



**SURREY POVERTY
REDUCTION COALITION
PROGRESS REPORT**

ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

2012 - 2016

Who We Are

Seated, Left to Right: Ashleigh Rajala, Alice Sundberg, Meghan Martin, Denise Darrell, Jennifer McCaffrey, Jacopo Miro, Anne Peterson. Standing, Left to Right: Kristen Andrews, Steven Lamothe, Njeri Kontulahti, Karen Blackman, Kristin Patten, Steve Dooley, Vera LeFranc, Aileen Murphy, Margaret Mubanda, Joe Woodworth



The Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition was created in 2012 to promote implementation of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan (THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey).

THE COALITION:

- Promotes and disseminates THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey
- Mobilizes and inspires the community to take actions to reduce poverty
- Monitors and measures achievements / progress / outcomes in implementing the Plan

HOW THE COALITION WORKS:

Two Co-Chairs act as the liaison between the Coalition and the contracted staff person(s), propose agendas and chair meetings of the Coalition. Working groups and subcommittees are struck from time to time to support the work of the Coalition and to oversee the projects that SPRC undertakes.

SPRC MEMBERS:

The Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition is a non-partisan group. Membership of the Coalition consists of representatives from relevant sectors including government, business, health services, community service agencies, and population groups impacted by poverty.

The coalition is co-chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve and Stephen Dooley.

There are currently 20 Coalition members, who represent:

- Municipal Government
- Provincial Government
- Aboriginal Community
- Homelessness
- Immigrant Settlement
- Children, Youth & Families
- Women
- Seniors
- Education
- Literacy
- Health and Mental Health
- Business
- Food Security
- Research
- Philanthropy

Why Poverty Matters

Poverty affects us all, not just those with low incomes. It impacts individuals, families and communities. The effects of poverty are felt in increased health care costs, expanded policing burdens and diminished educational outcomes.

HEALTH:

Research estimates that medical care accounts for only 25 per cent of health outcomes, while another 25 per cent is related to genetics and fully 50 per cent depends on the socio-economic determinants of health like income, education, housing, physical environment and community engagement. But people's health is affected not only by material poverty but also by social exclusion, yet another of the neglected effects of poverty.

EDUCATION:

Educational outcomes are one of the key areas influenced by family incomes. Children from low-income families often start school already behind their peers who come from more affluent families, as shown in measures of school readiness. The incidence, depth, duration and timing of poverty all influence a child's educational attainment, along with community characteristics and social networks.

CRIME:

Low-income Canadians greatly outnumber wealthier Canadians in the criminal justice system. They are more "at risk" of participating in crime because of the social and economic challenges they face. They are also more likely to face significant barriers once they are involved in criminal justice processes.

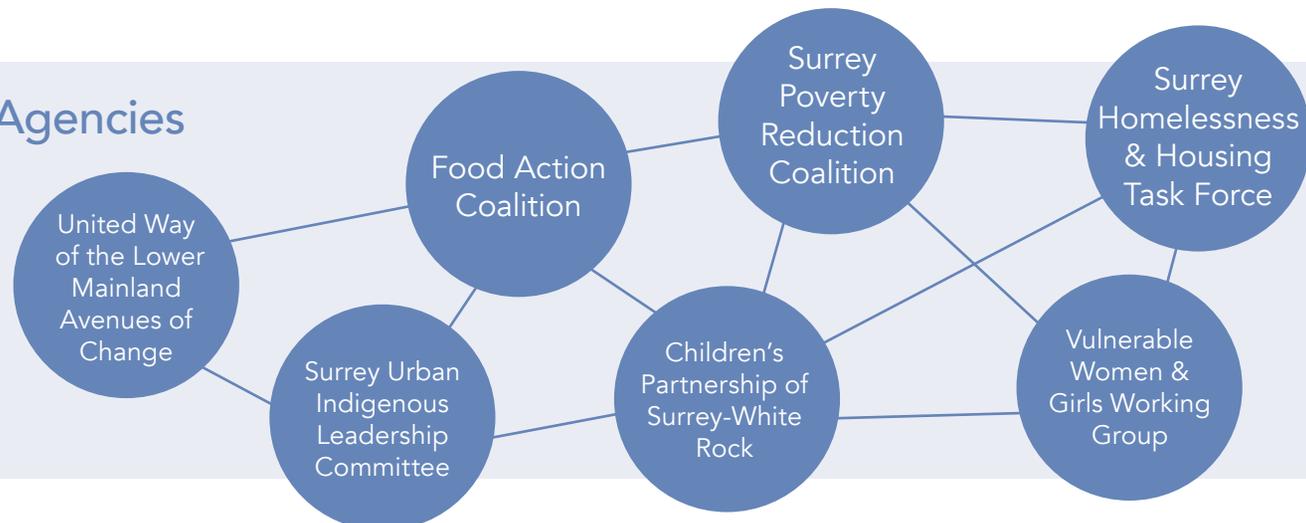
In Surrey, a number of plans, programs and initiatives of the City are directly linked to the issue of poverty and / or include poverty reduction as a priority including:

