



Kitimat Poverty Reduction Strategy

Prepared by: Marie Sasseville and Jessica Trebble

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Behind the storefront of a marvel of nature and industry, Kitimat has an ever-growing vulnerable population experiencing poverty. Kitimat and Haisla Nation's Kitimat Village is experiencing the stresses of limited resources, skyrocketing rents, and increased costs of living.

"We have nothing for families to do in town - Groceries are so expensive - Housing is wild, the cost of rentals is outrageous - No shopping for kids items / clothes - Poverty is rising due to grocery prices." - Lived experience voice.

Located in Northern British Columbia, Kitimat is a small town with a population of 8,236; according to the 2021 census. Kitimat is situated on the unceded territory of the Haisla people. The Haisla Nation Kitimaat Village is nearby on the opposite shore from the aluminum smelter, with a population of 507 reported in the 2021 census, making the total population for both communities 8,743. Kitimat is derived from Git-a-maat (Kitimaat), a Tsimshian description of the Haisla, which means "people of the snow."

The townsite known as Kitimat was established in 1953 as a district municipality. What started as an industrial townsite has become a place where families live, grow, and bloom. With its unique layout facilitating easy access to services, leisure, and shopping, Kitimat looks like and is promoted as a positive environment to raise a family. Nonetheless, Kitimat experiences social challenges and difficulties observed in the rest of the province, country, and world such as poverty, homelessness, violence, substance misuse, and mental illness.

Being an industrial town, Kitimat is subject to the buzz, boom, and bust cycle of industrialisation and has its downfalls from industrial developments. The 1950s was the building phase of the Alcan smelter and the original townsite. Many houses were built similarly and reflected post-war architecture of manufactured bungalows which were used to demonstrate engineering and urbanism qualities. Kitimat was made to be lived in and enjoyed, by workers and families. Vestiges of the early installations are still visible and are proof of the consequences of the buzz, boom, and bust cycle in Kitimat. While sun shines on those whose standard of living improves during the

buzz and boom phases that bring wealth, development, and modernization to the apparent majority, there is a margin of people left in the shadows of the big industries.

Residents that have been here before recent industrial waves are part of the fabric of Kitimat. These individuals have grown up here and their entire support network resides here. This matter is about the opportunity to have preventive measures in place to have basic needs fulfilled, respond to escalating crises and therefore provide a pathway to break the cycle of poverty and social exclusion.

Developing a Poverty Reduction Strategy for the Kitimat Region

As the Kitimat moves towards the development of its own Poverty Reduction Strategy, there is a significant amount of research to consider from the decades of poverty reduction work completed across Canada and the work that has been done locally. The province of British Columbia adopted the first poverty reduction strategy in 2018 named *Together BC*. The Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment is leaning on projects and studies as that one to further develop measures and programs to assist individuals and families within the community.

The Kitimat Poverty Reduction Strategy Project is a partnership between the District of Kitimat and Tamitik Status of Women to set a path towards the elimination of overall poverty in Kitimat and surrounding area.

The purpose of this project is firstly, to understand the vulnerable populations in Kitimat under a poverty reduction lens and inform local and higher levels of government to design a plan to improve the quality of life for Kitimat residents during times where the costs of living rises, and basic needs are not met especially for those in community who are not able to participate in industrial booms and therefore are at risk of their quality of life diminishing.

Secondly, the strategy will determine if there is a correlation between poverty and the industrial dynamic in Kitimat (as decades of research suggests), and to establish a concise and predictable framework to help with future planning for projects that are likely to change the socio-economic landscape of this area (i.e. large scale industry).

Although there are many best practices and effective strategies that can be learned from other communities, the needs of the Kitimat community are unique in that Kitimat does not always have the same available services as other communities impacting the way individuals navigate poverty. This means that the community will need to develop its own innovative strategy that works towards addressing these unique needs.

This document provides background information that will support Kitimat in doing the work of developing its own poverty reduction strategy. The first section will provide an overview of poverty in Canada, BC, and the Kitimat region. The second section will focus on poverty reduction strategies across Canada and lastly the third section will introduce a pathway for the development of a poverty reduction strategy.

Methodology

To obtain objective data to produce a reliable report, both qualitative and quantitative data has been collected during this study, listed below:

- Research and inventory amongst reports and censuses listed in bibliography.
- Rental market housing survey conducted on listed ads.
- Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment Survey conducted in person and online with 68 participants.

A STRONG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY:

- Focuses on establishing the roots of poverty, not just make it easier to live in poverty.
- Is informed by individuals with lived experience.
- Involves all levels of government, community organizations, industry, business, and the public health sector to work towards reducing poverty.
- Executes actions that will be measured and adapted to the changing context.
- Is supported by a backbone organization and clear local leadership.
- Targets a universal approach to poverty in a variety of areas such as: affordable housing, livable incomes, accessible transit, childcare and education, social inclusion and equity and food security.

SECTION 1: Understanding Poverty in BC, Canada, and Kitimat

What is Poverty: Definitions and Indicators

Poverty exists across Canada and Kitimat is no exception. Poverty refers to lacking enough resources to obtain the necessities of life—food, clean water, shelter, electricity (and other utilities) and clothing. But in today’s world, that can be extended to include access to health care, acquire education, secure a stable job, transportation, as well as the ability to participate in recreational activities. The housing crisis in Canada has demonstrated that safe and affordable housing is scarce and has ripple effects beyond just the individual affected.

In government circles, poverty is often classified as “absolute poverty” and “relative poverty”. For clarification, the important terms and concepts used in this study have been defined:

Vulnerable populations: The Institute for Research on Public Policy identifies five groups of people who are vulnerable to persistent poverty in Canada:

- Youth 20 – 24 years old
- Indigenous
- Recent immigrants
- Lone parents
- Disabled persons

To these groups, we added:

- Women (particularly those experiencing and/ or fleeing abuse and violence)
- Persons living with mental health disorders, diagnosed or not
- Low-income individuals and families
- Persons with substance misuse
- Seniors (65+) with few family supports
- LGBTQ2S+

Absolute poverty: When incomes fall below a line set by a given country. Less than this line people are unable to meet basic needs for food, water, and shelter. They also have no access to social services such as health care, education, and utilities. This measure is not based on people's incomes, but on whether people can or cannot sustain themselves with the income they have.

Relative poverty: An income less than a certain percentage of the country's median income. The median income can vary due to economic growth and the line for relative poverty can change.

Social exclusion/inclusion: According to the United Nations (2016), social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to fully participate in economic, social, political, and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state.

Social inclusion is multidimensional and “is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.” These groups may be excluded not only through legal systems, land, and labor markets, but also discriminatory or stigmatizing attitudes, beliefs, or perceptions. Disadvantage is often based on social identity, which may be across dimensions of gender, age, location, occupation, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), among other factors. This kind of social exclusion robs individuals of dignity, security, and the opportunity to lead a better life. Unless the root causes of structural exclusion and discrimination are addressed, it will be challenging to support sustainable inclusive growth and rapid poverty reduction.

The following factors can be favorable or unfavorable for social exclusion/inclusion:

- Gender identity and expression (Male, female, two-spirit, intersex, transgender, non-binary, gender neutral, agender, pangender, genderqueer, third gender, and all, none, or combination of all)
- Romantic and sexual orientation
- Employment & economic status
- Geographic location
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Citizenship status.
- Education
- Abilities/Disabilities
- Physical and mental health

Shadow population: People who currently live or stay in Kitimat, but for whom Kitimat is not their permanent place of residence (e.g., the address on their identity card is not in Kitimat, and/or their mail goes to a different household not located in Kitimat).

