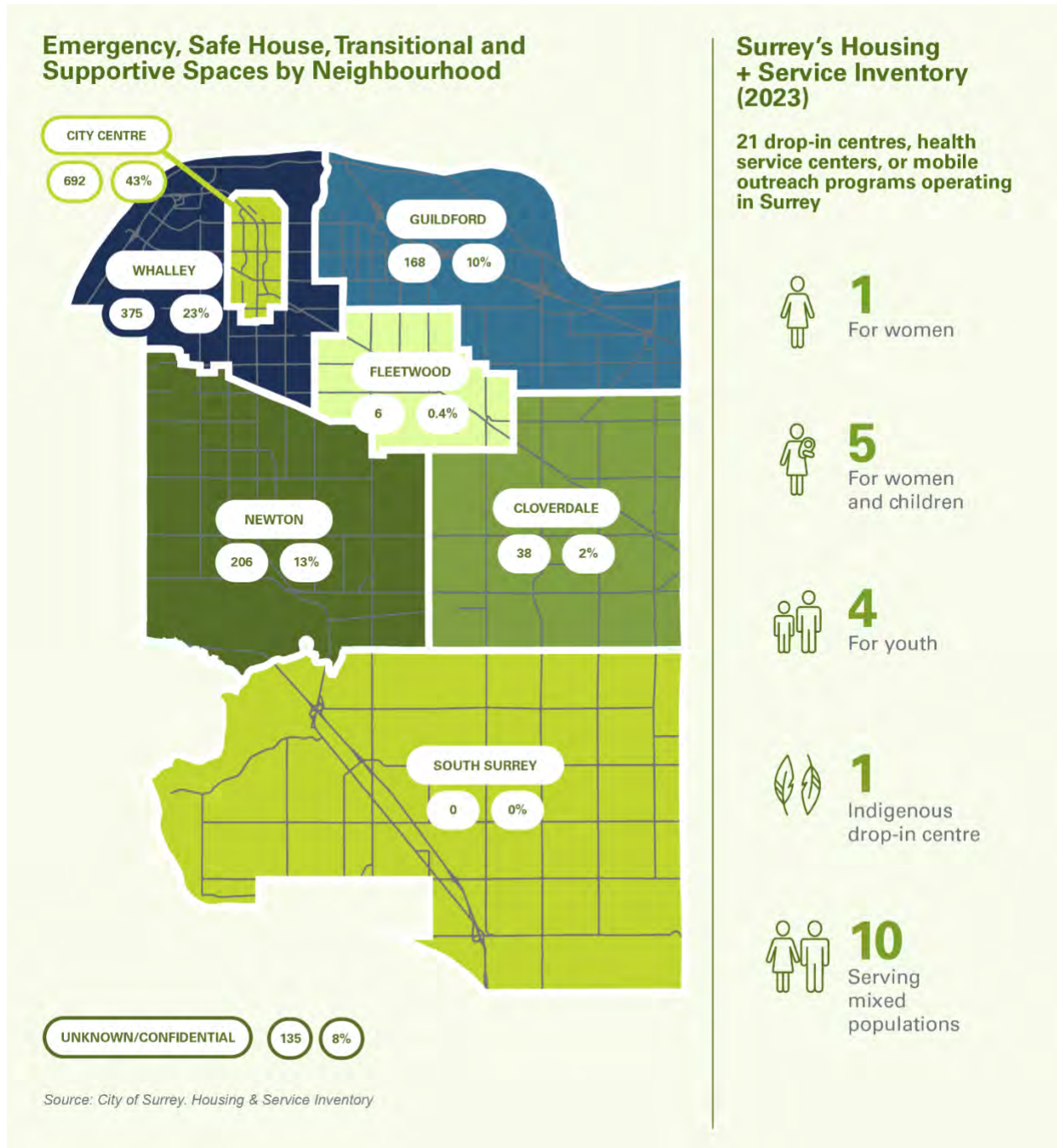


Figure 4: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey Executive Summary Extract (2022)





INTRODUCTION

Introduction

City of Surrey’s **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless (2013)** is over ten years old and a new plan is needed to respond to the current situation. Housing affordability is now even more of an issue in Surrey, especially for low- and moderate-income renters. There is a need to improve access to health services and housing for people with complex health needs, particularly those with concurrent mental health, substance use, and physical health challenges. Vulnerabilities resulting from decreasing affordability have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, drug toxicity crisis, and more extreme weather events caused by the climate crisis.

The **Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan** comprises three reports:



This **Situation Report** provides background planning and policy context, an overview of quantitative data on rental affordability and homelessness in Surrey, and an analysis of Surrey’s housing and services inventory.

SURREY CONTEXT

There is an urgent need for rapid, emergency solutions to homelessness and delivery of new non-market housing units in Surrey. By 2030, Surrey is projected to become the largest city in the province of British Columbia. The incidence of homelessness has been increasing across Metro Vancouver in recent decades. In 2023, a minimum of 1,060 people in Surrey were in urgent need of housing and experiencing homelessness, including 301 people sleeping in spaces unsuitable for human habitation (2023 Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver). Surrey has the second highest prevalence of homelessness in the region. Without intervention, this trend will likely

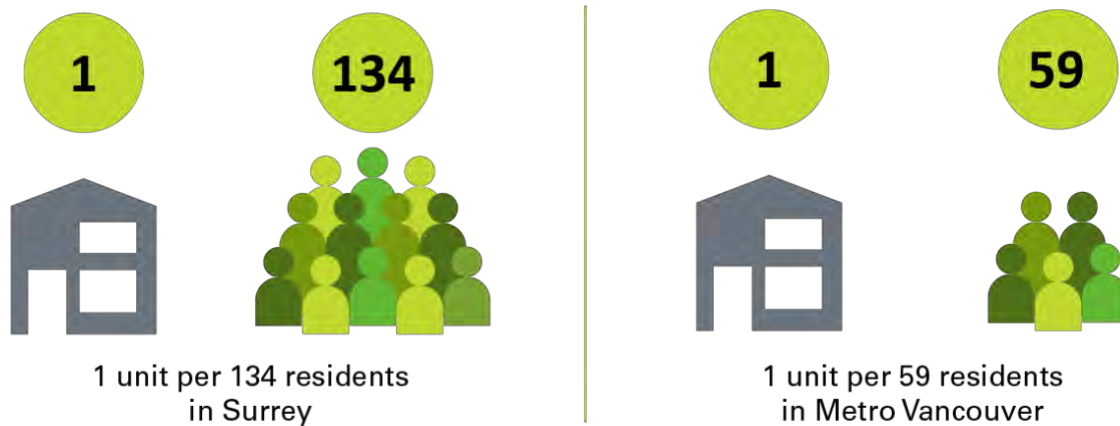


continue as the population grows. There are several population groups at disproportionate risk of homelessness, such as people with complex health and substance use issues, Indigenous peoples, and other population groups where dedicated spaces or services would be more impactful, such as women and women-led single-parent households with children, and youth.

Surrey is underserved in terms of shelter spaces, supportive and non-market units per capita when compared to Metro Vancouver. In fact, Surrey has less than half the regional average with one space or unit per 134 residents, compared to one space or unit per 59 residents in Metro Vancouver. Vancouver has twice the regional average, with one space or unit per 28 residents.

Figure 5: Number of Shelter Spaces, Supportive, and Non-Market Units per Resident, Surrey and Metro Vancouver

Source: BC Housing, Unit Count Reporting Model, March 31, 2023



A rapid increase in Surrey’s affordable and supportive housing supply is required to address the critical shortfall in non-market units. A focus on prevention is also required to create a coordinated system to serve people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness where people can access the housing, services, and supports they need. The City cannot address these challenges alone. Partnerships with senior governments, as well as collaboration across the homelessness, housing, and health sectors, is required. Although a significant challenge, the vision of attaining a functional zero end to homelessness in Surrey is achievable by undertaking the approach outlined in A Pathway to Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan.



WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?

Homelessness is the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect, means, or ability to acquire such housing. Homelessness is the result of systemic and societal barriers; a lack of affordable and appropriate housing; the individual / household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, or physical challenges; and/or racism and discrimination. Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, with people being without any shelter at one end and insecurely housed at the other end (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012).

- **AT-RISK:** People not currently experiencing homelessness but whose current economic and/or housing situation is dangerously lacking security or stability.
- **CHRONIC:** Individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g., chronic physical or mental illness, substance use challenges), currently experiencing homelessness and have experienced homelessness for six months or more in the past year.
- **EPISODIC:** Individuals, often with disabling conditions, currently experiencing homelessness with three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.
- **TRANSITIONAL:** People living in interim housing at the in-between stage of unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2021).

Based on Point-in-Time Counts, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey has been increasing over time. Between 2014 and 2023, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased from 403 to 1,060 – a 163% increase (11% annual average growth rate).



CITY HALL



HOUSING POLICY CONTEXT

Housing Policy Context

This section provides an overview of Surrey’s existing policy foundation, with a specific focus on policy documents that aim to address the housing problem.

PlanSurrey 2013: Official Community Plan (OCP) outlines Surrey’s vision, objectives, and policies that guide planning and land-use management. Other municipal plans and reports include the **Affordable Housing Strategy (2018)**, **Housing Needs Report (2022)**, and **Master Plan for Housing the Homeless (2013)**, to be replaced by **A Pathway to Home: Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan (expected 2024)**. Table 1 identifies City of Surrey housing planning and policy documents including key policies and recommendations.

A Pathway to Home: Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan draws upon two reports: Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC)’s 2022 **Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey** and Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group (SVWG)’s 2023 **In Their Own Words: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey**.

Homelessness is not a Surrey-specific issue, and there are other regional, provincial, and national plans and strategies that support the need for more system-wide change. Recent provincial legislative changes and provincial and federal funding calls offer significant opportunities for housing solutions, support services, and prevention programs that respond to homelessness.

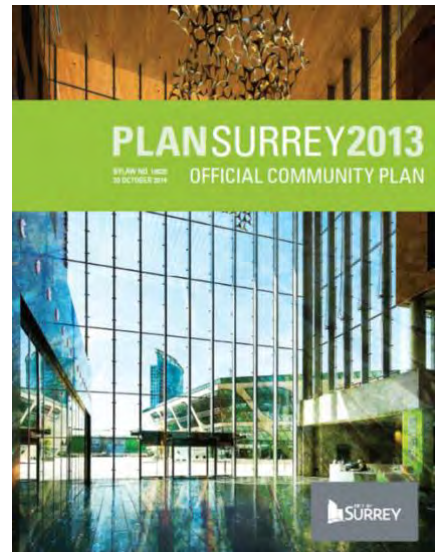


Table 1: City of Surrey Housing Plans + Policy Documents

MUNICIPAL PLANNING + POLICY DOCUMENTS	KEY POLICIES + RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Master Plan for Housing the Homeless (2013) identifies and responds to the needs for long-term housing and support services for people experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>The Master Plan is over 10-years old. The context of homelessness and housing in Surrey has changed significantly and requires updating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of an additional 450-units of transitional and supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness. • Replacement of Gateway emergency shelter in Whalley with a new purpose-built facility that incorporates transitional housing units. • Enhancement of supportive housing, shelter, and drop-in services that focus on vulnerable population groups with unique needs. • Continue to strengthen partnerships with BC Housing, Fraser Health Authority, Surrey Homelessness & Housing Society, and government funders & foundations.
<p>PlanSurrey 2013: Official Community Plan (2014) outlines the City’s long-term plan for community development and identifies objectives and policies to achieve the Plan.</p> <p>The Official Community Plan (OCP) will be updated by end of 2025 to align with new provincial legislative requirements, creating an opportunity for the update to further support the direction of A Pathway to Home: Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge #5 ‘Serve the Increasingly Diverse Needs of Surrey’s Population’ acknowledges that as the city grows, additional services helping persons experiencing homelessness or mental illness or addiction issues are needed. • F3 Policies relate to Non-Market Rental with the objective to establish a full range of non-market housing and supports to meet current and future residents’ needs.



MUNICIPAL PLANNING + POLICY DOCUMENTS	KEY POLICIES + RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Affordable Housing Strategy (2018) sets out strategies and actions to increase housing affordability in Surrey, with a focus on purpose-built market and non-market rental housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 4.0 aims to increase the supply of housing affordable for low- to moderate-income renter households through continued partnerships to increase the supply of non-market housing, as well as to continue implementing the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless actions.
<p>Housing Needs Report (2022) provides an overview of current and future housing needs in Surrey to inform planning processes and policies.</p> <p>The report will be updated by end of 2024 to align with new provincial legislative requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To tackle homelessness, the report advises increasing the supply of below-market and non-market rental housing that is affordable to those with very-low incomes. • There is no data source that exists to accurately estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey. Although Point-in-Time Counts are an important source of information to assess trends over time, they are widely accepted as an undercount. Therefore, the Housing Needs Report utilized a 3.5 ratio to estimate the number of people experiencing hidden homelessness in Surrey.¹

1. Based on research by M. Eberle et al. 2009. *Results of the pilot study to estimate the size of the hidden homeless population in Metro Vancouver.*



SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH

Finding Our Way Home: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022)

Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee

Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC) research provides insight into Indigenous people experiencing homelessness in Surrey, their pathways into homelessness, existing services and supports, and how these services and supports can be improved to reduce and then eliminate Indigenous homelessness in Surrey. Priority recommendations include:



- **Priority #1:** Immediate coordinated action is needed by the federal, provincial, and municipal governments to create deeply affordable housing, with and without supports, in Surrey to offer an exit strategy for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness and to prevent individuals and households from falling into homelessness. Housing is needed for single Indigenous men and women, and low-income families in crisis, especially single-parent families.
- **Priority #2:** Create and implement a strategy to increase local Indigenous capacity to develop affordable housing in Surrey.

Other recommendations include:

- Distributing **Finding Our Way Home** results to all stakeholders working on Indigenous housing and social services in Surrey;
- Including Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association at the Coordinated Access System (CAS) table to strengthen access to services for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness, especially those who are unsheltered;
- Advocating for increases to income and disability assistance to provide Indigenous people unable to work with more income for housing and increase the financial viability of operating deeply affordable housing; and

- Advocating for the implementation of the right to housing at the federal level and implementation of UNDRIP at the provincial level, including the right of Indigenous peoples to housing.

The *Finding Our Way Home: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey* report can be found at surreyindigenousleadership.ca.

At least 635 Indigenous individuals are estimated to have experienced homelessness in Surrey as of 2020, a rate of 1 in 26 Indigenous people living in Surrey compared to 1 in 239 non-Indigenous people.

With a rental vacancy rate of 0.6% as of 2021 and BC Housing waitlist of 2,554 individuals as of 2019, Surrey simply does not have the affordable housing supply to address the needs of those experiencing homelessness. Compounding this, Surrey has a deficit of Indigenous housing options. Despite similar urban Indigenous populations, Surrey had less than one-fifth the number of Indigenous housing units as City of Vancouver.

There is an urgent need to act. More deeply affordable non-market units – led by and in collaboration with Indigenous organizations – are needed to create exit pathways for those experiencing homelessness. Without more housing options, more Indigenous people will be put at-risk of homelessness. And without exit pathways, those currently homeless will face more severe and long-term erosion in their health, social connections, and trust in the systems that are meant to provide assistance.

Source: Finding Our Way Home: Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey, Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee

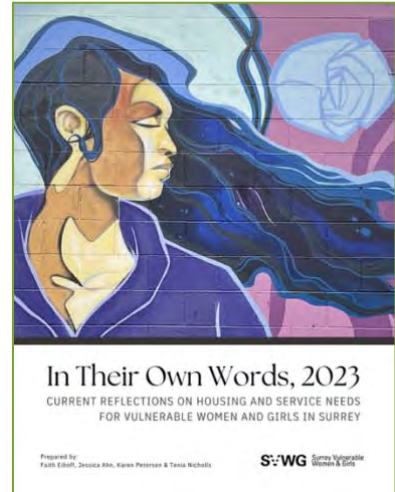


In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women And Girls in Surrey

Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group

Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group (SVWG)

research showcases the findings of a study conducted with 70 women and girls in Surrey about housing and service needs and challenges. The research focuses on the perspectives of women and youth, conveying key findings and recommendations in their own narratives. Twenty key organizations working on the direct care serving vulnerable women and girls in Surrey also provided their perspectives.



The report identified housing as being the most important need by women and youth, with the main housing barriers being availability and affordability. Women with children found housing often does not take into account their children's needs. Youth highlighted the vulnerabilities faced when transitioning to independent living due to expensive rental markets and hesitancy from landlords to rent to younger individuals.

Participants expressed the need for a greater variety of affordable, safe, secure, adequate housing, including longer-term and no / low barrier options, and a spectrum of housing from supportive to independent, as well as family housing (suitable for women with children and/or a partner), transitional and recovery housing (for women leaving hospital, treatment, or corrections facilities), and assisted living (for seniors, women with disabilities and/or serious mental illness).

A need for broader emergency response solutions was also identified, specifically safe housing/shelters for women fleeing violence. Another key group is women with developmental disabilities and ensuring supportive housing and shelter options include safeguards and supports for this population.

The full *In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey* report can be found at surrey.ca.

Vulnerable women and girls in Surrey experience challenges relating to transportation, stigma, trauma, cultural insecurity, and access to women-only support and age-appropriate services. Surviving the Night (2019) reports on research conducted with vulnerable women and girls in Surrey about night-time safety and service needs.

The report recommends increasing funding for mobile service vans to enable night-time service, opening separate night-time drop-ins for women and youths involved in indoor sex work, and developing more women-only shelter and housing in Surrey.

Source: In Their Own Words (2023): Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey, Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group



REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL, + NATIONAL PLANS

Provincial Plans

- **Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) BC Indigenous Homelessness Strategy (2022)** looks to reintroduce traditional and innovative Indigenous-led approaches to helping and empowering Indigenous people that have been disturbed and dismantled through colonization. The Strategy emphasizes the role of government to fund and work with Indigenous organizations, to build capacity of the Indigenous housing and support sector, enhance partnerships, strengthen policy in a culturally safe way, and design and deliver equitable services. The full report is available at ahma-bc.org.
- **Government of British Columbia Belonging in BC: A collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness (2023)** covers the initial phase to address homelessness from 2022-2025, with immediate actions supported by \$633 million (2022 BC Budget), and \$1.5 billion (2023 BC Budget). The full plan can be found at gov.bc.ca. The plan commits to four strategy actions to be implemented over three years:
 1. Transform housing and health systems and programs to reduce barriers to support;
 2. Strengthen community partnership to build capacity and respond to local needs;
 3. Ensure programming and service delivery includes input from people with distinct needs and perspectives; and
 4. Apply better data on drivers and impacts of homelessness to improve policy and program design and development.
- **Province of British Columbia BC Housing Action Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25 (2022)** outlines an investment of more than \$1.5 billion over 10 years to benefit BC households with access to appropriate, affordable, safe, and inclusive housing in their community. The full plan can be found at gov.bc.ca.
- **Province of British Columbia: TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2019)** addresses homelessness based on prevention, immediate response, stability, and working better together. Actions include a provincial rent bank, targeted interventions, policy enhancements, rapid response and supportive housing, and provincial homeless counts. The full strategy can be found at gov.bc.ca.

