

Exploring Service Integration in Campbell River's Homelessness Support System

Andy Gaylor, MPA candidate
Ron Neufeld, MPA candidate

School of Public Administration

University of Victoria

December 10, 2018

Client: Deborah Sargent, City Manager
City of Campbell River

Supervisor: Dr. Evert Lindquist, Professor
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

Second Reader: Bayla Kolk, Senior Executive in Residence
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

Chair: Dr. James McDavid, Professor and Graduate Advisor
School of Public Administration, University of Victoria

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank City of Campbell River City Manager Deborah Sargent for her enthusiastic and unwavering support of our research and her leadership in shining a light on the City's most vulnerable residents. We would also like to extend our appreciation to the members of Campbell River's City Council who have continually demonstrated their sincere commitment to improving the lives of all of the community's citizens, including the most vulnerable. A special acknowledgment to various City of Campbell River staff who took the time to discuss their perspectives on homelessness in Campbell River, in particular: Kevin Brooks, Cassandra Marsh and Amber Zirnhelt, who have been extremely helpful and supportive. To the newly established Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness - we appreciate your invaluable feedback and involvement in this project and look forward to collaborating with you to find appropriate solutions to end homelessness in the City. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to our academic supervisor, Dr. Evert Lindquist for his useful comments, direction and engagement through the development of this project.

This work is dedicated to the people sleeping rough, sleeping in shelters, or sleeping completely unsheltered in Campbell River. The authors recognize that this is unacceptable and hope that in a modest way, the recommendations contained will lead to more stable and safe places to live.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Campbell River, like many mid-sized cities in British Columbia, has a homeless problem. Declining vacancy rates, rising rents, and a shrinking supply of affordable housing has had a significant impact on the area's most vulnerable. As a social service hub for Vancouver Island north, the City has become a destination for homeless people from other jurisdictions, putting further pressure on the City's homelessness support system. A rise in homeless presence in the City's downtown has detracted from the City's downtown revitalization efforts and has made the area an undesirable place to enjoy for residents and tourists. These challenges have resulted in community calls to the municipality to intervene.

Successful approaches to homelessness strategies recognize that homeless people have complex needs and therefore require coordinated responses in order to provide the necessary support. From the City's perspective, greater inter-agency coordination of groups that support homeless people would assist in focusing the City's involvement and impact, particularly if requests for City assistance are accompanied by the collective support of service providers.

The purpose of this report is to learn from the shared experiences of agencies on the front line to identify ways to improve collaboration within the homelessness support system, and at the same time, investigate complimentary roles the municipality can play to build capacity within the existing homelessness support network. Two research questions are proposed:

- 1) What are the critical barriers preventing service integration of the social support network involved in addressing homelessness in Campbell River?
- 2) What role can the City of Campbell River play in supporting social service providers and their clients in successfully reducing homelessness?

This project provides an overview of key findings in the homelessness and affordable housing literature and discusses the implications in Campbell River. A comprehensive review of the service integration literature is then provided which shows that working together improves outcomes for homeless people. Key factors and barriers for service integration are then explored, and some examples of integration are provided. An overview of successful governance structures is then outlined and the associated role that cities play in support of these homelessness support networks.

Project data collection utilizes a mixed-methods approach that includes an online survey completed by local homelessness support agencies in Campbell River, facilitation of a focus group with the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness, and a telephone interview with key local government informants that are experiencing similar homelessness challenges in their respective jurisdictions.

Key findings include:

- There is not only a need but a desire to align the strategic priorities and actions of independent service providers so that agencies can speak as ‘one voice’;
- A lack of affordable housing inventory presents a major barrier to service integration;
- A formal strategy is needed to identify and compile an inventory of suitably zoned and serviced development sites to enable future affordable housing development in a sustained manner;
- Strong working relationships between municipalities and non-profit providers are key in developing homelessness solutions; and
- Cities can play a key role in aligning the priorities of service providers with funding opportunities from senior levels of government.

Based on our research, the City has three viable options for responding to the homelessness challenge:

- 1) Take a passive response where homeless solutions are allowed to evolve from the existing informal social support network and potential actions to address problems are considered as they arise on a reactive case-by-case basis (least preferred approach);
- 2) Take an assertive response by assuming an active leadership and directive role in the management of the homelessness issue, with support from local agencies (not recommended); or
- 3) Take a collaborative response within a broadened homelessness support network that enables agencies to have a high degree of latitude to operate within an open policy environment through partnerships, facilitation, and funding support (preferred approach).

Based on the recommended collaborative approach, three actions are proposed:

- 1) Enhance collaboration within the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness by fostering increased capacity through the establishment of a dedicated coalition coordinator position;
- 2) Broaden collaboration within the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness to include participation from the private land development sector, business improvement associations, and law enforcement; and
- 3) Enable affordable housing through the development of a comprehensive affordable housing development strategy for the full spectrum of affordable housing needs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES / TABLES	vi
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BACKGROUND	3
2.1 <i>State of Homelessness in Canada</i>	3
2.2 <i>Policy Responses to Housing and Homelessness</i>	3
2.3 <i>Homelessness Planning in Campbell River</i>	5
2.4 <i>Homelessness and Housing in Campbell River</i>	6
2.5 <i>Conclusion: The Need for a Coordinated Response</i>	8
3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK	9
3.1 <i>Homelessness: Key Factors</i>	9
3.2 <i>Service Integration</i>	10
3.3 <i>Conclusion: Analytic Framework Guiding This Study</i>	12
4. METHODOLOGY	15
4.1 <i>Online Survey</i>	15
4.2 <i>Telephone Interviews</i>	16
4.3 <i>Focus Group Session</i>	16
5. FINDINGS: ONLINE SURVEY	18
5.1 <i>Services Provided</i>	18
5.2 <i>Organizational Position</i>	19
5.3 <i>Number of Client Referrals</i>	20
5.4 <i>Relevance of Cooperation and Collaboration</i>	21
5.5 <i>Factors Contributing to Improved Cooperation and Collaboration</i>	21
5.6 <i>Barriers to Successful Cooperation and Collaboration</i>	23
5.7 <i>Potential Strategies to Improve Service Integration</i>	24
5.8 <i>Online Survey Conclusions</i>	26
6. FINDINGS: TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS	27
6.1 <i>Significance of Homelessness to Local Government</i>	27
6.2 <i>Quantifying Homelessness</i>	27

6.3 <i>Local Government Actions in Response to Homelessness</i>	27
6.4 <i>Local Government Relationships</i>	28
6.5 <i>Telephone Interview Conclusions</i>	29
7. FINDINGS: FOCUS GROUP SESSION	30
7.1 <i>Broadened Relationships Across Organizations</i>	30
7.2 <i>Need for Involvement of For-Profit Sector</i>	30
7.3 <i>Community Acceptance</i>	31
7.4 <i>Coalition Coordination and Leadership</i>	31
7.5 <i>The Urgent Need for Action</i>	31
7.6 <i>Focus Group Conclusions</i>	31
8. DISCUSSION	32
8.1 <i>Summary of Findings</i>	32
8.2 <i>Collaboration Gaps / Opportunities</i>	32
8.3 <i>Potential Role of Local Government</i>	34
8.4 <i>Revised Framework and Implications for Identifying Options</i>	35
9. OPTIONS, RECOMMENDATION, IMPLEMENTATION	37
9.1 <i>Three Options to Consider</i>	37
<i>Option 1: Passive Response</i>	37
<i>Option 2: Assertive Response</i>	38
<i>Option 3: Collaborative Response</i>	38
9.2 <i>Comparing and Evaluating the Options</i>	39
9.3 <i>Implementation Strategy</i>	40
<i>Phase 1: Enhance Collaboration</i>	41
<i>Phase 2: Broaden Collaboration</i>	41
<i>Phase 3: Enable Affordable Housing</i>	42
9.4 <i>Summary</i>	43
10. CONCLUSION	45
REFERENCES	47

LIST OF FIGURES / TABLES

- Figure 1: Doberstein's metagovernance model illustration
- Figure 2: Analytical Framework
- Figure 3: Forms of social support services provided by non-profit sector in Campbell River
- Figure 4: Organizational position held by non-profit respondent
- Figure 5: Number of client referrals made to other non-profit social service providers
- Figure 6: Relevance of cooperation and collaboration to successfully delivering social services
- Figure 7: Factors contributing to improved cooperation and collaboration
- Figure 8: Barriers to successful cooperation and collaboration
- Figure 9: Potential strategies to improve service integration
- Figure 10: Sources of revenue used by local governments for homelessness and related social issues
- Figure 11: Local government expenditures for homelessness and related social issues
- Figure 12: Techniques used by local governments to connect with social support networks social issues
- Figure 13: Applied analytical framework
- Table 1: Evaluation of options
- Table 2: Implementation plan

1. INTRODUCTION

Homeless people in Campbell River connect with several service agencies to find the support that they need, reflecting the decentralized nature of social support services in the region. Despite operating independently, many agencies are connected because they often share the same clients. Because various services intersect through the clients they serve, “effective working relationships between services across [homelessness support agencies] is, a priori, critical in achieving good outcomes for clients wherever they may be located” (Flateau et al., 2013, p. 1). The City has also seen a visible rise in vagrancy, drug use and other illicit behavior in the downtown core, highlighted in April 2018 by two separate overdose deaths in the City’s public library. With calls to improve levels of safety in the downtown, the City has found itself withstanding the worst of the impacts of the City’s homeless problem despite the fact that it does not have the constitutional ability (and associated resources) to do so. Finally, agencies request funding and assistance requests on a case-by-case basis from the City, making it difficult for the City to understand whether a particular funding request will address the most pressing social issue, or if there are opportunities to support an even more acute need. It is in the City’s interest, therefore, to see service providers approach the City as a coordinated service network for funding when projects have widespread support.

The City believes it has a role to play in working with non-profit agencies to find mutually beneficial solutions that can build the capacity of the homelessness support network in Campbell River, and as an intended outcome, assist in facilitating housing solutions for area homelessness while providing order to the City’s downtown. At the request of the City Manager, Deborah Sargent, the consultants committed to producing the following deliverables:

- Situate Campbell River’s homelessness problem in the context of homelessness Canada-wide;
- Provide an overview of affordable housing pressures in Campbell River, and the impact of a heated rental market on the City’s most vulnerable;
- Consult with other municipalities (of similar size and facing similar homelessness challenges) and report back on best practices and tools that the City can utilize to address the local homelessness problem; and
- Consult directly with local non-profit service providers to find gaps in the existing service system, and identify potential roles the City can play in supporting these agencies.

Given that this research project is motivated by the benefits realized by working together, it is fitting that the assignment was developed in partnership between two colleagues who also happen to be Public Administration classmates. A collaborative approach allowed each author to convey their own unique perspective based on their experience which led to a more fulsome and constructive project. The authors appreciated the ability to share their ideas and mutually learn from one another as the assignment took shape. A team-based approach allowed the researchers to leverage their

respective strengths by focusing on topic areas that were aligned with their academic and professional interests. For Mr. Gaylor, it was important to learn from non-profit agencies that support homeless people in Campbell River and what role the local government can play in building their capacity for greater forms of collaboration. Mr. Neufeld, on the other hand, was interested in hearing from other jurisdictions grappling with homelessness and exploring the key transferable factors that are critical for successful homelessness interventions.

This report has been structured to provide an overview of key terms and characteristics of both homelessness and affordable housing in Canada and to compare these findings with statistics highlighting the challenges seen in Campbell River. A literature review then discusses how many effective homelessness strategies are embracing ‘service integration’ as a means to increase coordination amongst services operating within the homelessness serving network and the positive effect these efforts have on those with complex needs. Drawing on the work of Doberstein (2016), the literature review then discusses network governance structures in homeless serving networks drawing from the experiences in Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver and presents some key factors that are necessary for success.

To understand the types of services provided in Campbell River, and whether there are opportunities for service integration within the existing homelessness support system, an internet survey was provided to local non-profit agencies. Concluding the survey, the researchers facilitated a focus group session with Campbell River’s Coalition to End Homelessness. Finally, in an attempt to investigate the roles that the City can play towards supporting service providers, a telephone interview was conducted with various local government officials involved in their respective homelessness programs.

Findings reveal that there is broad support within the City’s homelessness support network for increased service integration and the City can play a pivotal role in these efforts by aligning the strategic priorities and voices of service providers with tangible City actions and funding opportunities from senior levels of government.

2. BACKGROUND

This section summarizes the origins of the homelessness problem in Canada and argues that a rise in homelessness nation-wide is traced to deliberate federal government policy decisions which severely reduced investment in affordable housing developments and led to over-reliance on the private market. A lack of federal government investment in the provision of affordable housing has put pressure on cities and their non-profit agency partners to provide the direct support needed to support homeless people.

An overview of the City of Campbell River and its experience with homelessness planning is then provided. Housing indicators, such as declining vacancy rates, rising rents, and stagnant incomes have led to a noticeable rise in homelessness, particularly in the City's downtown whereby a clustering of services have propagated vagrancy, drug use and other illicit behavior. These problems, and calls for action from the community, indicated that the City lacks the relationships with a variety of service agencies to launch a coordinated response to address this problem.

2.1 State of Homelessness in Canada

Despite being one of the wealthiest countries in the western world, at any given night, 35,000 Canadians are homeless, with over 235,000 Canadians relying on shelter use at some point during the year (Gaetz, Gulliver, & Richter, 2014, p. 42). Ipsos Reid polling done in 2013 suggest that over a five-year period, 4% of respondents indicated that they were at some point homeless (either unsheltered, in an emergency shelter, or under insecure accommodation such as couch surfing), suggesting that at least 1.3 million Canadians have been homeless in a five-year period (Ibid, p. 43).