Permanent resident: People who have a primary residents in Kitimat, as of September 2021 (e.g., the address on their identity card, where their mail goes, or where they stay most nights out of the year). All persons who have their main residence at the surveyed household address.

Measuring poverty across British Columbia and Canada

Neither Canada, nor BC have an official poverty line. Instead, poverty is assessed by different instances according to an array of criteria and methodologies.

Statistic Canada proposes three methodologies to determine the threshold for low income:

The first being, **Low Income Measure (LIM)**: It uses the principle of equivalence scale and makes calculations accordingly to the income of household's data, adapted to the number of persons composing the family unit.

The second method used is the **Market Basket Measure (MBM)**: It is based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living. It includes the cost of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other items for a reference family. In 2020, for rural areas in BC, the MBM was \$43,069 for a family of four, for one year. That data remains an average and not a detailed portrait for the Kitimat area. The MBM is calculated based on a family of two adults and two children ages 9 and 13, for each region in every province. The baskets for other family sizes and types are established through a square-root equivalence scale. The components considered are food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other expenses. The sum of these amounts represents the market basket measure.

The third method used is the **Low Income Cut Off (LICO)**: Used by Statistic Canada and is present in the census data tables, the low-income cut-offs are income thresholds below which a family will devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter, and clothing than the average family. The LICO is calculated every year, considers the agglomeration in which a household lives, and the number of members per family. For this research, Kitimat will be considered a rural community.

The last LIM calculations were done in 2019. The following table highlights the after-tax income that would be a poverty threshold according to the size of the family unit.

Low-Income Cut-Offs After Tax, 2020, Rural Areas							
Family Size	One person	Two persons	Three persons	Four persons	Five persons	Six persons	Seven or more
LICO (2020)	\$14,431	\$ 17,564	\$21,871	\$27,284	\$31,070	\$34,457	\$37,845

Living Wage

The living wage for sample families is described as the hourly amount that each of two working parents with two young children (one being school age and one under the age of three) must earn to meet their basic expenses once government taxes, credits, deductions, and subsidies are considered.

The living wage is calculated on:

- Food
- Clothing & footwear
- Shelter (at the average rental market in the locality)
- Transportation
- Childcare
- Household expenses
- Social participation (sports, leisure activities, etc.)
- Medical service plan
- Extended healthcare
- Parent's education
- Contingency fund

This framework does not consider:

- Debt repayment from credit cards, loans, or other interest payments.
- Future savings for home ownership, retirement, or children's post secondary education.
- Anything beyond minimal recreation, entertainment, and holiday costs.
- Costs of caring for a disabled, seriously ill, or elderly family member.

Up until now there has been no specific initiative in Kitimat to determine the living wage for a sample family. When measured in 2021, it was determined for the participating communities (Columbia Valley, Comox Valley, Fraser Valley, Grand Forks, Greater Victoria, Kamloops, Kelowna, Metro-Vancouver, Nanaimo, Nelson, Penticton, Revelstoke, and Trail), the hourly rate a single employee should earn in BC is \$18.14/hour to afford the aforementioned necessities.

Due to Kitimat industrious nature with wages higher than both provincial and federal averages, the cost of living reflects the reality of northern regions. This includes higher costs for groceries, increased transportation costs, fluctuations in the price of shelter and other necessities influenced by the boom-and-bust cycle. Due to this effect the Kitimat living wage must be considered at least \$20/hr for a single person.

The Fraser Institute's Threshold is a threshold to use as a comparison but is not official. In this report, the author Sarto (2020) criticizes the official poverty thresholds adopted and the methodologies used to determine them. Notably, Sarto claims that the principle of using the rental price as a determinant for a family of four should be analyzed with caution since some families will choose to have the children share a bedroom while others will prefer to live in larger accommodations. Sarto further supports his argument by explaining that this threshold and the information gathered are only drawing the line of the necessities while ignoring the principle of disposable income used to fulfil more needs as well as being used for leisure, recreation, and other activities related to wellbeing. These thresholds also do not consider the debt, credit and other loans individuals and families may be forced to utilize. Finally, the official thresholds are only drawing a line between absolute and relative poverty, while families below that line are in absolute poverty and those on or above will be in relative poverty as they earn enough to keep afloat but not to have a disposable income i.e. individual and families in this respect do not have a choice with how their income is spent if they can only afford to meet their needs. In his report, Sarto states in Canada the income a family of four should earn, depending on their localisation, somewhere between \$55,000 and \$65,000 a year before taxes, which we chose to put at \$60,000 to draw a median line as well as considering this amount to be after tax to reflect the reality of the inflation rate in the province for the past 2 years.

Population

To better analyze the population of Kitimat and Kitamaat this report will refer to the terms cited in the Household Survey (Big River Analytics, 2022), of permanent resident and shadow population.

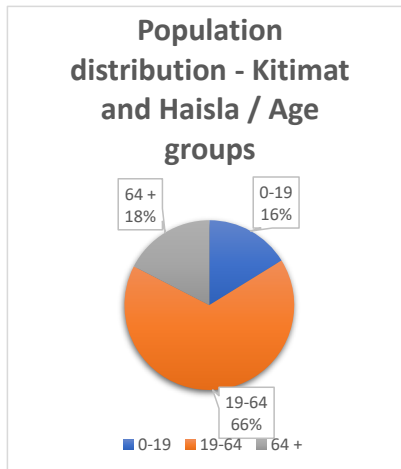
Kitimat & Kitamaat have a combined population of 8,743, which corresponds to the ratio of permanent residents. According to recent findings published in a report for the District of Kitimat, (Big River Analytics Ltd., 2022), the overall population in September 2021, was 9,978, divided as the following:

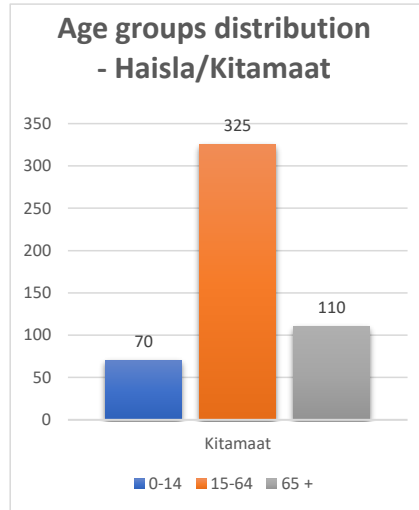
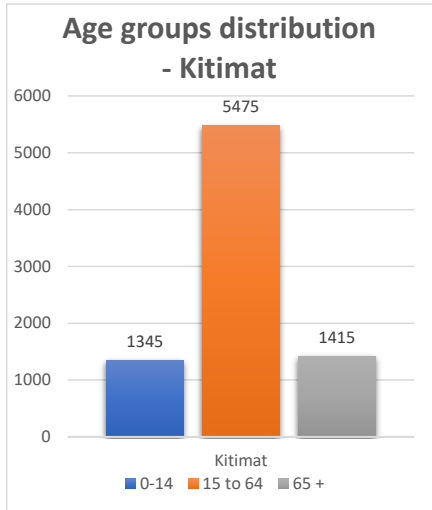
- 8,595: Permanent residents, representing 86% of the population.
- 1,383: Shadow residents, representing 14% of the population.

The 2020 census results present the population growth in Kitimat 1.3% (8,236 compared to 8,131) since the 2016 census. For Kitamaat, there reveals a decrease of -3.4% of the population (507 compared to 525) since the 2016 census. In Kitimat, the overall population is composed of a majority identifying as male 4,275 compared to 3,960 identifying as female. In Kitamaat, the numbers are almost even but there is a small majority of individuals identifying as female (255) compared to males (250).

