

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 10/5/2023 10:47:24 AM
Subject: NEWS RELEASE: 2023 Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver Final Report
Attachments: HC2023 Press Release.pdf

Good morning Mayor and Council,

I can confirm for you that the news release regarding the 2023 Metro Homeless Count has now been issued. Please see below and attached.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

From: James Caspersen <james.caspersen@hsa-bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 8:16 AM
To: James Caspersen <james.caspersen@hsa-bc.ca>
Subject: PRESS RELEASE: 2023 Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver Final Report

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Greater Vancouver's 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count finds 32% increase in people experiencing homelessness since 2020

Increase is the largest measured between consecutive Counts since they began in 2005

Unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations (Vancouver) | October 5, 2023 — Greater Vancouver's 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count, conducted by the [Homelessness Services Association of B.C. \[hsa-bc.ca\]](https://www.hsa-bc.ca) in partnership with community organizations, identified a 32 per cent increase in people experiencing homelessness, compared to the previous count made in 2020. Increases were measured across all 11 communities surveyed, with most communities measuring record numbers of people identified as experiencing homelessness.

The 2023 Count was funded by Infrastructure Canada, through [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy \[infrastructure.gc.ca\]](https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca). The Greater Vancouver Community Entity for Reaching Home is [Lu'ma Native Housing Society \[lnhs.ca\]](https://www.lu-ma-nativehousing.ca), in partnership with [Vancity Community Foundation \[vancitycommunityfoundation.ca\]](https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca).

Full Press Release attached.

Resources

[2023 Homeless Count for Greater Vancouver Report \[hsa-bc.ca\]](https://www.hsa-bc.ca)

[2023 Indigenous Count for Greater Vancouver Infographic \[hsa-bc.ca\]](https://www.hsa-bc.ca)

[2023 Greater Vancouver Homeless Count - Media Photos \[shelternetbc-my.sharepoint.com\]](#) (credit Oxford Film Media)

Media Contact

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On the ancestral, traditional and unceded indigenous land, including the territories of the [hən̓q̓əmi̓nəm̓](#), [SENĆŦEN](#) and [Skwxwú7mesh sn̓ichim \[maps.fpcc.ca\]](#) speaking people.

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This year, 4,821 individuals were identified on the night of March 7, and through the day and evening on March 8, 2023, compared to 3,634 individuals found in the Count that took place a few days before the pandemic was declared in March 2020. This is the largest increase between consecutive Counts since they began 18 years ago.

Delta, Richmond and the Tri-Cities measured the most significant percentage changes in the number of people experiencing homelessness, with count-over-count increases of 159%, 91% and 86%, respectively. Surrey, Vancouver and Burnaby had the largest changes in the total number of people count-over-count, with 416, 325 and 85 more individuals counted in 2023 compared to 2020.

"It's important to remember that every number represents a person who lives without housing," says Lorraine Copas, Chair of the Community Advisory Board who coordinates Federal Reaching Home funding in Greater Vancouver. "We know there are many individuals experiencing hidden homelessness – including youth, seniors, Indigenous and racialized persons, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community – and we know that many individuals in these communities are also underrepresented in these counts," she says.

Every Count works to close underrepresentation gaps and enable deeper intersectional analyses to more accurately reflect the identities of people experiencing homelessness, and several enhancements were made in the 2023 Count.

David Wells, Chair of the Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee of Reaching Home in Greater Vancouver, says; “This year, the Count made inroads into bringing recognition to the ongoing impact of colonial policies that continue to cause incredible harm to Indigenous people. For the first time, the Count asked respondents about experiences at residential school. Sixty-four percent of Indigenous-identifying respondents said they had either lived or intergenerational experience with Indian Residential Schools.”

This year’s Count was also the first since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this year’s Count, 15% of respondents cited the pandemic as a cause for losing their housing. The most frequently cited reasons for respondents’ losing their housing were: (a) lack of income: 35%, (b) a substance use issue: 24%, and (c) a mental health issue: 16%. Moreover, 85% of respondents reported having at least one health concern, and 63% reported two or more.

“Mental health and substance use issues are treatable medical conditions,” says Stephen D’Souza, Executive Director of the Homelessness Services Association of B.C. “However, these health needs are often unmet in people who are at risk of housing loss, and can also prevent a return to housing.”