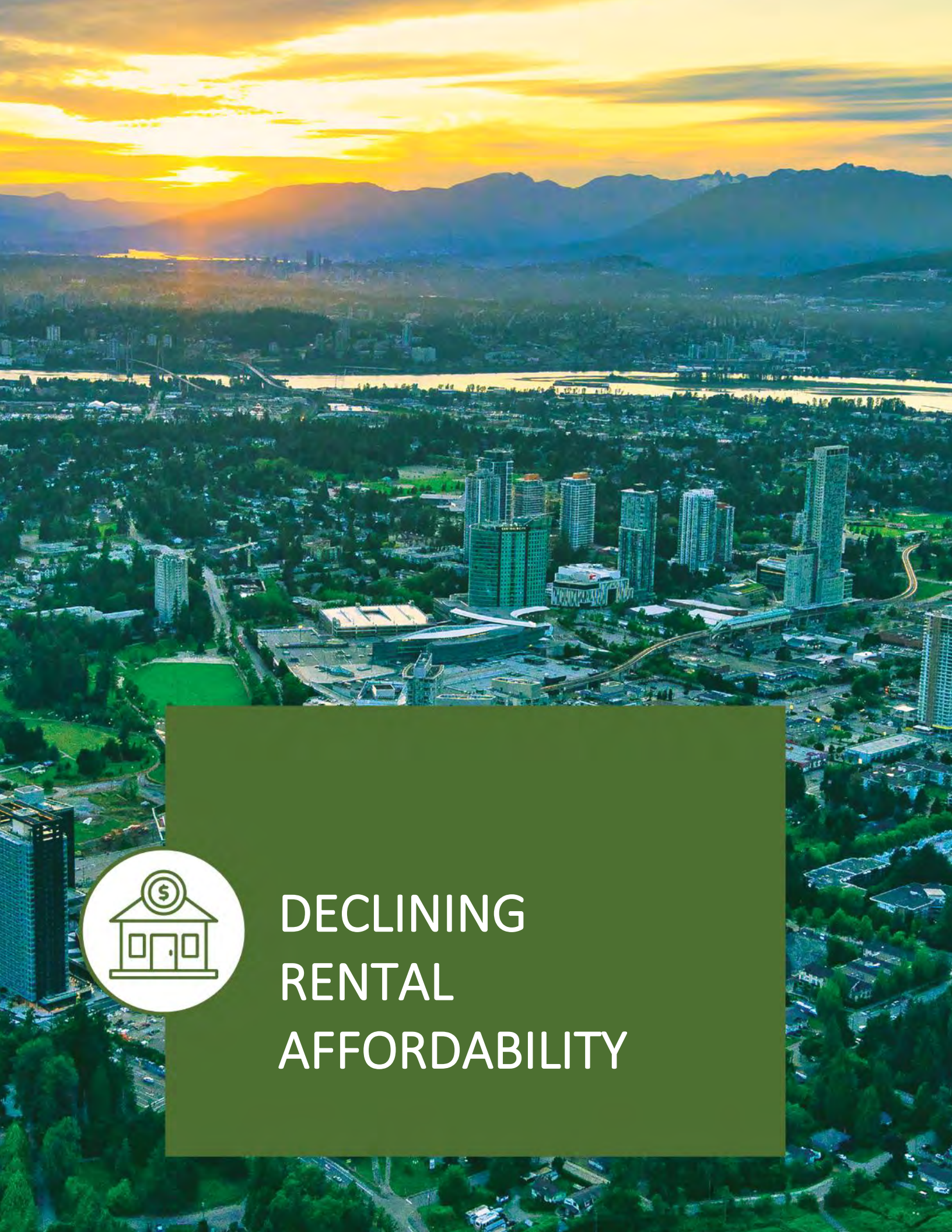


Federal Plans

- Government of Canada: Reaching Home: Canada’s Homelessness Strategy (2019) & National Housing Strategy (2017): Both documents aim to support the needs of the most vulnerable Canadians by creating safe, stable, and affordable housing, and reducing chronic homelessness by 50% by 2027-2028. The 2019 Strategy can be found at [infrastructure.gc.ca](https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca) and the 2017 Strategy can be found at [aplacetocallhome.ca](https://www.aplacetocallhome.ca).

Figure 6: Surrey's Housing Policy Context





DECLINING RENTAL AFFORDABILITY

Declining Rental Affordability

The following section provides an overview of current statistics related to homelessness and housing affordability in Surrey and Metro Vancouver. The analyses focus on affordability for renters, which are the households most at-risk of experiencing homelessness. Owners are typically less likely to experience homelessness – often having equity in their home to support through a transition into the rental market if required to sell.

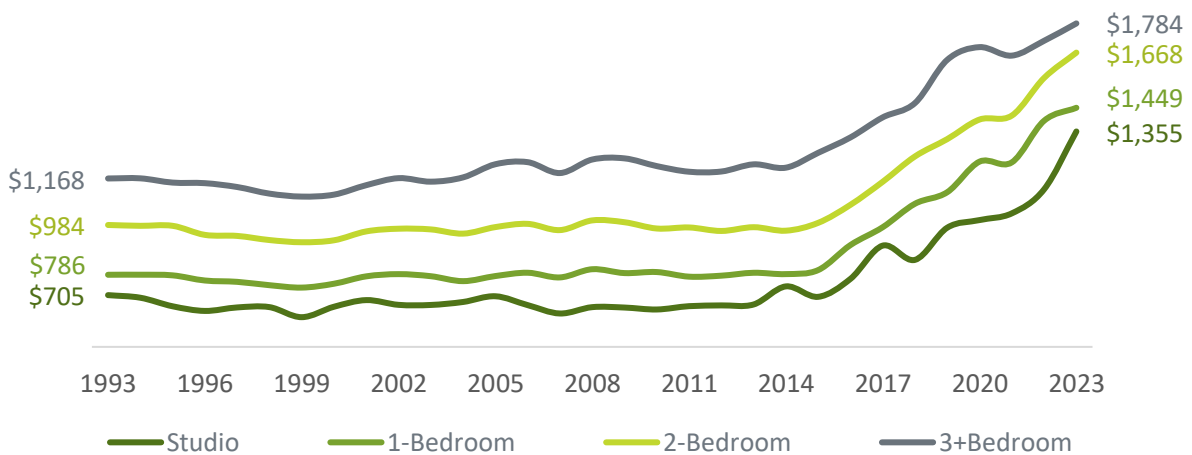
AFFORDABILITY OF RENTAL UNITS

Rental housing costs have been increasing year-over-year since 2014.

Since 2014, the cost of rental housing has seen a significant increase across Metro Vancouver. In Surrey, prior to 2014, purpose-built primary rental units had relatively flat rents year-over-year on an inflation-adjusted basis ². Available data suggests there was generally equilibrium between supply and demand for rental dwellings, with the market balanced overall when taking a multi-year view. However, this pattern abruptly changed after 2014 when rental costs began experiencing an upward trend, which has maintained a similar pace through 2023. Average rents increased by 74% between 2015 and 2023.

Figure 7: Inflation Adjusted Average Rent by Unit Size (Surrey, 1993-2023)

Source: Market Rental Survey. CMHC. 1993-2023



2. Inflation-adjusted to 2023 dollars based on Vancouver CMA Shelter CPI rate as published by Statistics Canada (Table: 18-10-0005-01).



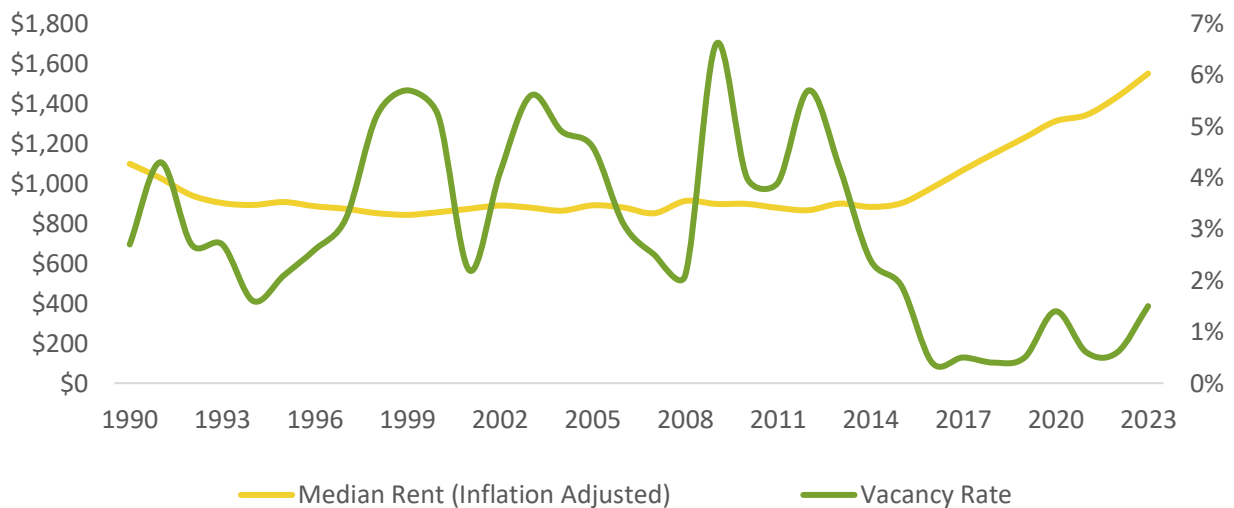
Vacancy rates have remained below 2% since 2015.

After years of a relatively balanced rental market, Surrey vacancy rates dropped from a healthy rate of between 3% and 4% to 1.5% or below every year since 2016. In October 2023, the vacancy rate was 1.5% and median rent increased 8.1%³ since the previous October.

A balanced vacancy rate is between 3% and 4%, which allows for existing residents to move between units. Less than 3% indicates high rental demand and more competition for available units, resulting in increasing rental costs.

Figure 8: Median All Units Rent and Primary Rental Vacancy Rate (Surrey, 1990-2023)

Source: Market Rental Survey. CMHC. 1990-2023



Low vacancy rates and high year-over-year inflation-adjusted rent increases have continued every year since 2015. Rents increasing much faster than the rate of inflation suggest significant ongoing and persistent rental scarcity or undersupply.

Vacant units in Surrey are 28% more expensive than occupied units.

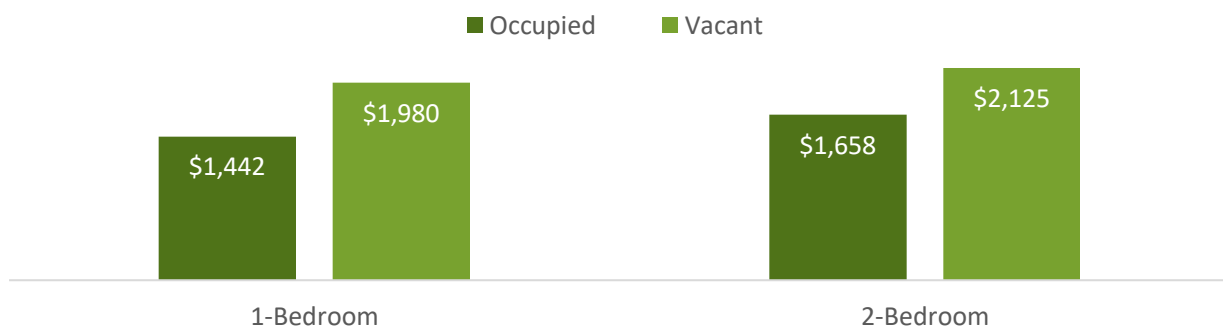
Rental controls in British Columbia cap annual rent increases to help maintain affordability for renters. In 2024, the maximum rent increase permitted is 3.5%. Otherwise, landlords can only increase rent in between tenancies. When considering all unit types collectively in Surrey, the median rent for vacant units is \$2,015 compared with \$1,542 for occupied units. On average,

3. 8.1% on an inflation-adjusted basis; 10.7% increase overall.

vacant units are 31% more expensive to rent than occupied units; a discrepancy not reflected in the standard median rental statistics collected by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This has created a situation in which households with secure and affordable housing can suddenly be put at-risk of homelessness if evicted or otherwise displaced. For many households, the cost increase of securing a new tenancy may be too high and is a significant driver of increasing homelessness across the region.⁴

Figure 9: Occupied and Vacant Average Rents, (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Market Rental Survey. CMHC. 2023



More than half of renters cannot afford the average rent of a new 1-bedroom tenancy.

The University of British Columbia HART methodology uses income quintiles to measure housing need; this concept can also be applied to consider how much renter households earn and therefore their ability to afford housing (as illustrated in Table 2).⁵ Examining renter household incomes shows that **at least 56% of renter households in Surrey would not be able to afford the average rent for newly initiated 1-bedroom tenancy (\$1,980)**. 32% of renter households in the bottom two income quintiles (17,845 households) would likely face significant challenges in securing new housing and be at-risk of experiencing homelessness if they had to move with a maximum monthly affordable housing cost of less than \$500 to \$1,250.

4. Primary rental only; vacant unit rent data is not available for studio or 3-bedroom units in City of Surrey.

5. The HART methodology developed by University of British Columbia Housing Research Collaborative uses a custom census dataset with an income quintile concept that can be freely cross tabulated against other census variables. This derived variable is based on multiples of the Area Median Household Income against specific percentages to establish five income ranges. Considering households in this way can help to understand the distribution of household income, and therefore the relative ability of households to afford their housing.



Table 2: Income Quintile Distribution of Renter Households (Surrey, 2021)

Source: Statistics Canada, 2023, HART - 2021 Census of Canada.

INCOME QUINTILE	VERY LOW	LOW	MODERATE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE
% OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	<20%	21%–50%	51%–80%	81%–120%	>121%
Households	3,415	14,430	13,785	13,270	11,310
Share of Households	6%	26%	24%	24%	20%
Income Range	<\$20,000	\$20,000 – \$49,999	\$50,000 – \$79,999	\$80,000 – \$119,999	\$120,000+
Maximum Affordable Rent	<\$500	\$501 – \$1,250	\$1,251 – \$2,000	\$2,001 – \$3,000	\$3,000+

CORE HOUSING NEED + HOUSING STANDARDS

Recent core housing need data from the 2021 Census is likely not reflective of actual trends.

It is important to consider the increasing vulnerability of people currently housed. As long-term housing shortages increasingly lead to rapidly escalating rents, more households will be at-risk of homelessness.

The 2021 housing standards and Core Housing Need (CHN) data present a mixed picture.

Between 2006 and 2016, CHN rates increased or were flat. However, in 2021, the overall CHN rate fell. Despite a population increase of 50,435 (15,705 households) between 2016 and 2021, there were 35 fewer households in CHN in Surrey.

Statistics Canada has suggested the reduction in the CHN statistics may be an anomaly from the timing of the census and market rental surveys during the global COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the availability of COVID-19 income supports over the period.

There are two opposing factors leading to what is likely a temporary reduction in CHN rates:

- the earnings of lower income households were boosted by temporary income supports, and
- rents were also temporarily suppressed due to reduced immigration and migration during initial periods of social distancing, meaning the ‘reference unit’ applied in the CHN test to



determine if households could afford to move to another dwelling and meet their needs, temporarily had a lower rent unrepresentative of the actual rental market.

Ultimately, low incomes increased and the income required to not be classified as being in CHN was reduced. Both factors had the effect of suppressing CHN rates nationally and in most jurisdictions; it is expected rates will rebound in the next census.

While overall CHN rates decreased in Surrey between the 2016 and 2021 Census, the rate of unaffordability and overcrowding (lack of suitability) increased for the first time since 2006 suggesting increasing vulnerability despite a lower CHN rate. This is particularly important as it indicates the number of households in precarious housing situations was potentially greater in 2021 than suggested by CHN rates.

Core Housing Need is when a household's housing falls below at least one of the indicator thresholds for housing adequacy, affordability, or suitability, and the household would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable.

Adequacy means housing does not require major repairs.

Suitability means housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household.

Affordability means shelter costs are less than 30% of total before-tax household income.

Source: Statistics Canada

Table 3: Share of Households Below Housing Standards and in Core Housing Need (Surrey, 2006–2021)
Source: Housing Market Information Portal, CMHC, Surrey (CY), Housing Standards (2006 -2016); Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0247-01, Core housing need by tenure, 2021

YEAR	HOUSEHOLDS				IN CORE HOUSING NEED	
	BELOW AFFORDABILITY STANDARD	BELOW ADEQUACY STANDARD	BELOW SUITABILITY STANDARD	%	#	
2006	26.4%	5.0%	10.2%	15.4%	19,210	
2011	25.9%	4.4%	11.2%	17.0%	24,450	
2016	25.0%	4.1%	9.2%	17.1%	27,740	
2021	26.0%	3.8%	12.2%	15.4%	27,705	





INCREASING
INCIDENCE OF
HOMELESSNESS

Increasing Incidence of Homelessness

This section highlights recent data on homelessness in Surrey and Metro Vancouver. The 2023 Point-in-Time Count data demonstrates there has been a significant increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey and across the region since 2014, with equity-seeking groups particularly adversely affected. This section also considers rates of homelessness and the relationship between median rent and income when considering forecasting homelessness in Surrey.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT DATA

Incidences of homelessness have increased across the region.

Metro Vancouver has seen an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness since 2005, when 2,174 individuals were identified across the region according to Point-in-Time data. In 2023, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased to 4,821, representing a 122% increase over the 18-year period.

There has been a 65% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey since 2020.

Based on Point-in-Time Counts, the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey remained relatively consistent between 2005 and 2014. However, in the years between 2014 and 2017, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased by 49% (14% annually).

Another significant surge in the number of people counted occurred in 2023, with a 65% increase since 2020 (18% annually).

Point-in-Time (PiT) Count data provides a snapshot of homelessness in a community and are considered an undercount as they represent only those individuals identified within a 24-hour period. PiT Counts only measure visible homelessness (i.e., people on the street or in shelters) which does not capture the extent of the population experiencing hidden homelessness or at-risk of homelessness.