In Kitimat and Kitamaat/Haisla, majority of the population is between the age of 19 and 64 (66%), which is the workforce. 16% generates the 0-19 and 18% compose of elders. This data is consistent with the rest of the province and the overall country.

Age group	Kitimat & Kitamaat	British Columbia	Canada
0 to 14	14.3%	14.9%	16.6%
15 to 64	67.7%	66.9%	66.5%
65 +	18%	18.3%	16.9%





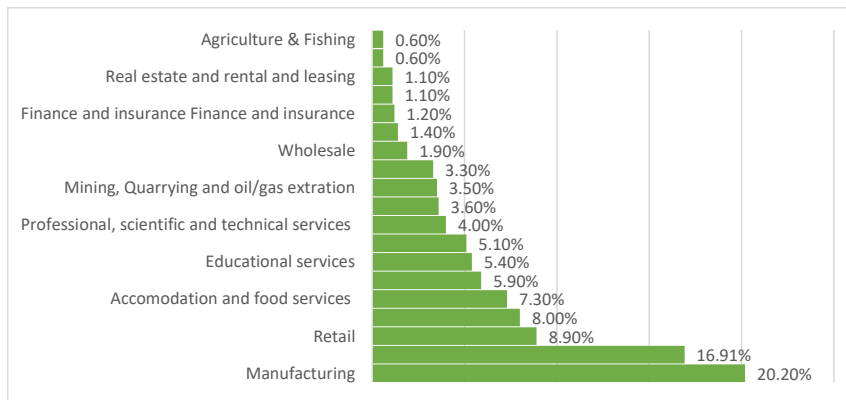
Employment and Income

“With inflation I feel like I don’t even make enough, my bills have increased and even took out a loan. Still have nothing in my bank.”-Lived experience voice.

During this study, the 2016 census stated that 4,230 residents were composing the labour force, either working or looking for work. Indicating 87.4% were working and 12.5% were unemployed and/or looking for work. The census reported 57.2% of the workforce was men while the minority 42.8% was composed of females. In the 2016 census, the average population in Kitimat was reported as 8,130. From this amount, 5,510 (67.7%) is aged between 15 and 64 years, which could be qualified as the active population.

There is a margin of error to consider when reviewing this data as it is a sample of 25% of the total population. Meaning the data is multiplied to reflect a prospective amount based on the sample but not on the whole population. Despite the potential lack of exact of the information, this sample demonstrates that a persistent minority of individuals in Kitimat remains non-eligible to participate and benefit from the prospected outcome of industrial development, but still experience the side-effects.

The following table represents the workforce as noted in the 2016 census:



When researching employment opportunities in Kitimat, it showed that there is a sufficient and constant offer for available positions in sectors including food services, retail, healthcare, social

services, industrial construction, and operations. While these employment opportunities are highly paid and compatible with the available training in this area, there is a vast income gap between employment in industry and other employment and it's important to consider one, that not everyone who participates in the labour force can or wants to work in industry, and two, that we need other employment sectors to be just as robust as industry in order for our community to thrive (i.e. civil servants, retail, restaurants and hospitality, administrative and business sectors, etc.)

For instance, persons with disabilities and/or work-related impairments can benefit from assistance to seek employment, but they are still considered underprivileged due to their lower income and opportunities. While this group of workers can sustain a work schedule, their quality of life is impacted because of the rental/real estate market and the overall cost of living not being on par with the wage.

With Kitimat being a community built around industries, it is expected that the average income of households will be more than sufficient. The average income in Kitimat, in the 2016 Census was \$32,314 for females and \$59,454 for males compared to \$31,874 and \$44,282 in British Columbia. While the female's income is slightly higher than the province average's (\$440 more), the income for males is above representing \$15,000 increase. This data highlights the difference in income between male and female genders with the females earning a little more than half a male's income.

To compare the income of residents to the low-income thresholds, the data used is from the 2016 census. The table below presents the median average income data regarding size of households, in Kitimat, Kitimaat, and in British Columbia.

Income data in households	Kitimat	Kitamaat	Province of BC
Median after-tax income of households – per year	\$ 73,635	\$ 59,936	\$ 61,280
Average size of economic families (persons per household)	2.8 persons	3.4 persons	3 persons
Median after-tax income of couple <u>without</u> children (2 persons)	\$80,256	N/A	\$ 70,464
Median after tax income of couple <u>with</u> children	\$ 109,525	\$ 90,368	\$ 96,176
Average size of families with 1 couple and children	3.8 persons	4.3 persons	4 persons
Median after tax income of lone parents led families	\$ 56,704	\$46,976	\$46,668
Average size of families with a single parent	2.6 persons	3.1 persons	2.6 persons

The table demonstrates that the average after-tax income of households in Kitimat is higher than the rest of the province, being \$73,635 per year for an average of 2.8 persons per household compared to \$61,280 per year for the rest of the province on an average of three persons per household. This leads us to believe that households in Kitimat have a standard of living above average when compared to the rest of the province. The situation is different in Kitamaat, as the median after tax-income of households per year reaches \$59,936 for an average of 3.4 persons per households, putting the Haisla community in a below-average economic situation compared to both the neighbor community of Kitimat and the rest of the province.

Couples without children had an average after-tax income in Kitimat of \$80,256 per year, which is \$9,792 more than couples without children in the rest of the province. This data was not available for Kitamaat Village.

Couples with children had an average after-tax income in Kitimat higher than the rest of the province being \$109,525 with an average of less persons per household. The same applies in Kitamaat as couples with children there earn less than the rest of the province with more members per families.

The data collected on single parent led families presents, Kitimat is still ahead with \$56,704 after tax per year for an average of 2.6 persons per families, while the single parents in the rest of the province are reported to earn, on an average, around \$10,000 less with the same amount of family members. In Kitamaat, the average income of single parent families is similar to the rest of the province but the average number of persons in the family is higher being 3.1 compared to 2.6.

This data demonstrates that while on average Kitimat is displaying better conditions than the rest of the province, the Haisla community is not benefiting from the same advantages when referring to the direct impacts observed in families and households on an economic level.

Compared to poverty lines, the income data in Kitimat, Kitamaat and British Columbia was calculated using the thresholds in place, detailed in the above section of this report. Due to the lack of resources to establish a fixed poverty line and to complete a census of the population, the data regarding household incomes in Kitimat and Kitamaat in the 2021 census was used.

To determine what MBM is in Kitimat, there are multiple factors to take into consideration. While the poverty thresholds are mostly calculated in urban areas, some of these elements do not line up with the reality of life in Kitimat.

For example:

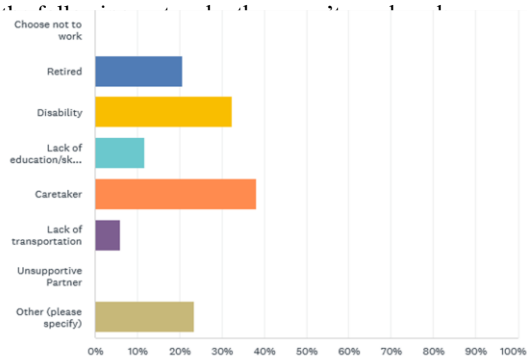
- The public transit services in urban areas provide longer hours of operation and more bus routes, when compared to a rural community. The efficiency of public transportation also eliminates the need for a second vehicle.
- The access to specialized health services will be local, eliminating the need to plan for budgeting, transportation, and shelter accommodations.
- The attainability of globally produced consumable goods is broader in urban settings, and the price tends to be lower.
- The availability of low-budget solutions for clothing, furniture, appliances, and entertainments is greater.

