



Tri-Cities
**Homelessness
& Housing**
Task Group

#20 – 2991 Lougheed Hwy,
Coquitlam, BC

October 7, 2020

Mayor Richard Stewart,
City of Coquitlam

Mayor Brad West,
City of Port Coquitlam

Mayor Rob Vagramov,
City of Port Moody

Dear Mayors,

A little over 2 years ago, our past co-chair, Sandy Burpee, approached the Tri-Cities for funding in support of recruiting a new coordinator to carry out ongoing work for the task group. This was essential as we, with our full-time roles at Vancity Credit Union, could not do so without the support of a coordinator. We have appreciated your past support and feel that we are on the doorstep of major changes within our community which will reduce the number of people living on the streets enabling us to reach our ultimate goal of eradicating homelessness.

We are writing to you today to request funding for a Task Group Coordinator. The advent of COVID-19 and the declaration of a State of Emergency on March 18th has delayed our request which typically comes forward earlier in the year. We are anticipating an increase in workload as we find more people facing homelessness due to the financial strains of the pandemic. As such we are requesting for funding for a 2-year period beginning January 1, 2021. Two years is proposed to reduce the administrative burden of asking for renewal of funding annually. This will also better able us to look to the future as the face of homelessness is changing rapidly.

The proposed annual budget for the Task Group Coordinator position is \$17,523.00* including GST (\$31.86/hour, 50 hours/month, 11 months/year). In the past we have utilized municipal meeting space on a rotating basis between the three municipalities. Currently, meetings are taking place virtually and will likely carry forward until it is safe to meet. Should we once again be able to convene in person, meeting space on a rotating basis would be appreciated.

We have been successful in securing funding; for example, to support Homelessness Action Week activities and to do updates to the Task Group Website. Given that granting organizations typically do not provide funding to sustain operation, we would be grateful if each of the Tri-Cities municipalities would continue to provide this funding.



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Under the terms of the Simon Fraser Formula, each municipality would contribute the following amount for two years:

- City of Coquitlam: Coordinator - $\$17,523 \times .6161 = \$10,795.92/\text{year} = \mathbf{\$21,591.84}$
- City of Port Coquitlam: Coordinator - $\$17,523 \times .2359 = \$4,133.68/\text{year} = \mathbf{\$8,267.36}$
- City of Port Moody: Coordinator - $\$17,523 \times .1480 = \$2,593.40/\text{year} = \mathbf{\$5,186.80}$

To aid in your decision, please find attached the Task Group's mission, Strategic Plan, a list of participating organizations, Task Group accomplishments, and the job description for the Task Group coordinator. Here are a few highlights of this year's accomplishments:

- Responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by working closely with BC Housing and Fraser Health to open a Capacity Expansion Shelter. Successfully worked with all stakeholders to ensure proper services were delivered with little impact on neighboring businesses and residents.
- Provided hands on support at the Emergency Response Shelter at Trinity United during the early days of the pandemic until its closing on March 31.
- At the request of BC Housing, took the lead on monthly calls with BCH, Fraser Health, Raincity, and all municipalities. The intent of the call is to collaborate at all levels to find workable solutions to get supportive housing for the homeless.
- Actively updated the Street Survival Guide to reflect the fluid nature of COVID-19 response.
- Began conversations with the Federal Reaching Home Team to identify local projects in need of Capital Grant Funding.
- Began conversations to work with all levels of government to ensure those with no fixed address can have a safe and non-judgemental place to vote in all elections.
- Worked closely with the Community Development Coordinator for the newly formed **Community-based Overdose Response Team** to identify gaps in services in the Tri-Cities.

The Task Group's Terms of Reference are available upon request. Funds received will be held in trust by Share Family Services, the Task Group's financial account holder.

Thank you for the City's consideration.

Yours truly,

Patricia Sonier & Cristina Pereira

Co-Chair, Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group

*This is a 6.2% increase over the previous contract, factoring COLA from Stats Canada.

Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group

Mission-Need-Role

Our vision

A future where all citizens of the Tri-Cities have access to safe, secure, and appropriate housing and the supports they need to retain it.

Our mission

To provide leadership to create a continuum of housing and supports for those who are homeless or precariously housed in the Tri-Cities.

