



# 10 Years of Impact Report

SURREY HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOCIETY | September 2017

## Executive Summary

The 10th Anniversary of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS) presents an opportunity to look back and assess the impact of the Society on people experiencing homelessness as well as the non-profit service sector and the community. It is also a chance to recalibrate and think about how to move forward from this point.

Recent SHHS consultations with the nonprofit agency sector and the general public provide us with a clear picture of the public perception of homelessness in Surrey and the impact the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society has had to date. This is valuable knowledge when considering the path forward.

The consultations with the nonprofit service sector have told us that the SHHS is an effective leader in the community and a great partner. The Society works hard to ensure that the resources available for homelessness have as big an impact as possible. Through cultivating relationships, bringing potential partners together and raising awareness the Society is having a significant impact.

### Here are some of the main ideas that the agency representatives shared in their interviews:

- The Society effectively uses the funds available by being strategic, responsive, and supporting innovation. Funding decisions are based on local knowledge and awareness of the current realities in the sector and the community.
- The Society leverages its own funding resources by fostering relationships with third party donors and providing organizational assistance to Surrey nonprofit agencies.
- The Society brings a much needed focus on Surrey and draws attention to underserved populations and issues.
- The Society has fostered collaboration within the homeless sector and built capacity to achieve a better system of services and housing for people experiencing homelessness.
- Surrey is a unique city in the region. The Society is supporting the development of effective “Made in Surrey” solutions that are designed to meet the challenges and barriers faced by people who are experiencing homelessness in Surrey.

### Here are the some of the clearest messages that we received through the public opinion survey:

- There is a growing concern about people experiencing homelessness in Surrey. This may be linked to the increase in visible homelessness in the community;
- There is also a strong awareness of homelessness in the community and a significant rate of respondents who have relationships with people experiencing homelessness;
- There is a high degree of dissatisfaction with current efforts to address homelessness; respondents seem to be dissatisfied with all levels of government especially the provincial and federal levels of government; and,
- There is strong support for increasing services for mental health, youth, addictions, people leaving Corrections and for increasing affordable housing and shelters.





**Public and agency respondents had some ideas about the way forward for the Society:**

- Continue to grow the fund and work with third party donors – so much more is required in Surrey to meet the growing need;
- Advocate for Surrey regionally, provincially and federally to ensure that the City is receiving its share of the resources based on need;
- Continue to develop a local understanding of homelessness in relation to Indigenous people, as well as children and youth, and women;
- Continue to build organizational capacity within the sector to respond effectively to opportunities;
- Review granting procedures and continue to develop innovative approaches; and,
- Continue to raise awareness about homelessness as a societal issue in Surrey and the very real impact it has on individuals’ lives. Also continue to publicize the Society and what it has accomplished to date.

While the rates of homelessness are on the increase in Surrey at this time, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society has the knowledge and experience, built on a decade of supporting the nonprofit sector in Surrey, to understand the emerging issues, assist in the improvement of the local system of services, and respond effectively to the challenge.

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# Introduction

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS) an accomplishment worth celebrating! Over the past ten years the Society has provided **over \$3.5 Million** in funding to Surrey organizations that assist people experiencing homelessness. The Society has supported **55 projects** with more than **50 partners** assisting over **500 individuals**, including children, who were homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness. More challenging to measure, but one could argue equally as valuable, is the support for capacity building that the Society has provided to the non-profit service sector in Surrey.



This anniversary gives us the opportunity to look back and assess the impact of the Society on people experiencing homelessness as well as the non-profit service sector and the community. It is also a chance to recalibrate and think about how to move forward from this point.

Homelessness continues to be a challenge in Surrey and the broader Metro Vancouver Region. The 2017 Homeless Count preliminary findings indicate that 602 people experiencing homelessness were counted in Surrey. The rates have increased 49% in Surrey since 2014 while across the region the rate has gone up 30%. Taking time to understand the current forces at play in the community and beyond, develop innovative and strategic approaches, and monitor the results will enable the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society to continue to respond effectively.

In preparation for the Society’s 10 year anniversary public and sector consultations were commissioned. The SHHS hired a consultant to design and conduct the consultations. This report presents the key consultation findings.

# Context

## The Fund and the Society

In 2007, the City of Surrey allocated \$9 Million from the City’s Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to seed the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund. This was a response to the emerging trend of homelessness and lack of affordable housing in the City of Surrey. The Mayor’s Task Force determined that establishing the SHHS Board and Fund would result in the largest impact from these dollars.

The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund is an endowment – meaning the principal amount remains relatively intact. This allows the fund to have greater long-term impact; as the fund grows, the Society is able to use the interest on the endowment to provide more funding to housing and homelessness solutions.

The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society was established by Surrey City Council in 2007. The society oversees the management and growth of the fund, and makes recommendations about the awarding of grants.

In 2008 the Society awarded the first grant, a one-time \$1 Million amount, to Atira Women’s Resource Society to complete Maxxine Wright Place. Since that time the SHHS has held an annual granting process in Surrey.

## SHHS Strategic Plan – Grow, Grant, Lead

The work of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society is guided by the following Strategic Plan:

### VISION

Our vision is that everyone in Surrey has a home.

### MISSION

Our mission is to raise, manage and distribute funds to support programs, projects and initiatives to make a difference in the lives of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Surrey.

