

Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group
Terms of Reference

Vision

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

Mission

To provide leadership and work collaboratively to address homelessness in the Tri-Cities, increase access to affordable housing and supports, and foster community awareness and engagement in these issues.

Need

Homeless and marginalized people need a diversified but unified voice from all sectors of the community:

- To make local and senior governments aware of concerns with respect to homelessness and housing affordability
- To advocate for better mental health and addictions care for homeless and other marginalized people.
- To provide a forum for local government to vet their policies and community plans.
- To provide a forum where diverse groups in the Tri-Cities community can reach consensus on homelessness and housing-related issues: 3 levels of government, law enforcement, health, income assistance, homeless outreach, addiction services, employment services, community groups, local business and concerned citizens.

Purpose

- To be a voice in the Tri-Cities to implement the Regional Homelessness Plan
- To collect, maintain and disseminate up-to-date information on the prevalence and nature of homelessness and housing need in the Tri-Cities and the services and actions which are addressing it;
- To identify gaps in services, determine what is needed and advocate for resources;
- To increase the engagement of all sectors of the Tri-Cities community in addressing and preventing homelessness and foster actions to meet specific needs;
- To take non-partisan political action to address gaps in service;
- To deliver presentations and provide education to local service clubs, corporate, faith and non-profit groups and the public in general to combat NIMBYism;
- To achieve buy in and commitment from local, regional, provincial and federal governments.
- To keep abreast of best practices in addressing homelessness and housing affordability.

Principles

The Task Group will:

- Collaborate with the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness;
- Collaborate with community and business partners;
- Promote positive change at the community level and within all levels of government;
- Recognize that solutions to homelessness are based on three essential elements: housing, support services and adequate income

- Support a “housing first” approach, which provides stable housing and the support services to end homelessness while meeting emergency shelter needs;
- Collaborate on planning for service provision to ensure that essential services meet a wide range of needs.

Goals and Objectives

- To develop and implement an action plan focusing on prevention, advocacy, facilitation and education;
- To build government support and work with the three levels of government to promote the Regional Homelessness Plan;
- To maintain and grow the political commitment within the Tri-Cities municipal governments to address issues of housing and homelessness;
- To provide for coordination of initiatives to prevent and address homelessness within the Tri-Cities.

Membership

The members of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group have a commitment to achieving the Task Group’s mission, goals and objectives, and include federal and provincial government agencies; municipal governments; federal, provincial and municipal politicians; non-profit, faith and community organizations, business, and concerned citizens.

The criteria for eligibility for Task Group membership are:

Organizations

- oversight at some level of one or more of the 3 “essential elements” (housing, support services, and adequate income) of the solutions to homelessness, or
- a provider of services which address one or more of the 3 essential elements, or an interest in addressing one or more of the 3 essential elements and potential resources to commit, or
- a membership that can be mobilized to provide expressions of support for actions to address homelessness & housing affordability

Individuals

- expertise or interest in issues related to homelessness, and
- time available for Task Group participation, including active participation in at least one committee.

Governance

Chair

The membership of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group will select a chair or co-chairs in January of each year to provide Task Group leadership for that year.

Responsibilities include:

- Prepare agendas and chair Task Group plenary meetings
- Review and approve draft minutes of Task Group plenary meetings
- Monitor the work of the Community Engagement Coordinator
- Be the voice of the Task Group in the community

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the Task Group chair, standing committee chairs and members at large to a maximum of 5 members. Responsibilities include:

- Maintain the Task Group Terms of Reference
- Develop an annual Action Plan with input from the standing committees; vet with the Task Group membership and report on accomplishments at year-end
- Vet media releases and other forms of communication which represent a position of the Task Group

The Executive Committee will meet as required, supported by electronic communication between meetings.

Community Engagement Coordinator

Under the purview of the Task Group chair, the Community Engagement Coordinator maintains and expands engagement of the Tri-Cities community in preventing and addressing homelessness and supporting social and affordable market housing initiatives. Job duties include:

- Implement and manage a Task Group social media strategy with the following objectives:
 - Expand Tri-Cities community awareness and engagement in issues of homelessness and housing affordability, create support for initiatives to address these issues, and foster political will;
 - Maintain and expand Tri-Cities faith group engagement with Task Group initiatives;
 - Create dialogue about homelessness and affordable housing in the Tri-Cities and beyond.
- Be a single point of contact for media and the public, and for information distribution to the membership
- Attend monthly Task Group plenary meetings

Analyst

The analyst will gather data and prepare reports on homelessness and housing affordability in the Tri-Cities. Job duties include:

- Publish an annual Tri-Cities Housing Affordability Report
- Keep up to date and re-publish as necessary the *Street Survival Guide* and *Tri-Cities Homelessness Landscape* and *Homelessness and Business in the Tri-Cities* info sheets

Standing Committees

Standing committees pursue annual Action Plan objectives which focus on ongoing areas of Task Group interest (e.g. addictions & mental health, community engagement)

Work Groups

Work Groups pursue annual Action Plan objectives which focus on specific, time-limited projects (e.g. Riverview Lands Visioning)

Plenary Meetings

Plenary meetings of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group membership will be held from 9:00 – 11:00 AM on the first Friday of every month. Extraordinary meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the membership. Task Group meetings will be held at the city hall of either Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody on an annually rotating basis.

Reporting

Minutes of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group plenary meetings will be recorded by the Committee Clerk of the municipality providing the meeting space.

Decision-Making

Consensus will be sought for all decisions made by the Task Group. Where this is not possible, the meeting chair shall call for a vote by those members present at a meeting. It is recognized that some members might not be able to vote on specific issues given their obligations to the organizations they represent. Therefore, prior to a vote, the number of members who will be casting a vote for a decision to be made by the Task Group will be determined. The quorum for the number of members who will be casting a vote is 10, plus the meeting chair. The issue will be decided by a 2/3rd majority of the members who are voting. The meeting minutes will record the number of votes for and against and the name of each member who abstained from the vote.

Official Communication

The chair will speak on behalf of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group. Requests for comment on Task Group activities and positions will be directed to the chair.

Committee Terms of Reference

Committees of the Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group will consist of
i) standing committees for actions that are considered ongoing or long term, and
ii) project-specific work groups for actions of a finite duration.

Role

The role of a committee is to carry out specific actions assigned to it in the annual Action Plan, in a manner consistent with the Task Group's principles.

Leadership

The members of a committee will select a chair in January of each year to provide committee leadership for that year, or in the case of a work group, for the duration of the activity.

Meetings

Committees shall meet at a frequency established by its members sufficient to meet the timeframe objectives of the assigned actions.

Committees will meet at a location mutually agreed to by its members.

Reporting

Brief minutes recording committee actions shall be prepared after each committee meeting and forwarded to the Task Group chair. Committee chairs will report on committee activities at each Task Group plenary meeting.