While the price of housing (rent and mortgage) is reported to be higher in urban centers there is more of a homeowner culture in remote areas. This creates the need to consider in the calculations, as well as the necessity, to save for a down payment for a mortgage, property taxes and increased fees to sustain the maintenance of the building and its surroundings. It important to highlight that while the income in Kitimat is higher than the average in the province, only specific groups such as men are more likely willing to work outside of their communities and/or commute to Kitimat for work. This population is in the margin of the shadow population to make extra income to provide for themselves and families.

Type of Poverty Threshold	Kitimat	Kitamaat	Province of BC
Market Basket Measure - \$43,069 / year for a family of 4	24.5%	36.3%	30.7%
LIM – Average household is 3 persons – \$46,021 in 2020 (after tax)	24.5%	47.4%	35.6%
Low Income Cut Off – (LICO) – Family of 3 is \$25,029 a year	9.8%	22.3%	16.1%
Living wage for families 20\$/hour for 40 hours a week for 2 persons) \$63,149 after tax	38.6%	64.1%	49.1%
Poverty Threshold (60% of average income, after tax)	<\$45 981	<\$30 876	< \$37 761
	24.5%	27.9%	24.8%
Fraser Institute’s Threshold - \$60,000 / year (4 people)	38.6%	64.1%	49.1%

SURVEY INSIGHTS ON INCOME/EMPLOYMENT:

The income data collected through the Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment Survey revealed that majority of the respondents are employed representing 52.94% while 50% identified one of



Participants identified “other” as looking for work or experiencing apprehension because of COVID-19.

Housing

“I would have to leave town if we had to rent again. It is so expensive and unstable that it really makes living in town prohibitive.”- Lived experience voice.

In Kitimat, the housing situation is up for debate ever since KMP created a rise in the value of dwellings and the price of rentals. According to (BC Northern Real Estate Board, 2022), the average selling price of a Single Family Residential was \$375,000 in Kitimat in March 2022, compared to approximately \$560,000 in Terrace and \$450,000 in Prince Rupert for the same period.

What do these numbers mean for the buyer? What do they represent on a daily family budget?

Here are comparisons put into perspective using the mortgage calculator provided on the CHMC’s website. According to financial advisors at banks, the maximum rate a person or household can spend on housing before it starts impeding their capacity to afford other necessities is approximately 30%.

The following three situations demonstrate that a family must earn a minimum of \$62,408 per year to afford the average single-family dwelling at the current market price; to become a homeowner, in the current market, an individual or family would have to be able to save approximately \$75,000 for a down payment. In contrast, those who were homeowners prior to the industrial wave will be able to take advantage of rising property values by selling a current property that they own for a profit.

Situation #1: Purchasing a \$375,000 house with a 5% down payment	
Down payment:	\$ 18,750
Interest cost (at 3.89%)	\$ 200,139.45
Mortgage insurance (at 3.10%)	\$14,250
Mortgage amount	\$ 370,500
Monthly payment (25 years)	\$ 1,926.87
Income (rule of 30%)	\$6,422.90/month OR \$77,074.80/year

Situation #2: Purchasing a \$375,000 house with a 10% down payment	
Down payment:	\$ 37,000
Interest cost (at 3.89%)	\$ 194,936.38
Mortgage insurance (at 3.10%)	\$10,462.50
Mortgage amount	\$ 347,962.50
Monthly payment (25 years)	\$ 1,809.661
Income (rule of 30%)	\$ 6,032.20/month OR \$72,386.40 /year

Situation #3: Purchasing a \$375,000 house with a 20% down payment	
Down payment:	\$ 75,000
Interest cost (at 3.89%)	\$ 168,066.72
Mortgage insurance	N/A
Mortgage amount	\$ 300,000
Monthly payment (25 years)	\$ 1,560.22
Income (rule of 30%)	\$5,200/month OR \$62,408/year

These numbers show that the median household can afford a house worth this value, the principle of home affordability raises questions for individuals earning less than the average median income and their capacity to afford a house. The average house in Kitimat sells for less than housing in Terrace and Prince Rupert. It needs to consider that a house below the average market value represents an increased financial liability because the value reflects the state of the house. The work to maintain it as well as improvements. This represents a greater amount of money spent yearly on maintaining the house than the 30% prescribed.

In Canada, there is a national housing crisis that is recognized by the public services and politicians at all levels of government, as well as housing advocates, associations, and corporations. To study the rental market through the years, we used the data provided by the CHMC (CHMC, 2021).

Regarding the distribution of the population in private households, the 2021 census counted 3,605 occupied dwellings out of a total of 4,381 dwellings in Kitimat. The population occupying these private dwellings is 8,215 out of 8,236. At the time, the survey was being conducted the data displays those 21 persons are homeless. There is an amount of shadow residents that could be occupying dwellings but are not considered in the census data. These numbers represents that there are 776 dwellings that were not occupied, presenting a rate of vacancy of 17.71%.

According to BC Housing there is 16 units of subsidized and/or low-income housing at Douglas Place. These units are, composed exclusively of bachelor units. Tamitik Status of Women holds 6 units at Douglas Place that are operated as Second Stage housing for women fleeing abuse, single, and accessing support while still living in an autonomous way.

Kiwanis Village has 12, 1-bedroom units, for seniors and persons with disabilities. Kiwanis Village is run jointly with Delta King Place, where access to the units is through a Health assessment. It is a subsidized 15-unit facility for seniors and persons with disabilities who require assisted living. The monthly charge for residents residing in this building is 70% of the persons income up to a certain amount. Delta King Place has a kitchen and served meals. Cable, phone, and hydro are charged to tenants. Individuals are also responsible for laundry, medication, and personal hygiene products. Residents in assisted living are expected to still have a degree of independence.

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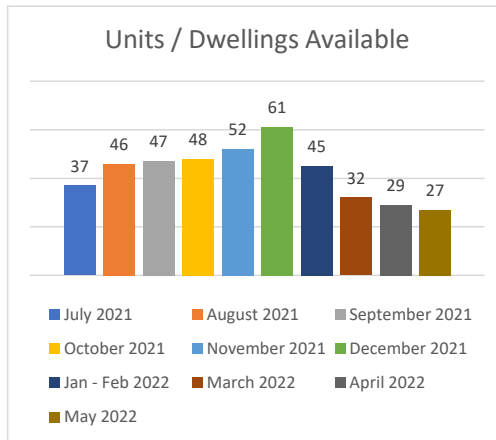
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During the time of this report, Kitimat residents are also awaiting the construction of a new facility for Tamitik Status of Women. This new building is planned to include the following:

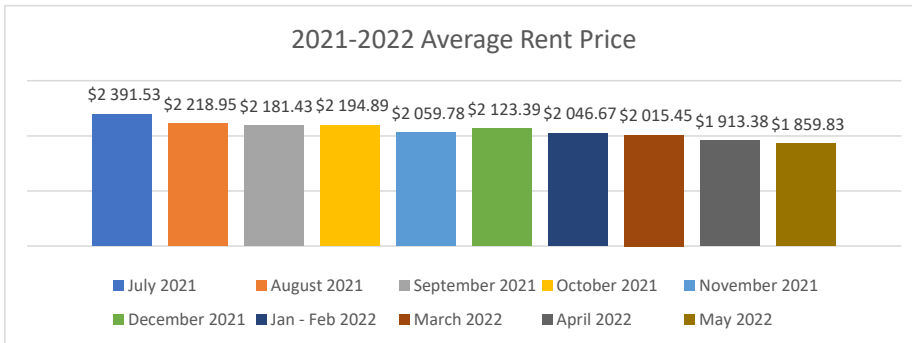
- Twelve-bed Transition House for women and children
- Twelve units for Second Stage Housing for women
- Twenty units of Affordable Housing (all lease holders will be women)
- 24-hour daycare

- Office space for existing BC Housing funded programs operated by Tamitik Status of Women

To better assess the situation of housing prices, The number of units advertised has been compared to the average price. At first, July 2021 prices were justified by the demand VS availability because there were thirty-seven units advertised for an average market price of \$2,391.53 per month. This correlation was confirmed in August when the average price was observed to have decreased of -7.21% compared to the previous month



while there were nine additional available dwellings on the market.