2.2 Policy Responses to Housing and Homelessness

The national rise in homelessness can be traced to specific policy decisions made by government in the 1980s and 1990s (Doberstein, 2016, p. 266). Shifting political ideologies based on the adoption of new public management systems within government during this era resulted in a deliberate withdrawal of the government from social policy (education, health care, housing, etc.) and a growing reliance on the private market to help people meet basic needs (Layton, 2008, p. xxi). To put this divestment into perspective, the era between World War Two and the mid 1990's saw the Canadian government invest in the construction of 600,000 affordable housing units, a number effectively reducing to zero by 1996 (Doberstein & Smith, 2015, p. 266).

In response to rising homelessness throughout the 1990's, the Government of Canada announced the creation of the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) in 1999. The initial three-year, \$735 million initiative was aimed at ensuring "community access to programs, services and support for alleviating homelessness in community in all provinces and territories" (Government of Canada, 2008, p. i). The NHI sought to break the cycle of homelessness by providing communities with the support needed to develop a broad range of tools to stabilize vulnerable homeless individuals and their families. The NHI recognized that communities at the forefront of the homelessness problem

were best equipped to deal with homelessness, and relevant to this research project, sought to build community capacity by broadening the ownership of the homelessness issue by public, private and non-profit sectors (Ibid, p. i)

A change in government in 2006 led to modifications of the NHI, which was renamed the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) and launched in 2007 (Government of Canada, 2018). The HPS continued the ideology that community-based approaches were key to addressing homelessness and supporting homelessness response actions prioritized by the community via a community planning process that involved public, private and non-profit agencies (Ibid, 2018). The HPS prioritized ‘housing first’ approaches to homelessness as a means to give individuals and families more autonomy and self-sufficiency in their journey out of homelessness (Ibid, 2018). Though initially funded to 2014, as part of the 2013 budget, the HPS was renewed for an additional five years, though the funding was reduced from \$134.5 million to \$119 million. Budget 2017 saw HPS funding increase by 47% for a period of two years, bringing total spending to \$2.1 billion over the next decade (Canadian Press, 2018) demonstrating the federal government’s acknowledgement and commitment for targeted homelessness support.

More recently, the federal government announced funding increases to its National Housing Strategy with a complementary redesigned homelessness strategy entitled Reaching Home that is projected to create up to 100,000 new housing units and 300,000 repaired or renewed housing units within the next 10 years (Canada Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development, 2018).

Compared to the federal government, the province of BC maintained a more consistent commitment to affordable housing and homelessness with the creation of BC Housing in 1967. This Crown agency has a mandate to deliver a range of affordable housing projects based on a cooperative approach with local governments and non-profit agencies. In response to the federal government’s near abandonment of affordable housing programs, the province of BC, through BC Housing, increased its funding in an attempt to maintain construction of affordable housing (Doberstein, 2016, p. 51). The recent election of an NDP provincial government (with the support of the Green Party) has once again increased funding for provincial housing programs, such as the new Rapid Response to Homelessness program, targeted to assist the homeless or citizens at risk of becoming homeless. This program commits \$291 million to create 2,000 modular supportive housing units across BC over two years (BC Housing, 2018). More recently, the BC government announced a new Indigenous Housing Fund with a financial commitment of \$550 million over ten years to create 1,750 new housing units on federal reserves through BC Housing (Province of BC, 2018).

Municipalities were generally ill-prepared for the dramatic reduction of funding by senior governments for programs and support to address homelessness and create housing during the mid-90’s. In major centers, such as Vancouver, the homelessness problem quickly metastasized in the downtown eastside as local governments and non-profit groups struggled to meet basic emergency shelter needs outside the historical

hierarchical governance context (Doberstein, 2016, p. 52). The transition to a highly institutionalized and inclusive integrated governance network structure of non-profit groups within the Vancouver region has yielded positive outcomes through broad engagement and integration of policy planning, decision-making, key investments and strategies across the various network actors (Ibid. p. 85). Complementary to, but outside of the governance network, local governments have played a secondary or supportive role through donation of land, assistance in development fees and costs, or zoning and regulatory incentives within their legislated mandate.

Insufficient resources and reduced or reinvented senior government support in the management and prevention of homelessness means growing reliance on non-profit sectors and local governments to find innovative solutions to support their community's most vulnerable citizens. With limited resources, this research project seeks to understand how the capacity of non-profit homeless service providers can be raised through increased service integration and coordination to deal with the intractable issue of homelessness.

2.3 Homelessness Planning in Campbell River

The City of Campbell River is a fast growing, coastal municipality located on the east coast of Vancouver Island, approximately 150km north of the City of Nanaimo. With a reported population of 35,138 people (Statistics Canada, 2017), Campbell River is Vancouver Island's fourth largest municipality. Historically known for its local sport fishing industry, the City is a resource hub for timber production, aquaculture and mining. The City is also a major service hub as the last major center heading north on Vancouver Island.

In recent years, local stakeholders and social service providers have participated in efforts to frame the City's homelessness problem and find appropriate solutions. The City's first attempt in alleviating homelessness began in 2009 with the City's establishment of a Homelessness Task Force. Through survey responses from homeless people and service providers, a number of recommendations were made, including (but not limited to):

- Adoption of a 'housing first' model;
- Work with community partners to enhance daytime services; and
- Amend City plans and bylaws to increase affordable housing opportunities.

In 2010, the City adopted an Affordable Housing Strategy. It focused on addressing affordable housing challenges for low income, vulnerable populations in the City, though recognized that economic trends at the time could impact the comparatively good state of affordable housing in the City (City of Campbell River, 2010, p. 2). Key goals outlined in the plan included:

- Facilitate housing options for the most vulnerable low income households;
- Encourage a greater housing mix and mixed use neighborhoods in the City; and

- Retain the City’s current strength in local housing affordability by supporting economic development initiatives and protecting a good supply of affordable rental units (Ibid, p. 2).

2.4 Homelessness and Housing in Campbell River

Like many Vancouver Island communities witnessing significant growth pressure and associated decreases in housing affordability, the City of Campbell River has a homelessness problem. Latest homeless counts show there are presently 47 unsheltered homeless people, with 32 sheltered (Orr & Allan, 2017, pp. 5-8). A majority (68%) of those unsheltered are men, and 38% identify as Aboriginal (Ibid, p. 6). Finally, 62% of those unsheltered report a median average of 2 years without a place to call their own.

The rising demand for housing in Campbell River has particularly affected those relying on subsidized housing. Twelve suites of subsidized housing in the Quinsam Hotel, a historic landmark in the Campbellton neighborhood, were lost after a catastrophic fire in June of 2017. Some of these subsidized suites were re-established in the Harbourside Inn, further concentrating the homeless population in the City’s downtown core. Tenants note that rent charged for a single occupant at the Harbourside Inn is \$800, or \$1000 for two people (Orr & Allan, 2017, p.4). Many of those required to pay these rent charges overwhelmingly rely on local meal programs as they do not have enough money to make ends meet.

The City of Campbell River has historically benefitted from relatively healthy rental vacancy rates (above 3.0%) and housing rental rates consistently lower than the provincial average (City of Campbell River, 2010). Recently, however, increasing pressure on the housing and rental market has significantly affected the most vulnerable. This pressure was forecasted in the City’s 2010 Affordable Housing Strategy, which noted that household income was lagging behind provincial averages, coupled with the fact that there was a growing lack of diversity in the housing market (primarily due to the predominant construction of new single family homes) creating a gap in the local market to meet the needs of all residents.

The drivers of increased migration into Campbell River include the construction of large-scale industrial projects (such as the \$1.1 billion BC Hydro John Hart Generating Station Replacement project and the \$300 million North Island Hospital project) and less expensive housing prices in Campbell River relative to other major housing markets (such as the Lower Mainland, Victoria and Nanaimo). However, Campbell River’s legacy of more affordable Vancouver Island housing is quickly disappearing as housing market pressures migrate north on Vancouver Island. In October of 2018, Vancouver Island Economic Alliance reported a 22% increase in benchmark single family home pricing in Campbell River over the past year and noted a narrowing of the house price differentials across Vancouver Island (p. 47).

As of November 2017, the City of Campbell River has the second lowest vacancy rate on Vancouver Island at 0.6%, down from 2.0% in 2016 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2017, p. 7). In lockstep with the shrinking vacancy rate, area rental rates

have increased by 6.0% in 2017 when compared to the average rent in 2016. With vacancy rates below 3%, explain Schiff and Turner (2014), landlords can leverage a lack of supply by raising rents and select more desirable tenants, pricing-out more vulnerable residents, particularly those with mental illness or addiction issues, visible minorities and Aboriginal people (pp. 22-23).

A lack of rental supply is compounded by a shrinking average income. At \$51,014, Campbell River's average household income is \$7,684 lower than the provincial average of \$58,698 (Canadian Rental Housing Index, 2016). It is becoming increasingly difficult to afford shelter in Campbell River. Households spending more than 30% of pre-tax income on shelter are living in unaffordable situations. In Campbell River, 43% of households are spending more than 30% of the pre-tax income on shelter, and more critically, 17% of households in the City are spending more than 50% of their income on shelter costs, indicating that these residents are facing critical affordability challenges and likely foregoing other household necessities (Ibid, 2016).

When housing markets shift, the burden is disproportionately shouldered by low-income residents (Schiff & Turner, 2014, p. 21). In Campbell River, there is a significant discrepancy in incomes and affordable housing, particularly for those in the lower income brackets. For example, in reviewing the average household income of the City's lowest income quartile (\$15,505), their income would need to be raised 93% in order for these households to live in 'affordable' situations, whereby 30% of their income is paid on shelter costs (Canadian Rental Housing Index, 2016). Research suggests (i.e. Schiff & Turner, 2014) that those on social assistance and disability particularly struggle with access to affordable units in hot housing markets usually as a result of a misalignment between subsidies for housing and the high cost of rent (p. 23).

While overall police calls related to disturbance and intoxication in the downtown have declined since 2016, the concentration of calls for service has become more acutely focused (C. O'Brien, RCMP, personal communication, July 24, 2018). Due, in part, to the clustered nature of existing locations of social services in the downtown, the visible impacts of increasing homelessness has raised the alarm of local businesses, residents and tourists. In response, the City coordinated enforcement and security by establishing a Downtown Safety Office strategically located in the downtown area generating the greatest number of public disturbance incidents. The primary objective has been to manage unacceptable street behavior, with a secondary objective of improving integration of enforcement and security services with social support services through deliberate cross-jurisdictional relationship building.

Until recently, however, the City has found it difficult to engage service providers without a cross-jurisdictional structure to foster representation and involvement of all providers. Though the recent (June 2018) formation of the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness is a step in the right direction, a lack of coordination in actions and planning among service providers remains.

2.5 Conclusion: The Need for a Coordinated Response

Disinvestment in affordable housing from the federal government has led to a rise in homelessness, and as a result, local governments and non-profit agencies are at the forefront of managing the issue. In Campbell River, the lack of coordination among non-profit agencies supporting area homelessness prevents a synchronized response to homelessness in the City. Furthermore, a disjointed homelessness support system prevents quick action when provincial affordable housing partnership opportunities become available.

Recognizing that successful interventions to homelessness requires a coordinated, systems-level response, this research project seeks to determine the barriers preventing service integration within the City's homelessness support system and the support that the City of Campbell River can provide to reduce homelessness. To properly inform the project methodology, an understanding of the complexities along the homeless spectrum and the potential that service integration may offer is needed. The following section (Section 3) provides a review of literature related to the benefits, limitations and types of service integration, specific to the homelessness context and informs the development of a conceptual framework to guide the City's involvement and role within Campbell River's support network.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

This section identifies key factors leading to homelessness and profiles homeless people, their needs, and the best strategies for meeting these needs. This literature review outlines key definitions and features of service integration, followed by an overview of the roles that network participants play in an integrated approach to homelessness. It shows how levels of service integration can vary along a spectrum, and how local context affects the intensity of the service integration that is needed. An analytic framework, adapted from Doberstein (2016), is set out to guide the analysis of Campbell River's existing homelessness support system and to identify opportunities for improved service integration and innovation.

3.1 Homelessness: Key Factors

Homelessness occurs along a spectrum. At one end, homelessness can mean an individual is *unsheltered*, whereby a person does not have access to emergency shelters and lives exposed to the elements (in forests, parks, etc.) or lives in areas not designed for habitation such as garages, closets, or attics (Gaetz et al., 2014, p. 39). *Emergency sheltered* is the institutional response to homeless people who cannot secure permanent housing (Ibid, p. 39). Some homeless are *provisionally accommodated*, meaning they do not have permanent shelter, though they have access to temporary accommodation. The underlying factor with provisional accommodation is no immediate prospect of secure tenure – it is usually an interim measure meant to bridge the gap between emergency and permanent housing (Ibid, p. 39). Finally, many are *at risk of becoming homeless*, including individuals with a reasonable prospect of homelessness from a major change in circumstance (such as losing a job, being evicted, people facing violence / abuse) (Ibid, p. 39). According to Gaetz et al., those who spend 30% or more of their household income on shelter generally fall into this category (2014, p. 39).

Homelessness populations can be differentiated with respect to how long someone experiences homelessness. The *chronically* homeless, for example, are those without shelter for a period of a year or more (Gaetz et al., 2014, p. 40). The *episodically* homeless move between homelessness and being sheltered, whereas the *transitionally* homeless spend a short time without a place to live (less than one month) (Ibid, p.40).

Understanding the differences in duration of the homeless is important from a policy response perspective. Although only 15% of homeless individuals and families are either chronically or episodically homeless, this cohort absorbs 50% of the resources in the homelessness support system (Aubrey, 2013, as quoted in Gaetz et al., 2014, p. 53). An analysis of costs associated with being homeless in Calgary, for example, found that those episodically homeless cost \$72,444 per person per year, with the chronically homeless costing \$134,642 per year (Latimer et al., 2017, p.77). A report undertaken by Latimer et al., confirms that homeless people with underlying mental health issues incur significantly higher costs due to use of the health, social, and justice systems, stressing the importance of “a more comprehensive response to homelessness and effective allocation of resources...” (2017, pp. 84-85).