Point-in-Time Homeless Counts measure the minimum number of people who are experiencing homelessness because participation is anonymous, confidential, and voluntary. The Count relies on locating people who are experiencing homelessness on the dates of the Counts, with individuals who access services and shelters more likely to be included than those who do not.

A majority of respondents (81%) in the 2023 Count were experiencing homelessness in the same community where they were last housed; 69% had been unhoused for more than a year, compared to 45% in the last Count; and 47% were on housing waitlists.

ADDITIONAL KEY FINDINGS

The *2023 Homeless Count in Greater Vancouver* Report found:

- The overall number of youth and seniors counted increased; 8% of respondents were youth (under the age of 25), and 22% were seniors (55 years or older);
- 12% identify as belonging to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, with the number of individuals who identified as non-binary, agender, or two spirit higher in the unsheltered population than those in shelters;
- 79% of respondents identified as having stayed in a shelter in the past year, 41% reported staying at someone else's place, and 20% reported staying overnight in a vehicle;
- 31% spent time in foster care, youth group homes, on Independent Living Agreements in their youth;
- 91% of respondents reported having at least one source of income, and 38% had two or more income sources.

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NOTES TO MEDIA:

Resources

[2023 Homeless Count for Greater Vancouver Report](#)

[2023 Indigenous Count for Greater Vancouver Infographic](#)

[2023 Greater Vancouver Homeless Count - Media Photos](#) (credit Oxford Film Media)

About Greater Vancouver's 2023 Point-in-Time Homeless Count

This Count was conducted in shelters, transition houses, safe houses and hospitals on March 7, and in police holding cells from 6am-midnight on March 8. Surveying was conducted by more than 1,000 trained volunteers who were present in 11 communities in Greater Vancouver: Burnaby, Delta; Langley (including City of Langley and Township of Langley); New Westminster; North Shore (including District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, and District of West Vancouver); Richmond; Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows); Surrey; Tri-Cities (including Port Coquitlam, Port Moody and Coquitlam); City of Vancouver; and White Rock.

The Count is an initiative of the Reaching Home Community Entity, which is funded by the Government of Canada; [Lu'ma Native Housing Society](#); and the Community Advisory Board (CAB) responsible for the [Reaching Home](#) program in Greater Vancouver. It is delivered in

partnership with the Indigenous Reaching Home Community Entity, the Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee, and is conducted by the Homelessness Services Association of B.C.

About Reaching Home

[Reaching Home](#): Canada's Homelessness Strategy is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This program provides funding to urban, Indigenous, rural and remote communities to help them address their local homelessness needs.

About the Homelessness Services Association of B.C.

[The Homelessness Services Association of B.C.](#) (HSABC) is an umbrella organization of shelters, drop-in centres, homeless outreach teams and other service providers addressing the needs of persons experiencing homelessness with the goal of ending homelessness. Our over 280 Members organizations can access regular workshops and webinars, participate in regional and provincial coordination and research initiatives, and benefit from advocacy on behalf of our sector.

About the Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee

The Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee (IHSC) is a community-based advisory board (CAB) that was established through a response to the Federal Government's announcement for homelessness funding through the National Housing Initiative (NHI) in 1999. The Indigenous Community Entity, Lu'ma Native Housing BCH Housing Society, oversees all contract administration for the funding that comes into the region.

The IHSC functions with an autonomous governance structure comprised of representative Indigenous organizations, community members, Elder and ex-officio members.

The vision of the IHSC is to enhance urban Indigenous Peoples' quality of life through the provision of coordinated strategies to prevent, reduce, and end homelessness. The most effective means of addressing this is through Indigenous best practices and culturally appropriate services.

About the Community Advisory Board for Metro Vancouver Reaching Home

Members of the Greater Vancouver Community Advisory Board (CAB) give voice to the interests of the homeless population and to the homeless-serving community in the Greater Vancouver region, which encompasses 22 municipalities. Members represent a cross section

of community voices; inclusive of government, nonprofits and those with lived and living experience of homelessness.

The CAB develops the Reaching Home community plan, which identifies funding priorities to respond to local needs. The plan is approved by the federal government and updated annually. It reviews and recommends projects based on Reaching Home [directives](#), terms and conditions as well as community plan priorities.

About Lu'ma Native Housing Society

[Lu'ma](#) empowers the Indigenous communities of Vancouver through culturally-appropriate housing, medical services and programs. We envision a future where Indigenous Peoples thrive through self-determination and are connected to their communities and traditions.

Media Contact

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