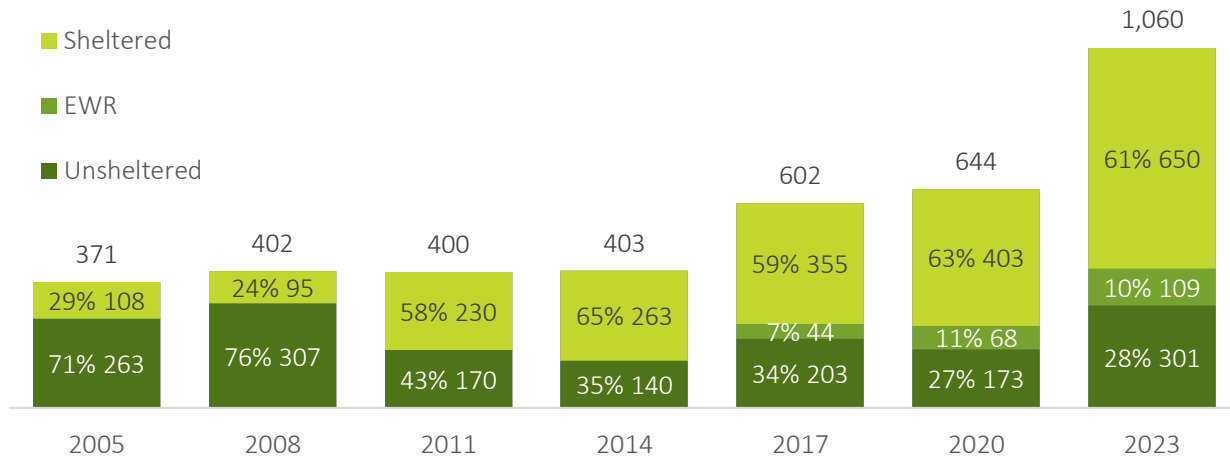
Hidden homelessness refers to people who live 'temporarily with others but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing' such as couch surfing.

Source: Homeless Hub



Figure 10: Sheltered + Unsheltered Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (Surrey, 2005-2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society – Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



61% of people experiencing homelessness were sheltered.

In 2023, most people experiencing homelessness in Surrey were sheltered (61%), while 109 stayed overnight in Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelters (10%) and 301 (28%) were unsheltered at the time of the Point-in-Time Count, contrasting with 71% unsheltered counted in 2005. The overall number of unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness in 2023 was higher (301 + 109 in EWR) than in 2005 (263). While the share of sheltered and unsheltered reversed between 2005 and 2023, the overall count is 185% higher (or 163% over ten years since 2014).

Sheltered refers to individuals in sheltering facilities (permanent/ temporary shelters, transition houses, or safe houses), or who would be released from the hospital (or police holding cells) in the next 30-days without a fixed address.

Unsheltered refers to the number of individuals without shelter on the night of the count (sleeping outside, in makeshift shelters / tents, in vehicles, or informally staying with others).

Extreme Weather Response (EWR) refers to the number of individuals staying in temporary emergency shelter spaces open during periods of extreme winter weather.

*Source: HSABC (2023)
Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver*

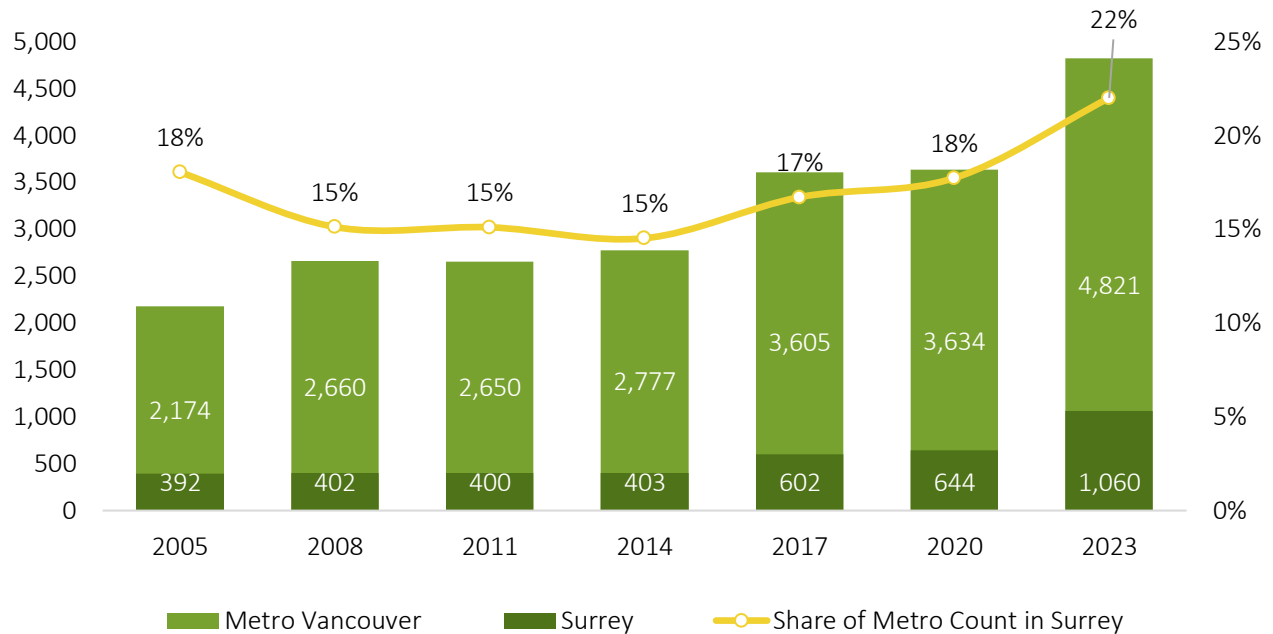


Surrey's regional share of The PiT count increased to 22%.

Surrey's share of individuals captured by Metro Vancouver's PiT Count increased from 15% (2014) to 22% (2023), suggesting the prevalence of people experiencing homelessness is increasing faster in Surrey than other areas in the region.

Figure 11: Share of Metro Vancouver Count, Surrey + Metro Vancouver (2005-2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



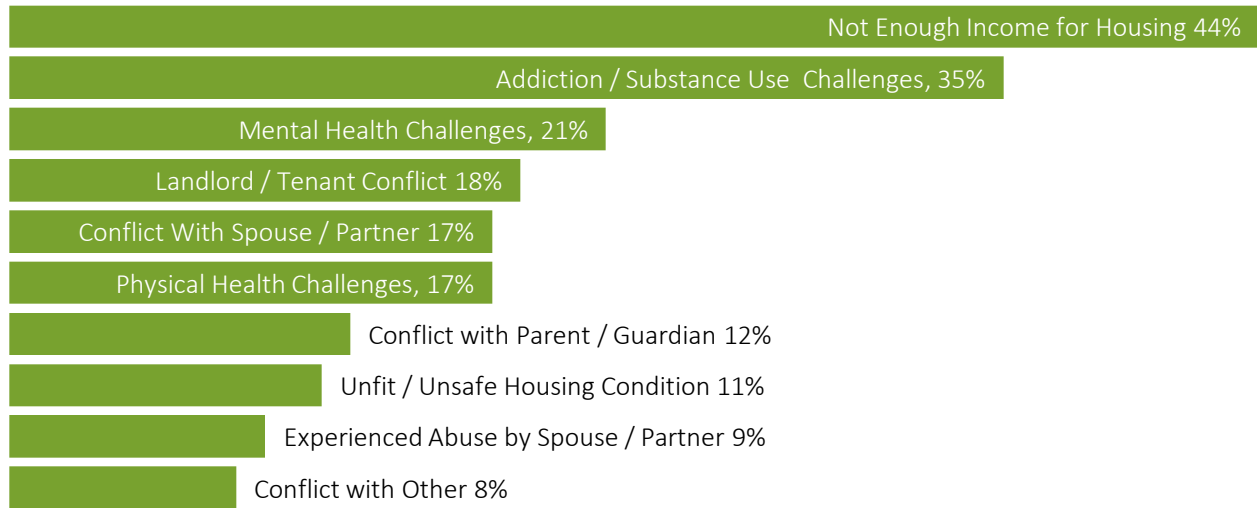
Not having enough income for housing most common reason for homelessness.

Respondents in Surrey identified at least 25 reasons for losing housing and experiencing homelessness, with the top ten reasons provided in Figure 12. Top reasons include not having enough income and addiction or substance use challenges, as well as more than 15% of individuals noting mental health challenges, landlord conflict, partner conflict, and physical health issues.



Figure 12: Top Ten Reasons for Loss of Housing (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



Most peoples' first experience of homelessness occurs in youth (42%) or adulthood (49%).

Most people captured by the 2023 PiT Count in Surrey first experienced homelessness in youth (42%) or adulthood (49%), while 10% were seniors when they were first without a home.

Figure 13: First Experienced Homelessness (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



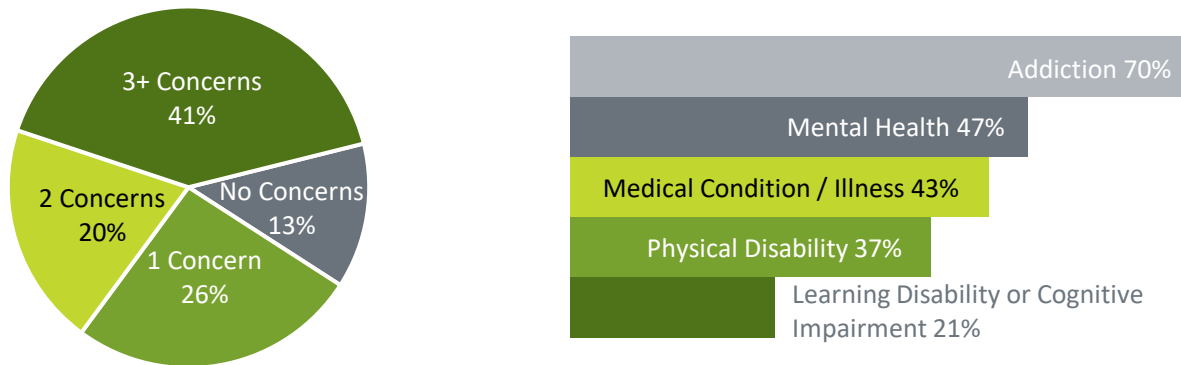
Health Concerns

Most individuals in Surrey reported at least two health concerns (61%), while only 13% reported no health issues. Most people reported an addictions challenge (70%), with half also reporting a mental health challenge (47%). More than a third reported a physical disability (37%), while almost half reported a medical condition (43%). A third also reported an acquired brain injury separately from a primary health challenge.



Figure 14: Number and Type of Health Concerns/Conditions (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Different populations and identities experience the housing system unequally and these variations can become particularly apparent for those experiencing homelessness. People of colour, Indigenous people, people identifying as 2SLGBTQIA+ (particularly youth), and increasingly seniors are all disproportionately represented in the population experiencing homelessness due to complex systemic experiences compounding to create barriers in accessing or maintaining secure and permanent housing.

Increase in the Working Age Population

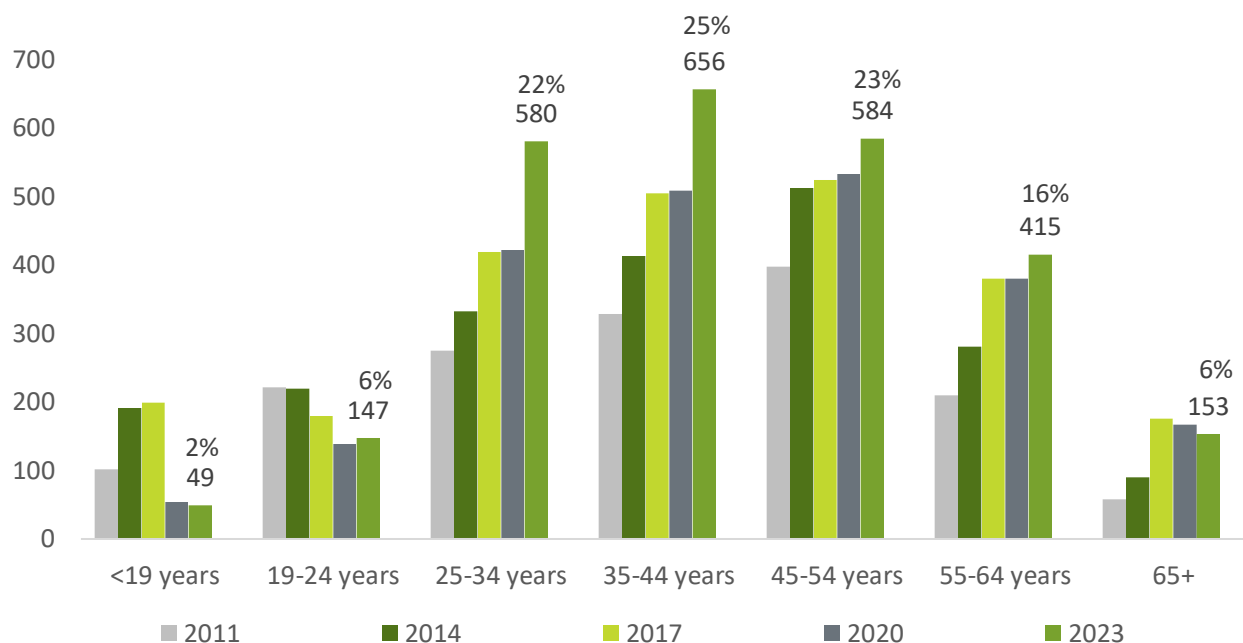
Figure 15 illustrates the share of population experiencing homelessness in Metro Vancouver⁶ by age category between 2011 and 2023; there is a consistent downward trend in children and youth (under 19), and young adults (19-24), while the opposite is true for adults. While the trend had been relatively flat for those in primary working years (25-54) for the previous two PiT Counts, a large increase was seen in 2023. **The 2023 increase is largest for those aged 25-44, suggesting an increasingly large number of working-age individuals are experiencing housing precarity and homelessness.**

6. Historical PiT Count age data is unavailable for Surrey; however, 2023 distribution in Surrey is almost identical to Metro Vancouver – the only discrepancy 45-54 years rounding down to 22% in Surrey compared to 23% in Metro Vancouver. The historical regional trend may be a good indicator of patterns in Surrey.

While there are increasing concerns for the growth of seniors experiencing homelessness in recent years, the trend is not as apparent in the data. However, seniors likely have more complex health and housing needs, and may be the most challenging to support or place in suitable housing. It is also important to note the reduction in children and youth captured by the PiT Count may be related to a change in the visibility of this population and the ability of counts to capture the population rather than a reduction of children and youth living in precarious or unstable housing.

Figure 15: Age Distribution of People Experiencing Homelessness, Metro Vancouver (2011-2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



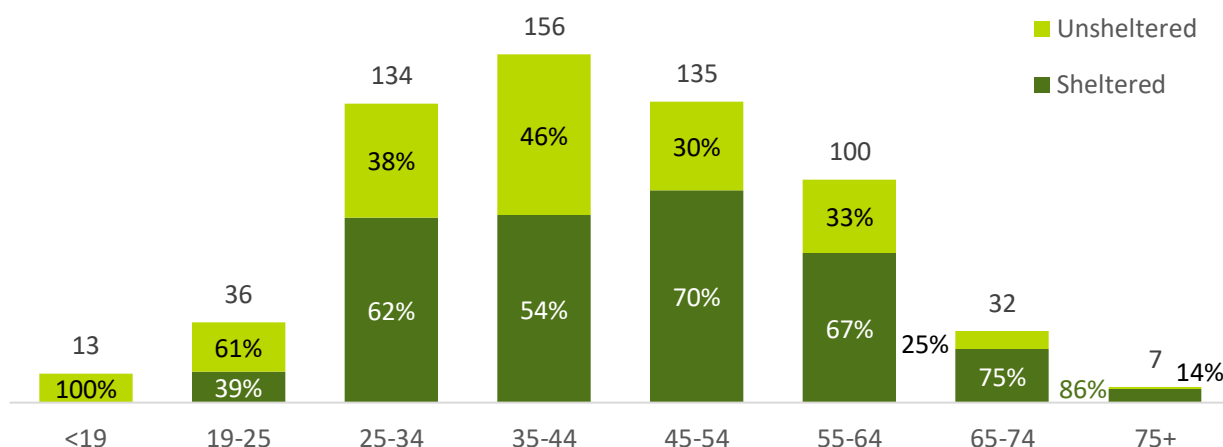
In considering the sheltering rate of those counted in Surrey, seniors were most likely to be sheltered (86%), with no one counted under the age of 19 having shelter (Figure 15).⁷ Other than those under 25, the age group least likely to be sheltered, whether by choice or lack of availability, is those aged 35-44 (54% sheltered).

7. Most emergency shelters do not serve children or youth, who must access specialized services that would likely result in being classified as being housed and no longer captured by the PiT Count.



Figure 16: Share of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Age (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



Youth in Care

Overall, a third of individuals counted reported previously being a youth in government care (31%), with a higher share for those unsheltered (38%) compared to those sheltered (27%) at the time of the PiT Count.

Gender and Sexual Diversity

Most individuals captured by the 2023 PiT count in Surrey identified as men (64%), with 33% identifying as women, and 3% identifying as another gender identity⁸. Women were slightly more likely to be unsheltered (41%) than men (37%), while those expressing gender diversity were rarely sheltered (76% unsheltered). While most individuals identified as heterosexual, 11% identified as 2SLGBTQIA+. Those expressing sexual diversity were almost twice as likely to be unsheltered (61%) as those identifying as heterosexual (35%).

Methodologies for counting people with diverse gender and sexual identities have evolved over time creating challenges in assessing a trend. These populations may also be more likely to not identify themselves and an undercount is possible as it is generally recognized that people of diverse gender and sexual identities disproportionately experience homelessness and challenges in securing housing.

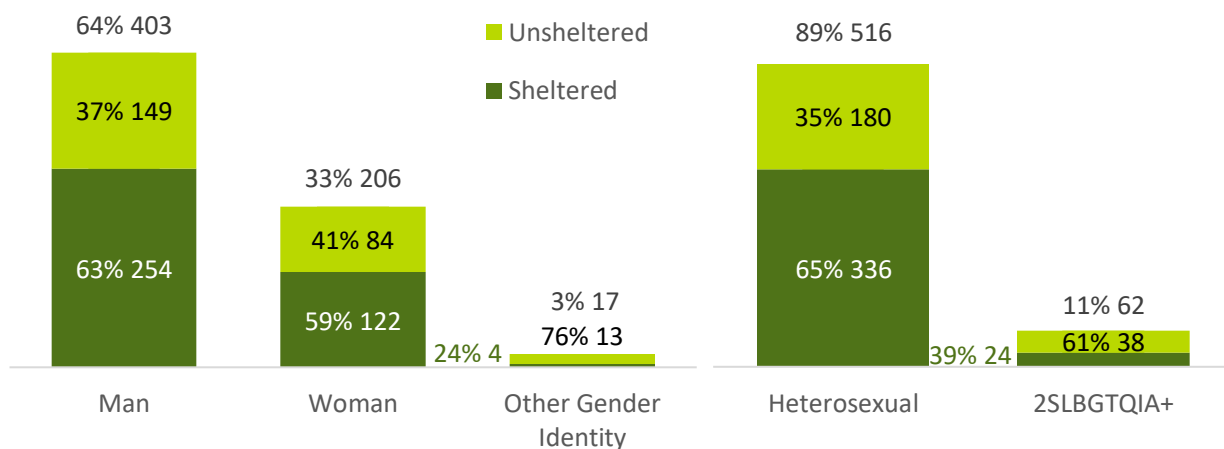
8. Including agender, non-binary, two-spirit, and 'not listed'.