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], one-third of OECD countries have identified integrating social services as a cornerstone of their homelessness strategies (2015, p. 113). As explained earlier, a minority of homeless people (the chronically and episodically homeless) have the most complex needs and, as a result, are substantially more costly to support. Service integration, such as linking supportive housing with complementary supports (i.e. mental health, addictions support, etc.), can reduce repeated emergency service use, thus freeing resources for others (Ibid, p. 121). Moreover, an increasingly coordinated service system provides opportunities for preventive action, such as employment assistance, which can successfully interrupt the “disruptive spiral of falling income, housing loss, no fixed address...and no access to mainstream benefits or services” (Ibid, p. 122).

3.2 Service Integration

Recognizing the complexity of homelessness, communities across Canada are developing systems-based plans to address the problem (Gaetz, DeJ, Richter & Redman, 2016, p. 6). As an example, a key element of the City of Kelowna’s Homelessness Plan was forming a task force with a mandate to “achieve a redesign of the functioning of the system of homeless-serving services” by adopting a homeless-serving systems planning approach (City of Kelowna, 2017, p. 1).

Another example comes from Medicine Hat, one of the few communities in Canada to announce that homelessness would be eliminated. Medicine Hat recognizes that an integral component of the City’s success involved shifting from adding new homelessness programs to a systemic overhaul of its approach (City of Medicine Hat, 2014, p. 21). Key components of Medicine Hat’s plan include:

- Establishing a transparent and inclusive process that incorporates input from a wide range of stakeholders; (p. 21)
- Developing clear terms of reference establishing common definitions, shared policies, and mapping relationships; (p. 21)
- Coordinating intake with a goal of streamlining the flow of program participants across the system; (p. 22) and
- Involving agencies related to the homelessness sector, including justice, child welfare, health, etc. (p. 22).

Service integration is defined as “a process by which two or more entities establish linkages for the purpose of improving outcomes for needy people” (Konrad, 1996, as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 14). Service integration as a means of managing homelessness has roots in the 1970’s health services literature. It called for a shift away from a system where a homeless person would need to navigate between services to one where “services aimed to provide a pathway out of homelessness for the client” (Neale, Buultjens & Evans, 2012, p. 246). A core principle that marked this shift was greater attention to the needs of the client as a starting point towards achieving better service integration (Ibid, p. 247).

Lloyd and Wait (2006) (as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 14) list four general stakeholders and their view of service integration: users, frontline providers, managers

and policy makers. For users of an integrated service system, obtaining care is seamless and easy to navigate (Ibid, p. 14). Frontline providers work with colleagues from different fields to coordinate tasks and services. Managers coordinate and align organizational objects with other agencies, and policy-makers set policies that enable service integration, such as financing arrangements, with a more holistic view when evaluating the efficacy of particular programs (Ibid, p. 15).

Integration can occur at the systems level and service level. Systems-level integration efforts are typically led by government with an aim of bringing together a range of services under a single centrally managed and funded function (Flateau et al., 2013, p. 15). Service-level integration, on the other hand, seeks to coordinate service delivery across different sectors (Ibid, p. 22). According to Nichols and Doberstein, systems integration efforts at this level are typically the most likely to be achieved and sustained (2016, p. 410). Service integration can also be vertical or horizontal in nature. Leutz (as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 18) notes that vertical integration occurs within agencies and is typically “authority driven, formal, structural orientation” whereas horizontal integration occurs between agencies and involves a broader range of stakeholders (users, front line workers, managers and policy makers) and is typically more collaborative in nature.

Service integration typically features high levels of coordination, communication, increased levels of trust and respect, and a unified commitment to achieving common goals (Keast, Waterhouse, Brown & Murphy, 2008, p. 24). The goals of service integration include better matching a specific set of services with the particular needs of a client, and creating a more coordinated and responsive system (Ibid, p. 24). The benefits of service integration include improving client’s access to comprehensive services, ensuring continuity of care, reducing service overlap, reducing inefficiencies (and saving costs) and establishing greater accountability (Randolph, Blasinky, Leginski, Parker & Goldman, 1997, p. 370).

Williams and Sullivan (as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 21) note that there are several key agency and structural factors that influence successful service integration. At an agency level, “motivation, goals, leadership and personal skills, experience and capabilities” play a role in service integration, whereas structural forces include the “legislative framework, available resources, histories of collaboration, accountability structures and organizational cultures” (Williams & Sullivan, as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 21). Successful factors enabling integration include accessible information systems, a shared commitment to collaborate between agencies, leaders that champion integration, having sufficient resources, supportive management, and organizational culture that supports integration (Ouwens, as quoted in Flateau et al., 2013, p. 21). On the other hand, there are several recognized barriers to service integration, including entrenched professional and organizational attitudes that are geared towards “specialization and fragmentation” (Flateau et al., 2013, p. 22). Other barriers outlined in the literature that prevent service integration include geographical barriers, different administrative processes (such as different intake procedures), and a reluctance to collaborate for fear of being required to share resources (Agranoff, 1991, p. 534).

Service integration proceeds along a continuum, with levels of varying intensity ranging from less integrated communication and information sharing, to a highly integrated service hub under a single governance model (Randolph et al., 1997, p. 370). Scholars who review the intensity of service integration point out that full integration should not be the end goal, but rather, the level of integration should be decided collectively by the stated goals of the service network (Neale et al., 2012, p. 245). As Keast et al. (2008) suggest, the level of integration should be tailored to a particular context and circumstance, and they caution that a failure to match an appropriate integration level with the goals of a system can be costly and limit potential positive results (p. 25). For instance, if a group of service providers are concerned about a lack of information sharing, more cooperation may be all that is required (Ibid, p. 25). On the other hand, in situations where a problem is intractable and requires a shift in approach, collaboration may be an appropriate solution (Ibid, p. 25).

3.3 Conclusion: Analytic Framework Guiding This Study

Scholars like Doberstein (2016) note that not many studies investigate homelessness through the lens of governance and policy (p. 6). Moreover, solving homelessness is beyond the capacity of a single level of government, and more collaborative forms of policymaking are required, with a particular aim in leveraging the insights of civil society to address homelessness (Ibid, pp. 17-18).

Doberstein (2016) points to two key structural features of a governance network: institutionalization (i.e. how often the group meets, level of integration with key players, role in the policy process); and, level of inclusiveness in the network (p. 41). The higher the level of institutionalization and inclusivity in the governance network, the more innovative the policy (Ibid, p. 42). Greater diversity of voices around the table leads to different perspectives, better analysis, and understanding of emerging trends (Ibid, p. 42). Higher institutionalization means that governance networks have more access to decision-making and more interconnectivity with other systems (Ibid, p. 42). Doberstein argues that brokerage and persuasion are underlying properties of more institutionalized and integrated networks and “these properties drive policy innovation and system coordination” (p. 164).

Dictating the overall performance of the governance network is how much autonomy is afforded by governments - what Doberstein (2016) refers to as metagovernance. Metagovernance is defined as the “context under which governance networks are designed and evolve” (Doberstein, 2016, p. 36). The metagovernor (like a regional district such as Metro Vancouver, or a City) determines the arena and the rules of the game (Doberstein, 2016, p. 18). When metagovernance is dynamic – that is, when networks have increased discretion and relationships between metagovernance and network leaders are positive – policy innovation and system coordination increase (Doberstein, 2016, pp. 45-46). On the other hand, when a governance network has a narrow mandate, (which Doberstein calls straightjacket metagovernance), policy innovation and system integration decline (pp. 45-46). The relationships of Doberstein’s metagovernance model are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

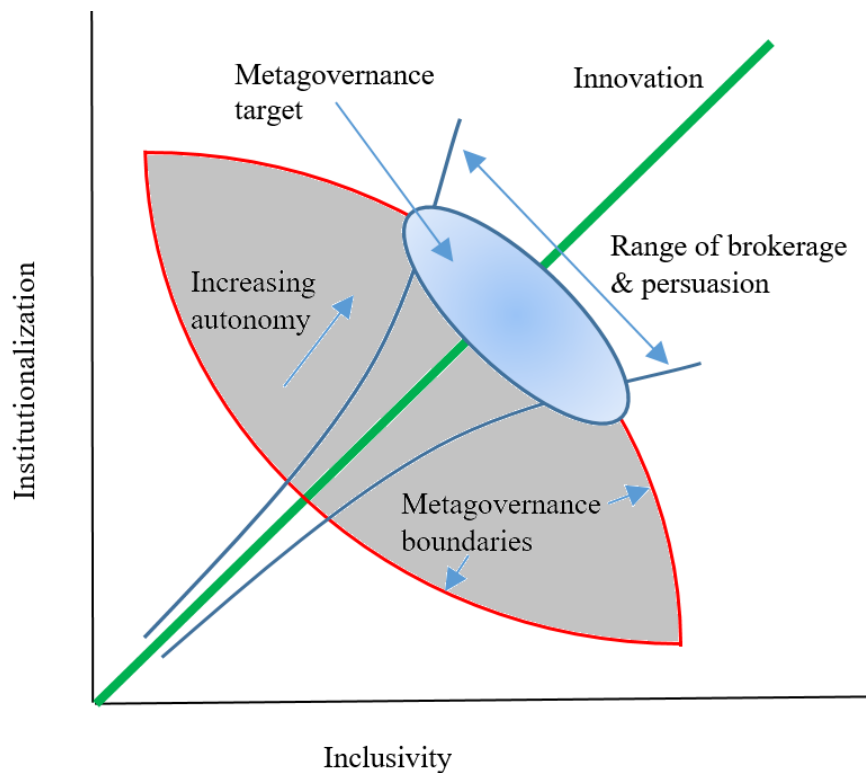


Figure 1: Doberstein's metagovernance model illustration

Doberstein applies these theoretical claims to review homelessness network governance over 20 years (1995-2015) in Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto. His book (Doberstein, 2016) explains why despite similar homelessness problems, Vancouver and Calgary generally have better homelessness policies and programs in terms of innovation and coordination than Toronto (p. 5). Prior to 2005, for example, Vancouver's homeless governance network had higher levels of institutionalization and inclusiveness, producing the most brokerage and persuasion (p. 167). Metro Vancouver as the metagovernor allowed the network to operate within "an open policy space" and relationships were cooperative (p. 167). Conversely, Toronto's metagovernance network was highly constrained by the City of Toronto and operated with low institutionalization and inclusivity that inhibited policy innovation and collaboration (p. 169), resulting in limited brokerage and persuasion (p. 167).

Doberstein's analytical framework has been adapted and used to guide the direction of this research project, and a conceptual diagram is outlined in Figure 2.

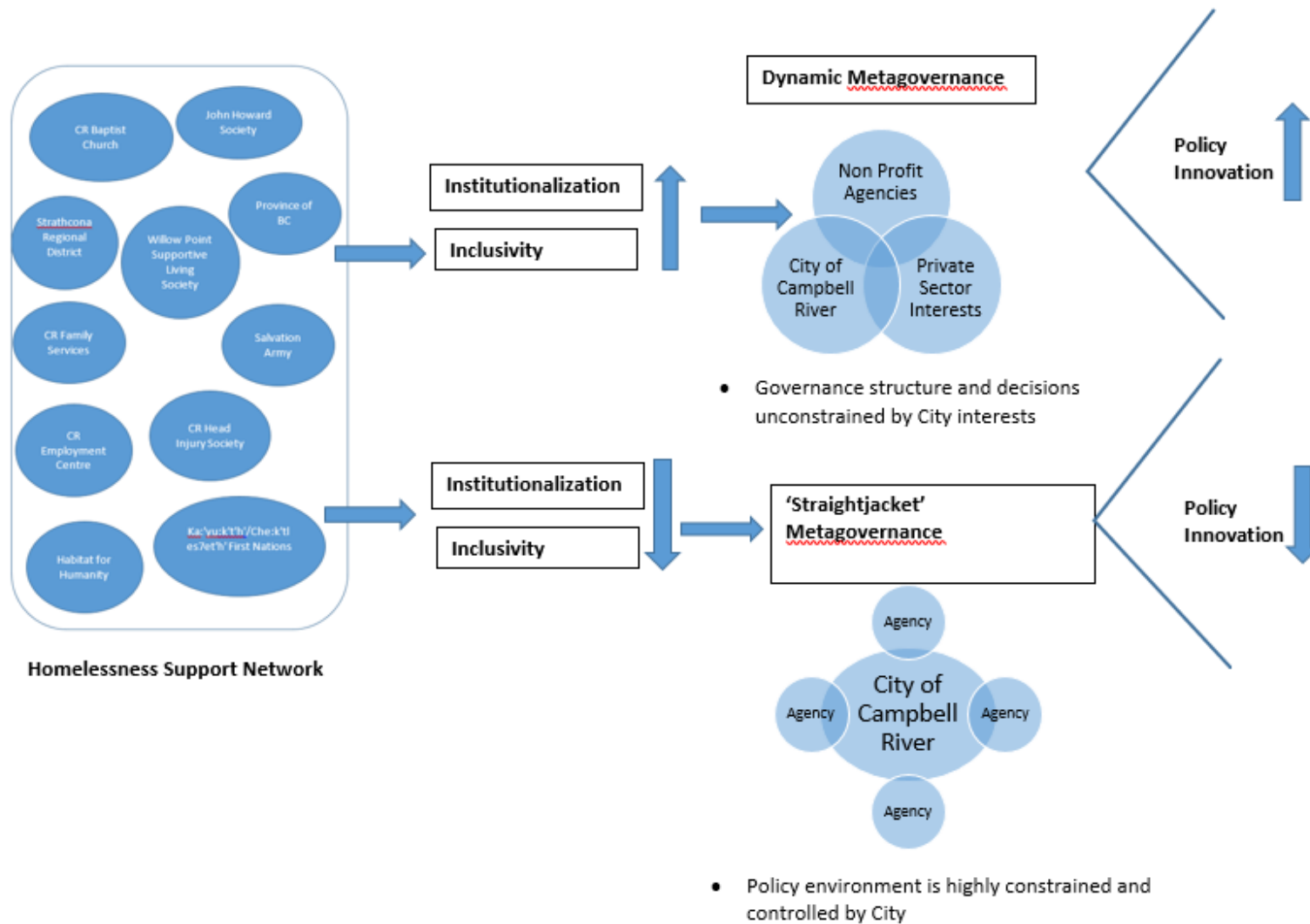


Figure 2 Analytical Framework

4. METHODOLOGY

This section provides an overview of the methodology developed to identify barriers to increased service integration within the City's homelessness servicing network and identify complementary roles that the City can play to increase coordination and collaboration in the sector:

- An online survey developed to obtain information from non-profit agencies;
- Telephone interviews with senior staff in other local governments responsible for their respective homelessness / affordable housing portfolio; and
- Coordination of a focus group session with membership drawn from Campbell River's Coalition to End Homelessness.