In 2014 the SHHS reviewed the Society’s Strategic Plan and confirmed the following 4 directions:

1. Fund development
2. Connect, convene and build capacity in the sector
3. Promote and communicate
4. Continue to be an effective grant maker



## Consultation Process

The content of this report is based on consultation with agencies that have received SHHS funding and the broader community. In June and July 2017 interviews were conducted with the Executive Directors of nine non-profit social service organizations in Surrey, which have received funding from the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society. Interviews were conducted in person and on site.

In July 2017 an online public opinion survey on homelessness in Surrey was conducted through the City of Surrey's CitySpeak platform. There were **908 respondents** who completed the survey. These respondents are self-selected individuals who have signed up to respond to regular CitySpeak surveys.

Together these two sources provide **valuable insight** into the current status of homelessness and service provision in the community and the impact of the Society's work. **This report provides an overview of the input from the public opinion poll and the agency interviews.**



## Impact Analysis: Homeless Serving Agencies

The interviews with agency representatives provide insight into how the **SHHS** is perceived in terms of partnership and leadership in the community. The impact of the Society is strong in the social service sector.

### The SHHS is an Effective Partner

Agency representatives were eager to talk about their partnerships with the SHHS. They said the Society partners more than most funders and it partners with everybody – big and small. The Society is proactive, open, collaborative, creative, and easy to work with and participates in the community. Staff members help with applications and limit competition amongst agencies. Staff members have been very helpful; the application process is interactive and applicants receive updates on every phase of the process. It is nice to have a funder who lets you present your idea to address homelessness – not prescribed like the Housing First model; proponents are able to try out ideas. There is funding for capacity building to support programs. The funded projects are great examples of the positive results that flow from the Society's ability to partner well.

*Each person that lives on our streets has a lived experience that is exceptionally valuable in learning root causes. We need to do better at reaching those roots before they lead down the path of poverty, homelessness, and/or addiction.*

Public Opinion Survey Respondent

### The SHHS is a Leader

Agency representatives remember when the Society was initiated. They say it set the tone in the community and conveyed the message that Surrey considers homelessness a serious issue. The Society dedicated actual dollars to addressing homelessness. It has built awareness, been an advocate, and brought the community together. SHHS is recognized as a key player in addressing homelessness in Surrey. It is viewed as one of the few strong voices for the community. The Society is known for having the hard conversations and challenging the status quo. It is active outside of Surrey in regional initiatives like the Homeless Count and Regional planning. Agency representatives would like to see SHHS leadership grow.

# Impact on Homelessness

Agency interview respondents described how the Society has impacted **local Surrey** organizations and their work addressing homelessness.

## Strategic Funding Approach – Leaps of Faith and Local Knowledge

Sometimes SHHS provides the first funding to a project – which gives it credibility and momentum or helps with feasibility and sometimes it is the final funder – supplying the funds to meet a critical shortfall that will make or break a project. Sometimes it has been organizations that do not normally get funding that are funded. The Society has given organizations the credibility to develop their projects. SHHS fills in the gaps in funding from the federal and provincial government. Leaps of faith and local knowledge are essential to the Society’s work. For example: E. Fry’s Ellendale project which needed funding for a water service upgrade to complete a new sprinkler project.

## Innovation Supported

Flexible and responsive funding allows organizations to try new untested approaches, which leads to sector learnings and in some

cases systemic change. The Society understands Surrey and why some types of projects are needed. It enables organizations to do work that will have a high impact in the community. This allows the unique needs of the community to be met. For example: the Surrey Women’s Centre Mobile Service Van, Surrey Housing First collaborative, and Surrey Rent Bank.

## Responsive to Emerging Needs

The SHHS is a nimble and responsive funder and is able to provide responsive grants in emergency situations. This approach has allowed some organizations to continue operating in the face of funding loss. For example: Winter Shelter projects.

## Community Donations Accessed

The Society helps flow significant third party donations from the community to Surrey organizations. For example: the Bill Reid Shelter and the All Nations Youth Safe House.

## Targeted Assistance

The Society provides organizational assistance when it is needed to get a project off the ground. This is very helpful for organizations that have a big vision but limited resources. For example: SHHS assisted when Options Community Services did not have a Director of Development and when Cweningitel needed help developing their HPS proposal.

# Impact on Leadership

Agency interview respondents described the impact of the Society’s work on the **broader community**.

## Brings A Strong Surrey Focused Approach

The Society presents the united voice of homeless services for Surrey and is a strong advocate for homelessness funding from the province and the federal government.

## Fosters Collaboration within the Homeless Sector

Over the past 10 years the Society has promoted and supported increased collaboration and partnering between service providers. It has also worked to create more acceptance between service providers. The Society brings the community together, and it is done with tact. SHHS staff members deal with competition within the sector by dividing the funding pot – they do not pit organizations against each other. As a result the Society has had some level of impact on every homeless serving agency in Surrey through capital and program funding.

## Raises Awareness of Underserved Areas

The Society has helped build an understanding of underserved issues and populations, for example Aboriginal youth homelessness. The Society supports the Indigenous Youth Housing Committee and Aboriginal Housing organizations. As a result more Indigenous housing is now being developed in Surrey. Service providers say that the Society may have a gentle voice but it is bringing awareness to all aspects of homelessness.