In September 2021, the available dwellings increased to forty-seven while the average rent saw a decrease of -1.70%. This tendency was interrupted in October when an increase of one available unit and a slight increase of 0.6% compared to the previous month. In November 2021, the number of available advertised units climbed to fifty-two while the average rental market price decrease to \$2,059.78, which is -6.15% compared to the previous month. By December 2021, the highest amount of available advertised units was sixty-one, with an average price of \$2,123.39, a variation

of +3.08% comparing to the previous month. The average rental market price started to decrease again by January 2022, as well as the number of available advertised dwellings. Although rental market prices decreasing could be looked at as a positive for the affordability of life in Kitimat, the margins that need to be considered are the types of dwellings were not divided by categories meaning that the average prices only reflect the average price of dwellings advertised and does not take into account if the housing advertised is appropriate for those in-need.

Additionally, an audit of online advertising of market housing from July 2021 to May 2022 was done. The following graph shows the average monthly rent advertised for each month of the target period, represented below.

Referring to the CMHC 2021 survey data regarding the rental housing market in centres with a population of 2,500 to 10,000, the data does not appear to be consistent with local advertisements. As shown in the table below, the average rent for apartments and row houses was \$ 1,475 per month. This data does not include the single detached houses for rent and the categories of housing available in Kitimat. Though these units remain affordable by definition, they are not the first choice for families residing in Kitimat. According to the same survey, the vacancy rate for these units was 15.4% in Kitimat, compared to a provincial average of 5.2%.

Type of Dwelling	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	Average
Row and Apartments - Kitimat	\$1,218	\$1,634	\$1,475
Apartments - Kitimat	\$1,218	\$1,651	\$1,491
Row - Kitimat	**	\$1,293	**

Data collected from different tables published by the CMHC.

For more complete comparisons, below is a table showing data around prices of rentals in other communities located in Northern British Columbia. The surrounding towns are also seeing the impacts of the economic development. The data collected is displayed in a table to show the difference between other municipalities in Northern BC and Kitimat.

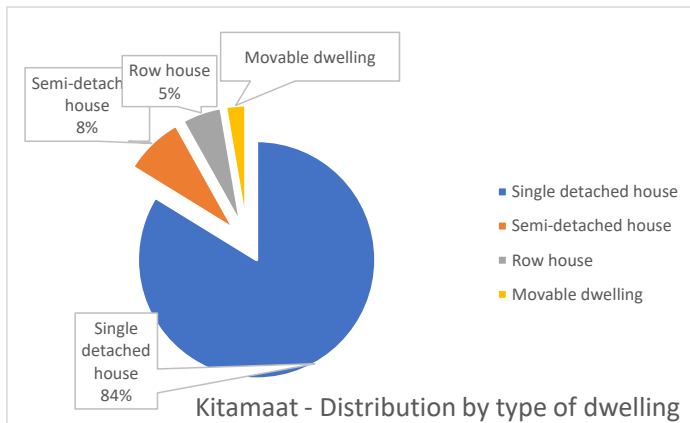
City / town / area	Bachelor	1 Bedroom	2 Bedrooms	3 Bedrooms	Average
Prince George	\$ 715	\$ 836	\$ 1,026	\$ 1,147	\$ 976
Dawson Creek	\$ 657	\$ 836	\$ 1,035	\$ 1,247	\$ 964
Fort St. John	\$ 612	\$ 753	\$ 1,035	\$ 1,104	\$ 959
Prince Rupert	\$ 814	\$ 945	\$ 974	\$ 989	\$ 960

Terrace	**	\$ 911	\$ 992	**	\$ 1,019
Williams Lake	\$ 711	\$ 739	\$ 963	\$ 1,217	\$ 963
Smithers		\$ 609	**	\$ 1,088	\$ 826

There is a crucial difference between the data collected in classified ads versus the 2021 survey completed by CMHC, the following considerations are to be considered to better clarify the data.

- The CMHC considers apartments and row houses in private dwellings dedicated for the rental market. Single-detached and semi-detached houses are not considered.
- The data studies units and dwellings that were occupied before the buzz & boom phase, so before the prices got up which means the rent amount is subject to a limited increase each year unless major renovations or renovations.
- There is no research data available that indicates the cost the before, during, and after KMP and LNG projects or any bust phases previously.

In Haisla/Kitamaat, the last census counted 187 occupied private dwellings from a total 211 representing a ratio of 84%. Majority of the dwellings were single detached homes. Although most families in the village are homeowners, there is no available data regarding the private rental market there.



Currently, M’akola Development Services has created a project for a multi-family housing building in Haisla Nation’s Kitamaat Village. This build will consist of 23 units, within a 3-story building. The objective is to be able to provide

affordable housing for Haisla Nation members living on-reserve as well as members wishing to relocate back there. These units are scheduled to be available in 2022.

The website of the developers details the units as following:

- 5, one-bedroom units
- 12, two-bedroom units
- 6, three-bedroom apartments
- Ground floor community space
- Ample shared deck/outdoor spaces

Other housing options that are available for Haisla Nation members, are described as

- 6 Units in 3 duplexes: located on the reserve
- Kuldo Suites composed of 80 units: located off-reserve

When Kuldo Suites was purchased, 60 units were already occupied and 20 were being renovated and soon to be available for band members. Haisla Nation members are eligible for discounted rent.

*There are no publication and/or reports available describing the situation of rental housing market units in Kitimaat.

The rental market prices reflect the hope of landlords and owners to benefit from the economic development and make a profit from rentals. There is a dichotomy between the owner's market because Kitimat has the most affordable real estate market in Northern BC but the highest rental prices. This may not be an issue for out-of-town workers earning a live-in allowance but the local population who are in an economic situation are deprived from suitable housing for their and family needs.

POPULATION'S INSIGHTS ON HOUSING:

The Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment showed that out of 68 participants, 58 answered the question regarding the type of dwelling occupied. From this number, 51.72% owned their house, 43.10% rented and 5.17% declared they are staying at a friends or family members.

For the question about the affordability of housing, while the occupants of the Kitimaat Village were declaring a lower income, the price paid for their housing accommodation was lower. A tendency of crowding in houses amongst lower incomes individuals was noticed, as well as a higher ratio of food insecurity. Most of these respondents declaring living in overcrowded settings are mostly persons with disabilities, mental health challenges, handicaps, and chronic illnesses.

Another challenge highlighted amongst individuals is the price of their rental that either equals or even often surpasses the ir income, arising the challenge for them to afford to feed themselves and their families.

Food Security

“I cannot afford to buy fresh produce or decent meats for proper nutrition.” “We go into credit card debt every month to pay for groceries.” – Lived experience voice.