Men are often overrepresented in counts due to the pressure for women and gender non-conforming people to pursue alternative arrangements due to safety concerns when sleeping rough or in shelters. The lower rates captured by PiT Counts does not necessarily mean these populations do not struggle with homelessness or housing precarity as much as men.

Figure 17: Point in Time Count by Gender Identity – Sheltered and Unsheltered (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



Gender and Sexually Diverse Youth

Gender and sexually diverse youth are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing homelessness, often due to rejection from family. It is estimated 2SLGBTQIA+ youth comprise 25-40% of youth experiencing homelessness compared to 5-10% of the general population.⁹ The data is insufficient to assess whether this is similar for youth in Surrey.

Indigenous Peoples

Surrey has one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in the province. In 2021, 12,180 Surrey residents identified as Indigenous (down 9.5% from 13,465 in 2016). Many Indigenous households are in disproportionate need of affordable housing. In 2016, 43% of Indigenous renters were in Core Housing Need, compared to 27% of all renters. The difference has narrowed in 2021, with 29% Indigenous-identifying households in Core Housing Need compared to 28% of the general renter population. However, Core Housing Need statistics were likely compromised

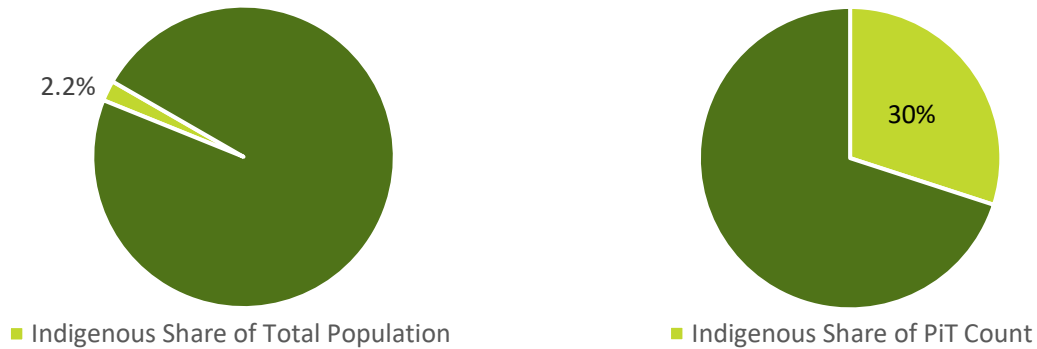
9. Youth Homelessness in Canada, 2013. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.



in 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19 income supports, which largely flowed to lower income households (see explanation of core housing need issues in the 2021 Census on page 18).

Figure 18: Indigenous Identifying Individuals in Total Population and Point-in-Time Count (Surrey, 2021-2023)

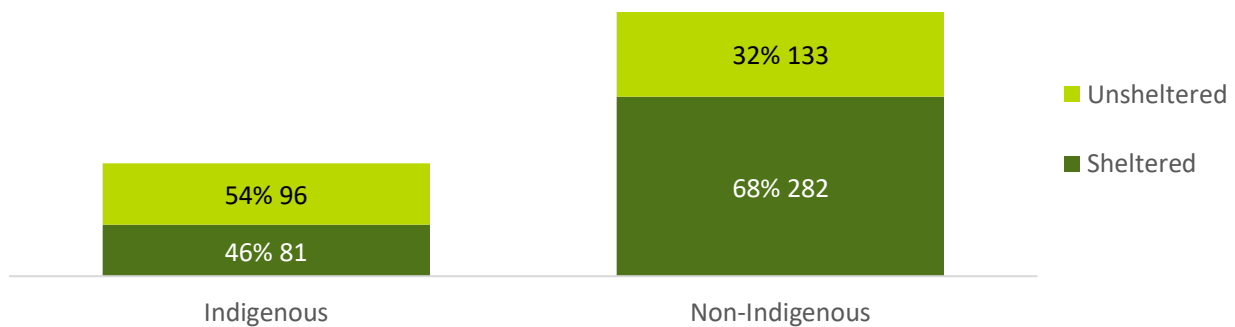
Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver; Census of Population, Surrey CSD, 2021.



The 2023 PIT Count found 30% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey identified as Indigenous compared to 2.2% of the total City of Surrey population identified as Indigenous in the 2021 Census.¹⁰ The prevalence of Indigenous-identifying individuals experiencing homelessness in Metro Vancouver has been consistent since 2008, with a fluctuating range of 27% to 34% of those captured by the count. In Surrey, among those identifying as Indigenous, 54% were unsheltered in 2023, which represents a prevalence two thirds higher than the non-Indigenous population (32%).

Figure 19: Indigenous Status of People Experiencing Homelessness (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.



10. It should be noted only 56% of Point-in-Time respondents answered this question and 30% may not be representative of the total population or of the population captured by the count.



Racial Identity

The Point-in-Time Count included a broad question on racial identity for the first time in 2020, and again in 2023 (see Table 4). Respondents were able to identify more than one category.

Analysis found Black people are overrepresented among the population experiencing homelessness in Surrey, with 7.5% of respondents identifying as Black compared to 2.3% of the overall population (2021 Census).

Table 4: Homelessness by Racial Identity (Surrey, 2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.

RACIAL IDENTITY (MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE POSSIBLE)	#	%
Arab	11	2%
Asian - East	5	1%
Asian – Southeast	12	2%
Asian – South	35	6%
Asian – West	9	2%
Black	44	7%
Black – Caribbean and Latin America	12	2%
Black – African	25	4%
Black – Canadian / American	12	2%
Latin American	22	4%
White	361	61%
Not Listed	18	3%
Total Respondents	587	
Don't Know / No Answer	473	
Total	1,060	



HOSPITAL PATIENTS UNABLE TO BE DISCHARGED

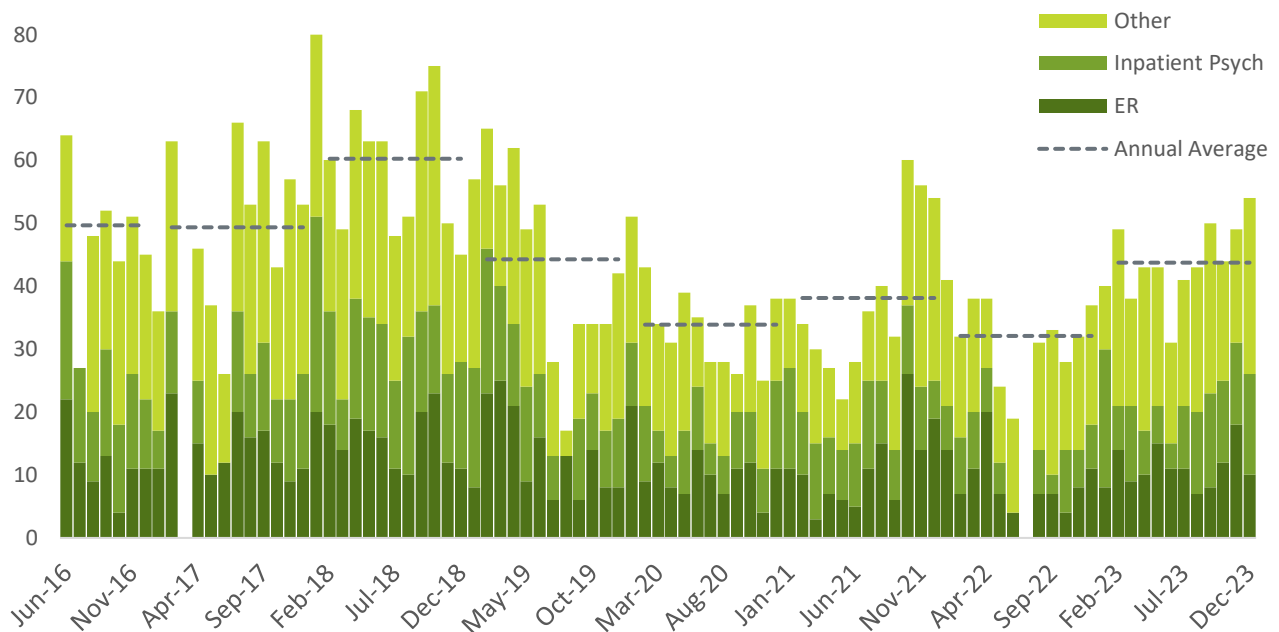
Between June 2016 and December 2023, an average of 43 patients were unable to be discharged from the Surrey Memorial Hospital each month due to experiencing homelessness.

Fraser Health Authority has been tracking the number of individuals unable to be discharged from Surrey Memorial Hospital because they have no fixed address or health / mobility needs that cannot be met in the community. While not a comprehensive record of patients, this information is helpful in assessing the trend over time. Due to the relatively informal nature of this data collection, there may be gaps where staff were unable to complete the count and it is therefore considered an undercount.

In December 2023, there were at least 54 patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital unable to be discharged into the community and an annual average of 44 patients in 2023.

Figure 20: No Fixed Address Admissions, Surrey Memorial Hospital (2016-2023)

Source: Surrey Memorial Hospital. Homeless Counts 2016-2023.



Hospital capacity and access to emergency services has increasingly been a challenge since the COVID-19 pandemic. The persistent presence of individuals with no fixed address and those unable to be discharged despite no longer needing acute level care is a barrier to addressing this larger issue. **The individuals being unable to be discharged from hospital is indicative of a lack of sufficient services and housing with supports for those with complex health needs and experiencing homelessness.**

In some instances, patients remain in hospitals who no longer require hospital care but cannot be discharged due to having no fixed address, lack of access to supports to live independently, or the available shelters are inappropriate for their needs (for example, a patient cannot be discharged to a shelter unless they can get themselves up off the floor).

There are also cases where patients need a higher level of care than is available, but do not need acute hospital treatment. These individuals often have very complex cases and may need a specific and high level of care outside a hospital setting.



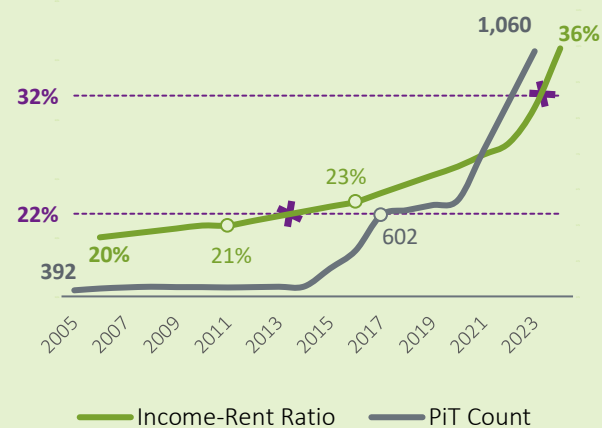
TIPPING POINTS: RATES OF HOMELESSNESS AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIAN RENT + INCOME

A recent study¹¹ examining the relationship between median income and rental cost found there were two thresholds where homelessness rates increased –when median rental cost was 22% and 32% of median household income. For example, if the median monthly household income was \$1,000, increasing homelessness rates were seen when median rents were more than \$220 (22%) and \$320 (32%). While available data does not allow for this analysis to be fully applied in the Surrey context, a high-level examination aligns with these findings.

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey was relatively flat between the 2005 and 2014 (PiT counts of ~400 people). Upon examining available rental and income data, the ratio of median rent to median income was approximately 20% and 21% (2006 and 2011 censuses), but by the 2016 Census it was 23% (\$47,965 median renter income and \$925 median rent), suggesting sometime between 2011 and 2016 Censuses, the ratio surpassed the 22% threshold. Between the 2014 and 2017 PiT counts, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness increased by 50% to 602 (after the 22% threshold was surpassed).

When the best available statistics are tested, it appears the ratio of median rent to income is 36% in 2024, surpassing the 32% threshold. Correspondingly, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey increased by 65% to 1,060 between 2020 and 2023. As illustrated in the accompanying chart¹², the 22% and 32% thresholds were likely passed in 2014 and by 2023.

Despite lacking detailed data to fully apply this methodology in Canada, the study’s findings seem to align with local patterns. From this perspective, there is rationale to suggest the recent and rapid increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness is likely to continue at a similar, or increasing, pace until the ratio of median rent and renter income can be brought below the 22% and 32% thresholds through increased income or reduced rent.



11. C. Glynn, T. Byrne, D. Culhane. Inflection points in community-level homeless rates. *Ann. Appl. Stat.* 15 (2) 1037 - 1053, June 2021; Homelessness Rises Faster Where Rent Exceeds a Third of Income. Zillow. 2018

12. Chart is for illustrative purposes only and relies on a mix of data sources to test the methodology explored in the described study, including CMHC Market Rental Report. 2005-2023; Zumper. Rental Market Trends. 2024/2022; StatsCan. Census (2006-2021); and Point-in-Time counts in City of Surrey.

Forecasting Homelessness in Surrey

Between 2014 and 2023, the annual growth rate of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey was 11%. **If this rate of growth continues, it is estimated that by the next Point-in-Time Count in 2026, 1,463 people will be experiencing homelessness in Surrey (representing an increase of 403 people since 2023).** By 2029, this number will have grown to 2,020 (representing an increase of 960 people since 2023).

Figure 21: Total Point in Time Count with Forecast (Surrey, 2005-2023)

Source: Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society - Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. 2023. Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver.

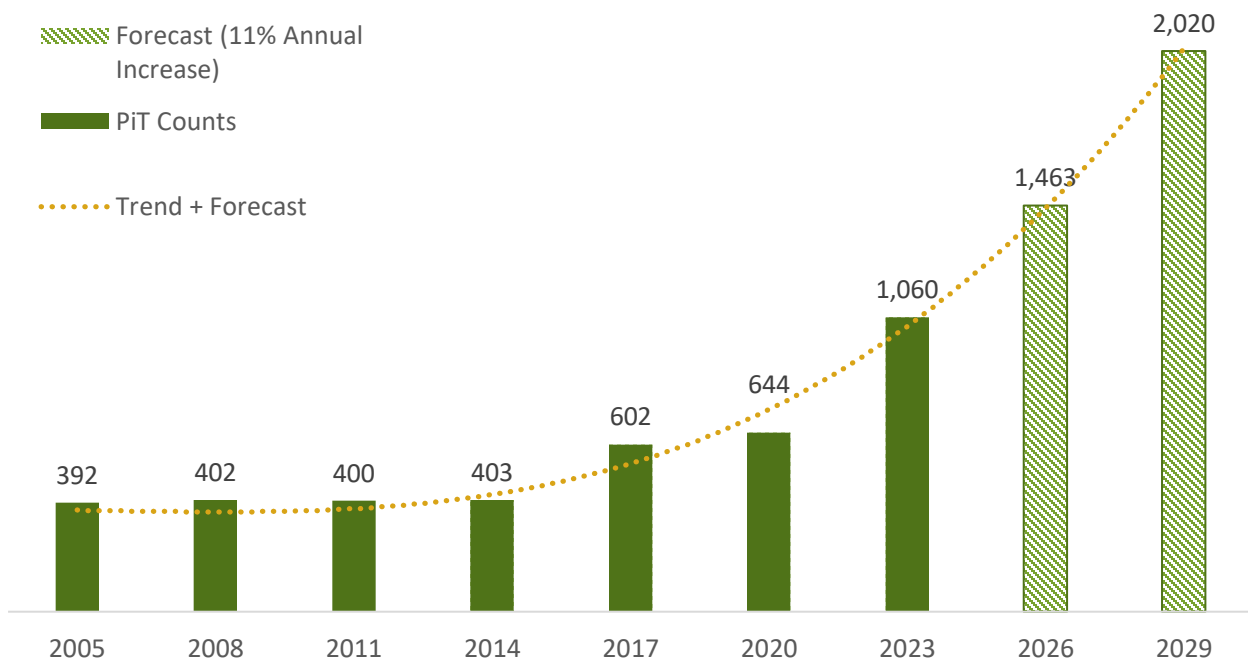


Figure 21 projects forward the estimated number of people expected to experience homelessness in Surrey by two additional three-year intervals to align with future PiT Counts (assuming counts will continue to be completed every three years).¹³ A growth rate considering the longer 2014-2023 trend has been applied (+11% annually). Although, the theory presented by the study discussed (page 33) suggests the 2020-2023 growth rate will continue (+18%

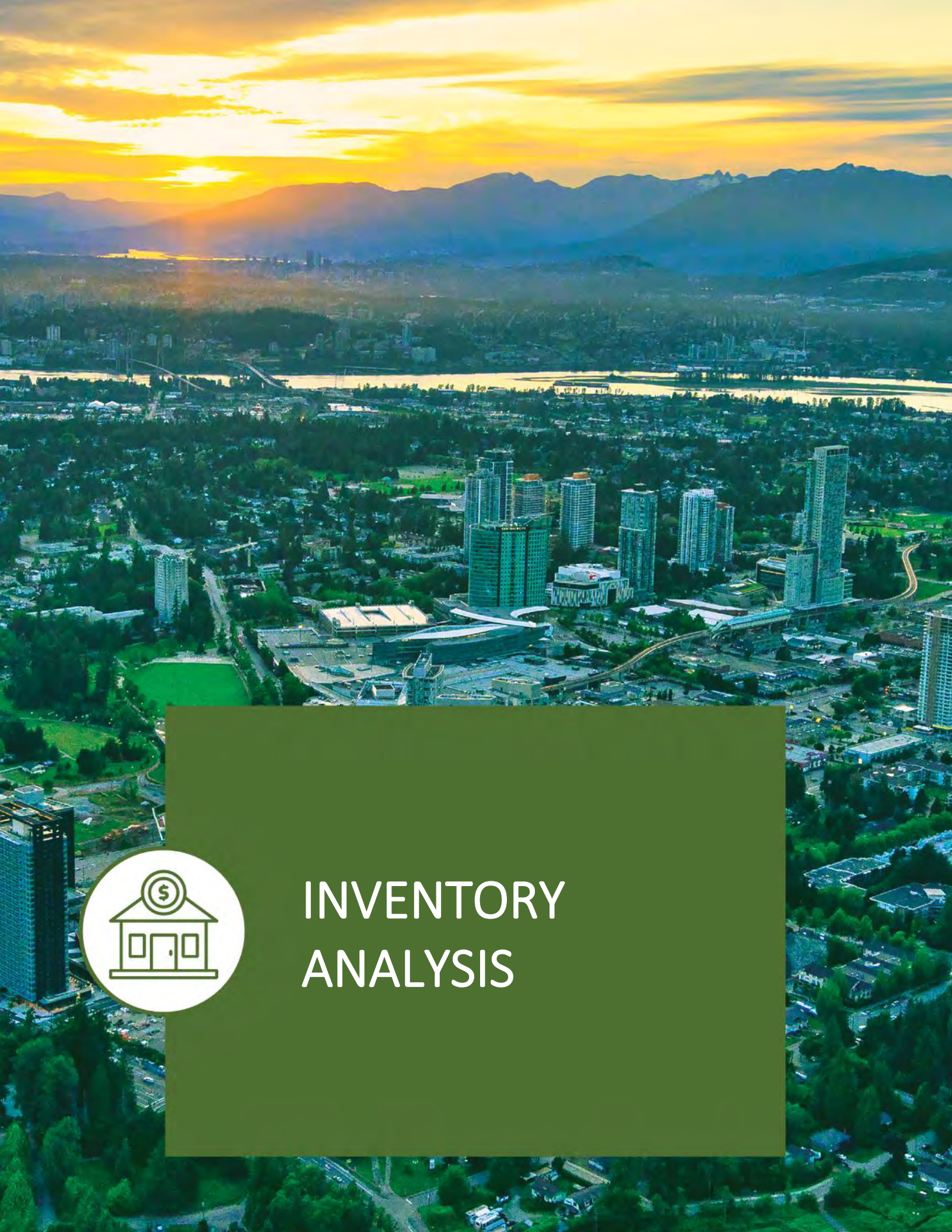
13. If the frequency of Point-in-Time Counts is changed, the same principles apply. A flat 11% growth rate growth was assumed based on the historical trend; the projected trend could be assessed against any future PiT Count by increasing the 2023 count by 11% per year to the time of that count.

annually) until the rent-income ratio drops below 32%.¹⁴ **If an annual increase of 18% is maintained, it is estimated there will be 2,872 individuals experiencing homelessness by 2029 (852 or 42% more people than shown in Figure 21).**

While it is impossible to predict the future, addressing the current housing affordability crisis will likely be a long-term challenge, just as it has taken decades to reach this level of severity. It is anticipated homelessness will continue to increase in the medium-term and only addressing the housing needs of those counted in the 2023 PiT Count will be insufficient to achieve functional zero end to homelessness. This is especially true considering PiT Counts do not capture everyone experiencing homelessness at any given time.