## Capacity Building Approach

The Society is supporting organizations to develop bigger and potentially more complex projects with multiple funding partners. Surrey agencies have had trouble in the past with the quality of the proposals; SHHS has supported organizations so they can develop better proposals. Society staff members are helpful in the RFP process. The willingness to fund collaboration and capacity building has strengthened the sector in Surrey; these approaches are typically not funded through standard funding programs. For example: Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group and the Outreach Network.



*Many feel that we make our own realities- but I have learned that in some cases, it doesn’t matter what you do, not everyone has the same opportunities. You can do all the right things and still end up in the bottom of heap. We need to support people and give with heart.*

*Public Opinion Survey Respondent*



## “Made in Surrey” Solutions

During the agency interviews, community leaders talked about the unique challenges faced in Surrey when seeking to serve people who are experiencing homelessness. These challenges have led to the development of several **“Made in Surrey” projects** that effectively address those challenges.



1. Surrey is a large spread out community with limited public transportation options. It can be difficult for people who are experiencing homelessness to access services. Mobile services are effective in allowing people to access basic services and establish contact with other services. The Options Outreach Van – allows outreach works to provide consistent services to key underserved locations around Surrey. The Surrey Women’s Centre Mobile Service Van will become operational this fall and will serve vulnerable women including sex workers at night in the community. SHHS has provided funding for both of these services.
2. In the past addictions services for pregnant women and mothers of infants have been limited in Surrey and this has prevented women who are expecting or have young children from seeking addictions services. Maxxine Wright Place is a “made in Surrey” project (12 bed shelter, 24 units of transitional housing, health care centre). It was inspired by Sheway in Vancouver but based on research findings conducted in Surrey. It is well situated regarding transportation – one stop shop for vulnerable women and their families.

3. Indigenous and youth are fast growing and underserved populations in Surrey. The Indigenous Youth Housing Committee is a social collective impact table. It includes funders, citizens, and a continuum of services. It has held a series of dialogues about how to house 16 – 26 year olds. The process has generated partnerships. SHHS staff members have been a strong support for this committee.
4. The E. Fry apartments and Wellness Centre (under development) is a made in Surrey solution which will bring together two different and underserved populations (youth without parents and mothers who have lost their kids). The proposed project will include apartments for Aboriginal youth as well as housing and health care services for women. The SHHS has been involved in the project development stage.
5. SHHS funded Guildford House and Fraser House which both provide under-19 youth housing. This is the first coed under 19 youth housing in Surrey without live in support (they do have a youth worker who is attached to the houses and they provide 1:1 support). It has helped to fill a gap in housing for youth in Surrey. The youth can stay as long as they need to as long as they follow the rules and participate; LGBTQ kids are supported as well.
6. In the past the service provider community in Surrey has been disjointed and non-collaborative, partly due to a competitive funding environment and lack of support in this area. The Surrey Housing First Collaborative – which is based on two agreements between four service providers (Continuum of Care and Service Agreements), has helped to provide a foundation for cooperation amongst Housing First service providers in Surrey. The SHHS provided early funding to develop the concept and the HPS funding proposal.
7. Surrey has a rural/suburban history and does not have a stock of older inexpensive low barrier single room occupancy hotels, which are found in more urban environments such as Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and which are used for supportive housing. As a result, aging single family homes are sometimes used for housing with support services. Small recovery houses like Luke 15, the Launching Pad and Realistic Success are located in suburban neighbourhoods in Surrey. The SHHS has recognized the value of these organizations and the services they provide despite their unconventional format.

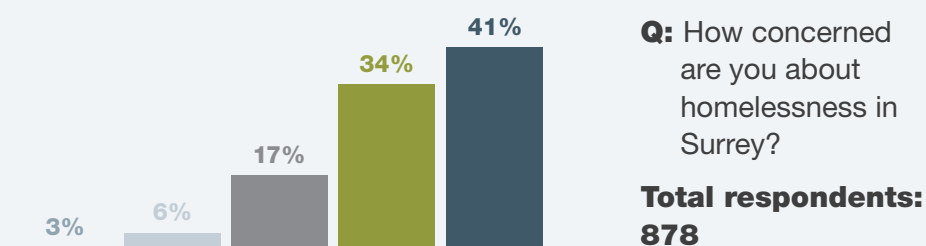
## Public Opinion Survey

In July 2017 the SHHS commissioned a public opinion poll about homelessness in Surrey. It provided an opportunity to gauge public opinion at a time when homelessness is growing and while there are **innovative new services** they are not keeping up with the growing need. The results indicate the following key messages from the public:

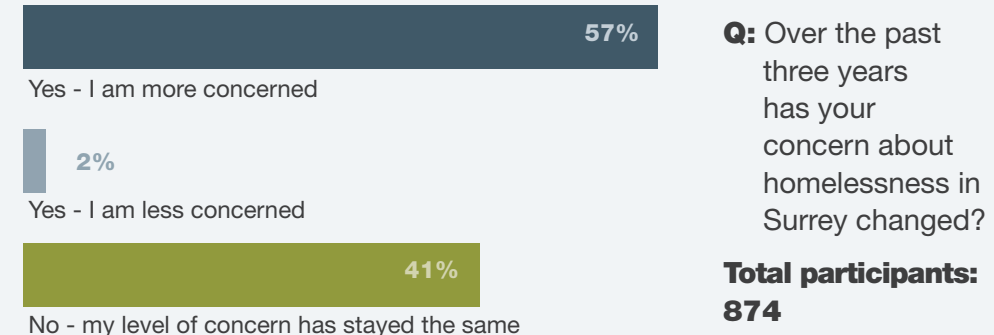
1. A growing concern about people experiencing homelessness in Surrey.
2. A strong awareness of homelessness in the community and a significant rate of respondents who have relationships with people experiencing homelessness.
3. A high degree of dissatisfaction with current efforts to address homelessness; dissatisfied with all levels of government especially senior levels of government.
4. A strong support for increasing services for mental health, youth, addictions, people leaving Corrections and for increasing affordable housing and shelters.