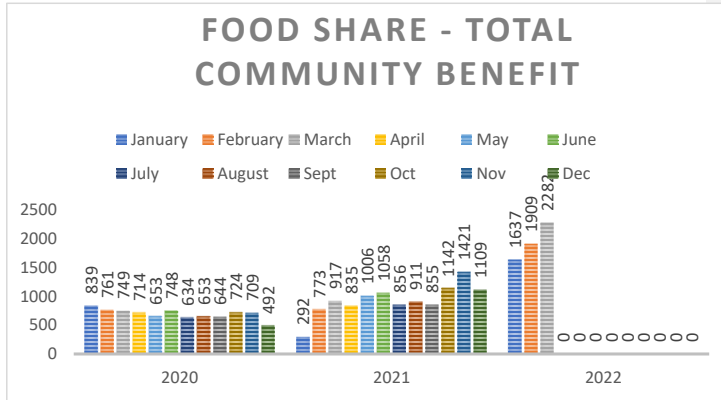
Food security is a crucial aspect in an individual’s life who is impacted by poverty. Expenses such as housing, utilities and transportation typically do not vary much from one week/month to another, but the cost of groceries will vary based on the following factors:

- The season
- Holidays
- Disturbances in the supply chains
- Meteorologic catastrophes
- Pandemics, endemics, etc.

During this research, a search was conducted based on what is available locally and what studies are currently being done regarding food security. The following food resources that are available in Kitimat include:

- Kitimat Food Bank – Individuals and families can access once a month for non-perishable and other goods.
- Tamitik Status of Women Food Share Program – Operates daily, distributes food to those in need, provides education on food and nutrition and connects individuals with other support needs.
- Child Development Centre’s Good Food Box – Up to a \$40 fee, offers an alternative fruit, and vegetable distribution system to increase availability for a modest fee.
- Kitimat Meals on Wheels – Which was initiated and operated by Northern Health. This service is a meal delivery service for elders and persons with disabilities.
- Kitimat Community Services Society’s Community Garden – Provides Garden space for community members near Northwest Community College for a regular fee.

For the broader impact and markers of food insecurity in Kitimat, data was requested from service providers, on a voluntary level. While being a service operated by Tamitik Status of Women, the Food Share data from 2020 until



March 2022 was available for the study.

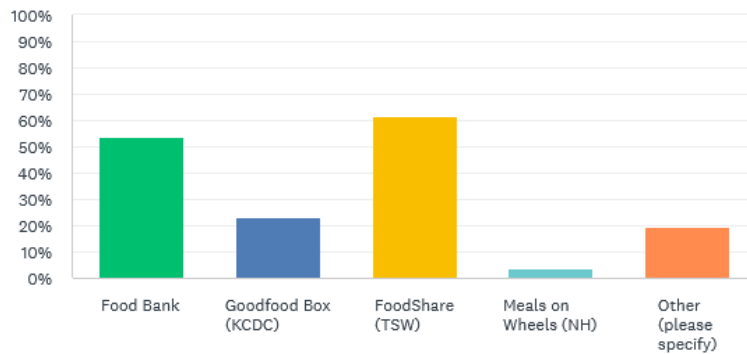
As highlighted above, 2022 is the year Food Share had the most clients requiring support in comparison to previous years.

Memos to be considered while interpreting this data:

- 2020 was the beginning of the COVID-19 hygiene measures and Food hares schedule was reduced, as well as the number of clients that could physically access the program.
- At this time the food share program operated out of the Cornerstone location by appointments oppose to drop-in. This created a barrier for clients.
- During the most restrictive parts of pandemic protocols, food had to be pre-bagged which was not a satisfactory solution for some as it eliminated the independence and choice.

In 2022, when COVID-19 vaccines were introduced, and mandates became less restrictive Food Share noticed a drastic increase in the numbers of clients accessing and utilizing the Support Services programs. Since January 2022, the first quarter reached nearly 50% of last year’s total number (5,828 persons in the first quarter of 2022 as compared to 11,175 persons in total for 2021). Although not everyone in the community will access Food Share and Hygiene Needs. These number represent many recurrent clients who rely on these services to be able to help fulfil their basic needs such as food, soaps, diapers, and feminine hygiene products.

USAGE OF KITIMAT FOOD RESOURCES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



The Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment asked participants “How satisfied are you with the price of foods at local grocery stores?” (Example: Are you able to afford everything you need to buy?) The following responses are voices of lived experiences:

“Not very, everything of good quality has doubled or tripled in price, and the more affordable stuff is very poor quality or near expiry/recalled.”

“It is difficult to afford everything I need. My mom helps me out financially.”

“It's harder and harder to eat healthily and stay in budget.”

“Last year average food bill per week \$100-130, this year \$200-230. Food costs have doubled in some cases.”

“We go into credit card debt every month to pay for groceries.”

“We can barely afford to eat meat now, and it is only getting worse.”

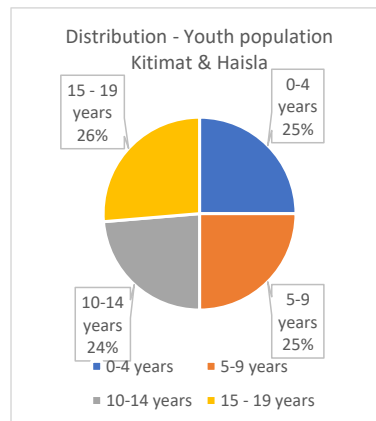
“Everything is going up in price. With the gas, to the food, to hydro, etc. It won't be long until we can't afford to buy our food. Had to go to the food bank when I was laid off work and in between jobs this year. Now I'm back working.”

According to a stakeholder: *“A good part of our clients come to us for assistance as they pay most of their income in rent and utilities, but then they struggle to afford food and other necessities.”*

Children, Youth, and Families

“The lack of daycare in this town is appalling. I had to stay home an additional year before we were able to get her into daycare and now it is closing, we have no idea what to do except for myself to stay home to take care of her.” - Lived experience voice.

While completing the assessment, research data has been collected about population and available resources for children, youth, and families in Kitimat and Kitamaat village. For convenience, anyone 19 and below was included presenting a population of 1,415 between Kitimat and Kitamaat. Youth in Kitimat and Kitamaat village compose 16% of the overall population which is the age group that comprises the smallest number of individuals. The age distribution of youth remains quite balanced as approximately a quarter of this group makes-up each age-group. The 2021 census reported 760 couples with children in Kitimat and Haisla Nation, and 390 lone parents-led families.



The Poverty Reduction Assessment survey included questions about the different aspects and realities experienced by youth and families in the area, such as:

- Availability of health and social services, including the ease of access and the sufficient promotion made
- The diversity and inclusivity in schooling programs
- The income supports
- Childcare resources

Tamitik Status of Women’s new build project will be providing a 24/7 childcare facility to accommodate atypical work schedules. This will give parents the opportunity to source and maintain work within the industrial industry that dominates employment in the community.

SECTION 2:

Poverty Reduction Strategies Across Canada

Poverty reduction strategies are nothing new, and the Kitimat region is in a fortunate position to discover how industries, resources, and rural location impacts people's experience of poverty. The following section will consider the learnings of other communities having gone through similar hardships. This review focuses on poverty reduction strategies throughout Canada.

CANADA'S POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

Canada's first Poverty Reduction Strategy – Opportunity for All developed by Employment and Social Development Canada was passed in August 2018 after an extensive consultation process that began in 2016. In June 2019, the Canadian Poverty Reduction Act came into law.