Need

Homelessness and housing need continue to be key community issues in the Tri-Cities and broader Metro Vancouver region. These issues are complex and involve many different policy and program responses, approaches, and stakeholders to address the needs of a diverse part of the community. The Task Group provides an opportunity for diverse stakeholders in the Tri-Cities community to have a collaborative approach and a credible collective voice to:

- ♦ Identify gaps and link efforts to address homelessness and housing need;
- ♦ Inform local and senior governments about community-specific needs and trends and provide feedback on their policies and action plans with respect to homelessness and housing affordability.

Role

- ♦ Create an annual action plan which provides strategic guidance for Task Group initiatives throughout the year;
- ♦ Identify gaps in facilities and support services available to persons homeless in the Tri-Cities to assist them to restore their independence, and advocate for the actions necessary to address these gaps;
- ♦ Advocate for better mental health and addictions care for homeless and "at risk" people as well as the general population;
- ♦ Champion Tri-Cities affordable housing projects which are seeking municipal development permission;
- ♦ Deliver presentations and provide education to local service clubs, corporate, faith and non-profit groups and the public in general to foster awareness and the engagement of all sectors of the Tri-Cities community in preventing and responding to homelessness;
- ♦ Keep track of and disseminate up-to-date information on the prevalence and nature of homelessness and housing need in the Tri-Cities;
- ♦ Provide a forum for Tri-Cities municipalities to vet their homelessness and housing-related policies;
- ♦ Participate in the Tri-Cities Healthier Communities Partnership, recognizing that homelessness is a key indicator of community health;
- ♦ Publish an up-to-date directory of resources available to persons homeless in the Tri-Cities ("Tri-Cities Survival Guide")
- ♦ Maintain a network of service providers on the frontlines of homelessness in the Tri-Cities – police, bylaw enforcement, fire-rescue, outreach, shelter providers and provincial agencies ("Tri-Cities Homelessness Frontline Network") and keep the Resource Toolkit up to date;
- ♦ Keep abreast of best practices in addressing homelessness;
- ♦ As a Community Homelessness Table, provide input on Tri-Cities-specific insights and needs to the regional collaborative approach to homelessness in Metro Vancouver ("Home Front"), and participate in implementing the regional homelessness plan at the Tri-Cities level.

Task Group Coordinator Job Description

Job Purpose:

The Task Group Coordinator will carry out the week-to-week activities of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group in support of the Task Group's mission, role, goals, and objectives.

Job Duties:

- ♦ In concert with the Task Group Executive Committee, develop an annual action plan with input from the standing committees and vet with Task Group participants;
- ♦ Support the Task Group, its committees and working groups in implementing the annual action plan and report on accomplishments at year-end;
- ♦ Implement the Task Group communication and marketing plan to maintain and expand community awareness and engagement in issues of homelessness and housing affordability;
- ♦ Maintain and update the Task Group website as a vibrant social media platform;
- ♦ Use social media channels to create public support for issues of homelessness and housing affordability;
- ♦ Be a single point of contact for media and the public, and for information distribution to the membership;
- ♦ Maintain and expand Tri-Cities faith group engagement with Task Group activities, including publishing a semi-annual Task Group newsletter;
- ♦ Recruit new Task Group participants that fit the mandate of the Task Group Terms of Reference;
- ♦ Prepare the agenda for the bi-monthly plenary Task Group meeting in concert with the Chair;
- ♦ Act as recorder at bi-monthly plenary Task Group meetings and distribute meeting minutes;
- ♦ Maintain the Task Group participant and e-mail lists;
- ♦ Provide updates to the Task Group on the progress of affordable housing project proposals in the Tri-Cities;
- ♦ Collect and disseminate up-to-date information on the prevalence and nature of homelessness and housing need in the Tri-Cities;
- ♦ Keep the Tri-Cities Street Survival Guide up to date;
- ♦ Convene semi-annual meetings of the Tri-Cities Homelessness Frontline Network;
- ♦ Represent the Task Group on the Tri-Cities Healthier Communities Partnership, the Council of Community Homelessness Tables, TC Food Security Table, TC Overdose Prevention CAT, and the BC Rental Housing Coalition.