Research undertaken as part of this project followed the Participatory Action Research [PAR] style. PAR "seeks to understand and improve the world by changing it" (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006, p. 854). PAR is a systems-level investigative approach that relies on collaboration "of those affected by the issue being studied, for the purposes of education and taking action or effecting social change" (Minkler, 2000, p. 192). At its core, PAR encourages both the researcher and participants to reflect on their respective practices and determine opportunities for improvement (Baum et al., 2006, p. 854).

4.1 Online Survey

A list of known service providers that support homelessness and vulnerable people in Campbell River was developed and contact information (email and mailing addresses) were retrieved from publicly accessible agency websites / social media pages. Effort was deliberately made to forward the survey to a wide variety of agencies that provide direct support to homeless people.

An email was circulated outlining the purpose of the research project, the contact information of the primary researchers, a copy of the letter of information for implied consent, and a link to the online survey. Hard copies of the survey, letter of implied consent and overview of the research project were also mailed out, recognizing that some agencies did not have publically available email addresses. The survey was also forwarded to the City of Campbell River's newly formed Coalition to End Homelessness, and coalition members were encouraged to have their colleagues complete the survey.

In general, the online survey sought to gain an understanding of:

- The varying types of service providers operating within Campbell River;
- The complexity of a typical client based on diversity of needs;
- Suitable conditions that could aid greater forms of collaboration;
- Perceived barriers to collaboration; and

- Potential integrative strategies that could work in Campbell River.

Survey questions were drawn from the service integration literature, particularly in the homelessness field. For example, questions that asked respondents to identify the key factors for greater collaboration and the associated barriers were based on the research completed by Evans, Neale, Buultjens & Davies, (2011). Potential integrative strategies were drawn from Randolph et al. (1997).

4.2 Telephone Interviews

Eleven British Columbia communities similar to Campbell River with respect to population, demographics, governance setting, organizational structure and / or social challenges were identified. The Chief Administrative Officer [CAO] for each of these eleven local governments was identified through publicly available sources and contacted via email to explain the purpose of the research project, introduce the primary researchers, confirm their organization's willingness to participate in the telephone interview, and identify the most suitable staff person from that local government to participate. Subject to a positive response, a telephone interview was arranged via email, with the designated local government staff person receiving the participant consent form and a list of the interview questions.

In general, the telephone interview sought to gain an understanding of:

- The significance of homelessness issues within the community;
- The forms and degrees of local government actions and responses to homelessness issues;
- The value to local governments of relationships in homelessness issues; and
- Current local government practices for developing and maintaining collaborative engagement related to homelessness matters.

4.3 Focus Group Session

With the results of the non-profit group online survey and the local government telephone interviews in hand, a focus group session was arranged with the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness. Qualitative methods such as focus groups enable deeper examination of complex issues compared to other survey methods (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008, p. 120). They also foster co-learning and collaboration between both researcher and participants, and reflect PAR principles (Neale et al., 2012, p. 250).

A one-hour session was scheduled immediately preceding the regularly scheduled Coalition meeting with a majority of the coalition members in attendance. Following introductions, the primary researchers provided an overview of the research project, distributed participant consent forms, and presented initial findings from the online survey and telephone interviews. An open feedback forum was facilitated by the primary researchers with comments and suggestions captured manually on flip charts to ensure comments were accurately recorded.

In general, the workshop sought to gain an understanding of:

- The critical gaps or disconnects that exist between existing social services and the City;
- The options for enabling collaborative actions and solutions to bridge critical gaps or disconnects; and
- Potential recommendations for structural, governance, and other improvements needed to promote improved outcomes for homeless individuals.

This research project utilized a mixed methods approach to gain insights about service integration from both local non-profit agencies that provide support to Campbell River's homeless, as well as learning from the experiences of other municipalities that experience homelessness in their communities.

Some limitations of the research approach provide opportunities for further research. This research does not feature any direct consultation with homeless people and relies on the perspectives of service providers to the City's vulnerable. Without these perspectives, the researchers do not know the service gaps in the Campbell River support network, or the unique needs of the homeless. Given homelessness research is generally aimed at improving outcomes for homeless people, these voices should be included in future systems-planning efforts.

5. FINDINGS: ONLINE SURVEY

This section provides the results of the online survey distributed to non-profit agencies engaged in social service support in the community. In total, 23 responses were collected. Twenty-two participants completed the online survey, with one submission received in hard copy. The hard copy submission data was manually entered into the online survey by the researchers.

Each sub-section below correlates to the questions comprising the online survey and provides a statistical representation of the results. Where open-ended questions were asked, the results were summarized into prevalent themes, where possible.

5.1. Services Provided

To gain an understanding of the landscape of services available to directly support homeless people in Campbell River, participants were asked to identify the kind of service their organization provided. Recognizing that some agencies likely delivered more than one type of service, respondents could select more than one choice. Of those that responded, 16 participants identified the provision of a health related service as a function of their organization, which included mental health. Thirteen respondents identified as providing harm reduction services, while 11 respondents indicated that they provide substance abuse and education and training (Figure 3). Respondents also noted that their agencies provided a number of other services not listed in the survey form, including:

- provide home ownership;
- providing child protection, youth services and support;
- rehabilitation;
- independent housing;
- transportation, visiting, grocery shopping assistance;
- drug and alcohol counselling; and
- counselling / mental health support.

Of these, 91% (21 respondents) indicated that they provide multiple services, with 14 (61%) indicating that they provide four or more services. This demonstrates that agencies must be multifaceted to support the needs of their clients, which is consistent with similar studies (Evans et al., 2011, p. 41).

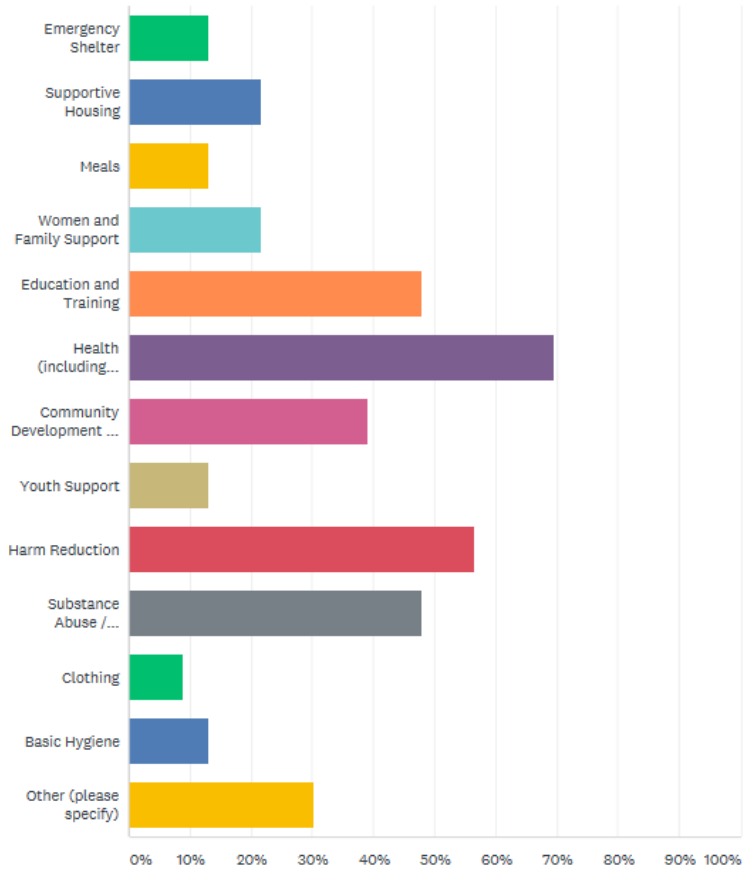


Figure 3: Forms of social support services provided by non-profit sector in Campbell River

5.2 Organizational Position

Recognizing that views of a front line worker may differ from the perspective of an Executive Director, respondents were asked to identify their position in their organization, as encouraged by Provan and Milward (2011) (as quoted in Evan et al., 2011, p. 40).

A majority of participants (52%) identified their position as ‘front-line worker’, followed by Executive Director (13%) and Supervisor (13%). Other positions (shown in Figure 4) identified included:

- Impact Officer – Community Developer;
- Housing and Program Coordinator;
- Program Coordinator; and
- Administrator.

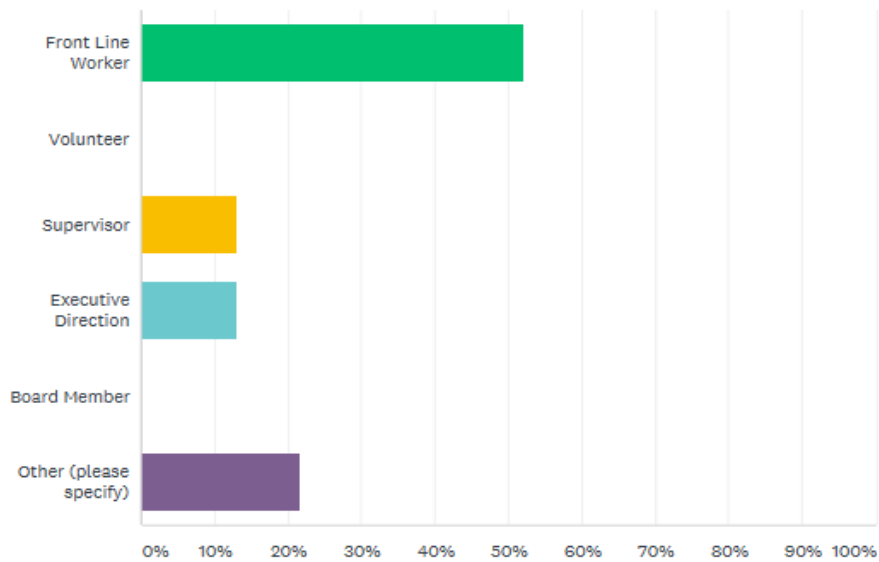


Figure 4: Organizational position held by non-profit respondent

5.3 Number of Client Referrals

To gain an understanding of average workload, respondents were asked to identify the typical number of referrals made to other organizations in order to meet the needs of a given client. Based on total number of respondents, 95% of participants provide at least one referral to meet client needs, with 19 (83%) providing multiple referrals.

Based on the survey (see Figure 5), 9 (39%) respondents indicated that they provide 5 or more referrals to another organization to meet the needs of a client. Seven (30%) indicated that they provide an average of two referrals per client.

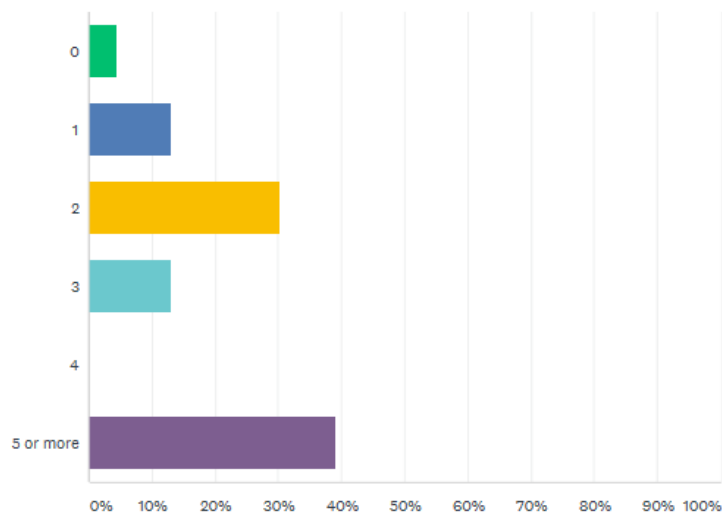


Figure 5: Number of client referrals made to other non-profit social service providers

5.4 Relevance of Cooperation and Collaboration

Adapted from Neale et al., (2012), participants were asked four questions aimed at gauging the level of importance attributed to collaboration in achieving some potential outcomes listed by the researchers. Shown in Figure 6, and consistent with the results of Neale et al., (2012) a majority of respondents believed that working with other agencies was either very important or important in:

- Gaining the support of government;
- Building capacity in the City’s homeless support community;
- Achieving their agency’s mandate or objectives; and
- Helping homeless people find the services they need.