### Detailed survey results

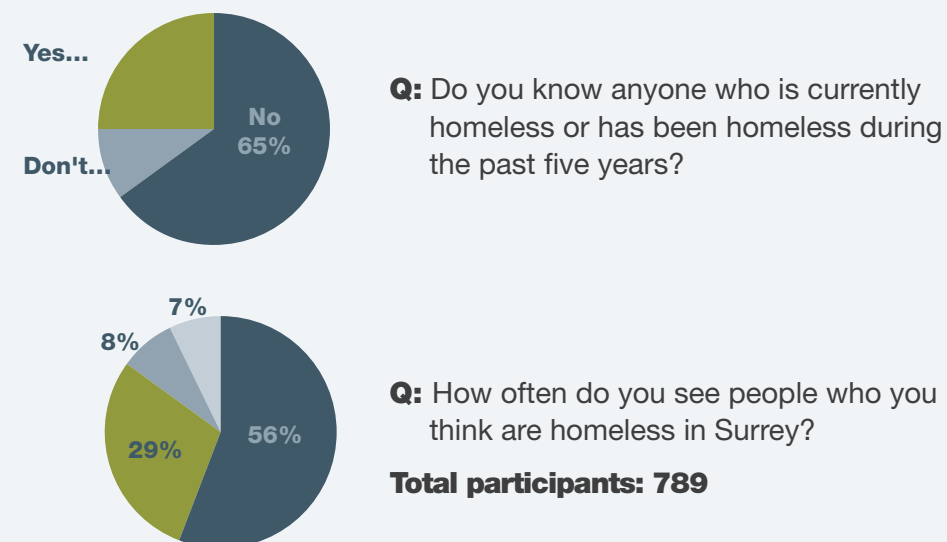
There is a high degree of concern about homelessness with 75% of respondents indicating that they are concerned or very concerned about homelessness in Surrey. Only 3% say they are not concerned at all.



There is growing concern in Surrey about homelessness with 57% of respondents indicating that they are more concerned about homelessness now than they were three years ago.

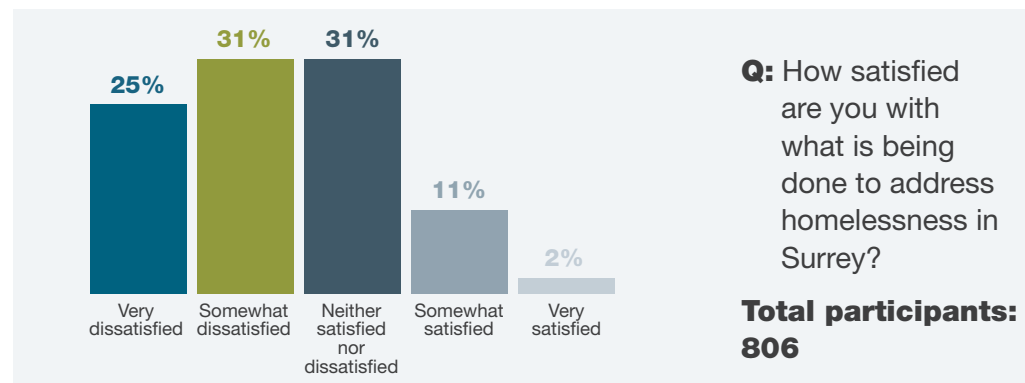


Almost a third of respondents report that they know someone who has been homeless in the past five years and 56% of respondents report seeing people who are homeless daily.



Respondents expressed a high degree of dissatisfaction about current efforts to address homelessness in Surrey. They rated all levels of government poorly in terms of their performance in addressing homelessness, especially the provincial and federal levels of government. The performance of community organizations, social services and the faith community were rated the best in terms of their efforts to address homelessness. Many respondents also indicated that they did not know enough about what the organizations and groups were doing to address homelessness to rate their performance.





**Survey respondents felt the following strategies were important or very important for solving homelessness**

1. Providing more mental health services (**89%**)
2. Providing more support to youth who are exiting the Foster Care system (**86%**)
3. Providing more affordable housing (**78%**)
4. Providing more addictions services (**75%**)
5. Providing more shelters (**73%**)
6. Providing more support to people who are leaving Corrections (prison or jail) (**70%**)

**Demonstrating a mix of compassion and realism over 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following 4 statements:**

- "People who are experiencing homelessness should have access to the services and information that they need"
- "Communities are safer when people do not have to live on the streets"
- "People experiencing homelessness should be treated with dignity and respect"
- "People who are properly housed reduce burdens on police and hospitals"

**62% of respondents reported that they had donated to an organization that helps people experiencing homelessness, with the majority donating in Surrey. 65% said they would be likely to make a charitable donation in the future. Only 20% of respondents had heard of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society and 11% recognized the logo.**

## Future Directions

Agency representatives who were interviewed for this report highlighted the following areas for focusing efforts, especially in the next 5 years. The comments are presented in relation to the Society's strategic directions **Grow, Grant and Lead**.