Supporting Organizations & Individuals

ACT 2 Child and Family Services	Metro Vancouver
ACCESS Youth Outreach Services	Metro Vancouver Transit Police
Atira Women's Resource Society	Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction
BC Assessment Authority	New View Society
BC Housing	New West & District Labour Council
BC Not for Profit Housing	New West Homelessness Coalition
Blanket BC	North Fraser Pretrial Centre
Calvary Baptist Church	Northside Church
Canadian Mental Health Association	Pasta Polo
City of Coquitlam	Phoenix Society
City of Port Coquitlam	Pooni Group
City of Port Moody	Port Moody Community Care Committee
City Reach Society	Port Moody Fire Rescue
Coast Mental Health	Port Moody Police
Community Members	Provincial Health Services Authority
Community Living BC	Purpose Society
Como Lake United Church	RainCity Housing
Concert Properties	RCMP Community Policing
Coquitlam Alliance	Reaching Home
Coquitlam & Port Moody Public Libraries	St. Andrew's United Church
Douglas College	St. Laurence Anglican Church
Dusos Fine Foods	Salvation Army
Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship	Service Canada
Eagle Ridge United Church	SHARE Family & Comm. Services
Elizabeth Fry Society	Soroptimist Int. of Tri-Cities
Fraser Health Authority	SPARC BC
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Talitha Koum Society
Homelessness Services Association	The Bloom Group
Homes for Good Society	TL Housing Solutions
Hope for Freedom Society	Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership
Immigrant Services Society	Tri-Cities Mental Health
Industry Training Association	Tri-Cities Seniors Network
InnerVisions Recovery Society	Tri-City Transitions Society
King of Life Lutheran	Trinity United Church
Lookout Society	Village of Anmore
MLA – Coquitlam-Maillardville	VanCity – Tri-Cities Branches
MLA – Port Coquitlam-Burke Mtn.	VanCity Community Foundation
MP – Coquitlam-Port Coquitlam	WorkBC
MP New Westminster – Coquitlam	YWCA Como Lake Gardens & Vancouver

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June 2018 – Present

In addition to maintaining the earlier mandates and visions, the Task Group has also:

Responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by working closely with BC Housing and Fraser Health to open a Capacity Expansion Shelter. Successfully worked with all stakeholders to ensure proper services were delivered with little impact on neighboring businesses and residents.

Provided hands on support at the Emergency Response Shelter at Trinity United during the early days of the pandemic until its closing on March 31.

Reworked the existing HTG website with the support of a SPARC Homelessness Community Action Grant.

At the request of BC Housing, took the lead on monthly calls with BCH, Fraser Health, Raincity, and all municipalities. The intent of the call is to collaborate at all levels to find workable solutions to get supportive housing for the homeless.

Actively updated the Street Survival Guide to reflect the fluid nature of COVID-19 response.

Began conversations with the Federal Reaching Home Team to identify local projects in need of Capital Grant Funding.

Began conversations to work with all levels of government to ensure those with no fixed address can have a safe and non-judgemental place to vote in all elections.

Worked closely with the Community Development Coordinator for the newly formed **Community-based Overdose Response Team** to identify gaps in services in the Tri-Cities.

The Homelessness Frontline Network has caught the attention of neighboring communities who have requested to attend a meeting in hopes of replicating in their communities.

Continued to work with and support **3030 Gordon Shelter** in hopes to ease the burden on the heavy workload which organically falls to them.

Assisted in the reactivation and rallied public support for the church-hosted, rotating **Cold Wet Weather Bridge Shelter Program** concept as an interim measure pending opening of a permanent emergency shelter.

Supported the residents of **1955 Western Drive** who were unexpectedly made aware of an "application to permit" to the City of Port Coquitlam for "major renovations" in Port Coquitlam and were facing eviction.

Created and coordinated community-wide support for **Atira Housing Project** – Port Coquitlam, during public consultation and public hearings.

Spoke up in support of and provided letters of support for **PoCo Integrated Court**.

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Advocated with Fraser Health for **Sharps Disposal Boxes** throughout the community.

Supported Fraser Health on the opening of the first **OAT Clinic** in Port Moody.

Expanded and maintained the **Street Survival Guide** which provides contact information of services available for homeless persons in the Tri-Cities.