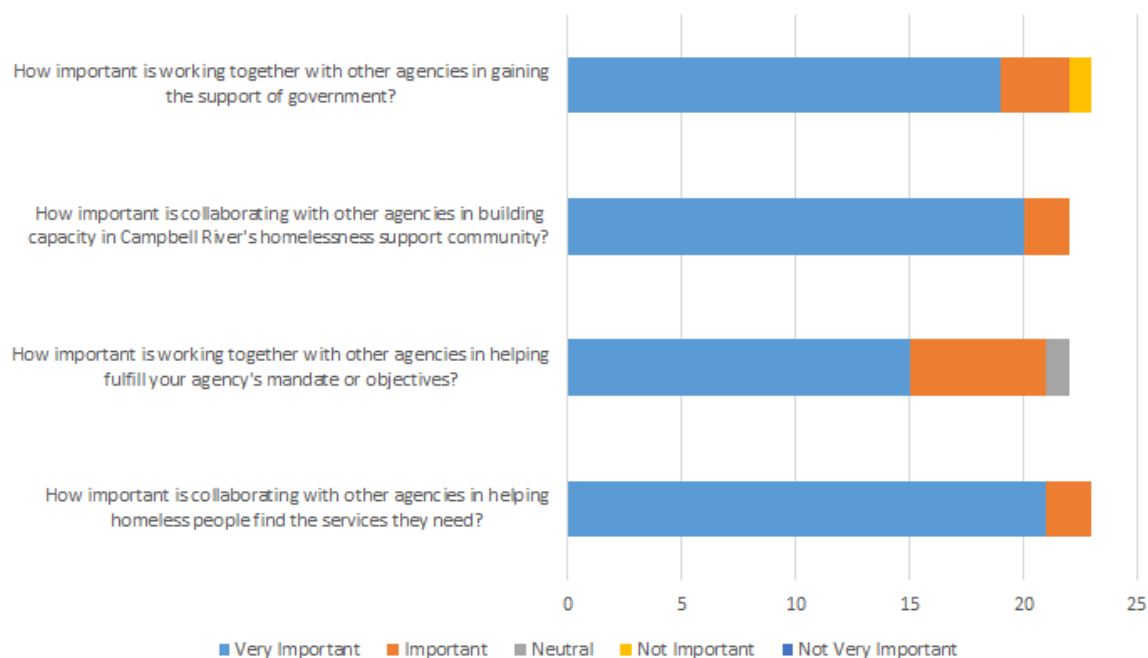


Figure 6: Relevance of cooperation and collaboration to successfully delivering social services

Responses from front line personnel and management were generally similar with no noteworthy variation.

5.5 Factors Contributing to Improved Cooperation and Collaboration

Adapted from Evans et al. (2011, pp. 46-47), participants were then asked to identify and rank the key factors needed to increase levels of collaboration between agencies that support homeless people in Campbell River. Figure 7 shows that most respondents (65%) believe that having sufficient resources to facilitate collaboration with other agencies was either the most important (39%) or second most important (26%) factor to increase collaboration. About 61% of participants felt that having strong working and professional relationships with other agencies was either the most important (13%) or second most important (48%) factor in increasing collaboration between agencies.

Having an organizational culture that promotes collaboration was ranked third with 26% respondents believing it very important (22%) or important (4%).

Being in close geographical proximity was ranked the least important factor in increasing collaboration, with 63% indicating that this factor was least (41%) or second least important (23%).

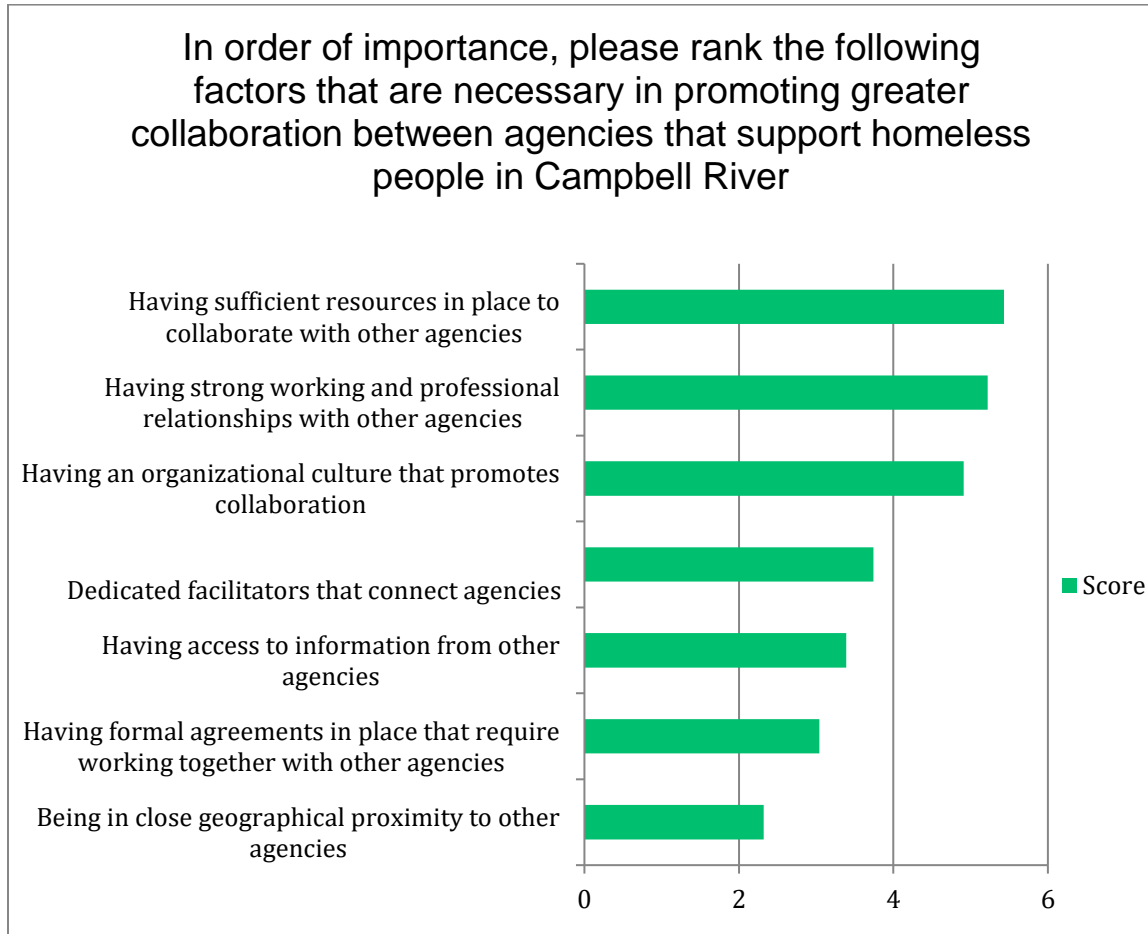


Figure 7: Factors contributing to improved cooperation and collaboration

To ensure the researchers were not missing any other important factors, respondents were given an opportunity to identify other key considerations that could assist in increasing collaboration between agencies. Thirteen responses were provided, with key factors pointed out as follows:

- Having a client focused outlook: “being mindful that you aren’t collaborating for a statistic but for a person.”
- Agency role clarification;
- Having a leading agency as the “backbone” of coalition efforts;
- Information sharing: having willing clients that wish to share their broad experiences and issues with other agencies;

- Having sufficient affordable housing;
- Education to reduce the stigma of bias and judgement; and
- Having support from agency management to carry-out collaboration efforts and planning initiatives.

Interestingly, three responses indicated that agency collaboration, though important, was not as urgent as a lack of affordable rental housing which was considered as a barrier to integration efforts. Consistent with Neale et al. (2012), the absence of affordable housing means that “service providers are limited in the opportunities to work with other services to provide solutions for their clients” (pp. 252-253).

5.6 Barriers to Successful Cooperation and Collaboration

Drawing from known barriers to service integration (i.e. Randolph et al., 1997, p. 369), participants were shown seven potential barriers and asked to rank them in order of importance, with ‘1’ being the largest barrier, and ‘7’ the smallest perceived barrier.

Figure 8 below shows that a majority (52%) of respondents indicated a lack of resources (time, money) was considered the biggest barrier to collaboration. With first and second choices combined, the second biggest barrier identified was a lack of available information about other agencies. Least important barriers to working together included geographic distances between agencies (41% of respondents identified this factor as the least significant) followed by feelings of tension or distrust between agencies (48% ranked this factor as second to least and least important factor).

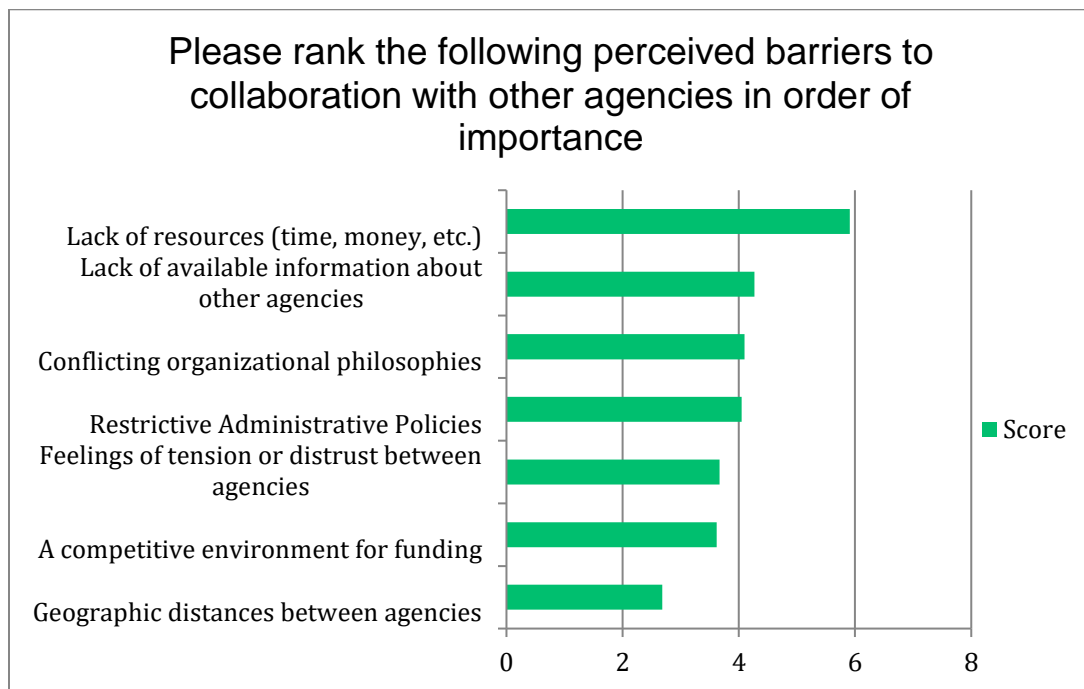


Figure 8: Barriers to successful cooperation and collaboration

Respondents were asked to identify potential barriers to service integration not listed in the survey. Though there were no statistically significant themes based on the 10 responses provided, some noteworthy barriers identified include:

- Lack of confidentiality;
- Sense of mistrust between non-profit agencies and City Hall;
- Lack of organizational support (i.e. non-supportive Board of Directors / Founders that do not support collaboration);
- Lack of available affordable housing;
- Government policy that creates barriers – money is better spent on reducing income inequality rather than “controlling” area homelessness population;
- A lack of facilitation expertise;
- Misunderstanding of other agency mandates; and
- Funding limitations, particular for First Nations homelessness programs.

5.7 Potential Strategies to Improve Service Integration

Next, survey participants were asked to rank, in order of importance, six potential strategies to help foster greater levels of service integration in Campbell River’s homelessness serving system. Potential strategies were adapted from Randolph et al. (1997, pp. 372-373).

Approximately 41% of respondents ranked the formation of a dedicated, multi-disciplinary team that provides direct support for homeless people as the top-ranked strategy to improve service integration (Figure 9). Indeed, 64% of respondents pointed to this approach as their most or second most preferred strategy. When combining the top two choices, developing an integrated multiple-service center and finding pooled or joint funding opportunities were each ranked (47.62%) as the second desired approach for Campbell River.

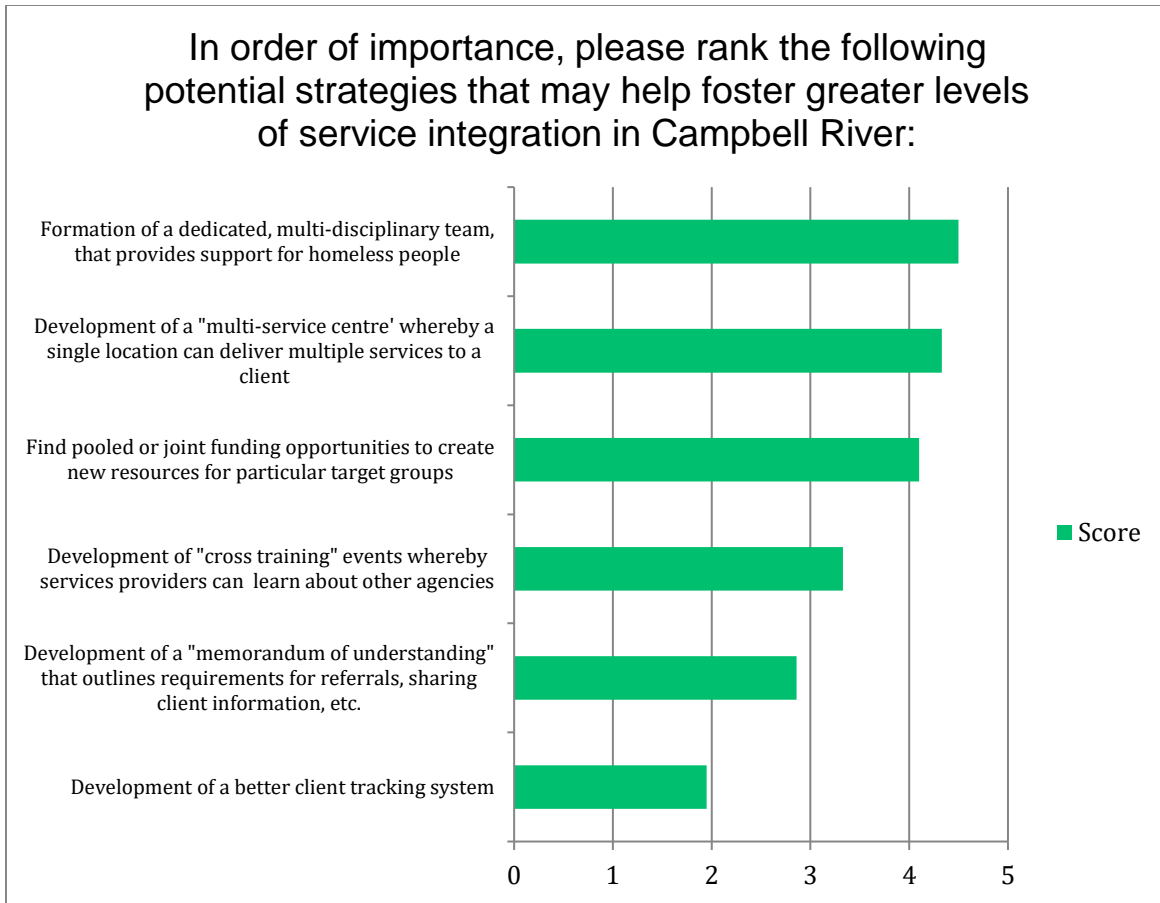


Figure 9: Potential strategies to improve service integration

Developing a better client tracking system was ranked as the least important strategy to improve interagency collaboration in the City with a combined 71.43% ranking this choice as their least, or second least favored approach. Developing a more formal “memorandum of understanding” prescribing requirements for greater information sharing between agency was ranked second least favored with a combined 52.38% of respondents identifying this approach as their least or second least preferred choice.

