



CITY OF LANGLEY

MOTION

EXPANSION OF HOMELESS RESPONSE & SHELTER SUPPORT (HEART & HEARTH) - City of Langley

WHEREAS the BC 2023 Homeless Point-in-Time count recorded the largest measured increase of individuals experiencing homelessness since 2005 (Metro Vancouver Regional District & Fraser Valley Regional District); with individuals experiencing homelessness for longer periods of time, and with more individuals in unsheltered environments due to insufficient permanent, temporary shelter or emergency beds throughout the regions;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government, having outlined the strategic plan “*Belonging in BC: A collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness*”, has invested over 2 billion dollars since 2022 outlining commitments to “prioritized” communities, based on provincial qualifying assessments of municipal homeless encampment impacts, to address immediate supports & shelter needs in those selected municipalities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM call on the Provincial Government to accelerate and expand its commitment beyond the qualifying limitations identified in “Belonging in BC” by including access for every community and expanding permanent, temporary shelters and associated program supports in all BC municipalities.

Document Number: 192477

Background:

“The vision of the Plan is that B.C. is a place where everyone has a home and community, and the overarching goals are to prevent and reduce homelessness; and to ensure that when it does occur, it is rare, brief and one-time. These goals are to be achieved through three strategic paths: prevention, immediate response, and stability and community integration”.

“Belonging in BC: A collaborative plan to prevent and reduce homelessness” p.4

Specific actions supporting the goals outlined in *“Belonging in BC” p.16-17* through 2022-2025 include the following components **but are limited to those specific communities with established and entrenched encampments as outlined in the program details for the Homeless Encampment Action Response Team (HEART) and the Homeless Encampment Action Response Temporary Housing (HEARTH):**

- **Immediate Shelter & Supports:** Homeless Encampment Action Response for Temporary Housing (HEARTH) includes funding for emergency housing, shelter options and immediate coordinated supports to assist people in encampments or sheltering in public spaces. p
- **Encampment Response Coordination and Best Practices:** Funding to protect the health and safety of people in encampments through supports such as site management and engagement; food; storage of personal items; cultural supports and ceremony; access to washrooms and showers; and transition to housing. Development of an Encampment Resource Guide for communities.
- **Encampment Response Coordination and Best Practice:** Funding to protect the health and safety of people in encampments through supports such as site management and engagement; food; storage of personal items; cultural supports and ceremony; access to washrooms and showers; and transition to housing.
- **Development of an Encampment Resource Guide** for communities.

Having key components that comprise the strategic plan in seeing homelessness effectively addressed are essential for progress – **but given now 2 years into the initial phase of the “Belonging in BC” plan and the investment of over \$2 Billion committed...**

“to help thousands of people maintain and access housing and supports. This is in addition to substantial investments in affordable housing and programs that support people with a range of needs who may be at risk of or experiencing homelessness.”

What we’re not seeing is progress in the key outcomes and goals defined within the plan given the 2023 PIT Homeless Counts:

- **Reduce Homelessness** – (+ 32% / 4821 in MVRD; + 169% / 1094 in FVRD)
- **Minimize length of time experienced in homelessness** greater than 1 year– (+19% MVRD to 69%; + 17% to 73% greater than 1 year.
- **Shelter Provision** – (+2% @ 30% unsheltered MVRD; -4% @ 48% unsheltered FVRD)

With the expressed intent of *“Belonging in BC”* for “everyone” experiencing homelessness and the lack of progress for thousands more of individuals experiencing homelessness in BC today year over year; **the data suggests the execution of the province’s plans need to be accelerated and expanded beyond the qualifying limitations they have outlined to include access for every community** which further supports their stated 4th commitment in support of their goals – which is to :

“Apply better data on drivers and impacts of homelessness to improve policy and program design and development.” p.15