Taking steps to create a **Street Survival App for iPhone and Android** utilizing the students from the Inquiry Hub in Coquitlam.

Successfully submitted a nomination package for **Community Member of the Year** to the **Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards** nomination package for former Task Group Coordinator, Sandy Burpee.

Various activities for **Homelessness Awareness Week** - Distributed comfort kits to area agencies who service the homeless; supported Stories from the Street at Coquitlam Library; selected personal hygiene products for the homeless at area Vancity branches; organized lunch served by Pasta Polo at 3030 Gordon.

Took steps to increase the number of **hot meals** per week from 4 to 7 (one per day.)

Put on **Homelessness - a Primer for Business** in conjunction with the Downtown BIA in Port Coquitlam and Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce in Coquitlam.

Tri-Cities Homelessness and Housing Task Group Strategic Plan – struck a committee to complete a 5-year strategic plan. Our Strategic Plan was written to coordinate with the **City of Coquitlam 3030 Gordon Task Force Action Plan**

Distributed Bed Rolls from the Fraser Pre-Trial Centre to a variety of services who work with the Homeless.

Created a list of Tri-Cities **Volunteer Opportunities** in response to community members and groups looking to volunteer their time and resources.

Facilitation a collaboration with key stakeholders to address the **Housing Crisis in the Tri-Cities** - BC Housing, Fraser Health, Hope for Freedom Society, City Planners, Council Representatives, etc.

Worked to gain clarity around proper ID for people with no fixed address to vote in **2018 municipal election**.

Began taking steps to set up a **Polling Station** at 3030 Gordon or **Mobile Voting** for next municipal election.

Continue to sit in on **key meetings**, attend **conferences** and sit at **various tables** – Tri-Cities Healthier Community Partnerships, Council of Community Homelessness Table, Regional Conversation on Youth Homelessness, BC Rental Housing Coalition, HSABC Conference, Work BC Inclusiveness Forum, Coquitlam Housing Forum.

Accomplishments 2007 – May 2018

Networking and Action Planning

- ◆ Have provided an ongoing forum where diverse groups in the Tri-Cities community have developed consensus on gaps in resources and support services available to persons homeless or at-risk in the Tri-Cities and created annual action plans to address these gaps: 3 levels of government, law enforcement, health, income assistance, homeless outreach, addiction services, non-profit service providers, community groups, local business and concerned citizens;
- ◆ Created the Homelessness Frontline Network, a network of organizations across the Tri-Cities that deal directly with homeless persons – police, fire, bylaw officers, outreach workers, RainCity Housing, Tri-Cities Mental Health etc. - and developed a **Homelessness Frontline Resource Toolkit**. Intent is to exchange information on the experience of homelessness in each of the Tri-Cities and foster open lines of communication when necessary for addressing escalating issues in the Tri-Cities

3030 Gordon Ave. Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Facility

- ◆ Identified need for full service, minimum barrier permanent emergency shelter in the Tri-Cities
- ◆ Drafted RFEI for 30 bed capacity shelter and transitional housing for adult men and women.
- ◆ Above actions lead to City of Coquitlam providing land at no cost to the Provincial Homelessness Initiative for an emergency shelter/transitional housing facility at 3030 Gordon Ave, which in turn precipitated BC Housing taking on the project as a provincial initiative
- ◆ Participated in the BC Housing-lead team preparing an RFP for a facility developer/operator and subsequent selection of successful proponent
- ◆ Reviewed and provided feedback on conceptual floor plan and site layout.
- ◆ Advised and assisted RainCity Housing with community engagement prior to facility opening and integration into the Tri-Cities community once the facility opened

Tri-Cities Cold Wet Weather Mat Program

- ◆ Developed church hosted, rotating CWW shelter program concept as an interim measure pending opening of a permanent emergency shelter
- ◆ Supported Hope for Freedom Society in implementation of CWW Mat Program
- ◆ Created a Policies & Procedures manual as well as a volunteer training manual for the CWW mat program

Tri-Cities Extreme Weather Response Plan

- ◆ Created the Tri-Cities Extreme Weather Response Plan and supported the operation of the Tri-Cities EWR shelter at Trinity United