### Grow

- Growing the fund should be the priority. The need in Surrey continues to increase and public opinion in Surrey strongly supports doing more to address homelessness.
- Encourage more legacy donors.
- Cultivate more direct donors and third party donors such as:
  - The Mitsubishi car dealership in Whalley which wanted to give back so they became the sponsors of an awareness raising event for young people leaving government care.
  - A private anonymous donor who set up an emergency fund for vulnerable youth through the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition to pay for things like work boots and clothes, a baby car seat, or school expenses.
- Use a stronger voice for advocacy to rally donors and don't be too tied to the City. More arms' length may be needed. It is hard to motivate donors when they think government is taking care of it.
- Position the community so that it is able to respond to emerging opportunities. Pull the regional focus back to Surrey and pull other funders together – create a pool of funders for Surrey.
- The public opinion survey indicated that there is a need to increase awareness of the SHHS and an understanding of homelessness in Surrey. These activities may assist in growing the fund as well.

*The housing affordability issue is a big one. We are lucky to have the place we do, however I worry that when the time comes to move, as renters, that as pet owners we will have extreme difficulty finding a place.*

Public Opinion Survey Respondent

## Grant

- There should be a larger grant every few years; it sometimes takes a big one to get things going.
- Provide multi-year funding (2-3 years). 1 year is not long enough to get something going.
- Need a more collaborative application process – like Status of Women where you talk about the concept before starting the proposal. Time is the most valuable asset for non-profits and they don't want to waste it.
- Continue financial innovations such as interest free loans.
- The public opinion survey shows strong support for funding strategies which provide more mental health, youth, and addictions services as well as increased affordable housing and shelters and support for those leaving Corrections.

## Lead

- Strengthen Advocacy for Surrey:** The Society could take on a bigger role in engaging the provincial and federal levels of government including the development of a Surrey homelessness and housing strategy with the provincial and federal governments and pressing for more funding for projects in Surrey.
- Focus on the Prevention of Homelessness:** Investigate and identify the root causes of homelessness in Surrey. Increase investment in homeless prevention. An example is supporting the growing awareness of the

needs of youth in care especially as they leave government care and transition to adulthood. The Society can reshape prevention in Surrey through more funding, advocacy and bringing key stakeholders together.

- Support Ongoing Sector Capacity Building:** Continue to assist Surrey organizations to respond successfully to funding opportunities through collaboration and effective partnering, engaging adequate professional support for project development and innovative funding approaches.

- Assume the Convener Role for the Surrey Homelessness Sector:** Executive Directors from service provider organizations in the homeless sector need to be connecting, talking and meeting regularly; it is challenging because service providers compete for funding – but they also need to support each other. The sector needs a convener in Surrey.

- Support the Development of More Affordable Housing:** Across Metro Vancouver there is a gap between supportive housing and market housing that the welfare shelter allowance cannot address. There are people who do not need or want to be in supportive housing – but they are stuck there and there are people who desperately need supportive housing but cannot access a place. We need more housing in between supportive housing and market housing. There is so little housing for singles in the low income category – a huge gap. Land costs are growing in the region so the role of the Society is increasingly important.

- Understand and Address Indigenous Homelessness:** Within the Indigenous population there are many faces of homelessness – seniors, families, and especially youth. There are 8,000 Indigenous youth in Surrey – many are living under the poverty line – they need support. The Society should continue building relationships with organizations that serve Indigenous people. More Indigenous programs for the community are needed. Programs need to be based on culture especially for people who are homeless – they need that spark. When people are oppressed they have no trust. We have to build the trust and they will be more willing to participate. There are intergenerational drug and alcohol issues (including neo-natal) as well as homelessness. The Society needs to look at the whole picture – not just homelessness - drugs and alcohol, trauma and violence.

- Raising Awareness and Understanding:** Continue to raise awareness and educate. The business sector and the general population are both areas of special focus for awareness-raising. Counter the mythology of bad choices and expand the definition of homelessness. Promote data availability.

- Focus on Child and Youth Homelessness:** We need to develop more affordable units for families; homeless parents have homeless children. Surrey needs more youth housing and a low barrier youth shelter. 60 Youth in Surrey age out of care on to the street every year and they struggle to find housing. We need to bridge the gap better because kids do not advocate for themselves. Youth and women on the street are increasing. We need targeted dollars for those populations.

- Incorporate a Gendered Perspective on Homelessness:** Gender neutral is gender blind – women get forced into a bottle neck of services where there are limited resources. Women often present differently and are not as visible and countable as men who are homeless. This can have an impact on the children of women who are homeless.

*Please talk about queer homelessness. You cannot talk about youth homelessness without talking about queer homelessness and queer people face unique challenges in navigating homelessness.*

Public Opinion Survey Respondent

*From what I see on a daily basis working as a pharmacy assistant is that we need a strategy for homelessness that also takes into account mental illness and addiction. I also find people of our community go without filling their medication because they cannot afford it and have had patients say, it is a choice between filling medications or a having a roof over their head.*

Public Opinion Survey Respondent





## Increasing Effectiveness as a Partner

- The agency executive directors who were interviewed for this project made the following suggestions to the Board for maintaining or increasing the Society's effectiveness as a partner:
- Pay attention to Board diversity; try to include members with lived experience, non-profits, and Indigenous representatives. The broader community should be represented on the Board.
- SHHS staff members work really hard with agencies especially during the grant cycle. The Society should consider an additional staff person so existing staff members are not so overworked.
- It is not well known that the Society does Social Impact Real Estate. This is really quite innovative. It should be publicized more.
- Make sure that the funding stays focused and there is no mission drift.