14. The ratio of median income to rent likely surpassed both 22% and 32% thresholds between 2014 and 2023.





INVENTORY ANALYSIS

Inventory Analysis

This section shares data on the existing inventory of non-market, supportive, and transitional housing, emergency shelter spaces, and support services in Surrey as of June 2024.

SURREY'S Supportive + Transitional Housing, Emergency Shelter, and Service Inventory

Surrey has 1,620 units / beds for people experiencing homelessness or substance use challenges.

Surrey has a wide range of units and beds of emergency shelter, supportive, transitional, second stage, post-corrections, or live-in substance use programs. In total, City of Surrey currently tracks 1,620 spaces, which may vary from units tracked by BC Housing. Table 5 provides a summary of current shelters, facilities, and programs as tracked by City of Surrey.

Shelters: Temporary, short-term accommodation for individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

Safe Houses: Short-term shelter and other supports for women fleeing violence and youth, often apartments, hotel/motel rooms, or a secure room in a private home.

Second Stage Housing: Safe, low-cost, temporary housing for women fleeing violence to live independently with staff available for support.

Supportive Housing: Subsidized self-contained units with on-site supports for single adults, seniors, and people with disabilities at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, operated by non-profits.

Transition Houses: Supportive, temporary accommodation meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, support, life skills, education, etc.

Supportive Recovery Housing: Transitional housing that provides supports for people seeking assistance with substance use, including Licensed Addiction Treatment facilities.

Registered Mental Health: Housing that provides supports for people living with mental health challenges to build skills to live with an optimal level of independence.



Table 5: Emergency, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Spaces by Facility Type/Subtype
 Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory

PROGRAM / FACILITY TYPE	SUBTYPE	# SPACES / UNITS	% TOTAL STOCK ¹⁵
Emergency Shelter + Women's & Youth Safe Houses (536)	Shelter (Permanent + Temporary)	458	28%
	Women's Safe Houses / Transition Houses	72	4%
	Youth Safe Houses	6	0.4%
Transitional + Supportive (1,084)	Long-term Supportive	591	36%
	Licensed Addictions Treatment + Supportive Recovery Services ¹⁶	149	9%
	Registered Mental Health	85	5%
	Transitional Supportive Recovery	75	5%
	Women's Second Stage	63	4%
	Post-Corrections	46	3%
	Youth Transitional	43	3%
	Transitional Housing	32	2%
	Total	1,620	

15. Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding

16. This does not include other supportive recovery facilities that are not licensed but are registered under the Assisted Living Registry.



Almost half of all Surrey shelter spaces are temporary.¹⁷

Approximately half (250 / 47%) of all existing shelter spaces are temporary¹⁸ and all temporary spaces are for adults (19+). Some facilities are specifically targeted to youth, women, or women and children, with approximately one-fifth for anyone 19+.

Table 6: Shelter Beds by Population Served and Facility Stability

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory

Shelter Unit Type	All Clients (19+)	Women / Women + Children	Women Only	Youth (16 - 18)	Total
Permanent	122	144	14	6	286 (53%)
Temporary	250	0	0	0	250 (47%)
Total	372 (69%)	144 (27%)	14 (3%)	6 (1%)	536



Bill Reid Place, opened in 2018, is a 16-bed shelter with 12 transition housing pet-friendly units located in Cloverdale, Surrey.

17. Shelter spaces include Women and Youth safe houses.

18. Temporary facilities include shelters that are non-purpose-built, in retrofitted commercial spaces, or houses, and/or with expiring leases in the next 2-10 years (depending on the facility).



Of those identified, over half of all shelter spaces serve adults aged 19+ and only 3% are youth-specific.

Table 7 provides a breakdown of emergency, safe house, transitional, and supportive spaces by client group. Over half of the available spaces (55%) are generally targeted to adults (19+), with the next largest category for women and children (18%). There are also gender-specific spaces for adult men (12%) and women (6%). Only 5% of spaces (77 in 2 facilities) are for seniors or people with disabilities, while there are 19-spaces for youth aged 16-18, 30-spaces for youth aged 19-24, and 12-spaces for young adult men (19-35).



The Nest, located in Newton is a 40-unit supportive housing site: 16 supportive recovery units for people having recently completed a treatment program and 24 units for people at-risk of homelessness.

Table 7: Shelter Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Housing Units by Target Population

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory

CLIENT GROUP	#	% ¹⁹
All (Aged 19+)	891	55%
Women & Children	292	18%
Men (Aged 19+)	197	12%
Women	102	6%
Seniors or Disability	77	5%
Youth (Aged 19-24)	30	2%
Youth (Aged 16-18)	19	1%
Men (Aged 19-35)	12	1%
Total	1,620	

19. Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding



Most shelter, transitional, and supportive spaces are located in City Centre (43%), followed by Whalley (23%) and Newton (13%).

The distribution of emergency, safe house, transitional, and supportive spaces in Surrey is uneven, with housing and services clustered in City Centre (43%) and Whalley (23%), other communities, such as South Surrey (0%), Cloverdale (2%) and Fleetwood (0.4%), being particularly underserved.



Opening in 2021, Baird Blackstone supportive housing offers 61 air-conditioned studio apartment units to people experiencing, or at-risk of, homelessness in the community.

Table 8: Emergency Shelter Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Housing Units by Neighbourhood

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory

NEIGHBOURHOOD	#	% ²⁰
City Centre	692	43%
Whalley	375	23%
Newton	206	13%
Guildford	168	10%
Confidential Locations	135	8%
Cloverdale	38	2%
Fleetwood	6	0.4%
South Surrey	0	0%
Total	1,620	

20. Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding



Most shelters and supportive housing currently operating opened after 2010.

More than one third of shelters and supportive housing sites have opened since 2020 (43%) with three-quarters being supportive or transitional units. An additional 32% of shelters and supportive housing sites opened in the previous ten years. While the opening date of 11% of spaces / units are unknown or suppressed for facilities with confidentiality protections, only 15% were opened prior to 2009 compared to at least 75% since 2010. Only 4% (25) of long-term supportive spaces existed prior to 2010, with 69% (409) opened since 2020.

Table 9: Emergency Beds, Safe House, Transitional, and Supportive Units by Opening Year

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory

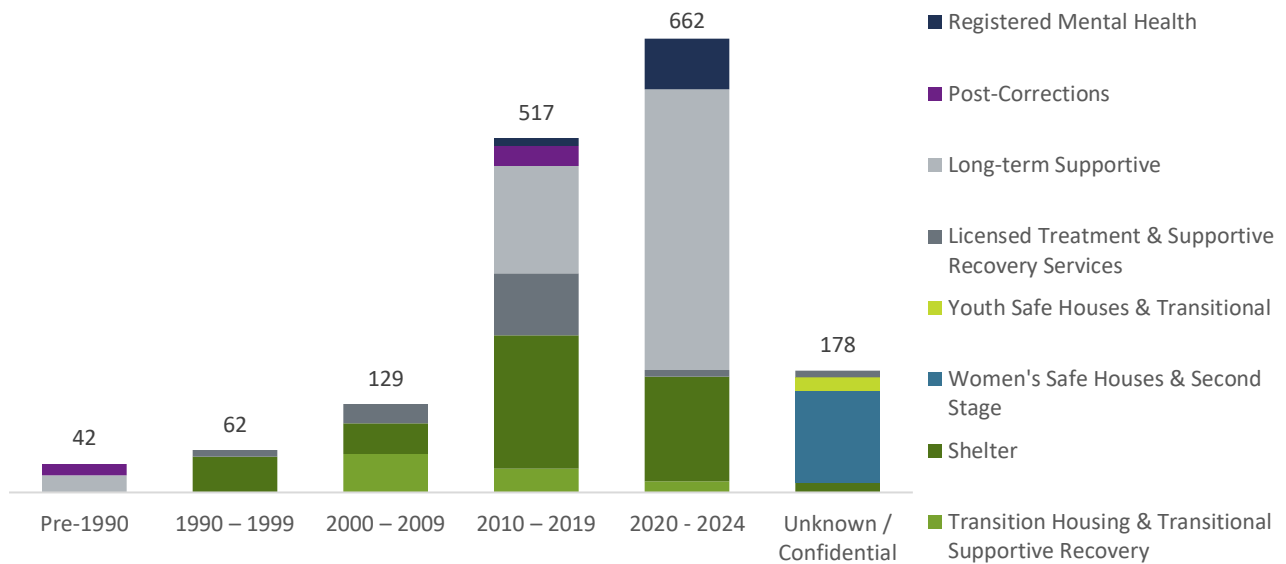
YEAR OPENED	#	% ²¹
Pre-1990	42	3%
1990 – 1999	62	4%
2000 – 2009	129	8%
2010 – 2019	517	32%
2020 – 2024	692	43%
Unknown / Confidential	178	11%

21. Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding



Figure 22: Shelter, Safe House, Transitional and Supportive Spaces by Year of Opening

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory



Surrey has 21 centres or programs offering a range of support services.

There are 21 drop-in centres, health service centres, and mobile outreach programs operating in Surrey, with many targeting supports to women (1), women and children (3), women and female youth (2), youth (4), and one Indigenous drop-in centre. The remaining centres serve all populations (10). The two services for women and female youth are mobile, in addition to one mobile outreach program for all populations.

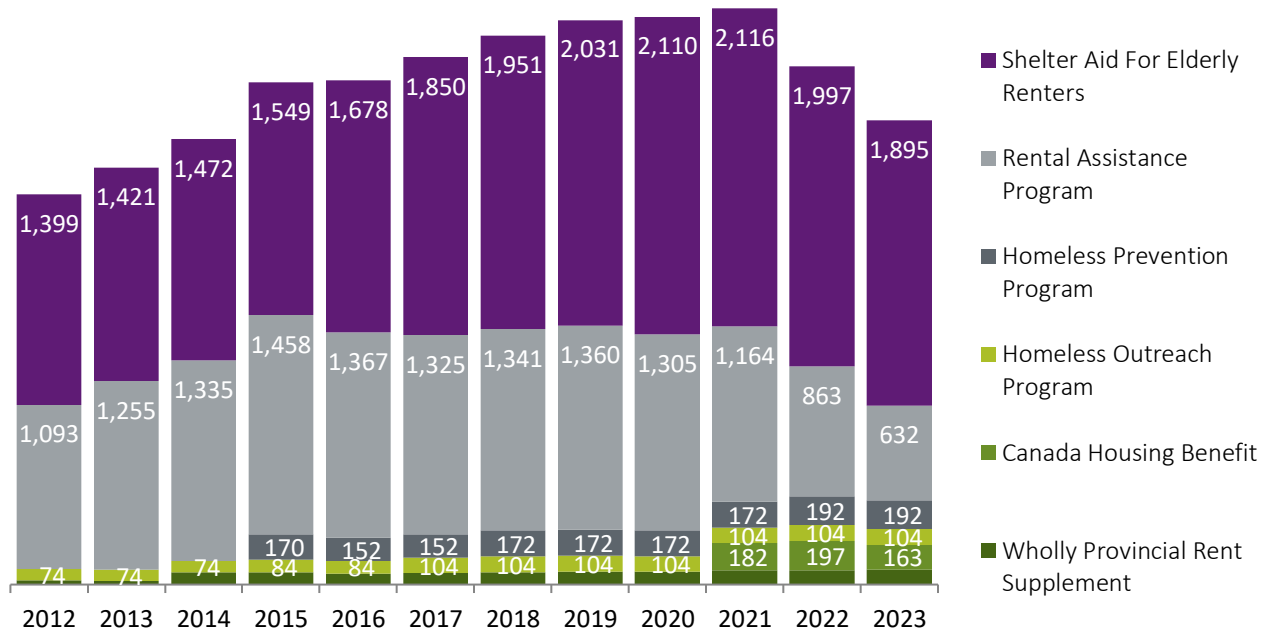
Since 2021, fewer Surrey residents are receiving rent supplements.

Figure 23 illustrates the number and type of rent supplements received by Surrey residents from 2012 to 2023. The overall number of rent supplements increased year-over-year until 2021, after which it decreased by 19%. There were 745 fewer Surrey residents receiving rent supplements in 2023 (3,087) than in 2021 (3,832). Reductions were seen in the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) (-532) and Shelter Aid For Elderly Renters (SAFER) (-221). Since 2021, the Canada Housing Benefit started being distributed, representing ~5% of all subsidies (163 recipients in 2023).



Figure 23: Rent Supplements (Surrey, 2012 – 2023)

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory



Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters provides monthly rental payment assistance to eligible seniors.

Rental Assistance Program provides eligible low-income working families with monthly rental payment assistance.

Homeless Prevention Program provides rent supplements and support services to youth aging out of care, women experiencing or at-risk of violence, Indigenous individuals, and individuals leaving correctional or hospital systems help access rental housing in the private housing market.

Homeless Outreach Program is a support program for people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness.

Canada BC-Housing Benefit assists vulnerable low-income households renting in the private market.

Wholly Provincial Rent Supplement is an older subsidy program for those assessed by health services as stable and connected to appropriate supports where a directly managed building meeting their needs is not available.

Source: BC Housing



Figure 24: Shelter and Supportive / Transition Housing in Surrey by Type

Source: City of Surrey. Housing & Service Inventory



SURREY'S NON-MARKET HOUSING INVENTORY

Surrey has a total of 4,625 non-market housing units.

According to City of Surrey data, Surrey has 4,625 non-market housing units including non-profit housing, Indigenous non-profit housing, non-profit seniors supportive and independent housing, and co-op housing. Most non-market units fall within the non-profit housing category, with 1,955 units (or 42% of total non-market units).

Table 10: Surrey's Inventory of Non-Market Housing Units by Type (2024)

NON-MARKET HOUSING TYPE	UNITS
Co-op Housing	821
Indigenous Non-Profit Housing	194
Non-Profit Seniors Independent Housing	962
Non-Profit Housing	1,955
Non-Profit Seniors Supportive Housing	693
Total	4,625

Non-Market Housing: Housing for low- or moderate-income households that is owned/or and operated by a public agency, non-profit society, or housing co-operative.

Non-Profit Housing: Housing units that are owned and/or operated by a non-profit society. These buildings may consist of a mix of low-income rental units and market rental units or 100% of the units may have subsidized rents.

Co-op Housing: Housing units that are owned and/or operated by a housing co-operative. Residents are members of the housing co-operative and pay a monthly housing charge instead of rent.



In terms of non-market unit breakdown by population, the category with the highest proportion of non-market units is seniors with 1,655 (or 36% of non-market units). Most other non-market units serve all populations and families (at 56% combined), while 194 units are for Indigenous people and families, 91 units serve veterans, and 6 units serve people with HIV/AIDS.

Table 11: Surrey’s Inventory of Non-Market Housing Units by Population (2024)

POPULATION SERVED	UNITS
All	1,363
Families	1,316
Indigenous	194
People with HIV/AIDS	6
Seniors	1,655
Veterans	91
Total	4,625



BC HOUSING INVENTORY OF SHELTER, TRANSITIONAL, AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

BC Housing tracks an inventory of 4,631 spaces in Surrey.

BC Housing maintains an inventory of non-market rental, shelter, transitional, and independent social housing spaces or units. Many of the units tracked by City of Surrey overlap with those tracked by BC Housing.²² The categories used to classify units also vary and BC Housing only tracks units while it has an active operating agreement; the inventory may not be comprehensive of all spaces, beds, or units in Surrey.

City of Surrey relies on its own actively tracked inventory, as described above; however, BC Housing’s inventory can be used to compare coverage rates across different municipalities in Metro Vancouver.



The Rosewood, opened in 2022, is a low-barrier emergency shelter and supportive housing site for women and children. The site provides 60 shelter beds and 57 apartments with 24-hour staffing. The ground floor provides a community care hub with a health and dental clinic and drop-in centre.

Surrey is underserved in terms of beds, spaces, or units per capita compared to Vancouver.

Table 10 provides coverage rates for spaces or units of shelter, transitional, and independent social housing in Vancouver and Surrey (values represent the number of spaces or units of each subtype per 100 residents). The ratio indicates how many times more units or spaces there are per 100 residents in Vancouver compared to Surrey (e.g., there are 3.52 shelter spaces per 100

22. BC Housing only tracks units it has a financial relationship with and there may be other subsidized housing units in the community funded through other means or those previously funded through BC Housing that have reached the end of their operating agreements but are still operating.



residents in Vancouver for every one space per 100 residents in Surrey).²³ A ratio of 1.00 would indicate the same coverage rate.

Table 12: Shelter, Transitional, and Independent Social Housing Units / Spaces per 100 Residents, City of Vancouver and City of Surrey (2023)

Source: BC Housing, Unit Count Reporting Model, March 31, 2023²⁴

HOUSING TYPE + SUBTYPE		CITY OF VANCOUVER	CITY OF SURREY	RATIO
Emergency Shelter and Housing for the Homeless	Homeless Housed	1.09	0.12	8.75
	Homeless Shelters	0.14	0.04	3.52
Transitional, Supportive, and Assisted Living	Supportive Seniors Housing	1.67	0.86	1.93
	Special Needs	0.26	0.06	4.62
	Women and Children Fleeing Violence	0.020	0.023	0.87
Independent Social Housing	Low Income Families	0.89	0.23	3.89
	Independent Seniors	5.43	0.91	5.96

Ratios shown in red indicate that Surrey is underserved compared to Vancouver. The only housing subtype where Surrey has a marginally higher ratio than Vancouver is Transitional Housing for Women and Children Fleeing Violence.