- Public Safety Strategy
- Sustainability Charter
- Social Plan
- Master Plan for Housing the Homeless
- Urban Indigenous Strategy
- Refugee Integration Strategy
- Immigrant Integration Strategy
- Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy
- Leisure Access Program

// The effects of poverty are felt in increased health care costs, expanded policing burdens and diminished educational outcomes. //

Collaborating Social Agencies

Many social service agencies operating in Surrey are working collaboratively to alleviate and reduce poverty. Some examples include:



Understanding Poverty

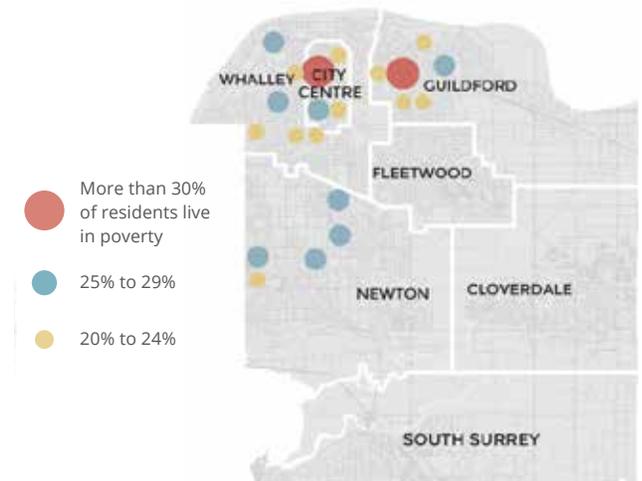
How Many People Live In Poverty In Surrey?

In 2011, about 72,000 residents lived in poverty in Surrey (as measured by the after tax Low-Income Measure, LIM-AT). This is equivalent to a 16% poverty rate for the city as a whole.

Of these 72,000 residents, almost 30% are children and youths (less than 18 yrs of age), about 60% are adults, and 10% are seniors (65yrs and older).

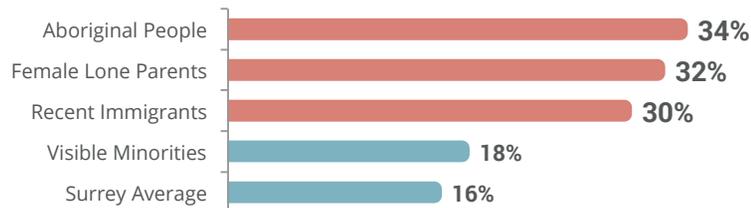
Although low-income residents are found throughout Surrey, some neighbourhoods have higher concentrations of than others. In the neighbourhood around Holly Park Elementary (in Guildford), up to 36% of local residents live in low-income. Another important pocket of poverty exists in the City Centre.

Poverty by Neighbourhood

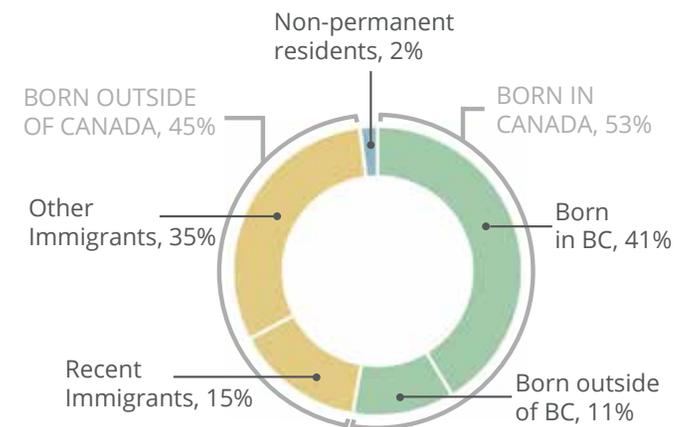


Who Is Poor In Surrey?

