

**Homelessness**

Across Surrey, there were also 403 individuals who were identified as homeless on the night of the 2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count, representing 15% of the total Metro Vancouver homeless population. This includes 140 people who were sleeping outside, or unsheltered. The other 263 homeless individuals were sleeping in emergency shelters, transition houses, hospitals or jails.

Social housing

Data available through the 2011 National Household Survey reports that 11% (4,600) of tenant households lived in social housing units in Surrey, compared to a metropolitan average of 14%.

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IS HOW WE END POVERTY IN SURREY



THE FACTS ON POVERTY IN SURREY

housing

Metro Vancouver is recognized as having high housing costs. While housing in Surrey is more affordable when compared to other parts of the region, our research shows that there are still too many low-income families and individuals struggling to find housing that they can afford.

We also know that access to affordable housing plays a critical role in helping to provide low-income families and individuals with the foundation that they need for their overall well-being. We are interested in exploring strategies to provide low-income families and individuals with increased stability in their housing situation and an expanded range of housing options.



What we know from our research

Many families and individuals in Metro Vancouver are renters
Renter households account for approximately 35% of all households across Metro Vancouver. Within the City of Surrey, approximately 27% of all households are renters. While many households will aspire to be owners, there are also many households for whom owning might not be possible and renting is their only option.

Average rental housing costs

Rental market data published by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (Fall 2013) reported average monthly rents of \$1,067 across the Metro Vancouver region. Within the City of Surrey, the average monthly rent was \$846. An average market rent of \$846 is approximately 21% below the average market rent for the region.

Average housing cost for a bachelor and 1-bedroom unit (2013)

CMHC reports that the average monthly rent in Metro Vancouver for a bachelor unit is \$876 and the average monthly rent for a 1-bedroom unit \$1,005.

In Surrey, the average monthly rent for a bachelor unit is \$630 and the average monthly rent for a 1-bedroom unit is \$750. The average rent for a bachelor and 1-bedroom unit in Surrey is affordable to a household with an annual income of between \$25,280 and \$30,000. These rents are above the level that is affordable to a single person or 2 person household living at the poverty line.

Average housing cost for 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom units (2013)

CMHC reports that the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom unit in Metro Vancouver is \$1,281 and the average monthly rent for a 3-bedroom unit is \$1,498.

In Surrey, the average monthly rent for a 2-bedroom unit is \$920 and the average rent for a 3-bedroom unit was \$1,080. These rents are affordable to households with annual incomes of between \$36,840 and \$43,200 and are above the levels that would be affordable to three and four person households living at the poverty line.

The affordability of the rents in Surrey

While the average rent in Surrey is 21% below the average market rent for the region, the rents are still unaffordable to many lower income households, especially those living in poverty. Even with the higher levels of affordability when compared to rents across the region, the average rent in Surrey is between \$100 and \$150 per month above the level that is affordable to a household living at the poverty line.



TABLE 1 AFFORDABILITY OF RENTS FOR HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN LOW INCOME

Household Size	Low-Income Measure (After Tax)	Affordable Rent Levels	Surrey Rent Levels	Difference
1 person	\$19,460	\$487	\$630	\$143
2 persons	\$27,521	\$688	\$750	\$62
3 persons	\$33,706	\$843	\$920	\$77
4 persons	\$38,920	\$973	\$1080	\$107

Core housing need and 'shelter-to-income' ratio

Core Housing Need refers to households spending 30% or more of their income on their housing costs, or unable to find housing in their community that is suitable in size and that is in good repair with the resources they have available. Issues of housing affordability can be related to both a shortage of affordable units and rents which are not affordable to households with incomes at the lower end of the income distribution. Data from the CHMC shows that there are 85,700 renter household in core housing need in Metro Vancouver representing approximately 1 in 3 renter households.

Core housing need data at the municipal level is yet to be released for 2011. However, the National Household Survey shows that approximately 38% (15,500) of renter households in Surrey spend 30% or more of household total income on shelter. NHS data further reports that 11% of all households in Surrey live in 'unsuitable/overcrowded' dwellings, as defined by the National Occupancy Standard (NOS).

These two metrics, 'shelter-to-income' ratio and 'housing suitability' are different than Core Housing Need, but given the lack of available data, they serve as useful alternatives for thinking about housing vulnerability in the city.

TABLE 2 PROFILE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN CORE NEED

	Renter Households	Renter Households spending 30% or more of household income on shelter	%	Households living in unsuitable dwellings	%
Metro Vancouver	306,105	136,800	45	83,300	9
Surrey	41,185	15,500	38	16,800	11