23. 2021 populations in Vancouver and Surrey were 662,248 and 568,322.

24. To determine coverage rates, total population from the 2021 Census was applied for all but supportive seniors housing and independent seniors housing (which used the 65+ population instead).



EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE + TEMPORARY WINTER SHELTER DATA

Extreme Weather Response Shelter (EWR): Temporary emergency shelter spaces only open during periods of extreme winter weather for people who are unsheltered, unlike emergency shelters which are open all year.

Temporary Winter Shelter (TWS): Open nightly during the months of November to the end of March to provide additional shelter capacity for those experiencing homelessness.

One fewer extreme weather response facility was available in the 2023-2024 season than the previous season.

Seven Extreme Weather Response (EWR) facilities were open through the 2023/2024 season, with a total of 147 spaces. There was one fewer facility than the 2022/2023 season, although due to capacity, seven more spaces were available in the 2023/2024 season. **In 2023/2024, four of the seven facilities operated at or above 100% capacity at least half the nights they were open.** All but one facility (Pacific Community Resources Society) had at least one night over 100% capacity. Surrey Urban Mission Society’s Welcome Hub was over capacity 82% of the time and Shimai House (the only EWR option specific to women) was over capacity 64% of the nights it was open in the 2023/2024 season. The majority of EWR sites were in City Centre.

Table 13: Extreme Weather Response Capacity and Usage (Surrey, 2023/2024 Season)

Source: Surrey EWR Data, 2024

FACILITY	AREA IN SURREY	MATS	POPULATION SERVED	NIGHTS OPEN	NIGHTS AT OR ABOVE CAPACITY	
Pacific Community Church	Clverdale	25	19+	6	4	67%
Lookout Surrey Alliance	City Centre	30	19+	63	3	5%
Options South Surrey	South Surrey	45	19+	67	1	1%



FACILITY	AREA IN SURREY	MATS	POPULATION SERVED	NIGHTS OPEN	NIGHTS AT OR ABOVE CAPACITY	
Pacific Community Resources Society	City Centre	10	Youth	61	0	0%
Shimai House	City Centre	6	Women	88	56	64%
Surrey Urban Mission Society NightShift	City Centre	16	19+	89	45	51%
Surrey Urban Mission Society Welcome Hub	City Centre	15	19+	97	80	82%

Since the 2019/2020 season, the overall number of EWR mats across all sites increased in Surrey by 19, which represents an increase of 15%, while homelessness increased in Surrey by 65% between the 2020 and 2023 PiT Counts.

Table 14: Extreme Weather Response Mats (Surrey, 2019/2020 – 2023/2024)

Source: Surrey EWR Data, 2024

	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
EWR Mats	128	64 ²⁵	121	140	147

In the 2023/2024 season, Pacific Community Church, operated by Options Community Services Society, was the only Temporary Winter Shelter (TWS) in Surrey. This shelter operated as an EWR for six days before converting to a TWS for the remainder of the season.

Table 15: Temporary Winter Shelter Data (Surrey, 2023/2024)

FACILITIES	AREA IN SURREY	NUMBER OF MATS	NIGHTS OPEN	NIGHTS AT OR ABOVE CAPACITY	
Pacific Community Church	Cloverdale	25	112	93	83%

25. Including 40 spaces operated as Temporary Winter Shelters (open every night) for Winter 2020-2021 as part of COVID-19 response (Peace Portal Alliance Church and Pacific Community Church). Pacific Community Church operated as Emergency Weather Response in Winter 2019-2020 and Winter 2021-2022.





CONCLUSION

Conclusion

In Surrey, the rising cost of living, particularly the high price of housing, stands out as the leading cause behind the growing number of people experiencing homelessness and housing precarity. The 1,060 people experiencing homelessness in Surrey counted by the 2023 Point-in-Time Count demonstrates a significant need and under-delivery in housing and support services. While Surrey's inventory of non-market housing has increased, especially since 2020, the growth of the housing stock has not kept pace with population or household growth; this is not a Surrey-specific issue, with housing system pressures being felt across Metro Vancouver and the country. Long-term structural issues in meeting housing demand have built over decades to reach the current state of crisis.

Data highlights the urgent need for rapid, emergency solutions to homelessness and the delivery of new non-market housing units in Surrey. Addressing homelessness will require both expanding supports and services for those currently without housing, and also a significant increase in the supply of both non-market and market homes to reduce the pressure on the housing system and displacement, and better match the supply of homes to housing need. The insights and data presented in this report, along with what was heard from community engagement, have influenced the recommendations found in **A Pathway To Home: Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan**; this initiative emphasizes the City of Surrey's dedication to ensuring every resident has a safe and affordable place to call home in the long-term.







City of Surrey Homelessness Prevention + Response Plan
WHAT WE HEARD ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT
DECEMBER 2023

Prepared for

City of Surrey

13450 – 104 Avenue

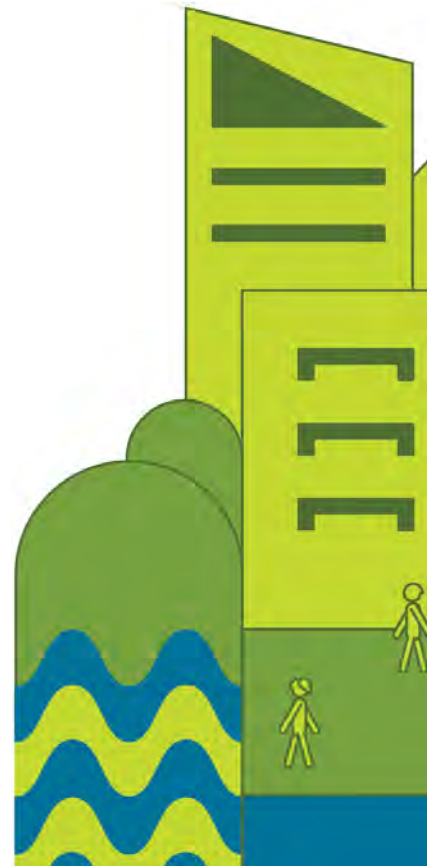
Surrey BC V3T 1V8

Prepared by

CitySpaces Consulting Limited

585 – 1111 West Hastings Street

Vancouver BC V6E 2J3





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, unceded territories of Semiahmoo, Kwantlen, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations on whose lands this work was undertaken.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We feel privileged to have been listeners throughout this process and are thankful for all who provided valuable input and shared their knowledge, experiences, and passion for addressing homelessness in their communities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION 1**
- WHAT WE HEARD – HIGHLIGHTS 3**
- ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 7**
- KEY THEMES 15**
- HOUSING 17
- INTEGRATING HOUSING AND HEALTH PROGRAMS 30
- SUPPORT SERVICES 36
- PREVENTION 43
- APPENDIX A – LIVED EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS..... 47**



INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Surrey Mayor and Council authorized the development of a *Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan* to replace the 10-year-old *Master Plan for Housing the Homeless*. Engagement was undertaken to listen and learn from participants, build on quantitative data, and inform the plan. A variety of engagement events were implemented in Summer–Fall 2023. Engagement events included in-person workshops, sensitive listening interviews with people with living and lived expertise, key informant interviews, and focus groups.

This Engagement Summary Report highlights the feedback received from people with living and lived experience of homelessness, frontline and outreach workers, social service providers, government partners, immigrant serving agencies, and the business community.

Acknowledging that relevant research has recently been undertaken in Surrey, this Report also incorporates the findings of the following two reports: Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee’s *Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Canada* (2022) and Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group’s *In Their Own Words* (2023).

IN TOTAL, ENGAGEMENT EVENTS REACHED 176 PEOPLE INCLUDING 147 REPRESENTATIVES FROM SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES, GOVERNMENT PARTNERS, FRONTLINE WORKERS, THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, AND IMMIGRANT SERVING AGENCIES, AND 29 PEOPLE WITH LIVING AND LIVED EXPERTISE.



The **objectives** of the engagement process were to:

- Inform stakeholders, partners, and the public about the development of a new Homelessness Plan in Surrey;
- Listen and learn from equity-deserving groups and people with lived and living experience of homelessness to improve understanding of the issues and identify potential solutions that are responsive to unique and diverse needs;
- Engage with local groups including homelessness services providers, affordable housing sector, business sector, provincial and federal funding partners and ministries, Fraser Health Authority, Indigenous organizations, and other key informants; and
- Address data gaps through collection of qualitative information to understand the level of community need for housing and homelessness services.



WHAT WE HEARD – HIGHLIGHTS



HOUSING

- The **rising cost of rent means housing has become unaffordable** for many people, especially for those earning fixed incomes or that rely on benefits.
- More people are staying at emergency shelters or hospitals for extended periods due to a lack of transitional housing options and reluctance or inability to move on.
Emergency shelters are not a long-term housing solution.
- **Pathways into homelessness are varied, complex, and interrelated**, including family conflict, depression or trauma, separation from a partner or marriage breakdown, domestic violence, rent price increases, surgery, pressure by landlords, substance use, mental illness, fraud, and building fire damage.
- **There is a lack of all housing types across the network**; diverse housing types are needed, including non-market housing, housing for families, urban Indigenous households, women and children, seniors and people with complex health needs, youth, low-income immigrants/refugees, emergency shelters, supportive housing, transitional housing, and market rental.
- **Non-market housing is needed in all Surrey neighbourhoods**, not only in City Centre.
- **Accessibility to transit and proximity to services** is a vital consideration when locating new housing.
- **Stigma and NIMBYism is prevalent** and represents a barrier to people accessing housing and services.
- **Collaborative solutions and partnerships are recommended** to facilitate more housing.





INTEGRATED HEALTH AND HOUSING

- People experiencing or at-risk of homelessness face **barriers to accessing health services** and are more likely to access in-house or mobile services.
- A **new model of assisted living is needed** for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness with substance use challenges who have health needs which are not being met.
- A range of **health services are needed in shelters and supportive housing** including medication support, mental health services, general health check-ups, youth-specific clinics, sexual health, substance use support, psychiatrist, dental, physiotherapy, pre- and post-natal support, and physical health and nutrition programs.
- Adopting a **client-centred, trauma-informed approach** is recommended for housing with embedded health supports.
- **More collaboration** is needed between health, housing, and other related sectors.



SUPPORT SERVICES

- In addition to health service gaps noted, there are **gaps in other key support services** in Surrey including a lack of social infrastructure, counselling, tenant support including rent and eviction support, transit passes, life skills, food security, and employment programs.
- **Culturally-sensitive supports** are needed that acknowledge the needs of diverse populations.
- Service sector staff and frontline workers experience daily stress due to **lack of experience, limited training, and adequate support.**
- Service hubs should be **located in every neighbourhood** – offering a range of services including housing and health supports. Collaboration with multiple organizations and partners will be needed to implement service hubs.





PREVENTION

- **People are most vulnerable and at-risk of homelessness during transitions in their lives.** Greater involvement, support, and communication is needed between different organizations, youth and adult services, and departments to ensure a smooth transition.

- **People struggle to navigate the system to access housing and support services.** A straightforward system where

information is centralized would help people access resources faster.





ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Figure 1: Engagement at-a-Glance



ENGAGEMENT

An Engagement Strategy was developed to outline engagement activities proposed as part of the Homelessness Plan process. The Strategy was shared with the Advisory Committee for input to ensure a diversity of voices was heard to represent the needs and perspectives of the Surrey community.

Engagement activities included **4 in-person workshops**, **29 interviews** with people with lived and living experience of homelessness, **2 focus groups** (one with **members of the business community** and one with **10 immigrant/newcomer serving non-profit societies** working in Surrey), and **2 key informant interviews** with non-profit societies in Surrey.

Alongside the engagement activities, meetings took place with an Advisory Committee and Cross-Departmental City Staff at key milestones of the Homelessness Plan process. The City of Surrey website has also shared content on the planning process.

The project team also attended the Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group Community Forum in July 2023 to learn from the group's research and inform participants about the Homelessness Plan.

The following sections outline the methods utilized for each engagement activity.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At the start of the Homelessness Plan process, an Advisory Committee was formed comprising non-profit organizations delivering homelessness services and supportive housing in Surrey. The role of the Advisory Committee was to:

- provide guidance on the engagement approach and facilitate connections with people with living and lived experience of homelessness in Surrey;
- share information, data, and estimates about the number of people experiencing homelessness in Surrey; and
- share input into the development of the draft Homelessness Plan.

The Advisory Committee members included representatives from the following non-profit organizations:

- Atira Women's Resource Society
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- Lookout Housing and Health Society
- Options Community Services
- Pacific Community Resources Society
- RainCity Housing
- Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee
- Surrey Urban Mission Society

The Advisory Committee provided feedback on the draft engagement approach, supported the coordination of interviews with people with lived / living experience, identified frontline service staff, and reviewed the engagement summary report.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL STAFF MEETINGS

To confirm the City of Surrey's role as champion to develop and implement the new plan, City staff from across multiple departments (Community Services, Planning and Development, and Engineering) met with the research team to identify the impacts and outcomes of the 2013 *Master Plan for Housing the Homeless* and discuss possible areas and opportunities for City-led actions. Staff representatives will also be asked to review draft recommendations for the Plan.



WORKSHOPS

Four in-person workshops took place at Surrey City Hall including a project launch in July 2023 and three focused workshops in September 2023. Participants included representatives from social service providers, frontline and outreach workers, and government partners.

Representatives from the following organizations participated in the workshops:

- Aboriginal Housing Management Association
- Affordable Housing Societies
- Atira Women’s Resource Society
- BC Housing
- BC Yukon Union of Drug War Survivors
- Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation
- Cloverdale BIA
- Coast Mental Health
- Community Integration Services
- Community Living BC
- Connective Support Society
- Downtown Surrey BIA
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- Entre Nous Femme
- Fraser Health Authority
- Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association
- Fraserside Community Services
- Kekinow Native Housing Society
- Ministry of Mental Health & Addictions
- Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction
- Options Community Services
- Pacific Community Resources Society
- Peninsula Homeless to Housing
- RainCity Housing
- Realistic Success Recovery Society
- Sources BC
- Surrey Board of Trade
- Surrey Libraries
- Surrey Newton Union of Drug Users
- Surrey Overdose Response CAT
- Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee
- Surrey Urban Mission Society
- Surrey Road to Home Society
- Surrey Women’s Centre
- UNITI
- WRSS Division of Family Practice



- Lookout Housing + Health Society
- Métis Nation British Columbia
- YWCA Metro Vancouver

Project Launch Workshop – July 2023 (In-Person)

The purpose of the project launch event was to inform participants about the Homelessness Prevention and Response Plan. The event was also an opportunity to receive feedback on the project’s guiding principles, consider key outcomes of the Plan, and discuss the most pressing challenges and opportunities to prevent and respond to homelessness in Surrey.

Focused Workshops – September 2023 (In-Person)

Three workshops were held in September 2023; one inviting government partners, one with social service providers, and the third with frontline and outreach workers. The beginning of each session considered pathways into homelessness and provided an opportunity to share what was heard from the project launch and lived / living experience interviews. Each session then focused on pathways out of homelessness and smaller breakout sessions were formed to discuss key themes, including:

- Build More Housing Across the Continuum;
- Facilitate Integrated Health and Housing Programs;
- Create a Services Hub;
- Strengthen Partnerships & Collaboration; and
- Build Capacity.

LIVING AND LIVED EXPERIENCE INTERVIEWS

In August 2023, 29 people with living and lived experience of homelessness in Surrey were interviewed at Rosewood, SUMS Place, Foxglove, and Newton Youth Hub. Interviews were focused to meet people ‘where they are at’ and reach a diverse range of priority groups including youth, women, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+, older adults, people with disabilities, people with complex needs, and people earning low incomes.

Honoraria were provided to participants for their time and expertise. Each conversation was guided by the list of interview questions found in **Appendix A – Lived / Living Experience Interview Questions (page 47)**.



KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

In October 2023, two interviews were conducted with non-profit organizations that were unable to participate in the engagement workshops. These interviews included representatives from Phoenix Society and Engaged Communities Canada Society.

FOCUS GROUPS

Two virtual focus groups were coordinated in October 2023. One of the focus groups was held with five members of the business community in Surrey. Another focus group was held with 10 participants from immigrant and newcomer serving agencies in Surrey.

Representatives from the following organizations participated in the focus groups:

Business Community

- Cloverdale Business Improvement Area
- Cloverdale District Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Area
- South Surrey & White Rock Chamber of Commerce
- Surrey Board of Trade

Immigrant Serving Agencies

- Immigrant Serving Societies of BC
- MOSAIC
- Muslim Food Bank
- New Hope Community Services
- Options Community Services
- Sources BC
- SUCCESS
- Surrey Local Immigration Partnership
- Umoja Operation Compassion Society

CITY WEBSITE

A webpage on the City of Surrey website has been regularly updated to communicate information with the public about the plan process and progress updates.



Figure 2: Engagement Workshop Images, Summer–Fall 2023



FINDING OUR WAY HOME: RESEARCH ON INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS IN SURREY – WHAT WE HEARD REPORT (2022)

Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee

Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee's (SUILC) research provides insight into Indigenous people experiencing homelessness in Surrey. It highlights their stories; pathways into homelessness in Surrey; existing services and supports; and how the services and supports can be improved to reduce and then eliminate Indigenous homelessness in Surrey.

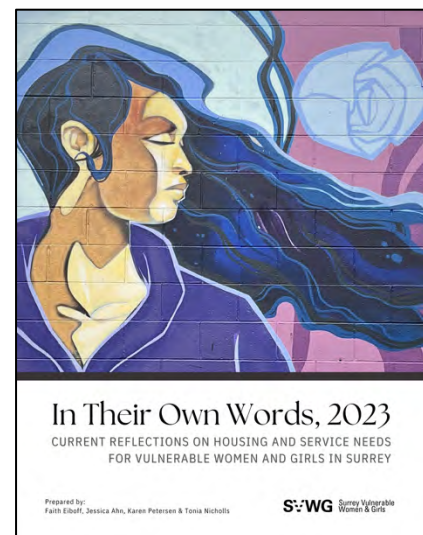
Engagement took place between May and August 2022, where a total of 44 individuals and 12 organizations participated in workshops and interviews. The purpose of SUILC's engagement was to better understand the needs of Indigenous individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Surrey and identify strategic recommendations for better serving these needs in community.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS, 2023: CURRENT REFLECTIONS ON HOUSING AND SERVICE NEEDS FOR VULNERABLE WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SURREY

Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group

Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group's (SVWG) report showcases the findings of a study conducted with 70 women and girls in Surrey about their housing and service needs and challenges. The research provides an update of research conducted by SVWG in 2015 and focusses on the perspectives of women and youth, conveying key findings and recommendations in their own narratives. Twenty key organizations that work on the frontline serving vulnerable women and girls in Surrey also provided their perspectives.