## Appendix

### Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society Agency Interviews Summary Report July 17, 2017

In June and July 2017 interviews were conducted with 9 social service organizations in Surrey, which had received funding from the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society. The summary results of the interviews are provided in this report.

#### Organizational impacts

Agency representatives had many positive stories about the impact of Society funding on their organizations. The following themes emerged during the interviews:

- Organizations are able to get new projects initiated. The early funding can provide the foundation, momentum and legitimacy to a new project that will help leverage more substantial funding. (e.g. Housing First Collaborative, E. Fry Shelter Project and Wellness Centre)
- The Society is helping flow third party donations from the community to Surrey organizations. (e.g. Bill Reid Shelter, E. Fry Women's Shelter Amalgamation)
- Flexible and responsive funding allows organizations to try new untested approaches, which leads to sector learnings and in some cases systemic change. (Landlord Engagement Project, E. Fry Women's Drop In)
- The willingness to fund collaboration and capacity building has strengthened the sector in Surrey; these approaches are typically not funded through standard funding programs. (Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group, Outreach Network)
- Responsive funding has allowed some organizations to continue operating in the face of funding loss.
- The Society provides organizational assistance when it is needed to get a project off the ground. This is very helpful for organizations that have a big vision but limited resources. (stepped in when Options did not have a Director of Development)
- Flexible funding formats is allowing new types of projects to happen (5 year no interest loan to Atira for a property assembly)
- The Society's Surrey focus allows organizations to do the work that will have a high impact in the community (Rent Bank)
- The Society understands Surrey and why some types of projects are needed. This allows the unique needs of the community to be met. (Surrey Women's Centre Mobile service van, Surrey Housing First collaborative)

#### Cumulative or broader-based community impacts over the past 10 years

Those interviewed also discussed the impacts of the funding and the work of the Society on the community and the sector:

- The Society has a Surrey First approach – strong advocate for homelessness funding from the province and the feds. It presents a united voice for Surrey.
- The projects being developed in Surrey now will have a legacy in the community for many years (Bill Reid Place, Maxxine Wright)
- The Society acts as is the collective voice of homeless services in Surrey – even if that is not one of its stated goals
- The Society has promoted and supported increased collaboration and partnering between service providers.
- The Society has had some level of impact on every homeless serving agency in Surrey through capital and program funding. At the awards to agencies it is great to see the range of organizations represented.
- It has had an impact on large new builds in Surrey (\$1 Million to Maxxine Wright and the most recent loan to Atira).

# Appendix

- || Sometimes SHHS provides the first funding to a project – which gave it credibility or helped with feasibility and sometimes it was the last funder. Sometimes it has been organizations that don't normally get funding. SHHS fills in the gaps in funding from the Feds and BC Housing. Leaps of faith and local knowledge are key.
- || The SHHS is a nimble funder – able to provide responsive grants in emergency situations (e.g. Winter Shelter projects)
- || Surrey agencies have had trouble in the past with the quality of the proposals; SHHS has supported organizations so they can develop better proposals.
- || They have helped build an understanding of Aboriginal youth homelessness.
- || They have given organizations the credibility to develop their projects ( even if they are not one of the “big guys”)
- || The Society is supporting organizations to develop bigger and potentially more complex projects with multiple funding partners.
- || It is gentle but there – it brings an awareness to homelessness
- || The Society brings the community together – done with tact; They deal with competition by dividing the pot – they do not pit organizations against each other; They are helpful in the RFP process.
- || Created more acceptance between service providers – who now realize that everybody has a role to play (they are not so secretive)
- || Has brought in more players over the past 10 years
- || More indigenous housing is being developed in Surrey

## “Made in Surrey” solutions to homelessness

During the interviews, the following “Made in Surrey” projects were identified:

- || The **Options outreach van** – providing outreach throughout Surrey – City blocks are huge and services are often inaccessible.
  - || Housed a couple who were living in a ramshackle hut on farm land in South Surrey – both with complex health needs because Options outreach workers were able to provide consistent outreach.
  - || Also do outreach two early mornings a week to survival sex workers – it is a life line because women's homelessness is different than men's. The van also serves homeless women who are trading sex for shelter.
- || In Surrey there is a reliance on sfds in the absence of SROs. We have small recovery houses such as **Luke 15, the Launching Pad and Realistic Success** that are located in suburban neighbourhoods – they are not quite sfds. SHHS has helped those organizations – small non-profits.
- || Retro-fitting **Ellendale** – an old senior's facility in a single family neighbourhood; Fraser health funded a sprinkler system so that it could become a licensed addiction facility for women but would not fund the new water pipe leading into the house for the sprinkler system. SHHS funded that part of the project. Now the facility has been expanded to include the cradle program. SHHS is practical and pragmatic; the facility did not need to be in a new build.
- || **Maxxine Wright** is a made in Surrey project (12 bed shelter, 24 units of transitional housing, health care centre). It was inspired by Sheway in Vancouver but based on research findings conducted in Surrey. It is well situated regarding transportation – one stop shop for vulnerable women. It has had an enormous impact; birthed a baby the other day. Provide daycare to vulnerable kids; dental services provided. Health Care Centre serves 800 people. Able to provide methadone and suboxone to pregnant women.