Opportunity for All includes long-term commitments to guide the Government of Canada's actions and investments including developing Canada's first Official Poverty Line; ambitious and concrete poverty reduction targets, a plan to address data gaps and track progress on poverty; the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Poverty; and poverty reduction legislation. The official poverty line departs from one of the more commonly used measures of poverty, the Low-Income Measure After Tax (those with an income less than half of the median income) in preference for a Market Based Measure (combined costs of a basket of goods and services required to meet basic needs). This means that the definition of those living in poverty line is affected by the cost of living those changes depending on the location.

Opportunity for All is based on three pillars to focus government actions to reduce poverty:

- **Dignity:** Lifting Canadians out of poverty by ensuring basic needs – such as safe and affordable housing, healthy food, and healthcare – are met.
- **Opportunity and Inclusion:** Helping Canadians join the middle class by promoting full participation in society and equality of opportunity; and,
- **Resilience and Security:** Supporting the middle class by protecting Canadians from falling into poverty and by supporting income security and resilience.

TOGETHERBC: POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

In fall 2018, government passed BC’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Act to develop a pathway to reduce and prevent poverty in British Columbia. This strategy was developed to reduce BC’s overall poverty rate by 25% and a 50% reduction in child poverty by 2024. The strategy consists of four guiding principles, five foundation elements, and six priority action areas that span across BC government ministries.

THE STRATEGY’S FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Affordability
- Opportunity
- Reconciliation
- Social Inclusion

FIVE FOUNDATION ELEMENTS

- BC Child Opportunity Benefit
- Increasing BC’s Minimum Wage
- Making Child Care More Available and Affordable
- Increase Income Assistance and Disability Assistance Rate
- Leveraging Federal Initiatives and Supports

SIX KEY PRIORITY AREAS TO ENACT POVERTY REDUCTION AND TARGET IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE:

1. Making Housing More Affordable
2. Supporting Families, Children and Youth

3. Expanding Access to Education and Training
4. More Opportunities, More Jobs
5. Improving Affordability
6. Investing in Social Inclusion

TAMARACK INSTITUTE: A CONNECTED FORCE FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

The Tamarack Institute develops and supports collaborative strategies that engage citizens and institutions to solve major community issues across Canada. Tamarack began with two major goals; the first was to establish a learning centre that would provide research and document real stories, exemplary practice, and effective applications for community change. The second was to apply what was learned to end poverty.

Tamarack's work is comprised of two key areas of impact:

1. Learning Centre: exists to empower community changemakers to achieve greater impact. The 18 years of experience leading community change and advancing practice awards them to support municipalities, funders, non-profits, and community leaders through on-demand coaching and consulting, in-person and digital training, and publications that guide change efforts.

Five interconnected practices that support and lead to community change are:

- Collective Impact: How can we mobilize collaboration across sectors for systems change?
- Community Engagement: How can we engage the community to create and realize bold visions for the future?
- Collaborative Leadership: How can we bring the right people together in constructive ways?
- Community Innovation: How can we create, test, and scale new approaches?
- Evaluating Impact: How can we identify and amplify what works?

2. **Vibrant Communities:** Supports cities and local leaders to develop and implement large-scale change initiatives through the following learning networks:
 - **Communities Ending Poverty:** is a network of 330 municipalities represented by 80+ regional members working collaboratively to end poverty in their communities.
 - **Cities Deepening Community:** is a network of 67 cities seeking to strengthen neighbourhoods and 25 cities developing community plans to grow citizen engagement, civic leadership, and a sense of belonging.
 - **Communities Building Youth Futures:** is a five-year strategy to work with 13 communities to develop system-wide solutions for youth as they build and act upon plans for their future.
 - **Community Climate Transitions:** is building a network of communities that are committed to tackling climate change through a multi-solving approach that advances social, environmental, and economic goals simultaneously.

Tamarack Institute believes that when we are effective in strengthening community capacity to engage citizens, lead collaboratively, deepen community, and reduce poverty, our work contributes to the building of peace and a more equitable society.

THE BC POVERTY REDUCTION COALITION

The BC Poverty Reduction Coalition consist of over 100 organizations and community mobilizations that have joined together to advocated for public policy solutions to end poverty, homelessness, and inequality in BC. The work is grounded in the foundation of universal human rights that prioritized equity-seeking groups, and a whole government, cross-ministry approach to ending poverty.

The BCPRC Blueprint for Justice is based on four principles that shape recommendations to Government: Economic Security, Universal Basic Services, Equity, and Climate Justice.

ECONOMIIC SECURITY

- Extreme Poverty and Homelessness: Achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1: Zero Poverty, 1.1. by eradicating extreme poverty in all its forms by 2030 and ensuring all those who are homeless have homes by 2030 in B.C.
- Working poverty and employment standards: Implement interventions to reduce and eliminate precarious work in B.C.

UNIVERSAL BASIC SERVICES

- Health Care: Expansion and protection of our publicly funded health care system to ensure equitable access to health care for all.
- Information: Fulfilling our right to online access, safety, and security.
- Education: Protecting and expanding our publicly funded education system.
- Childcare: Strengthening our emergent childcare plan in B.C.
- Housing: Strengthening our emergent childcare plan in B.C.
- Democracy and Legal Services: Democratic participation and access to justice for all.
- Transportation: Universally accessible basic mobility for all.

EQUITY:

- Equity principal addresses who are excluded or disenfranchised due to a lack of proactive equity measures, and guides work around decolonization, racial justice, LGBTQIA2S+ rights, gender equality, and disability rights. BCPRC builds public awareness about substantive equality and equity in relation to economic, social, and cultural rights.

CLIMATE JUSTICE:

- The Climate Justice principle prioritizes reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty, poverty, and systemic inequality reduction in all climate change-related policy planning and in the movement-based action to save our planet.

END POVERTY EDMONTON

End Poverty Edmonton (EPE) is a community enterprise working towards prosperity for all through advancing reconciliation, the elimination of racism, livable incomes, affordable housing,

accessible and affordable transit, affordable and quality childcare, and access to mental health services and addiction supports. EPE is a space for agencies, funders, service providers and people with lived experience to share their knowledge to meet the vision of eliminating poverty in Edmonton in a generation.

The road map to End Poverty Edmonton consists of 35 action priorities that are organized under five goals:

1. Toward true reconciliation
2. Justice for all
3. Move people out of poverty
4. Invest in a poverty-free future
5. A movement to change the conversation to end poverty

EVERYONE IS HOME YELLOWKNIFE

A 10-year plan to end homelessness was set in motion by the Yellowknife Community Advisory Board beginning in January 2017. This plan's objective is to by 2026, homelessness in Yellowknife will be prevented wherever possible; if homelessness occurs, it is a rare and brief experience. The core tenets of this plan are a housing first approach with wrap-around supports that are flexible and customized to participants needs and strengths.