Some population groups experience significantly higher poverty rates than the general population.



Where Are They From?



Understanding Poverty

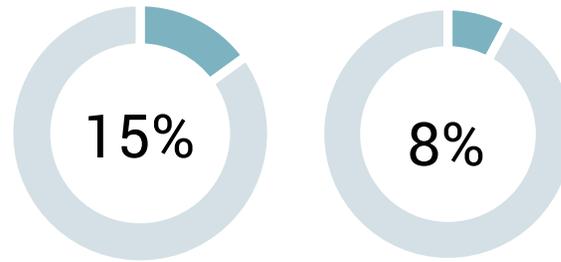
Working Poor

27,135 low-income residents in Surrey participate in the labour force (about half of all people living in poverty 15yrs and over). Of these residents, 15% are unemployed and actively looking for work, which puts the unemployment rate for low-income residents at twice the rate for the city as a whole.

Low-income people in Surrey have a median individual income of \$9,700, compared to \$27,000 for other Surrey residents.

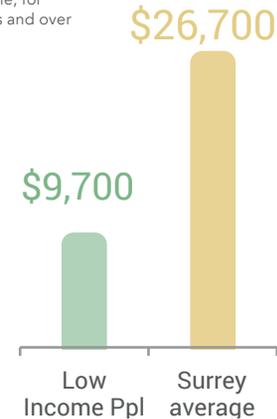
Unemployment Rate

Low-Income People (Surrey) Surrey Average



Median Individual Income*

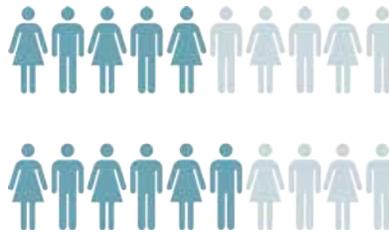
*Median individual income, for population aged 15 years and over



Where Are Low Income Residents Working?



Education



50% of low-income people in Surrey have a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree.

60% of people in Surrey have a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree (for total population aged 25 to 64 years and over).



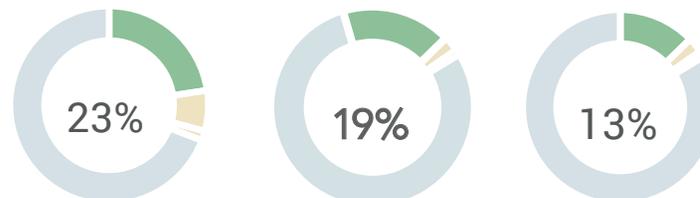
Public Transit Matters

Almost one quarter of all women living in low-income in Surrey use public transit to get to work.

Transit ridership rates among lower-income people are significantly higher than for the rest of Surrey residents. Moreover, 25% of working poor in Surrey leave for work between 5 am and 7am.

How Do People Get To Work?*

Low-Income Women (Surrey) Average For All Low-Income (Surrey) Surrey Average



■ Bus ■ SkyTrain ■ Other



Total employed population 15 years and over with a usual place of work or no fixed workplace address by mode of transportation that commutes by "public transit"

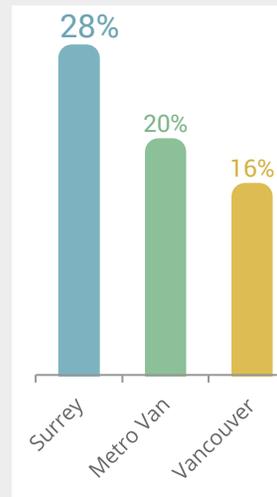
Statistics Canada, NHS 2011.

Understanding Poverty

Child Poverty Rates In Surrey

Children and youths make a disproportionate percentage of Surrey's low-income population.

Almost 30% of all low-income residents in Surrey are younger than 18 years of age, compared to 20% for Metro Vancouver as a whole, and 16% for the city of Vancouver.