Finally, participants were asked to list any other strategies to promote greater service integration. Responses included:

- Greater City Hall involvement in community development (i.e. the hiring of a dedicated staff member tasked with homelessness support, greater action on the provision of affordable housing);
- Greater community education about cultural histories of area First Nations (with an aim to prevent vilifying homeless people in Campbell River that are predominantly aboriginal) and lobbying government about inadequate shelter allowances;
- Including First Nations and homeless perspectives in homelessness planning work;

- Using a community organizing approach to develop an area housing charter that can be presented to all levels of government;
- Greater follow-through on actions taken by agencies for each client;
- Find culturally appropriate approaches and a need to think outside of the box; and
- Embracing more ‘social work’ approaches to interactions with homelessness, with less reliance on medical approaches.

Three predominant themes emerged from these open-ended responses: the need for greater involvement from the City (three responses), recognizing that engagement efforts should be culturally appropriate based on a high presence of area First Nations (three responses), and the need for affordable housing (three responses).

5.8 Online Survey Conclusions

Online survey results completed by participating non-profit agencies yield several important findings. Almost all agencies are required to deliver multiple services and provide multiple referrals to support the needs of a particular client. Results show that the agencies in the homelessness support network recognize the value of service integration and see increased collaboration as a means of gaining government support, building capacity in the network, achieving agency objectives, and critically, assisting homeless people find the services they need. The survey results show that having sufficient resources in place to collaborate with other agencies are a key factor in facilitating working together, and a lack of resources is the biggest barrier to increased inter-agency collaboration. Finally, approaches such as the formation of dedicated multi-disciplinary teams and creation of a multi-service hub to support area homelessness are identified as potential strategies for future consideration.

6. FINDINGS: TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

This section presents the summative findings of the telephone interviews that were conducted with local government representatives from selected British Columbia municipalities. Seven of the eleven or 64% of the local government CAO's contacted agreed to participate in the process. Telephone interviews varied between 30 and 45 minutes and supplemental written information was provided by three participating municipalities.

The feedback generated through the combination of standardized interview questions, expanded conversations, and supplemental written information was collated and is presented below within the following four general themes:

- How significant the issue of homelessness is to municipalities;
- How communities are monitoring the number of homeless;
- What tools municipalities are using to respond to homelessness; and
- The forms and reliance on relationship networks with other agencies / organization.

6.1 Significance of Homelessness to Local Government

The increasing relevance of homelessness issues to communities and local governments in particular was apparent in the feedback received from local government respondents. Six of the seven local government interviews confirmed that the issue of homelessness has been identified as a priority by their elected governing body, with most formalizing homelessness issues as a priority within their Strategic Plan.

6.2 Quantifying Homelessness

Quantifying the issue of homelessness was seen as important to all responding local governments with regularly scheduled point-in-time counts used as the sole reporting tool by all. Most communities reported, however, that they felt the point-in-time results under-reported the degree of homelessness. This view is consistent with the findings of research conducted in the Metro Vancouver region (Eberle, Graham & Golberg, 2010, p. 33). Of significance, however, were comments of some respondents that engaging the local broader social support network in the point-in-time process led to a higher degree of confidence in the accuracy of the reported numbers.

6.3 Local Government Actions in Response to Homelessness

The telephone interview posed three distinct questions designed to understand the tools used at the local government level to address homelessness issues. The first focused on staffing and the degree to which local governments were allocating staff resources towards homelessness issues. All respondents confirmed that staffing resources were regularly directed to homelessness and / or related social issues. However, the norm for the mid-sized communities surveyed is to allocate this work across staff, who undertake this work in addition to other operational responsibilities. The minority of respondents

reported that their local government had staff positions dedicated solely to homelessness and / or related social matters.

While none of the local governments represented by respondents were directly involved in the provision of homelessness services directly, all confirmed their local government’s indirect involvement by providing funding and / or support to their community’s social support network. Revenue for this support was limited to three sources as illustrated in Figure 10 below. Revenue from taxation and user fees was used by all surveyed local governments and gaming revenue was commonly used. A single participating local government relied on revenue from development.

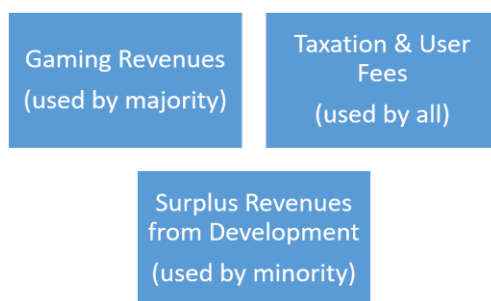


Figure 10: Sources of revenue used by local governments for homelessness and related social issues

Figure 11 below illustrates the range of support provided by the surveyed governments. Not all support tools were used by all reporting local governments. In-kind support and the direct provision of grants to social service providers were common to all surveyed local governments and the provision of land and / or facilities, tax exemptions, and fees and / or charges are also common supportive techniques used by 85% of the reporting local governments. The remaining tools (provision of matching grants, security and clean-up services, and infrastructure / servicing) were less common, used by a minority of local governments.

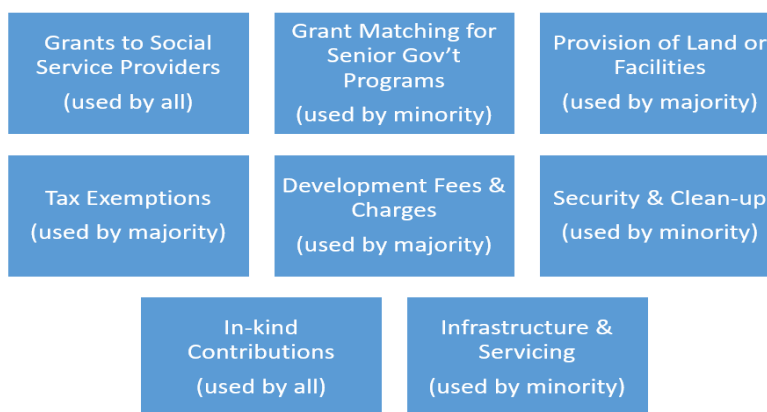


Figure 11: Local government expenditures for homelessness and related social issues

6.4 Local Government Relationships

The final questions posed during the telephone interview focused on the relationships between local governments and the social service network in the communities. While

100% of local government participants agreed that positive working relationships were essential to developing solution to homelessness, the techniques used by local governments varied. Figure 12 below identifies the techniques used to engage and connect with the social support networks. Although somewhat fluid, the application of each technique varies depending on the desired outcomes as noted on the left side of Figure 12.



Figure 12: Techniques used by local governments to connect with social support networks

6.5 Telephone Interview Conclusions

The telephone interviews with local government representatives confirmed that homelessness is of strategic significance to local governments. While the method of quantifying the number of homeless is generally standardized across municipalities, there is agreement that the scope of the problem remains under-reported. Local government responses to homelessness vary in application, but are almost exclusively drawn from a spectrum of supportive, rather than directive options with few funding opportunities for these initiatives outside of general taxation and gaming revenue. Of most significance, however, was the universal recognition that a foundation of healthy collaborative relationships between a local government and the social support network was integral to successfully addressing homelessness issues.

7. FINDINGS: FOCUS GROUP SESSION

This section presents the results of the project's final phase of data collection. A focus group, with members of the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness, was held to discuss preliminary project results (obtained through the online survey and telephone interviews). While some of the attendees had previously participated in the project's online survey, the informal focus group setting provided a unique opportunity for input through dialogue.

The following themes emerged from the focus group discussion:

- The need for broader and stronger horizontal relationships and understanding across organizations;
- The need to involve and engage the for-profit sector in solutions, and the need to incorporate some form of profitability into affordable housing projects to attract development interest and investment;
- The need for engagement and education with the broader community on homelessness issues to reduce the 'not in my backyard' (Nimbyism) opposition to affordable housing initiatives;
- The need for resilient and sustained coordination and leadership; and
- The need for less planning and more action, recognizing the urgency of homelessness in the City.

These themes are discussed in further detail below.

7.1 Broadened Relationships Across Organizations

Several focus group participants reinforced the notion that a lack of understanding related to inter-agency responsibilities and scope still exists within the social support network. This was substantiated through tangible examples provided from individual agency representatives. This gap appeared particularly acute when recent staff turnover had occurred in an agency, or where client needs had exceeded an agency's capacity to respond. There was widespread agreement that broader understanding and appreciation of the scope and capacity offered by the diverse social support network agencies could lead to reduced duplication of efforts and increased motivation for collaboration.

7.2 Need for Involvement of For-Profit Sector

Considerable discussion explored the absence of the for-profit sector from the social service network table. Participants readily identified affordable housing as a major barrier to successfully addressing homelessness in the community and recognized the potential benefits of incorporating market driven solutions to expedite housing projects. The group acknowledged that the social support network lacked expertise related to for-profit development and further suggested that comprehensive mixed-use housing projects provide opportunity for profit. This might become an increasingly important component to successful affordable housing projects, particularly as land availability, siting and neighborhood compatibility issues become increasingly challenging. Gaining

the perspective of the for-profit sector was viewed as important and most easily obtained by broadening coalition membership.

7.3 Community Acceptance

Several examples of community integration challenges were raised during the focus group discussion. Members expressed frustration about the challenges and localized opposition associated with successfully landing affordable housing projects in neighborhoods. Nearly all focus group participants noted some direct encounter with the 'not in my back yard' (NIMBY) reaction that often accompanies affordable housing and/or social service delivery projects. Negative community reaction was noted as highly discouraging and demotivating by several participants. It was generally attributed to the community's poor understanding of the range of causes and solutions to homelessness. Focus group participants suggested that closing this information gap represented a distinct opportunity for targeted efforts by the coalition and the City.

7.4 Coalition Coordination and Leadership

Without exception, coalition members in the focus group expressed hope and optimism as to what could be accomplished through collaboration by the newly established coalition. While a framework for next steps has been established and coalition members have expressed a willingness to participate, the feedback clearly indicated that participants have limited capacity to coordinate or lead the next steps. References were made to other communities where dedicated coordination and leadership resources have been used to sustain progress. It was widely agreed a similar dedicated resource would be needed for the coalition to have impact.

7.5 The Urgent Need for Action

For the most part, the feedback from the focus group was constructive and optimistic. This optimism was tempered, however, by an underlining tone of urgency for tangible results. This urgency was expressed more directly by a few participants who explained their growing impatience for process discussions in the face of such physical needs and tangible actions. While all participants shared the desire for urgent action, most recognized the long term value of resilient systems design as foundational for addressing homelessness.

7.6 Focus Group Conclusions

Feedback from the focus group session confirmed the need to improve understanding, relationships and partnerships across the established social support network and a broader network including the for-profit sector. While the formation of the coalition was identified as a positive first step, members recognized that a key limitation was the lack of a single agency or dedicated person to coordinate and align the strategic priorities of participating agencies and translating the collective coalition vision into action. Finally, the urgency for more affordable housing inventory was identified as the single most important priority due to ongoing lack of coordinated resources and community acceptance.

8. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is to identify key opportunities by distilling findings from the online survey, telephone interviews, focus group, and literature review. The discussion is structured into two sections aligned with the two research questions guiding this project. Resulting opportunities then form the basis for the options and recommendations in Section 9, which are identified below as ‘Strategic Implications’.

8.1 Summary of Findings

The data collected for this project universally identified collaboration as integral to successful service delivery to the homeless. Despite acknowledging the benefits of collaboration, social service providers remain highly sensitive to their capacity limitations and manage their participation accordingly. With finite resources, the social service providers require a high degree of coordination and focus if expanded collaborative practices are to be effectively sustained.

Local governments remain aware of the jurisdictional boundaries related to social issues such as homelessness and thus remain supportive in their actions but cautious in committing to more direct involvement. Despite this conservative approach, local governments identified developing and maintaining cooperative relationships across the social support network as critical for addressing homelessness challenges.

The findings confirmed the need to expand the local supply of affordable housing. While this shortage was not unanticipated given the shift in senior government policy priorities, combined with sustained economic growth, the findings confirmed that a combination of broad strategic coordination and participation is urgently needed to increase the availability of affordable housing.

8.2 Collaboration Gaps / Opportunities

The online survey results demonstrate that social service providers in Campbell River as a collective (either in whole or in part) are typically required to provide the full spectrum of services needed to support a particular client. Given that no single social service provider in Campbell River has the capacity, resources or mandate to meet the full range of a homeless client’s needs (a level of service typical to mid-sized communities), multiple referrals to other social service agencies in the community are commonplace. This collaborative protocol affirms the suitability of a service integration model for Campbell River, also supported by Evans et al. (2011) who note that higher number of client referrals are a good representation of a higher workload, which highlights the relevance and importance of increasing integration within the services network (p. 42). This finding justifies greater forms of integration at the program level, which could more readily assist homeless people in the City by reducing the amount of client navigation needed to access each service.

Strategic Implication: The non-profit sector recognizes that expanded collaboration and cooperation is required to maximize the impact and benefits of social services within the community. This awareness represents opportunity for improved integration of services.