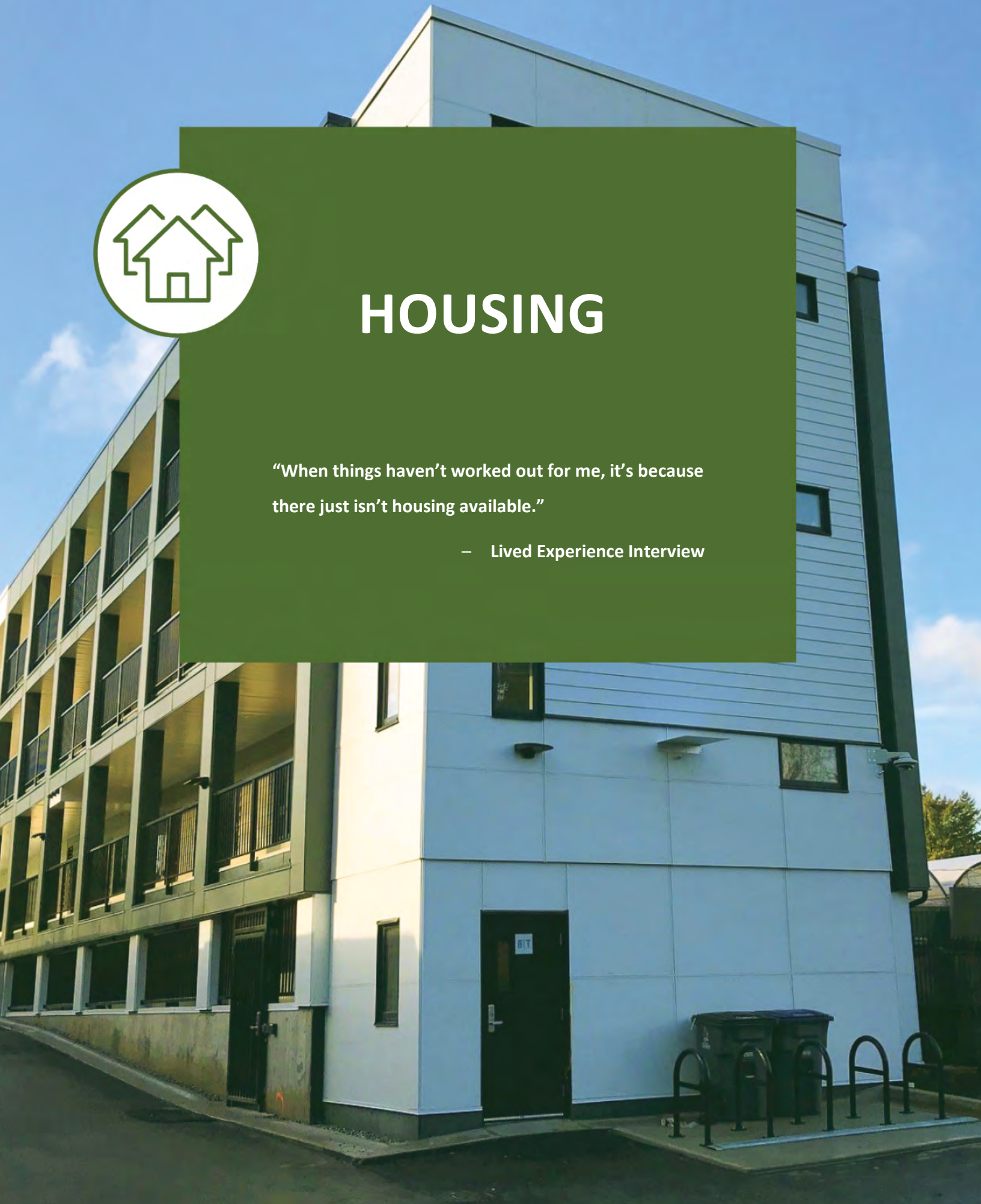
KEY THEMES



HOUSING

“When things haven’t worked out for me, it’s because there just isn’t housing available.”

– Lived Experience Interview



HOUSING

THE RISING COST OF RENT

Participants shared that rent has become too expensive for many people to afford, especially those relying on benefits or fixed incomes. The cost of rent along with other living costs including hydro, gas, and food is too costly for many to afford. Lived experience interviewees expressed they can no longer afford to live on their own as "*there are no places renting for \$476 these days.*"



People must then find roommates to share the cost, but finding roommates with whom they can feel safe and comfortable is difficult. Older people interviewed have found it challenging to share living spaces with roommates when they have spent their lives living alone or with family members. One focus group participant explained that some people in Surrey are 'hot-sheeting' where they share beds or rent a bed for 12 hours at a time, due to the high cost of housing.

"It gets hard as you get older. To rent a home you have to live with 3 to 4 others."

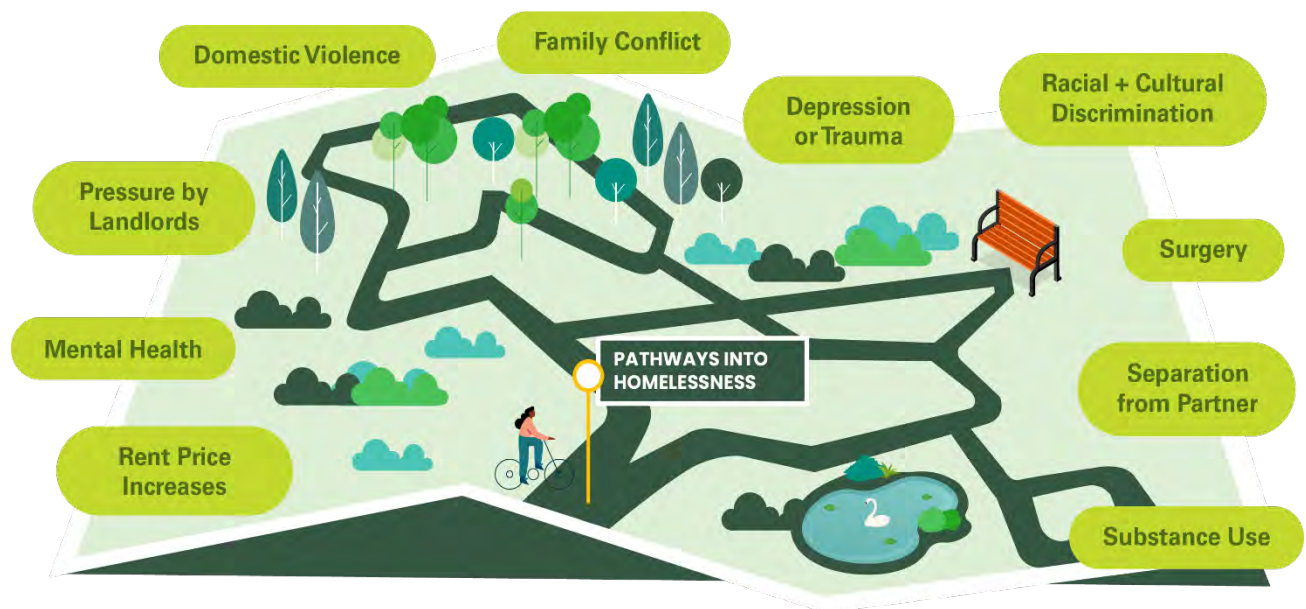
– Senior person with Lived Experience



PATHWAYS INTO HOMELESSNESS ARE VARIED, COMPLEX, AND INTERRELATED

Participants with lived experience of homelessness in Surrey shared their stories and the many reasons why they found themselves unhoused. The reasons were often layered and interrelated. Interviewees retold how they experienced homelessness resulting from a range of incidences including family conflict, depression, and trauma.

Figure 3: Pathways into Homelessness shared from Lived Experience Interviews



Women and youth-specific barriers identified in the **Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group's** research include affordability and availability for women fleeing violence, housing options that are suitable for children, lacking privacy and independence for youth, substance use, mental health, health, mobility, disability, and other vulnerabilities.

Source: Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.

Indigenous people are often experiencing multiple issues at once and have few resources to support them. Key pathways into homelessness for Indigenous people include a history of trauma and violence, high cost of housing, low wages and lack of financial resources, lack of addictions treatment, discrimination, high risk of evictions in a competitive housing market, and the impact of the child welfare system. Participants also highlighted that colonization, the Indian Act, and the reserve system have created conditions of perpetual poverty for Indigenous people.

Key challenges for Indigenous households include racism and discrimination in the housing market, especially for those with larger families; lack of support systems and difficulty navigating a complicated service delivery system; difficulty accessing non-market housing due to long waitlists and eligibility requirements; lack of job skills and steady work opportunities that limit income; among many others.

from Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee, Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022)

“I was bullied and pressured to move out by my landlord due to rental increases over the past 7 years. I had to move out as it wasn’t a safe spot for me.”

– Lived Experience Interview



EMERGENCY SHELTERS ARE NOT A LONG-TERM HOUSING SOLUTION

People having longer stays at emergency shelters has become more common. Many lived experience interviewees had been **living at a shelter for over a year**, on BC Housing’s waitlist or with no immediate intention to move somewhere more permanent. Frontline workers shared it can often be difficult to encourage people to continue on their journey. A key informant shared that the longer people spend in shelters, the less likely they are to move on to other stages of housing.

“I’ve been there over a year now. I guess I’m lucky...it seems like people get turned away pretty often.”

– Lived Experience Interview

Participants expressed that emergency shelters are only a temporary solution and do not provide conditions for people to be independent and make their own decisions. However, shelters have now been accepted as part of the system as it is better and safer to have people in a shelter than on the streets. Shelters are unable to free-up spaces due to a **lack of viable low-income supportive housing units** for people to transition to. One recommendation was to build more affordable rental housing for those ready to move on from transitional housing, which in turn would free-up shelter beds for those ready to leave shelters and move into longer term housing.

Hospitals are unable to discharge patients ready to move on as they have no fixed address and need housing with some supports. One interviewee with living / lived experience shared how during a recent hospital visit, they had seen 17 people they knew in the hospital.



A LACK OF HOUSING OPTIONS ACROSS THE NETWORK

Various people with lived / living experience shared they are on waitlists for housing but expect to wait for years before being housed. **Pet-friendly housing** was identified as a gap that can represent a critical barrier to people finding housing as they would rather live on the streets than be separated from their pet. There are also many people staying in non-market or supportive housing that is not well suited for them, but the lack of housing choice has meant residents are 'stuck' where they are.

“Oftentimes there is no next step, just an ever-increasing mountain of people put on a waitlist. A first stage site turns into a second and third stage site.”

– Social Service Provider Key Informant Interview

Participants described how the housing network is interconnected. An **increase in supply across the entire network** is needed to address the housing shortage, but also changes to the system of referral, coordinated access, transition, and reporting will be needed to achieve efficiency and effectiveness.

- **Non-market housing.** Participants described the lack of non-market supply in Surrey, including affordable, supportive, and subsidized rental housing types for low- and moderate-income groups. The housing system needs more stepping stones in the housing network, from housing with a high-level of supports to post-transitional and independent housing.
- **Emergency Shelters.** More emergency shelter spaces are needed in Surrey, including both low- and high-barrier options. Respondents expressed a need for female and gender-inclusive shelters. Shelter spaces for single men with children was also identified as a gap. With extreme weather conditions becoming more frequent, participants stressed the need for more temporary solutions for respite from the heat and cold. Some participants suggested a shelter is needed outside of the Whalley area and the **lack of an Extreme Weather Response (EWR) solution** for the coming winter in South Surrey and White Rock was raised by many as an area of serious concern.



- **Supportive Housing.** Long-term stable and supportive housing was highlighted by participants as a need. Once in stable housing, many individuals will be able to maintain their housing. Ongoing access to support services such as health and mental health services is key, along with life skills support and coaching such as personal care, food preparation or food skills, cleaning, laundry, completing documents, and long-term planning. Creating a sense of community and addressing the challenges of isolation as part of supportive housing was also noted.
- **Transitional Housing.** Transitional housing was identified by many as being a significant need. People living in emergency situations such as hospitals, shelters, or correctional facilities often have nowhere to move. The available shelter beds in Surrey are typically at capacity, leaving no options for individuals in an emergency.

“For every 1 unit we have available, there are 10 people put forward. 9 people don’t get housing.”

– Social Service Provider Key Informant Interview

- **Market Rental.** Participants commented on the change that has taken place in Surrey over recent years in which households used to be able to find affordable housing to rent, but it is no longer the case. Finding **housing that is affordable to lower income residents** is increasingly difficult and landlords will often select tenants in stable family or employment situations, excluding those most in need. Market rental available at affordable rents is needed in all Surrey neighbourhoods to free-up space elsewhere in the network. Participants suggested incentivizing developers to help deliver affordable market rental housing through relaxations or fee waivers.

PRIORITY POPULATION GROUPS

Housing is not keeping pace with demand, but there is also a lack of suitable affordable options in the housing network. Housing is needed for families (including large / intergenerational



families), Indigenous People and Elders, seniors, people with disabilities, people with complex needs, newcomers/immigrants, youth aging out of care, and young adults.

- **Housing for Families.** Family-sized units that are independent and low-cost are needed for parents or single parents; shared style housing is not suitable for families. There is a significant gap in housing suitable for larger low-income newcomer families, who may have five or more children. Having more flexible housing options, such as units with room dividers, reduces the risk of a family being separated or displaced. While there is an urgent need for longer-term, stable housing, emergency shelters, short-term solutions are also needed for families who have just relocated or unable to stay in their current housing. Moving from shelter-to-shelter is difficult on families and existing shelters are often low-barrier (i.e. with few requirements for entry and a focus on harm reduction) and not suitable

Housing for Women and Children is needed including those fleeing violence, through second stage housing and safe homes. Women and children face unique barriers to accessing housing and services due to stigma, discomfort in the service environment, safety of service location, waitlists and pre-requirements to health services, transportation challenges, lack of childcare, and family not supporting change. The SVWG report recommends developing affordable, safe, secure, and adequate housing options for women and youth and creating more longer-term and low/no barrier housing options.

from Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.

for children.

- **Housing for Couples.** Workshop participants referenced the lack of shelter space and supportive housing units for couples. Often couples are separated or required to secretly bring their partners into their housing unit as they are not permitted overnight guests. More couple-friendly housing is needed to help couples stay together.



- **Housing for Seniors.** Seniors were frequently identified as a growing group among people experiencing homelessness. Respondents discussed the increasing number of seniors in shelters and the mental health challenges seniors face due to isolation. Seniors need more long-term and affordable housing options. Housing should be adaptable to allow residents to age-in-place. Accessible housing was also highlighted as an area of need, for older clients as well as people with physical disabilities.
- **Housing for People with Complex Health Needs and Acquired Brain Injury (ABI).** Workshop participants reported there are high rates among people experiencing homelessness and those precariously housed who have complex health needs and/or a traumatic or acquired brain injury (ABI). Such populations need client-specific, wrap-around supports and health services. However, the current supportive housing models are often unable to respond to such complex or specific needs. There is also a systemic gap in terms of eligibility and access to mental health services for this population. New models of housing with adequate health supports are needed.
- **Housing for Youth.** Youth-specific or youth-appropriate shelters, supportive housing, and transitional housing are lacking in Surrey. For young adults, traditional shelters can be intimidating. Youth aging out-of-care were identified as a particularly vulnerable group in need of supportive housing with wrap-around supports. Supports should include life skills such as navigating how to pay rent and complete forms, as well as mental health and other support services.

“Sometimes it’s hard being around people using drugs. They try and separate these groups, but it isn’t easy. At times, I feel tempted to use.”

– Lived Experience Interview



- **Housing for Immigrants and Newcomers.** Shelters have flagged an increasing number of refugee, low-income immigrants and other newcomers are coming to their sites with nowhere to go. Often, these individuals have arrived with little to no information about housing and supports and do not speak English. Such immigrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to untrustworthy landlords who may raise rents or give eviction notices illegally, due to a lack of knowledge about the system and their rights. Newcomers without legal status are also ineligible for BC Housing units, limiting their options to shelters or market housing. International students and migrant workers were also identified as being a vulnerable population in need of affordable, safe, and secure housing. A culturally-informed response is needed, ensuring language, religion, diet, and certain other accommodations can be met.

“A (refugee) claimant family arrived through the border, and they were just released onto the street, spent 3 nights in a local park with a 3-year-old.”

– Focus Group with Immigrant Serving Agencies

NON-MARKET HOUSING IN ALL SURREY NEIGHBOURHOODS, NOT ONLY IN CITY CENTRE

Non-market housing is needed in every community in Surrey and participants shared the importance of **housing and services located across the municipality**. Whalley, Cloverdale, South Surrey and Newton were identified as areas where more shelters, and supportive and transitional housing is needed. Equally, people spoke to the clustering of housing and support services in Whalley, with other communities being underserved. South Surrey was identified as an area which lacks housing and supports, especially for seniors, young adults, and people with complex needs; yet South Surrey was considered an area where NIMBYism is problematic. Guildford was also noted to be an area with many refugees and seniors.



ACCESSIBILITY IS VITAL WHEN LOCATING NEW HOUSING AND SERVICES

Participants expressed that Surrey covers a large geographical area and for those who rely on transit, it can be very **difficult to travel across the City to access appointments and services**. The areas where more housing and services are available, such as Whalley, are not easily accessed from the rest of Surrey. Unhoused people often feel most comfortable and safe in their own community despite the lack of services; they won't travel out of their community for services. Participants recommended **locating new housing close to services and transit**, with opportunities identified along the new SkyTrain route.

STIGMA AND NIMBYISM IS PREVALENT

Workshop participants expressed how much stigma exists around homelessness, which can result in NIMBYism when planning new social housing sites. **Stigma reduction** should be a priority to ensure that social housing residents become integrated members of the community. Respondents advocated the City's role in promoting awareness and education to help break the stigma. Equally, integrating social housing into master-planned or urban expansion sites was suggested to limit neighbour opposition.

An interviewee highlighted that building housing without community consultation and leaving integration to the service provider can increase tensions between the new and existing community. A successful approach involves **early community engagement** by the municipality (including open houses, tours, knocking door-to-door at businesses and homes) and available resources for new residents once they have moved in.

Grassroots, community-led responses to new housing, empowering non-profit agencies to work with communities to identify community need was identified by an interviewee as the preferred way to build housing. Community involvement, as opposed to the City identifying land for housing sites, was recommended as a way of avoiding NIMBYism.