Number Of Children Under 6yrs Of Age Living In Poverty

Surrey is the city with the largest population of children living in poverty in BC. Both Richmond and Burnaby have higher child poverty rates than Surrey (25% and 23% compared to 19% respectively). But Surrey's population of poor children is significantly higher than other cities.



Neighbourhood-Level Child Poverty

Low-income children are concentrated in particular neighbourhoods in Surrey.

Metro Vancouver has identified the 20 neighbourhoods with the largest populations of poor children and youth. Eleven of these neighbourhoods are in Surrey.

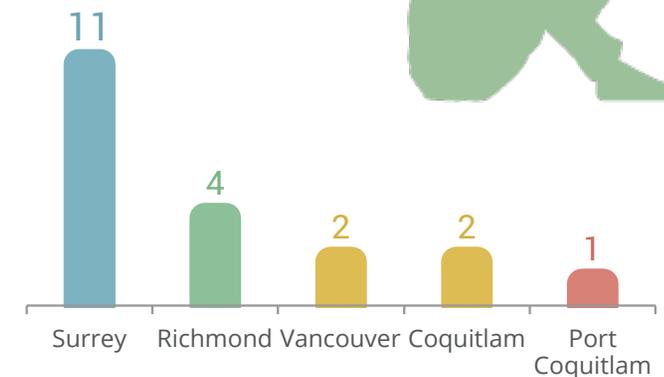
In fact, the 4 neighbourhoods with the largest populations of low-income children (less than 6 years of age) are all in Surrey.

800 children and youth live in poverty around Holly Park, more than any other neighbourhood in Metro Vancouver



Where Are They?

Location of the 20 neighbourhoods with the largest populations of poor children in Metro Vancouver.



Children & Youth Living In Poverty: Who Are They?

1 IN 5 CHILDREN IN SURREY LIVE IN POVERTY

More than 20,000 children and youths (younger than 18yrs of age) live in poverty in Surrey, more so than Vancouver, Burnaby and Richmond.

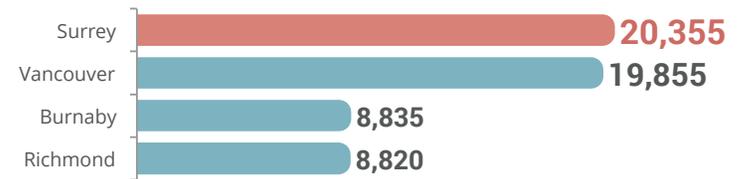
1 in 5 children in Surrey lives in poverty. But Aboriginal and recent immigrant children have significantly higher poverty rates. Up to 45% of Aboriginal children and youths live in low-income. Similarly, 40% of new immigrant kids also live in poverty.

**45%
ABORIGINAL**

**19%
SURREY
AVERAGE**

**40%
NEW
IMMIGRANTS**

How Does Surrey Compare?



Children and youths less than 18yrs of age living in poverty

**1688
SURREY
HOUSEHOLDS**
ON THE BC HOUSING
WAIT-LIST. OF THESE,
ALMOST HALF
ARE FAMILIES

FROM
1.9%
TO **0.4%**
**SURREY
VACANCY RATES
DECREASED**

FROM
\$874
TO **\$940**
AVERAGE RENT
PURPOSE-BUILT
**APARTMENTS
INCREASED**

Mobilizing The Community



A significant part of the role and purpose of SPRC is to undertake and support community initiatives that have an impact on poverty and its effects on individuals and families.

The Coalition has actively supported a number of innovative projects led by Surrey agencies, and has initiated projects that build the capacity of the community to reduce poverty in the City.

We have:

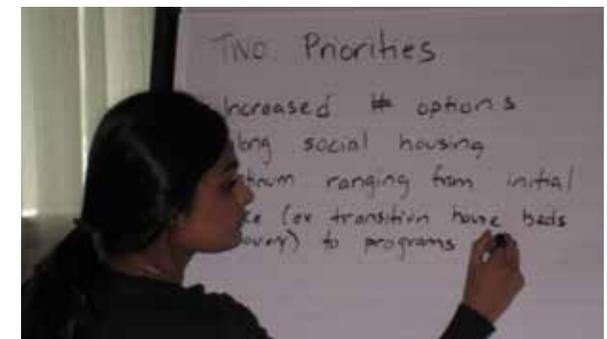
- Mobilized the Community
- Taken Community Action
- Championed Change

The SPRC Has Held Three Community Forums

Poverty Dialogue March 20, 2012

This first forum engaged the community in contributing to the development of the Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan. It provided the participants with an opportunity to:

- Review and understand the statistics on poverty in Surrey and Metro Vancouver
- Reflect on the real life experience of the people who experience poverty
- Consider and provide guidance into effective strategies to make a difference



Mobilizing The Community

Let's Make THIS Happen November 7, 2013

The goals of this second forum were to inform the community about successful poverty reduction initiatives in Surrey and beyond, and to inspire stakeholders to take on poverty reduction initiatives.