A lack of resources and capacity was a common concern identified by survey respondents, and as the most commonly identified barrier to enhanced collaboration. Respondents, however, also recognized service integration could build additional capacity within the social services support community to help homeless find needed services. The recent establishment and robust membership of the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness is a tangible grass-roots acknowledgement of the importance and benefits of working together in the homelessness support system. Despite the promise of the coalition, participants also indicated that a single agency or coordinator is key to successfully moving the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness forward in a sustained and productive manner. Filling this identified gap is seen by the researchers as a significant opportunity for the City to aid in the cooperation and collaborative efforts of the community's social support network and follows the lead of other cities. Dedicated coordination would facilitate other actions identified in the online survey and focus group session such as improving understanding and access to information across agencies as well as inclusion of cultural training and awareness.

Strategic Implication: A coordination and leadership role is required in the Coalition to End Homelessness to coordinate efforts and to realize the full benefits offered by members. Filling this gap represents opportunity for greater service integration and impact of a unified social support network.

While improved collaboration and cooperation was viewed favorably by most respondents, three indicated that a lack of willingness to collaborate is not the primary barrier; rather, the bigger issue is the lack of affordable housing. As one respondent notes, "looking to improve ways that service agencies work together is great, but it does not increase the availability of safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing." These findings are consistent with a regional service integration study by Evans et al., (2011) which found that of all barriers, a lack of housing stock was the highest inhibitor of integration with 92.7% classifying it as either a somewhat significant or extremely significant barrier (p. 44). These findings highlight the important linkage between service support and providing affordable housing, illustrating how crucial a sufficient affordable housing stock is for service integration. The researchers conclude that the lack of affordable housing in Campbell River (along the full spectrum of the housing continuum) represents a significant barrier to effective social service delivery and reduces the net impact or value of the services provided to the individuals most in need.

Navigating the complex processes of delivering affordable and /or supportive housing projects, however, is not without its challenges. Consider these examples: in Vancouver a for-profit mixed use development that proposed 30 supportive housing units was withdrawn for economic reasons (claims by the developer that amenity fees levied by the municipality for rezoning were excessive, resulting in the project becoming no longer economically viable); in Surrey a 60 unit supportive housing development was cancelled due to community opposition; in Nanaimo a 44 modular housing unit, proposed as part of the province's Rapid Response to Homelessness program, was

quashed due to neighborhood concerns and perceived land use conflicts; and, in Saanich funding for a modular housing project for 40-50 people was withdrawn by BC housing due to the unsuitability of property offered up by the municipality.

These recent examples confirm feedback from the focus group session regarding the need for strategic collaboration and alignment of priorities across a broad spectrum of players, including the City and for-profit groups. Such collaboration could secure senior government funding and local community acceptance needed to enable appropriately responsive affordable housing projects. Establishing a formal strategy for the efficient and timely delivery of affordable housing projects in the community would close a significant gap and lay the foundation for realizing the benefits of social service integration.

Strategic Implication: A deliberate and comprehensive strategy (inclusive of land assembly, community engagement, financing, operations and development processes) to deliver immediate and sustained projects along the full continuum of affordable housing is needed to secure the potential benefits offered by the social support network. The current willingness of senior governments to invest in affordable housing represents a rare alignment of political will and policy that should not be ignored. This is a propitious opportunity to quickly develop affordable housing stock in the community but requires urgent coordinated community action.

8.3 Potential Role of Local Government

The results from the telephone interviews with local government representatives provided a glimpse into the actions taken by local governments elsewhere in the province and provides a road map for the City of Campbell River. The feedback helps identify the strategic opportunities for City action and involvement best aligned with the strategic needs identified by the community's collective social support network.

Interestingly, the telephone interviews did not identify any new tools or techniques of significance for responding to homelessness not known or in use by the City of Campbell River. The majority of local governments are aware of the tools at their disposal to respond to social issues such as homelessness. The significant takeaway from the feedback was less about what is being done and more about how it is being done. Respondents indicating a higher degree of integration and coordination between the local government and the social service sector, responded with a greater degree of confidence that their efforts are having impact; respondents reporting a low level of integration with the community's social support network had more frustration and felt less effective despite using similar tools.

Campbell River, like the majority of communities interviewed, identifies homelessness as an issue that warrants City attention and resources. A commitment to action is made through its strategic plan that identifies how the community "...is strengthened through diversity and is defined by how it treats its most vulnerable" (City of Campbell River, 2015). The City does not, however, sit at the head of the 'social services table' in the community, but rather plays a typical conservative role with actions and resources

focused on more traditional local government service delivery. Where and when these traditional responsibilities and social issues such as homelessness have intersected, the City's actions have been constructive and supportive for the most part, but largely reactive rather than strategic and deliberate. Responding to community concerns about downtown safety and disorderly conduct by establishing the Downtown Safety Office is a tangible example.

The number and quality of connections / relationships that local governments reported having with their social support networks was recognized by all respondents as increasing the benefits realized by the local government efforts and investments. No local governments reported a top-down governance or controlling approach, but rather, all utilized (to varying degrees) a partnership approach, involving influence but not control. This is similar to Doberstein's highly effective dynamic metagovernance model that offers discretion yet maintains positive and constructive relationships (2016, pp. 45-46). Accordingly, the researchers perceive an opportunity for a more deliberate role for the City in supporting and influencing the community social support network through the Coalition to End Homelessness, while affording this network flexibility to operate at arms-length.

Strategic Implication: Healthy and constructive collaborative relationships between the social services community and the City will be critical for effective service integration. A deliberate investment by the City in sustained engagement with the social support network (via the Coalition to End Homelessness) will provide an opportunity for increased City influence in proactive and impactful social solutions while reducing potential negative consequences from reactive and underdeveloped actions.

8.4 Revised Framework and Implications for Identifying Options

The strategic implications drawn from the project research and analysis can be inserted succinctly into the analytical framework developed in Section 3.3, derived from Doberstein (2016). Figure 13 below identifies specific opportunities for systematic changes to the current Coalition to End Homelessness / City dynamic.

The application of the analytical framework assists in developing appropriate options by 'connecting the dots' defined through the project's original research questions. Options for responding to these opportunities are set out and explored in Section 9.

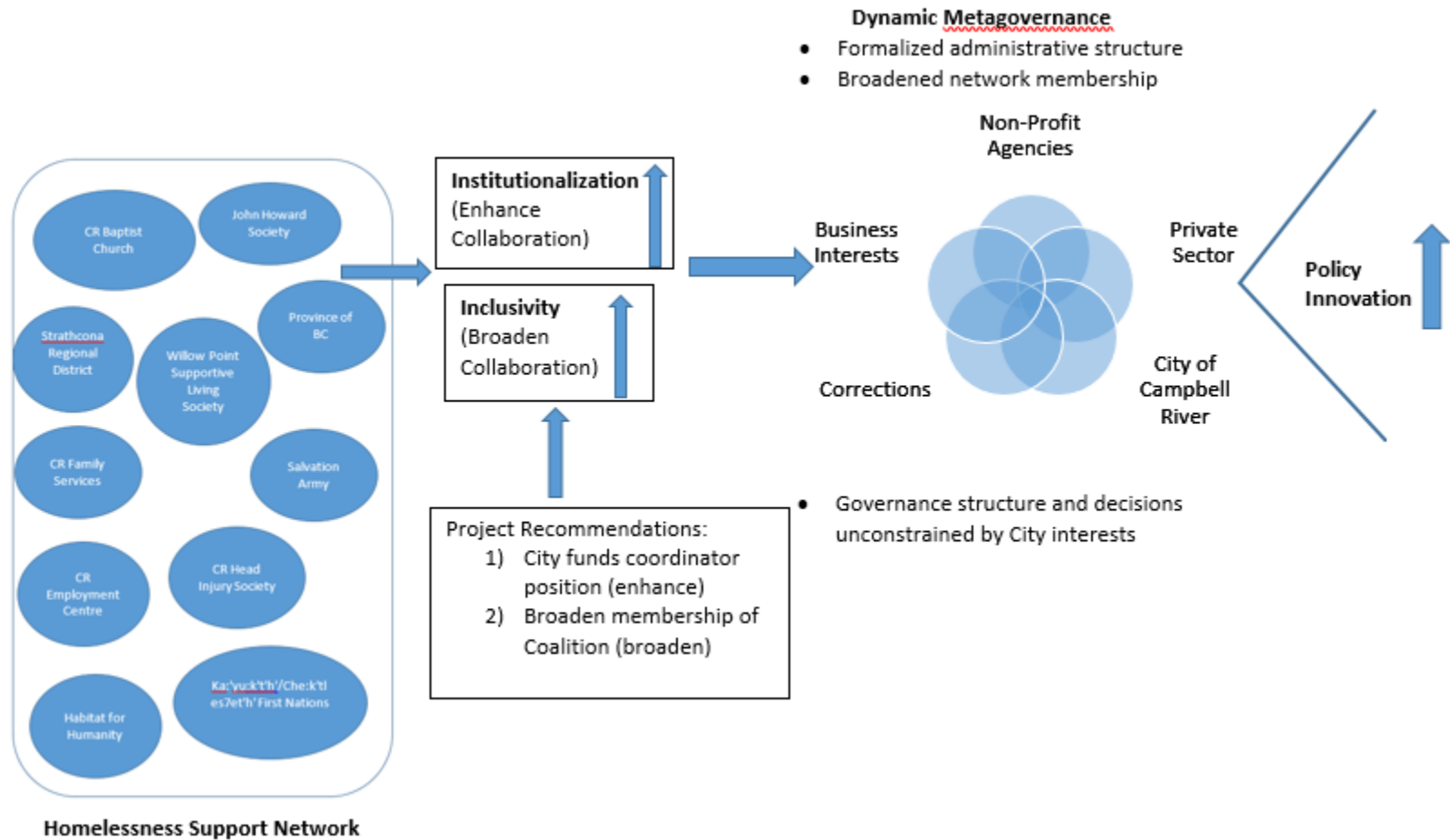


Figure 13: Applied analytical framework

9. OPTIONS, RECOMMENDATION, IMPLEMENTATION

This project was commissioned to answer two questions:

- 1) What are the critical barriers preventing service integration of the social support network involved in addressing homelessness in Campbell River?
- 2) What role can the City of Campbell River play in supporting social service providers and their clients in successfully reducing homelessness?

Using inputs from the community's network of social support agencies, local government representatives, reported best management practices, and research literature, the researchers have developed options to address these questions:

- Option 1: Passive Response;
- Option 2: Assertive Response; and
- Option 3: Collaborative Response.

In what follows, each option is applied to the 'Strategic Implications' identified in Section 8 and evaluated against the following criteria:

- Alignment with City's strategic plan;
- Alignment with City's core governance responsibilities;
- Financial implications;
- City's internal organizational capacity;
- Net impacts to the number of homeless; and
- Degree of responsiveness.

After comparing the options, a recommended course of action is identified and a detailed implementation plan is set out.

9.1 Three Options to Consider

The options described below provide the City with distinctly different approaches to homelessness. Each represents a viable and practical approach and is evaluated against criteria significant to the City.

Option 1: Passive Response

A passive response to the homelessness issue by the City reflects a status quo position. In this scenario, the City's actions going forward would reflect the City's actions of the past. The City would remain focused on its core local government responsibilities while remaining receptive and responsive to homelessness related issues as they evolve - evaluating appropriate City involvement, engagement, investment and action on a case-by-case basis.

This approach aligns with the City’s strategic plan, although there is risk for criticism given the potential for accusations of City disinterest or inaction from time to time, which have fostered feelings of distrust between the City and non-profit agencies. Resources required to establish and maintain relationships with the network would ebb and flow depending on the issue and the level of desired City involvement, and as a result, redirection of administrative capacity would follow similar patterns. This approach has led to successes in expanding social services targeted to benefit the homeless population albeit at a rate outpaced by the growth in the homelessness problem. Accordingly, this approach would offer minimal net improvements to the homeless population.

Option 2: Assertive Response

The City could assume an assertive approach constructed on a clearly prescribed leadership role in the network of social support services. This metagovernance model with reliance on top-down control would see the City inject itself as the lead agency in the Coalition to End Homelessness, directing the scope and the boundaries of the coalition’s strategic planning, priorities and action items through a formal hierarchical administrative and governance structure. Nichols and Doberstein observe that such government leadership is best able to “use their authoritative policy levers, in addition to persuasion and inspiration, to assume the leadership and brokering role” (2016, p. 416).

This approach requires the City to step outside its traditional local government role to realize the Council’s strategic plan. Successful implementation requires dedicated City resources for the necessary administrative and governance demands needed to fulfill the leadership role. In addition, the City may be expected to provide funding to ensure that recommended strategies can be implemented in accordance with raised expectations. Through an increased centralized control, the City would dictate and drive coalition actions, and potentially deliver tangible results and outcomes more quickly, particularly in the short-term. The City could also lever its authority to strongly influence non-profit agencies to become more involved in working with clients to mitigate unsavory behavior in the downtown (a high priority of City Council).

This top-down approach comes with trade-offs. While the potential for short-term results may be initially welcomed by some in the social support network, Doberstein (2016), warns that highly controlled networks with narrow mandates (straightjacket metagovernance) could stifle policy innovation and mitigate system integration (pp. 45-46). As a result, the full capacity of the broader social service support network may not be realized as greater expectations and reliance falls to the City for action and solutions. Agencies might withhold or constrain their resources and efforts for more singular purpose within their own controlled sphere of actions.

Option 3: Collaborative Response

The final option is a collaborative approach focused on building resilient partnerships and a broadened network of agencies with a common interest in addressing homelessness issues. As a key partner in addressing community homelessness, the City

would seek to increase its influence by building strong relationships with other coalition members and encouraging expansion of the coalition's membership to broaden its perspective and capacity. Such a 'dynamic metagovernance' approach minimizes centralized control and encourages a high degree of discretion and operational latitude in a more open policy space (Doberstein, 2016, pp. 45-46). Doberstein (2015) argues such an approach is most likely to achieve sustained service integration (p. 410).