- || **Indigenous youth housing committee** – a social collective impact table; Vera is the co-chair; It includes funders, citizens, and a continuum of services; A series of dialogues - How to house 16 – 26 year olds. The process has generated partnerships. Will articulate the gap, id people who can make the change and look at models.
- || The **E. Fry apartments** (under development) are made in Surrey – high degree of risk and reward in bringing together two different types of populations (kids without mothers and mother who have lost their kids). Urban indigenous people do better when their services incorporate a cultural component. Not uncommon for people to adopt an auntie or a grandma.
- || The youth housing is made in Surrey - SHHS funded **Guildford House and Fraser House** both are under 19 youth housing; It is the first coed under 19 youth housing without live in support (they do have a youth worker who is attached to the houses and they provide 1:1 support); There were no transition houses for young people at the time; The youth can stay as long as they need to as long as they follow the rules and participate; LGBTQ kids are supported as well. Landlords will not rent to under 19 kids.
- || The **Coordinated Outreach Network** in Surrey (these types of groups tend to focus on the leaders not front line staff – this is different - this focuses on the workers and provides moral support.
- || **Surrey Housing First Collaborative** – two agreements between service providers (Continuum of Care and Service Agreements); it helped that E Fry was the broker – we are not in direct competition with the other organizations.
- || **Kekinow Housing - The Sohkeyah Project** – providing the continuum of housing to help directly with homelessness (want to provide the continuum).

## A Partner

Interviewees described SHHS as a partner:

- || SHHS partners more than most funders. SHHS partners with everybody – big and small.
- || The Bill Reid shelter and Options Outreach Van are good examples of a well-functioning partnership
- || Yes – they are out there absolutely proactive
- || They participate in the community
- || Very effective; Open, collaborative and creative and easy to work with
- || Amazing partners – they help with applications and limit competition
- || Every piece of homelessness is important to the Society
- || Nice to have a funder who lets you present your idea to address homelessness – not prescribed like the Housing First model; Able to try out ideas
- || Funding for capacity building to support programs
- || Staff have been very helpful; the application process is interactive we received updates on every phase of the process.

## Becoming a more effective partner

Agency representatives who were interviewed made the following suggestions for improving the Society's effectiveness:

- || Pay attention to Board diversity; try to include members with lived experience, non-profits, and Indigenous representatives. The broader community should be represented on the Board.



# Appendix

- || Growing the fund should be the priority – cultivating direct donors and third party donors
  - || e.g. SPRC Connecting community to young people leaving foster care – Vancouver Foundation (SHHS is engaged in a working group for the project. It is directly connecting donors to the projects for example the Mitsubishi car dealership in Whalley - wanted to give back – became the sponsors of an awareness raising event for young people coming out of care.)
  - || Private donor set up an emergency fund for vulnerable youth through the SPRC to pay for work boots; clothes; a car seat etc...
- || Staff work really hard with agencies – need another staff person.
- || There should be a larger grant every few years; It sometimes takes a big one to get things going
- || It is not well known that the Society does Social Impact Real Estate - need to publicize it more
- || Make sure there is no mission drift – great that the funding stays in Surrey
- || Provide multi-year funding (2-3 years) - The coordinated outreach project only got funded for 1 year and then it fizzled out because it did not get any more funding. 1 year is not long enough to get something going.
- || Do scenario planning with community partners for 15 – 20 years out in the community. Involve a demographer who is good with statistics. The society is good at 5 years out but need to look farther. Changes are coming
  - || We are not building women only shelters – homeless children do not have anywhere to go
  - || In Surrey the Aboriginal youth population is growing – many are living in poverty
  - || There are intergenerational drug and alcohol issues (including neo-natal) as well as homelessness
  - || We should look at what Australia is doing
  - || Look at the whole picture – not just homelessness - Drugs and Alcohol, trauma and violence
  - || We also need to understand the link between incarceration and homelessness; there is a strong connection
  - || With the Surrey pretrial facility – no planning for release
  - || People are released at the court house but their belongings may still be at the prison – they have to go back to the prison but have no way of getting there
  - || They are pushed out on the street with no support
  - || 40% of the homeless population has been incarcerated
  - || What is generating homelessness in Surrey? – What are the implications?
- || Support around programs to support clients and capacity building
- || Need a more collaborative application process – like Status of Women where you talk about the concept before starting the proposal. Time is the most valuable asset for non-profits and they don't want to waste it.
- || I'd like to see them increase their donor revenues and build more partnerships. East Vancouver has a myriad of support for the population – Surrey does not.
- || We need to develop a Surrey strategy with the province and the Feds

## A leader

Agency representatives agree SHHS is a leader for homelessness and housing in Surrey and beyond:

- || They have the hard conversations, they challenge the status quo and they put their egos aside.
- || Especially outside of Surrey in regional initiatives like the Homeless Count and Regional planning
- || SHHS recognized as a key player in addressing homelessness in the SPRC THIS plan
- || I would like to see it grow
- || SHHS is unique and the group faces unique challenges
- || Builds awareness, advocacy, bring community together, social impact real estate
- || Yes I remember when it started – it set a tone – that Surrey considers this a serious issue; they dedicated these dollars to addressing homelessness
- || SHHS is one of the few voices - Surrey does not have the social/ medical/ health services that Vancouver has