Social License

- ◆ Created and coordinated community-wide support for social housing projects during public consultation and public hearings, including:
 - CWW Mat Program (3 cities)
 - Como Lake Gardens
 - 3030 Gordon Ave

Municipal Engagement

- ◆ All 3 Tri-Cities have appointed staff and councillor reps to the Task Group
- ◆ CWW Mat Program engaged all 3 Tri-Cities in confronting the challenges of homelessness, approving requisite rezoning, and responding to neighbourhood concerns
- ◆ Participated in and provided input to Port Coquitlam's Mayor's Action Team on Homelessness (MATH)

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Addictions and Mental Health

- ♦ Identified the need for medical and non-medical withdrawing management (detoxification) services in the Tri-Cities
- ♦ Researched different practices and models including a sobering centre
- ♦ Developed a "Community Addictions Strategy for Persons who are Homeless in the Tri-Cities" which resulted in:
 - Implementation of a "3 Things" community awareness campaign addressing stigmatization of persons with substance use disorder (website, rack cards, newspaper ads, bus ads)
 - Ongoing advocacy to Fraser Health for a mobile substance use withdrawal management program for the Tri-Cities

Youth Homelessness

- ♦ Developed and conducted a youth homelessness survey of youth-serving organizations in the Tri-Cities in partnership with Douglas College
- ♦ Created and published a report "Tri-Cities Youth Homelessness Survey" and followed-up with a forum of service-providers to determine need and priorities for youth homelessness initiatives in the Tri-Cities

Housing for Women and their Children

- ♦ Commissioned a study and report "The Housing Needs of Women and Their Children in the Tri-Cities". Briefed city planning staff and councils on report recommendations.
- ♦ Used the information to support expansion of Como Lake Gardens with 7 townhome units.
- ♦ Precipitated a proposed 87-unit non-profit housing project on Metro Vancouver land in Port Coquitlam for women and women-lead households

Services for Persons Homeless in the Tri-Cities

- ♦ Identified free shower and laundry facilities available to homeless persons
- ♦ Organized a Connect Day – multiple services under 1 roof – during Homelessness Action Week 2010 – 2012 inclusive
- ♦ Developed and maintain a **Street Survival Guide** which provides contact information for services available for homeless persons in the Tri-Cities

Riverview Lands Visioning Project

- ♦ Task Group requested by BC Housing in December 2013 to be the advisory group to the Riverview Lands Visioning project for social/housing issue.
- ♦ Submitted and published a Riverview Lands "Statement of Need" and "Companion Document" May 2014, making the case for affordable housing in the form of an inclusive community on the Riverview site in addition to a range of mental health and addiction services.
- ♦ Submitted a "Comments" document in January 2015 in response to land use proposals tendered at Open House #3

Annual Tri-Cities Housing Affordability Report

- ♦ Developed a Housing Affordability Report template using an amalgam of housing indicators used by each of the Tri-Cities
- ♦ Prepared and published Tri-Cities Housing Affordability Reports annually 2013 – 2016 inclusive

City of Coquitlam Housing Affordability Strategy

- ♦ Followed the development of Coquitlam's Housing Affordability Strategy
- ♦ Delivered interim feedback and recommendations to Coquitlam Planning staff on the draft HAS August 2014
- ♦ Tendered a formal response to the draft HAS in December 2014

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Advocacy

- ◆ Raised the profile of homelessness and housing affordability in the Tri-Cities community and become a credible community voice through presentations to Tri-Cities councils, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and faith groups; newspaper articles and opinion pieces
- ◆ Task Group website www.tricityshomelessness.ca on line September 2009. Website completely revamped in 2012, given a face lift in 2014, and completely revamped in 2019. Website includes blogs, information on services available for homeless persons and how the public can help; a library of reports and research projects on homelessness etc.
- ◆ Created the "Tri-Cities Homelessness Landscape" document to inform the community about homelessness in the Tri-Cities, and "Homelessness and Business in the Tri-Cities" to inform the business community how homelessness impacts business and how business can support efforts to end it. Both documents are accessible on the Task Group website.
- ◆ Conducted advocacy campaigns directed at homelessness and affordable housing during municipal, provincial, and federal election campaigns 2009 - 2014
- ◆ Coordinated or supported Metro Vancouver triennial homeless counts since 2008

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