A collaborative response would strengthen the City's position in support of its strategic plan while respecting the traditional responsibilities of local government. Developing successful partnerships and relationships requires significant time and resources. It would increase the demands on City resources, particularly in the short-term. Successful service integration, however, could institutionalize beneficial proactive preventative practices, which in turn can reduce or eliminate the variability of resource demands associated with more reactive practices.

Research confirms that a collaborative approach, focused on improved service integration, coordination and relationships, can lead to improved analysis, understanding and decision-making (Doberstein, 2016, p. 42), and can help drive policy innovation (Ibid, p. 164). This approach, if applied in Campbell River, would lead to an improved collective response to homelessness challenges which, in turn, could reduce the number of homeless. However, the gains from this approach can only be expected in the long-term once relationships and partnerships have matured and produce a series of mutual successes. While this approach might yield the most sustained 'return on investment', the City is at risk of criticism if tangible results are not produced quickly – managing short term expectations will be necessary to ensure this approach is afforded adequate time to mature.

9.2 Comparing and Evaluating the Options

Table 1 (see next page) considers the impacts that each option might have against criteria of key importance as identified by the City. Descriptions of the anticipated outcomes resulting from the differing approaches are provided for each scenario.

When evaluated against the established criteria, Option 3 represents the recommended approach for the City of Campbell River to pursue. It will position the City's actions well against its strategic plan, while respecting its traditional service roles. This option recognizes and leverages the expertise of those with 'on the ground' knowledge, and enables further opportunity for grassroots innovation. An initial investment is required from a financial and corporate resourcing perspective to ensure sufficient support for systems development, however, the magnitude of these investments is expected to recede as the collaborative network gains collective support, relevance and influence. Perhaps most importantly, the delivery of integrated services could become increasingly impactful, responsive and resilient as the collective coalition matures.

Criteria	Option 1 Passive Response	Option 2 Assertive Response	Option 3 Collaborative Response
Alignment with City Strategic Plan	➤ moderate alignment due to reactive actions	➤ strong alignment given direct involvement and control	➤ strong alignment given deliberate participation and expanding influence
Alignment with City core gov't responsibilities	➤ strong as traditional local gov't scope maintained	➤ weak as local gov't scope assumes leadership role in social service delivery	➤ strong as traditional local gov't scope maintained
Financial implications	➤ unpredictable and variable funding demands due to reactive actions	➤ sustained increased funding demands	➤ initial increase in funding demands to establish resilient network
City's organizational capacity	➤ unpredictable and variable demands on organizational capacity due to reactive actions	➤ increase demand on organizational capacity due to administrative and governance leadership role	➤ initial increase in demand on organizational capacity to establish resilient network
Net impact to number of homeless	➤ no anticipated improvement	➤ initial improvements anticipated but impactfulness reducing over time	➤ sustained improvements anticipated
Degree of responsiveness	➤ responsiveness varies due to reactive actions	➤ highly responsive initially due to considerable direct control, but responsiveness reduced over time	➤ increasing levels of sustained responsiveness anticipated

Table 1: Evaluation of options

9.3 Implementation Strategy: Three Phases

To successfully implement the recommended collaborative response will require three implementation phases. What follows outlines prioritized tasks for each phase. While none of the implementation phases are mutually exclusive, the greatest impact will be realized through Phase 1 since it establishes the additional coalition capacity required for tasks in subsequent phases.

Phase 1: Enhance Collaboration

The literature is clear that governments play a key role in fostering integration and can contribute to these efforts through funding that directly supports ongoing integration efforts (Neale et al., 2012, p. 248). Other cities provide direct financial support to agency coalitions. There will be an immediate need for central coordination to shepherd the collective voices of the Campbell River's Coalition to End Homelessness, and to create the capacity to translate efforts into coherent action. The coalition would be best able to identify and recruit someone with the expertise and legitimacy to act in the interests of the coalition, but the City could assist filling this coordination gap with financial support. It is recommended that the City commit funding from its social services budget (50% funding up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year) as seed money to the coalition to hire a coordinator over a two-year term. This position will facilitate service integration through strategic planning and communication initiatives informed by approaches drawn from other jurisdictions.

Though subject to Council budget deliberations, the seed money for a coalition coordinator position could come from gaming revenue - avoiding any impact to general taxation. Limiting the funding contribution to 50% is also deliberate, aligned with the recommended collaborative response because it will encourage further pursuit of leveraging and partnerships, leading to a more resilient financing solution. Limiting the City's funding commitment to two years should provide sufficient stability to establish coalition strategic planning efforts and formalize an administrative structure. After two years, the coalition and City should re-evaluate the types and forms of support most needed by the coalition.

Phase 2: Broaden Collaboration

The members of the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness include those that provide emergency assistance to area homeless, ranging from mental health, harm reduction, and emergency housing. Though this membership type is critical and provides opportunities to discuss common issues from a systems-perspective, the coalition should consider expanding membership boundaries to consider other key actors that may play a role (Foster-Fishman, as quoted in Nichols & Doberstein, 2016, p. 411). The capacity created through Phase 1 enables coalition engagement with a broader set of stakeholders through a community and instrument mapping process which can lead to greater awareness of the distinctive nature of the Campbell River setting, as well as an appreciation of models and approaches used elsewhere that may offer promise.

The findings suggest the Coalition believes the private sector has a role to play in discussions about homelessness. For example, Campbell River is home to a number of a large land development companies, which could provide valuable insight about market factors and their associated projections about the impact on area affordable housing. These groups would provide invaluable land development expertise (project administration, construction, land assembly, etc.), a noted knowledge gap within the coalition. As some of the loudest voices to highlight a rise in vagrancy in the City's

downtown, coalition membership should also be expanded to include area business improvement associations. Finally, recognizing that many homeless people within the City have recently been incarcerated, the corrections system should be invited to participate as well.

With an expansion of coalition membership, however, it is important to consider risks. Many related sectors to homelessness resist participation in broader policy discussions as they see the issue as outside of their immediate mandate (Nichols & Doberstein, 2016, p. 412). In the corrections system, for example, the mandate is to rehabilitate offenders rather than focusing on what happens to inmates once they are released from prison (even if inmates usually do not have the support structure in place once released and end up on the streets) (Ibid, p. 412). Particular attention to relationships and the developing mutual trust will be integral to overcoming these forms of barriers.

Phase 3: Enable Affordable Housing

Though the City has a track record of providing land as part of affordable housing partnerships with senior levels of government, land disposition for these projects has mostly relied on ‘surplus’ lands and lacked comprehensive consultation with agencies with in-depth knowledge of the needs of clients. As a result, past housing projects have been located in areas on the periphery of the community, away from services and supports critical for intended clients. In addition, the use of ‘surplus’ lands, rather than a more deliberate use of strategically suitable lands, has generated unfavorable community reactions and /or has led to unanticipated site development costs.

Given the political will from senior levels of government to build affordable supportive housing and the worsening homeless problem in Campbell River, the City should develop and implement the development of an affordable housing land strategy that identifies priority neighborhoods and specific properties suitable for affordable housing projects. Such a strategy, if suitably comprehensive, will better position the City and its supporting social service network to act quickly and decisively on senior government housing programs as they become available.

A successful strategy will need acceptable selection criteria against which potential properties can be evaluated. Such criteria should be developed in consultation with the social support network, and with input from the broader community to ensure that the broader community values contained in the City’s Official Community Plan (City of Campbell River, 2012) are properly reflected and respected.

Potential criteria should consider distance from services, amenities and transit. For supportive housing that focuses on the most vulnerable population (such as those that are chronically homeless and have underlying mental health and addictions issues), properties should ideally be located within walking distance from community services such as meal programs, drug and alcohol treatment clinics, counseling and other related services. Site selection criteria should consider distances from schools, daycares and public parks and the negative perceptions of such projects from residents.

Despite the best efforts associated with project siting, any proposed affordable housing project should consider developing a formal neighborhood communications plan to mitigate misinformation. A “good neighbor” communication protocol would be helpful as a template that could be modified as needed based on the uniqueness of a given housing project. The City of Kamloops (2018) uses such an approach where it commits to engaging with the community using the following tools:

- Posts updates on its affordable housing goals on its website and City social media pages;
- Hosts stakeholder meetings with a wide array of stakeholders to hear about concerns;
- Directly notifies residents within 100m of a project and offer to provide details about the project prior to a public announcement of the project;
- Prepares press releases with information about the project; and
- Hosts a project open-house and provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions of project leaders (p. 3).

Proactive understanding of the development demands of potential sites is crucial to reducing unanticipated delays and costs for affordable housing projects. Identifying and properly addressing regulatory, servicing, tenure and / or financing obstacles before a tangible project for a property identified and prioritized as suitable for an affordable housing project ensures that, when a project is proposed, it can proceed with minimal obstacles and be delivered quickly. This implementation phase can realize the benefits of a broadened service integration network particularly if the City is willing to introduce proactive regulatory measures (i.e. pre-zoning of potential sites), and if for-profit sector development interests are actively engaged.

Limiting affordable housing projects to the current inventory of City lands is problematic. A comprehensive affordable housing land strategy will generate other priority lands. Acquisition of these sites may be an option, but other land tenure arrangements may also be viable, particularly if the for-profit and non-profit sector are fully engaged in discussions. Regardless of the resulting tenure for the priority sites, a suite of potential financing tools is an integral component of the strategy needed to enable implementation of this phase.

9.4 Summary

Implementing the recommended collaborative response means that the City must remain actively engaged and influential, but not controlling in its response to homelessness actions. Maintaining a high level of institutionalization and inclusivity within the existing Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness is integral to the collaborative response. By implementing Phases 1 and 2, the City can take tangible steps to support coalition capacity and expanded diversity. Phase 3 will involve a collaborative and proactive approach to enable greater long-term success in the delivery of affordable housing projects – one of the principle ingredients needed for curbing homelessness. The specific

tasks needed to action each phase of the implementation plan are set out in Table 2 below, along with a recommended lead organization and budget.

Phase	Tasks	Timeline	Budget
1. Enhance Collaboration Responsibility: both Coalition and City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ define scope of work for coalition coordinator ➤ secure seed money to fund establishment of coordinator position ➤ hire coalition coordinator ➤ establish full coalition membership for City representative ➤ formalize Council role with coalition ➤ assign dedicated City staff person as Coalition member ➤ Coalition member strategic plan analysis ➤ Coalition strategic plan ➤ Coalition communication plan 	<p>Jan/2019</p> <p>Feb/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar-Apr/2019</p> <p>May/2019</p> <p>May/2019</p>	\$10,000/yr. for 2 years
2. Broaden Collaboration Responsibility: Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ solicit BIA representative for coalition membership ➤ solicit a representative from the local land development industry for coalition membership ➤ solicit RCMP representative for coalition membership ➤ Evaluate potential for other representatives 	<p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Jan/2020</p>	
3. Enable Affordable Housing Responsibility: both Coalition and City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ establish criteria for full spectrum of affordable housing ➤ engage with broader community to establish community principles for siting affordable housing projects ➤ develop standardized good neighbor agreement ➤ identify and prioritize all potential properties that meet criteria ➤ investigate and clarify encumbrances ➤ quantify required servicing and development costs for all properties ➤ develop strategy for securing land tenure ➤ develop sustainable financing strategy 	<p>Jan/2019</p> <p>Jan-Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Mar/2019</p> <p>Apr/2019</p> <p>Apr/2019</p> <p>May/2019</p> <p>Aug/2019</p>	

Table 2: Implementation plan

10. CONCLUSION

This research project sought to answer two questions: what are the barriers to service integration in the City, and what role can the City play to strengthen collaboration within the homelessness support system? It is evident from the literature that service integration is vital in any community response to homelessness. It is further apparent that the City has a role to play in supporting service integration.

Recognizing the importance of collaboration and service coordination, local non-profit agencies that support homelessness in the City have joined forces as the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness. The municipality has also signaled its willingness to address the source of homelessness by its continued financial support of affordable housing projects in the City, and the recent funding of a dedicated City staff person to address homeless and affordable housing concerns in the City. Council and senior staff support of this research project affirm the City's sincere commitment to improve outcomes for the area's most vulnerable.

This project indicates that there remains decentralization and gaps in the City's homelessness support system that warrants action. The City's Coalition to End Homelessness, for example, lacks both strategic direction and dedicated coordination to lend coherence to the voices of participating agencies. On the local government side, opportunities abound for the City to work with senior governments and service agencies to provide affordable housing.

In consultation with service providers and municipal officials from other communities, the City is well-positioned to support further integration. It is recommended that the City pursue a collaborative approach that provides meaningful support to the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness, but allows it to operate at arms-length from the City with significant discretion and operational latitude.

Three implementation phases were identified for improving service integration:

- 1) *Enhance Collaboration*: Provide seed money funding to the Campbell River Coalition to End Homelessness to assist in the hiring of a coordinator position on a two-year term with funding from the City's Gaming Reserve;
- 2) *Broaden Collaboration*: Expand the membership of the coalition to include representation from other related or complementary sectors, particularly, the private land development sector, business improvement associations, and corrections; and
- 3) *Enable Affordable Housing*: Develop an affordable housing land strategy that prioritizes suitable lands for affordable housing projects along with site specific land assembly and financing strategies.

The City is in the early stages of an appropriate response to homelessness, and these recommendations will only scratch the surface of the issue. There is more work to do and several opportunities for further research. Future homelessness planning efforts

should feature the voices of homeless people themselves to understand service gaps. Relatedly, a disproportionate percentage of area homelessness are Aboriginal, thus future efforts to address homelessness should involve direct, but culturally appropriate collaboration with area First Nations and Indigenous service agencies. Finally, future efforts should have a bias towards action, recognizing that as planning takes place, individuals on the street are suffering. As one survey participant reminds us: “[we] aren’t collaborating for a statistic, but for a person...”

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