## New opportunities for Leadership

They also identified the following areas as new opportunities for leadership:

### Advocacy

- || The SHHS is representing Surrey regionally and for the National Housing Strategy, and changes at the Provincial level; more funding for projects in Surrey. The advocacy piece could be stronger though; the SHHS should do more advocacy and push the envelope for the common good. Take on a bigger role engaging government. Push a bit and raise awareness
- || SHHS also helps ensure that Surrey receives a share of the funding and resources available.
- || A little generic – take some risks – don't be too tied to the City
- || Use a stronger voice for advocacy to rally donors
- || It is hard to motivate donors when they think government is taking care of it.
- || More arm's length needed

### Capacity Building

- || Continue to help Surrey organizations to respond successfully to funding opportunities.
- || Support around programs to support clients and capacity building
- || The Surrey Homelessness Task Force could be strengthened and become more functional; it needs support or it should be replaced
- || **Homelessness Table:** Service providers need to be talking – meeting quarterly; it is hard because we compete for funding – but we also need to support each other.

### Affordable Housing

- || Housing affordability; land is not getting cheaper so the role of the Society is increasingly important
- || Housing is a key issue in the future – there is a role for the Society in developing new housing – figuring out how to address it

# Appendix

- || Across Metro Vancouver there is a gap between supportive housing and market housing that the welfare shelter allowance cannot address. There are people who do not need or want to be in supportive housing – but they are stuck there and there are people who desperately need supportive housing. We need more housing in between supportive housing and market housing.

- || There is so little housing for singles in the low income category – a huge gap.

## Indigenous Homelessness

- || How can we go about building relationships with organizations which serve Indigenous people
- || Support indigenous organizations - speak with indigenous organizations
- || Within the indigenous population there are many faces of homelessness – seniors, families, youth and with the loss of housing everything spirals out of control
- || Need cultural support workers
- || Programs for indigenous people and reconciliation
- || We know the city has a homeless strategy and there are directions for the indigenous population – not sure what
- || Indigenous housing could be a new focus
- || There are 8,000 Indigenous youth in Surrey – many are living under the poverty line – they need support
- || Recognize the territories we are on
- || Recognize the protocols which are in place
- || More indigenous programs for the community needed
- || Community building happens through culture and ID
- || Culture is healing
- || Programs need to be based on culture especially for people who are homeless – they need that spark
- || When people are oppressed they have no trust
- || We have to build the trust and they will be more willing to participate
- || Need cultural support workers

## Raising Awareness and Understanding

- || More marginalized populations
- || Awareness
- || Long term impact
- || Counter the mythology of bad choices
- || Expand the definition of homelessness
- || Ministry support difficult to get for some who cannot fill out forms. There are structural things that are keeping people homeless.

## Youth Homelessness

- || A low barrier youth shelter is needed in Surrey
- || Youth and women on the street are increasing. We need targeted dollars for those populations.

## Poverty

- || Poverty and homelessness are connected. Solutions to poverty are not pretty or as captivating as housing a person – but really important.

## Focusing efforts in the next five years

Those who were interviewed highlighted the following areas for focusing efforts in the next 5 years:

- || **Prevention:** Homelessness prevention (most funds are being spent on homelessness); We have seen a decline in investment in homeless prevention; the systems for accessing supports are becoming more complicated – we need to simplify the systems or bring on more advocates; People face barriers especially if they have mental and physical disabilities – they may be eligible but can't access. 135A Street – we can do better than that; there are 94 people on the strip now; if we house them all – we will have 94 other people replacing them. We need to collectively reshape prevention through advocacy and bringing people together.
- || **Beyond the boarders** – position the community so that it is able to respond to emerging opportunities
- || There may be a leadership opportunity for SHHS to adopt the convener role in Surrey; conduct workshops for the sector; bring all of the EDs together
- || The SHHS is doing good things with their money – like the **interest free loans** – do more like that.
- || Continue to raise awareness and educate
- || Develop a **provincial/federal housing strategy** for Surrey
- || Increase **Donor Impact Revenue** including legacy donors
- || Develop **affordable units for families**
- || More **youth housing**; 60 youth in Surrey age out of care on to the street every year - They end up in the shelters. We need to bridge the gap because kids do not advocate for themselves
- || Don't know how to get the SBOT involved – but it is important.
- || Do a capital grant campaign - No other way to get a low barrier youth shelter in the City Centre (damp/wet)
- || There are no experienced **youth workers** at the safe consumption site
- || Homelessness is a symptom – need to look at the root causes like **poverty** and the real estate market and multi-generational dependency on income assistance
- || **Homeless children** – this is a generational issue and Surrey is ground zero.
- || There is a large segment of the **Aboriginal youth population** that is living in significant poverty – there is not enough housing
- || **A gendered perspective on homelessness** – there are no outreach workers attached to women only shelters. Gender neutral is gender blind – women get forced into a bottle neck of services where there are limited resources
- || Integrate **Indigenous and culture** piece
- || Pull the regional focus back to Surrey and pull other funders together – create a pool of funders for Surrey
- || Promote data availability

## In summary

- || Thank you
- || The staffing choices are amazing and supportive
- || Creative, knowledgeable, and caring – we don't get this from other funders

Thank you Surrey





**Surrey Homelessness  
& Housing Society**

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