The plan sets forward key directions and goals that include:

1. Leadership

- Strike a Yellowknife Homelessness commission at the highest decision-making levels to champion the plan
- Increase affordable housing options
- Engage lived experiences in the movement to end homelessness

2. Coordination

- Introduce an interagency council to coordinate homelessness services
- Improve information and knowledge about homelessness

- Support the creation of homelessness strategies across Northwest Territories

3. Reconciliation

- Advance the calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Embed an Indigenous lens to ending homelessness
- Support enhancement of indigenous wellness and cultural supports in Yellowknife

4. Healing

- Enhance access to mental health and addiction supports
- Ensure adequate emergency response capacity is in place to ensure zero exposure deaths
- Develop and implement Northern Indigenous housing first programs with wrap around supports

ABBOTSFORD HOMELESSNESS

Abbotsford City Council's Task Force on Homelessness has developed a plan with the goal of ensuring that everyone in Abbotsford has a home. The focus of this plan is to create conditions that prevent homelessness and quickly support those who have become homeless to again have a home. The Task Force of Homelessness developed five strategic directions followed by priority actions to guide the Homelessness Action Plan that include:

1. Facilitate a Housing First Approach

- Promote partnerships with organizations to provide more housing across the spectrum by hiring an experienced Housing and Homelessness Coordinator to implement the Homelessness Action Plan.
- Initiate the development of a procurement plan for housing across the spectrum

2. Advocate for housing and wrap-around support

- Lobby for an Assertive Community Treatment Team
- Foster the concept of wrap-around support

3. Initiate a Prevention Program

- Initiate a training and prevention program
 - Enhance the application process for recovery homes
 - Advocate for discharge practices that support prevention of homelessness
 - Adopt policies to support scattered site and small housing programs
 - Continue to implement affordable housing strategy
 - Support improved food security
4. Create a culture of awareness, inclusiveness, and respect
- Promote a culture of awareness
 - Initiate a dialogue on Community engagement and volunteerism
5. Foster collaboration between agencies, community, and government
- Establish a housing and homelessness advisory committee
 - Establish a housing first centre

REDUCING POVERTY IN ONTARIO

Building a Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty in Ontario; is the Ontario government's plan to address poverty over the next five years by laying a strong foundation to help those in need. The five-year poverty reduction strategy outlines a cross-government plan that builds on the government's response to the COVID-19 outbreak to prevent people from falling into poverty and dependence on social assistance while supporting economic recovery. The government will provide the right supports and services with the goal of increasing the number of social assistance recipients moving into meaningful employment and financial stability each year from 35,000 in 2019 to 60,000 by 2024.

The poverty reduction strategy is built upon four pillars:

1. Encouraging job creation and connecting people to employment
2. Connecting people with the right supports and services
3. Making life more affordable and building financial resiliency
4. Accelerating action and driving progress

TORONTO POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

The City of Toronto has developed a long-term strategy to address immediate needs, create pathways to prosperity and drive systemic change for those living in poverty in the city. The Toronto Poverty Reduction contains 17 recommendations to be achieved by 2035.

Housing Stability

1. Improve the quality of all affordable housing
2. Assist low-income individuals and families to secure and maintain affordable housing
3. Increase the supply of affordable housing

Service Access

4. Increase service access and availability
5. Improve access to high-quality programs for children and youth

Transit Equity

6. Make transit more affordable for low-income residents
7. Improve transit services in the inner suburbs

Food Access

8. Eliminate hunger
9. Increase access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food

Quality Jobs and Livable Wages

10. Improve the quality of and access to income supports
11. Create employment opportunities for low-income groups with high unemployment rates
12. Improve the quality of jobs

Systemic Change

13. Leverage the economic power of the city to stimulate job growth, support local businesses, and drive inclusive economic growth
14. Create a seamless social support system
15. Coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the strategy
16. Engage City staff and residents on poverty reduction efforts
17. Dedicate funding to poverty reduction actions

The City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy Office regularly reports on achievements and other updates related to the strategy.

PEEL POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY: COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee was created in 2008 following a local commitment to further the work that began with the Region of Peels 2005 Strategic Review of Poverty in Peel. The Peel Poverty Reduction Committee is co-chaired by the Untied Way Greater Toronto and the Region of Peel. The Committee consists of representation from community groups and organizations, regional and municipal governments, the education and health care systems and residents. The mission is to create a Peel Community where everyone works together to build a poverty-free future. They recently released a 'refreshed' strategy for 2018-2028.

2018-2028 Strategy Priority Areas and Goals

1. **Income Security:** Equitable and inclusive access to income that results in adequate income security for Peel residents.
2. **Economic Opportunity:** Stable, non-precarious employment opportunities. Reduced systemic barriers, including inequitable access to stable non-precarious employment and good quality education for marginalized and equity seeking groups.
3. **Well-being and Social Inclusion:** Equitable and inclusive access to essential supports and services that meet the needs Peel residents and their human rights.

SECTION 3:

Towards a Kitimat Poverty Reduction Strategy

This section combines lessons learned from past records, research, and engagement in the Kitimat surroundings. This will provide a roadmap for the development and implementation of a strategy and consideration in the Kitimat surroundings moving forward. Through the survey and the work in the community, Kitimat shares a desire to create a community where everyone thrives.

A ROADMAP FOR A KITIMAT POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

There are several initial principles that are themes across the best examples of poverty reductions strategies. These key principles underline the work in the development and implementation of strong poverty reduction strategies.

Key Principles

Equity, decolonization, and reconciliation: An opportunity to create more equity and work towards reconciliation.

Social inclusion: Including the voices of lived experiences.

Human rights approach: Every Citizen has the right to enjoy basic freedoms and rights to fully participate in community life.

Evidence based: Drawing on good research and data to make informed decisions.

Key Action Areas

There are several factors that contribute to poverty that require key actions to develop a poverty reduction strategy. The key action areas include:

- Livable incomes & quality jobs
- Affordable housing
- Accessible & affordable transit
- Food security
- Childcare & early learning
- Health services, including mental health & addiction
- Social inclusion, social cohesion, or social equity
- Racial equity
- Stigma & discrimination – Changing the conversation
- Systemic change
- Community economic development
- Access to services

LEADING TO A KITIMAT POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

The following presents key strategies for addressing the key action areas:

- Improved income assistance, commitment to living wage
- Economic development strategies/ diversification, transition economies, adult education, and skills training
- Housing first models, cooperative housing
- Accessible and affordable transit, improved routes
- Community garden programs, social enterprise, low-cost nutritious food programs
- Childcare spaces and programs
- Access to doctors, harm reduction services, mental health, and counseling
- Involvement of diverse and lived experiences voices
- Apply racial / gender lens

- Accessible services
- Consider other levels of government
- Challenging acceptance of poverty / eliminating poverty

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE VOICE

The Kitimat Poverty Reduction Assessment Survey asked individuals “Do you think Kitimat has changed in the past few years, please explain if you qualify the change to be positive or negative.” The following are voices of lived experiences:

“Higher rent.”

“The cost of living has gone up in the few years I've lived here. I'm still struggling to make ends meet, still in debt.”

“Negative change, house prices are comparable to Vancouver with none of the amenities.”

“Both, higher rent/costs for living but more job openings.”

“It has become negatively way more expensive and from my understanding the drug and crime rate has increased by a lot.”

“It is getting too busy, there is too many offices and catering to the industry workers but not enough stores and other services for the main population.”

“I qualify it to be negative.”

“Both provided employment but no affordable rentals. House prices have gone up but there isn't an acceptable option if Seniors want to sell.”

“There is more work, but the rent is sky high.”

“Rent is ridiculous.”

“Mostly negative! There has been some good and improvements but, there is more social issues and poverty as well.”

“While some things have improved, the overall quality of life I feel has decreased.”

“More expensive than Vancouver.”

MOVING FORWARD

In summary, the key next steps forward in the development of a Kitimat poverty reduction strategy will be to:

1. Identify backbone organization(s) to support the work
2. Look for resources to support the strategy development
3. Determine governance and accountability structures
4. Identify priority action areas, and actions with measurable outcomes and timelines
5. Move from strategy to implementation: monitor collective progress on priority action areas

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