The ongoing impacts of **racism and discrimination impact peoples' abilities to access housing and services**. One participant explained how LGBTQIA+ people immigrating to Canada can struggle to find safe and stable housing. Often, they are housed with people from the country they fled from and can face discrimination in their house.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Fraser Health Authority, BC Housing, City of Surrey, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Ministry for Children and Family Development, non-profits, landlords, churches, and libraries were all recognized as critical partners to deliver more housing. Participants expressed that unconventional partnerships should also be considered to produce creative solutions. Participants offered various solutions to deliver more housing including:

- **Interim use of vacant buildings or land for temporary shelters. Collaborating with developers** to use vacant sites before redevelopment was suggested.
- **Collaboration with hotels** as a short-term solution to house people.
- **Businesses** were recognized as facilitators to help deliver housing, such as through **subsidized employer-led housing.**
- **Faith-based communities** are close to the ground and should be given more support for Emergency Winter Response shelters.
- The **co-op housing model** was recommended as a solution to deliver diverse housing that fosters a sense of community and ownership. It was reported the waitlist for existing co-ops is lengthy, demonstrating the demand for this housing type.
- Prioritization of non-profit **housing developments** and recognizing non-profits as community builders. Participants called for more funding to help non-profits purchase housing.
- **City-led actions** to help facilitate more housing include releasing public land for housing; DCC fee waivers; streamlining and fast-tracking approvals for non-profits; reducing zoning barriers to allow for higher density and diversity of housing types; and policy updates to incentivize affordable housing in private market developments.



- **Partnerships between municipalities** were supported by participants, recognizing the fluidity and cross-boundary movements of people experiencing homelessness; this is not

Opportunities for addressing Indigenous homelessness in Surrey include creating more opportunities for Indigenous-controlled housing, creating renter processes that meet the needs of Indigenous households, more dedicated Indigenous support services, and more lower cost housing.

from Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee, Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022).

only Surrey's problem.

- **Partnerships with First Nations** and the need to rebuild relationships and unlearn old practices was advocated by participants. This could unlock other opportunities such as an Indigenous-led stream of housing with Housing Accelerator Fund dollars.
- **Partnerships between all levels of government** were identified to deliver housing quickly through BC Housing's Community Housing Fund, Indigenous Housing Fund, and Community Development Fund, CMHC's Rapid Housing Initiative, Housing Accelerator Fund, CMHC investments, and other funding streams. Governments should be investing in relationships to create trust and celebrate success. Participants advised creating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between all senior-level leaders in the region as a guide for service coordination and alignment of values to use as leverage to meet community needs.



- Better collaboration with the organizations that provide personal identification is needed. Without official identification, people cannot access income and housing support.

“I need help with my ID and welfare. I need to line up all the time to get help with my ID.”

– **Lived Experience Interview**

Participants highlighted several ideas to help women and youth find suitable housing including, direct housing support and outreach, more subsidies and subsidized housing options, and support and advocacy to communicate with landlords.

from Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.





INTEGRATED HOUSING AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

“Stable housing for an individual, coupled with mental health counselling, health inventions, food, and closing, that is where you really start to see success.”

– Social Service Provider Interview

QUIBBLE

HEALTH
PHOENIX T
HOUSING CENTRE
18670 - 94A AVE

INTEGRATING HOUSING AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES

Lived experience interviewees shared how they struggle to access health services for various reasons, including mobility issues for those with physical disabilities. **Transportation** can be a challenge, such as arranging a HandyDART or using public transit to travel to appointments. People with mental health and substance use issues find attending health services and appointments challenging, due to psychological barriers such as anxiety or lack of retention regarding appointment times. Respondents expressed that individuals need **immediate access, drop-in health services**, not scheduled appointments.

“I want to be offered help. I want iHART to come but they aren’t available when I need.”

– **Lived Experience Interview**

Other barriers to accessing health services include a negativity towards clinical healthcare or hospital environments due to **past traumatic experiences**, a fear that individuals will end up in the emergency department as their health needs are not adequately treated, and **long wait times to receive medical attention**. Respondents also highlighted circumstances where people are coming to a shelter from hospital because they lost their housing while receiving treatment in hospital. Some people in shelters are **fearful of losing their shelter space** if they seek medical attention. Workshop participants shared that some people experiencing homelessness are afraid to go into housing because their health needs may not be met.



Lived experience interviewees shared that they are more likely to access in-house **health services or mobile services that come to where they are at**. Participants shared that many people arriving at shelters have varied health needs, including primary care, counselling, and mental health supports and that shelters need more medical services, especially wound care.

“I use the medical mobile program... it’s great. And free! They come once a week and help me with what I need. Maybe they could expand their services.”

– Lived Experience Interview

Participants recommended there should be more integrated health and housing models, including short-term transitional as well as long-term low-barrier housing where housing and healthcare expertise is combined. Government partners explained that in-house services are better suited to the complex care context. However, in-reach services, such as regular visits from a community worker, may be more appropriate for supportive housing.

A RANGE OF HEALTH SERVICES ARE NEEDED IN-HOUSE

Social service providers highlighted that more people are being sent to hospital from shelters and supportive housing because they do not have access to appropriate health services. They commented that in **an integrated health and housing model, where in-house health services are available to residents, fewer people may be admitted to hospital, reducing the strain on emergency services**. This new model of assisted living is needed specifically for people experiencing and at-risk of homelessness with substance use challenges (including tobacco use) who are not eligible for assisted living, but whose health needs are not being met in the new complex care/enhanced health model.

Participants highlighted the range of health services needed in shelters and supportive housing including medication support, mental health services such as counselling and trauma counselling, general health check-ups, confidential youth-specific clinics, sexual health, substance use support, psychiatrist, dental, physiotherapy, pre- and post-natal supports, and



physical health and nutrition programs. These health services should be supported by a team of case managers or peers to help people navigate the different supports available.

ADOPTING A CLIENT-CENTRED, TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Respondents shared that integrated health and housing models should advocate for a **client-centred, trauma-informed approach** and that some housing options should also be low-barrier so that no one is turned away. Participants found integrated health and housing programs have been successful in Surrey at Rosewood, which offers medical and dental care, Maxxine Wright that provides doctors, midwives, and counselling, and Foxglove that offers complex care services for mental health and substance use. Options' Home-Based Addictions Support and Detox program was also commended, where an addictions team visits clients daily in their homes. Participants recognized the important role this program plays in prevention. The Broadway Youth Resource Centre in Vancouver was highlighted by respondents as an example of providing services for youth up to age 24 including schooling options, food, medical support (including counselling and substance use support), with outreach on the lower floor and housing

“Housing like Foxglove has really done me well. But I wish they had detox right here. They should have options for people to go to AA meetings at night – or just space for people to tell their stories.”

– Lived Experience Interview

above.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE HEALTH AND HOUSING SECTORS

A social service provider identified how the defined roles and responsibilities of health staff and housing providers have created unintentional silos and a two-tier system between health and housing. This also applies to other key sectors such as income assistance, child and youth services, and others. These transition points between providers create challenges for the client. An example, regularly mentioned by participants, is when clients are discharged from hospital care but do not have access to health support when back in the community. Respondents



recommended **greater integration around staffing models** to better respond to clients' needs and circumstances.

Frontline workers called for process changes as currently organizations need permission to access client health information, which results in longer wait times to access treatment. A **centralized database, built around confidentiality** would reduce the need to seek consent to release information (at each touch point) and would reduce application times so clients can access the medical treatment needed in a timely manner.

For housing with embedded health supports to work effectively, respondents explained that an **ongoing funding commitment** is required, such as through the Reaching Home program. Others shared that where integrated health and housing projects are City-led, the City should be a partner. Fraser Health Authority was also identified as a key partner. Collaboration is also needed with housing and health providers, such as through optometrists for glasses and eye exams. Creating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between all partners reportedly works well.

Participants also advocated **greater integration between Fraser Health Authority and Vancouver Coastal Health**. People experiencing or at-risk of homelessness are moving between the different health regions and unable to access health services in both.

“Surrey is so big. It’s not a one size fits all everywhere. The only way we can find a solution is if we all work together.”

– Business Community Focus group





SUPPORT SERVICES

“PCRS help you get set up, show you how to adult and do things on your own. How to take better care of yourself and support you at home so you are not on our own.”

– Key Informant Interview

SUPPORT SERVICES

THERE ARE GAPS IN KEY SUPPORT SERVICES IN SURREY

Participants noted many gaps in service delivery in Surrey including a lack of social infrastructure, counselling and mental health support, tenant support including rent and eviction support, transit passes, life skills, food security, employment programs.

A key informant commented how the needs of racialized communities in Surrey have gone unaddressed and unabated, with diverse neighbourhoods, such as Newton, offering very few culturally appropriate housing and support services.

“It is disheartening when people understand the demographics of Surrey. Newton is the most diverse neighbourhood, but there are very few services. There’s a heavy concentration of Somali, Afghani, South Asian, Chinese, Urban Indigenous... a wide variety of people with different languages and backgrounds, whose needs are not being met.”

– Key Informant Interview

Numerous service gaps and barriers were identified for Indigenous people in Surrey. Participants gave consistent feedback that their experience with services reflected a lack of resources and a lack of supports that address the needs of Indigenous people. Examples of gaps and barriers included lack of individual advocacy, requiring families to attend programs, service navigation, being asked invasive questions, lack of services for Indigenous mothers, lack of trauma-informed staff, and overcrowded schools.

*from Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee,
Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022).*



Culturally sensitive supports that acknowledge the needs of diverse populations are needed. Focus group participants suggested having resources available in every language the people living in Surrey speak. An Indigenous lived experience interviewee shared how Elder visits at their shelter once or twice a week helped them attend a sweat lodge which was cleansing and helped restore their spirit.

Gaps in services for women and youth include 24-hour low-barrier drop-ins and extended after-hours services, mental health and trauma support, including grief counselling and supports for childhood and sexual trauma, couple/relationship support services, and services to support youth through the transition to adult services and independence.

from Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.

Support and training for staff and frontline workers is also lacking. Participants described a high burn-out rate and frontline staff turnover due to a lack of counselling, therapy, and other support services. A lot of pressure is also placed on housing case managers to find housing for clients. Continuous training, including trauma-informed care, Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT), and equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (EDIB) is needed.

“ ...come into field because we care about people, but it’s hard to care for people if you can’t care for yourself.”

– Frontline Workshop Participant



SERVICES HUBS TO OFFER A RANGE OF SERVICES

Respondents imagined a hub as a place people may go to access one particular service but also be connected to other services, i.e., come for a meal and then connect with health services.

A focus group participant shared how people experiencing homelessness have nowhere to go, except the library, during the day after they must leave the shelter. A hub should act as a community drop-in space, providing 24-hour wrap-around, culturally appropriate services through collaboration with multiple agencies.

Youth need better access to information about services and would benefit from better connections to supports through the creation of a one-stop hub with various services and professionals.

from Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs for Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.

However, one interviewee commented that a services hub should not act as a replacement to outreach services. Those most vulnerable may not access the hub. Most felt a hub should include:

- **Housing services.** Participants identified the need for housing services including applications for BC Housing registry, newcomer support, and housing support workers on site available to provide assistance.
- **Health services** including counselling services (including trauma and mental health counselling), primary care services, Fraser Health's Integrated Homelessness Action Response Teams (IHART), Fraser Health staff, general health services including optometrist, dental, nurses, family doctors, and overdose prevention / harm reduction supports.
- Other **general support services** were referenced including employment and training, life skills, hygiene (including showers and laundry), meals, childcare, legal support, transit passes, crisis support (clothes or donation centre), EWR or emergency day shelter, and refugee/landed immigrant assistance. Federal Government services were mentioned by most participants, such as tax, welfare, involuntary separation, pension, and identification



(ID) support. ID support was particularly stressed as being a barrier as people without ID are unable to access health services. It was suggested that hubs consider storage for

Potential ideas for Indigenous service solutions include First Nations land trust in Surrey, training and employment opportunities, Indigenous renters' directory where landlords can list properties, website where Indigenous people can access supports and find advocates in Surrey, 24/7 services dedicated to housing Indigenous people, treatment centres for families, program where Elders do not have to pay for food, and access to garden for growing food.

*from Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee,
Finding Our Way Home: Research on Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey (2022).*

belongings while services are being accessed.

SERVICE HUBS IN EVERY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Participants expressed that every neighbourhood in Surrey needs a hub and the services offered should be community specific. The neighbourhoods most referenced to locate a hub include Newton, Cloverdale, Whalley, and South Surrey. Fleetwood and Guildford were also mentioned by participants. The location of hubs should also consider accessibility by public transit, access to the hospital, and proximity to shelters and supportive housing.

Respondents suggested using **existing civic spaces as micro-hubs**, including community centres and libraries. The concept of **integrating housing and support services in one building** by building a hub on the ground floor with supportive housing above was also referenced by various attendees.

SERVICE HUBS INVOLVE MULTIPLE ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS

Participants highlighted that collaboration between several sectors was key to implementing service hubs in Surrey including local businesses, City of Surrey, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and government partners. They highlighted the significance of hubs being



operated by multiple agencies that offer different services. This collaboration could create **information and data sharing opportunities** and improve communication across organizations. However, respondents did express the difficulties around people consenting to share their information.

Government partner workshop participants shared feedback around need for **consistent long-term operational funding** for a service hub. There is currently no model to fund hubs. Hubs in other jurisdictions have been funded through their municipalities and recent Union of BC Municipalities' grants, Reaching Home program, Ministry of Justice, or by different agencies each year (which was not advised due to administrative burden). Challenges can arise when non-profits are restricted with a narrow focus due to funding which can then silo services. Funders need to create flexibility for partners to work together and collaborate.

Respondents highlighted that Pacific Community Resource Society operates successful service hubs for youth, which provide all services on-site except housing. Non-profits have been critically involved in the design and delivery of these hubs. Equally, several organizations provide supports for Indigenous people at-risk of or experiencing homelessness, such as FRAFCA, Kekinow, Options, School District 36 Indigenous support workers, Together We Can, and Atira, among others.

Participants saw the **City's role as an administrator or convener of the hub**. The City would also be critical in identifying land for service hubs. Several participants highlighted the role of government partners to facilitate service hubs, including Fraser Health Authority, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and BC Housing. Government partner roles should include co-funding social work and case management positions within the hub and support with navigation.

There was also consideration that centralized hubs may not be suitable for all groups in crisis, and that youth, women, or families may be unwilling to go to drop-in locations that are low-

“When the right people are connected together, good things happen.”

– Lived Experience Interview



barrier or those frequented primarily by men. Consideration of the users and type of services to be provided will be critical. One proposed solution was to explore dedicated mobile outreach teams for selected services.





PREVENTION

“I never thought about coming here before, never even applied. To know there’s an option for single women is comforting. Not having the knowledge of this place existing was preventing me, and I’m sure prevents others.”

– Lived Experience Interview

PREVENTION

PEOPLE ARE MOST VULNERABLE DURING LIFE TRANSITIONS

Participants shared that people are most likely to slip through the safety net without the support they need during times of transition, including when **youth age out of care** and transition to adulthood, **hospital patients without a fixed address are discharged** into the community, **immigrants or newcomers** start their new lives in Canada, and **older adults enter the senior stage of life**.

- Youth aging out-of-care need **wrap around services** and help navigating how to pay rent, complete forms, life skills, mental health counselling and on-site services with adequate staffing levels. **Partnerships with schools** to provide in-school services and raise awareness of programs or organizations could help support youth better during transitions.

Youth suggested planning for their future at an earlier age, i.e. while they are still in group homes, would help ease the transition into adulthood and the adult service system to ensure continuity of support.

from Surrey Vulnerable Women & Girls Working Group, In Their Own Words, 2023: Current Reflections on Housing and Service Needs For Vulnerable Women and Girls in Surrey.

- For refugees, low-income immigrants and other newcomers entering a new country with limited to no knowledge of the housing system and services, **information should be provided pre-landing**. Before arriving, they should be encouraged to research housing availability and cost, organizations and settlement agencies that can support newcomers, and the requirements for employment or housing such as resumes, references, and financial information.



- As older adults who are considered low-income and at-risk of homelessness age, they become more vulnerable and need more support to stay safely and stably housed. Participants shared that when someone turns 65, they stop receiving income assistance and become eligible for pension. However, during this transition, cheques are not automatically transferred from income assistance to the pension, and seniors who are at-risk of homelessness can lose their housing due to insufficient funds if they have not applied for their pension.

“When staff are good, it makes such a difference. People can help explain the paperwork and all the documents.”

– **Lived Experience Interview**

Greater involvement, support, and communication is needed between different organizations, youth and adult services, and departments to ensure a smooth transition.

Closer alliance with landlords is an important prevention piece, to ensure once a person is housed positive interventions are made to prevent evictions and future incidents of homelessness. Cultural awareness or sensitivity training for landlords supported by the City was also suggested by a focus group participant.

CLIENT ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Participants indicated that navigating the system is a barrier to finding housing and accessing services; many people experiencing homelessness did not know where to access the services. It is very easy for people to get overwhelmed and give up. With better access to information and services upfront, instances of homelessness may be prevented.

Frontline workers highlighted how when someone moves between shelters and come from outside organizations, it is hard to pass information on in terms of resources and specific client needs. **Information sharing between different organizations was recommended** by participants to pool resources and avoid duplication. This could be actioned through coordinated access or information sharing agreements.



Many called for a straightforward system where information is centralized and resources can be accessed faster. Some suggested creating a hub to act as a physical database of information that raises awareness of services and helps groups network and share resources.

“There should be some straightforward system, with everything upfront. For me it is added stress, having to look at multiple websites, there is information everywhere.”

– Lived Experience Interview

A **digital services hub** was proposed by participants as a centralized online website and/or mobile application to find information. The digital hub should contain information on all the different organizations providing housing and support services and an accurate and up-to-date list of services. Giving contact details for the specific team to contact at an organization is also important, such as a direct phone number or e-mail address. Social media was also highlighted by participants as a useful resource, such as Facebook groups





**“Housing is everyone’s responsibility.
It is critical to move clients from
an unstable state to a stable state
when they are starting their new life.”**

– Immigrant Serving Agency Focus Group





APPENDIX A

LIVED EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

LIVED EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

We have prepared guiding questions we can reference as part of the conversation. We recognize that not all questions might be appropriate and/or some may be answered as the conversation unfolds.

- Tell me about yourself and your story.
- Do you currently have affordable, safe housing that meets your household's needs?
- What kind of housing do you need?
- How old were you when you first experienced homelessness? What were the main reasons you first experienced homelessness?
- When did you most recently experience homelessness? Why was that?
- Have you always lived in Surrey? If not, when did you start living in Surrey? Why did you move to Surrey?
- What area(s) of Surrey do you generally stay or spend time in (e.g. Whalley, Newton, Guildford, Cloverdale, or South Surrey). Why this/these areas?
- What support services do you access in Surrey? (prompts: housing, mental health support, substance use services, free meals or food bank, employment services, trauma counselling...)
- Are there some services you visit more often or like more than others?
- Do you ever use support services outside of Surrey (such as in New West or Vancouver?)
- Are there areas of Surrey that need more support services? If yes, which areas? What services?
- Could you share a time when you succeeded in getting the services or housing you needed? What helped you succeed? (prompts: was there a particular housing program or support service/individual who helped?)
- Tell me about a time when and where you didn't get the support you needed to access housing. What was the reason? (prompts: Was it a person, a process, lack of funding, waitlists, services that didn't connect to each other? Something else?)
- Is there anything preventing you from accessing emergency shelters or other services?
- What does the word 'home' mean to you?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share?







SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE &
COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS
DEPARTMENT