The keynote address by James Hughes described the process and outcomes of a poverty reduction strategy for the Province of New Brunswick. James reminded the audience that communities CAN make a difference.

A series of short, powerful presentations demonstrated

the impacts of poverty and the successes of local activities. Participants learned about the work being done by Surrey community organizations to alleviate poverty.

The afternoon focused on a "Design Jam" to generate action steps in reducing poverty in Surrey.



THIS Is The Change... February 16, 2015

This event was a professional development forum on Collective Impact. This third forum was designed to improve Surrey's collective impact in reducing poverty. At this event, leaders of the community agencies working on poverty-related issues came together to:

- Review and discuss updated Surrey poverty facts based on the 2011 Census
- Explore tools and techniques for collective impact
- Share success stories and promising practices that demonstrate effective collaboration
- Network with colleagues and build momentum toward collective impact



Councilor Vera LeFranc and Steve Dooley



Taking Community Action

Somali Women's Project 2013 - 2015



This project used a community economic development approach to support a group of Somali women to develop the skills and confidence to help them move toward their dream of paid work. The women participated in workshops ranging from financial literacy to first aid and food safe. They were connected to key community resources like libraries, rec centres and employment agencies. They set up a stall at local farmer's markets, selling henna tattoos and hair braiding.

In fact, the ripple effect of this project has been the formation of a non-profit business, Women 4 Women Foundation with some of the original Somali women participants and project supporters.

The organization is inclusive of women who may have lower literacy skills and not be able to access some employment programs. Women 4 Women has achieved great things already, including helping participants achieve Food Safe Certification, raising \$3000 and developing relationships with a local Legion for ongoing support.



Housing First Landlord Project 2014 – 2016

In support of the Surrey agencies that serve people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness, the Coalition has partnered with the Surrey Board of Trade and Landlord BC to encourage private landlords to rent to people who are homeless.

The goal of this partnership is to facilitate the connection between private landlords and the health and service agencies that support people who are chronically or episodically homeless.

The project brings together the partners to provide support and education to landlords on housing the homeless in Surrey, while obtaining rental units for Housing First clients of Surrey agencies.

Low Cost & Free Library Resources



Surrey Libraries developed a series of brochures and an interactive website of resources available at no-cost or low-cost in Surrey. The brochures are in high demand – 15,000 of the print brochures are given out every year.

Taking Community Action

Community Leaders Igniting Change (CLIC) 2015 – 2017

CLIC is a partnership with SFU and the Beedie School of Business to build the capacity of grass-roots leaders in neighbourhoods throughout Surrey to plan and organize community-based projects or programs, engage the community in these projects, and make a lasting impact on the conditions of people living with low incomes in Surrey.

As of 2016, two cohorts of students have completed the course. A third cohort will begin the program in spring 2017. The course is made possible through a multi-year grant from Envision Financial.



CLIC Participant Profile: Kyla Bains



When the flyer for the CLIC program came across Kyla Bain's desk, she knew exactly why she wanted to join. As a Program Manager for the All Nations Youth Safehouse with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre (FRAFCA), Kyla identifies herself as a young leader.

"I was working on a fundraising gala for FRAFCA. I wanted to learn how to engage the community to help support our youth. I also wanted to be a better leader for the Safehouse team – to build their morale, their passions."

The CLIC program met Kyla's expectations – and then some. "It was exhilarating. [Instructor] Dr. Kathleen Burke was awesome. It was an opportunity to listen to people from different walks of life, to learn from one another." Kyla gained many of the 'hard skills' of leadership – how to write a grant proposal, how to do a presentation. But she also learned about her own values, about where she wants to go and how to get there.

And the biggest impact of the program? "Increasing your confidence in your own ability to make change and engage people in something that matters to you – whatever it is."

Connecting Community to Surrey Youth Leaving Care 2016 – 2017

With the support of the Vancouver Foundation, the goal of this project is to raise awareness and increase community engagement around youth who are "aging out" of the provincial care system.

Currently, it is the Ministry of Children and Family Development's policy that a child in the care system becomes an adult on his or her 19th Birthday.

The project, called "Connecting Community to Surrey Youth Leaving Care" promotes a radical rethinking of the ways in which these young people are supported when they transition from the care of the MCFD into adulthood. All phases of the project are engaging youth in/ from care - "not about them without them." The project reflects and promotes Vancouver Foundation's Fostering Change Initiative.

The first step in the project was to compile available information and research on youth in/from care in Surrey. Two workshops were held to bring organizations and individuals together that can make a difference in the lives of young people aging out of care.

A public art exhibit, featuring the 19th Birthday Party, was installed at Surrey City Hall as the final stage in the project. Eighty-five people attended a reception featuring speakers including a young woman who told her story of aging out.



The "19th Birthday Party" invited Surrey residents to listen to the stories of youth aging out of care.



Championing Change

Refugee Transportation Loans

Refugees resettled to Canada must pay for their medical exam and travel to Canada. Since most refugees cannot afford these expenses, Canada offers them a loan. As a result, refugee families start their new life in Canada with a debt of up to \$10,000. They must repay this loan with interest.

Over the past decade, Surrey has emerged as a primary destination for refugees arriving in BC. The past year was no exception, with 44% of Syrian refugees that arrived in BC settling in Surrey. While the loan requirement was waived for the Syrian refugees, the repayment of transportation loans has a serious impact on the economic well-being of other vulnerable refugees.

Since 2009, the City of Surrey, under the leadership of Councillor Villeneuve, has been actively advocating for the elimination of the refugee transportation loan program. In 2009, the City put forward a Resolution to the Union of BC Municipalities' Annual Convention. The Resolution was endorsed by all BC municipalities. In 2010, it was adopted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

In partnership with the Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition, the City of Surrey launched a petition calling on the federal government to eliminate the refugee loan program. With signatures gathered from over 1,000 residents, the petitions were presented in the House of Commons by MP Randeep Sarai in June 2016.

As well, in May 2016, Councillor Villeneuve appeared as a witness to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. Her remarks drew attention to the loan program and its effect on pushing refugees into deep poverty. As Councillor Villeneuve stated, "While the federal government makes significant investments in the settlement and integration of all government assisted refugees, the transportation loan negatively impacts this process. It does not make economic sense!"

The SPRC plans to continue to advocate on this important issue.



Seeing is Believing Tour 2014

The Surrey Poverty Reduction Coalition, together with the Social Policy Advisory Committee, invited members of service clubs in Surrey with the opportunity to learn about poverty in Surrey through the lived experiences of Surrey residents. Participants met face-to-face with clients of community organizations to better understand social issues and explore solutions.

A Living Wage for Surrey Campaign 2015

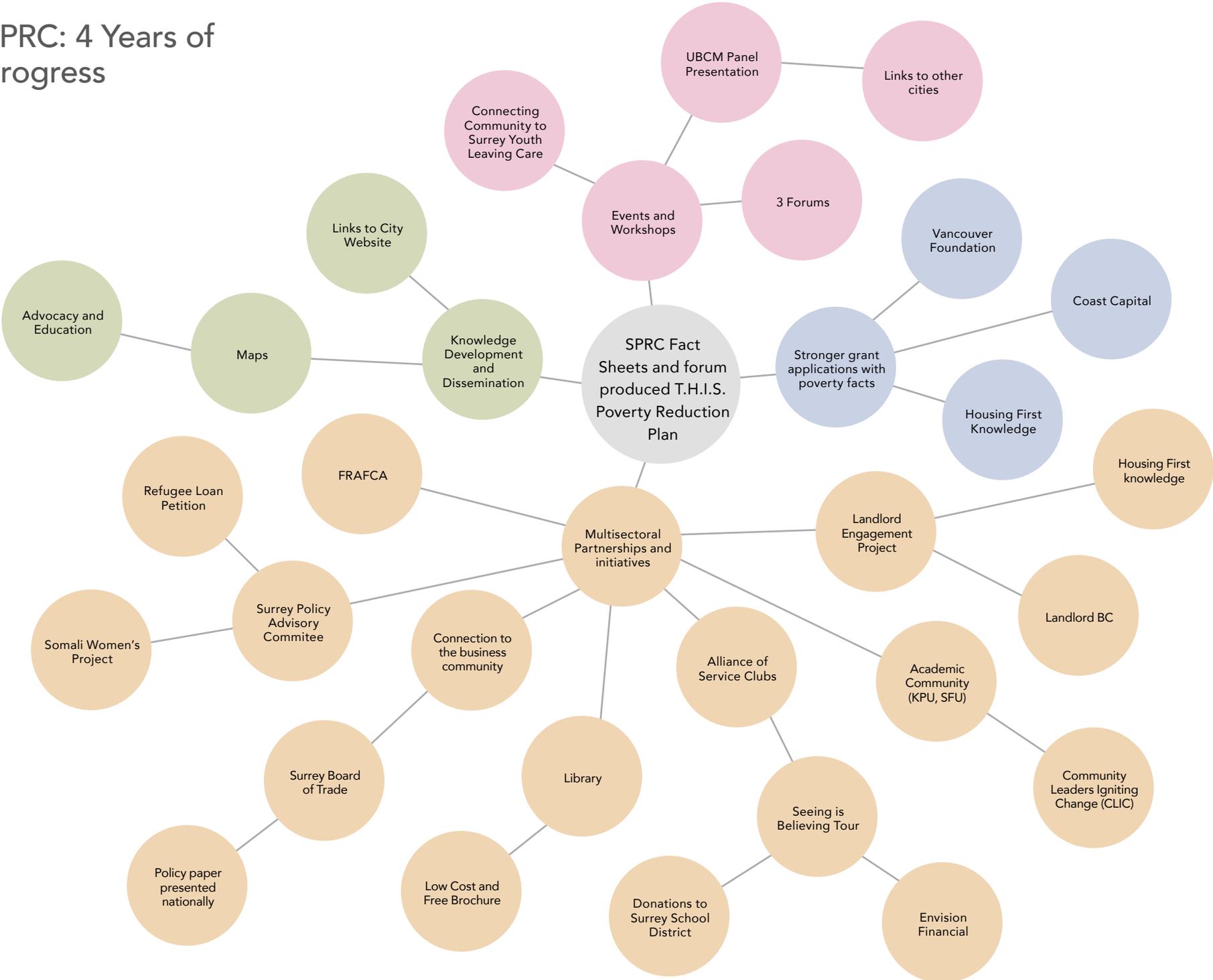
A Living Wage for Surrey Campaign was launched following the February 2015 community forum, where there was overwhelming support by attendees to pursue this activity.

In partnership with the Living Wage for Families Campaign, SPRC convened a gathering in November 2015, as a follow-up to the forum discussions. The 40 people who attended learned about Living Wage and its adoption by businesses and municipalities and discussed opportunities and challenges for launching such a campaign in Surrey.

Presentation at UBCM 2015

SPRC planned and organized a workshop on poverty reduction at the municipal level, which featured panelists from Revelstoke and Victoria as well as our Surrey panelist.

SPRC: 4 Years of Progress



We Couldn't Have Done it Without You...

Current SPRC Members

Aileen Murphy
Alice Sundberg
Anne Peterson
Christy Northway
Cllr Judy Villeneuve
Denise Darrell
Dr. Shovita Padhi
Jacopo Miro
Jennifer McCaffrey
Jessica Pan
Joe Woodworth
Karen Blackman
Kristen Andrews
Kristin Patten
Louise Sallai
Margaret Mubanda
Michelle Shaw
Njeri Kontulahti
Steve Dooley
Steven Lamothe
Trish Garner
Cllr Vera LeFranc

Past SPRC Members

Amelia McComber
Andrea Thompson
Anita Huberman
Connie Hong
David Poulette
Devinder Chattha
Dina Lambright
Jason Shortt
Joanne Mills
Kathy Berggren-Clive
Kelsey Baglo
Marlis McCargar
Melanie Houlden
Morten Bisgaard
Pat Horstead
Susan Keeping
Susan Papadionissiou
Wagella Hunt
Wendy Cahill

SPRC Funders

