

# TOWNHALL COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

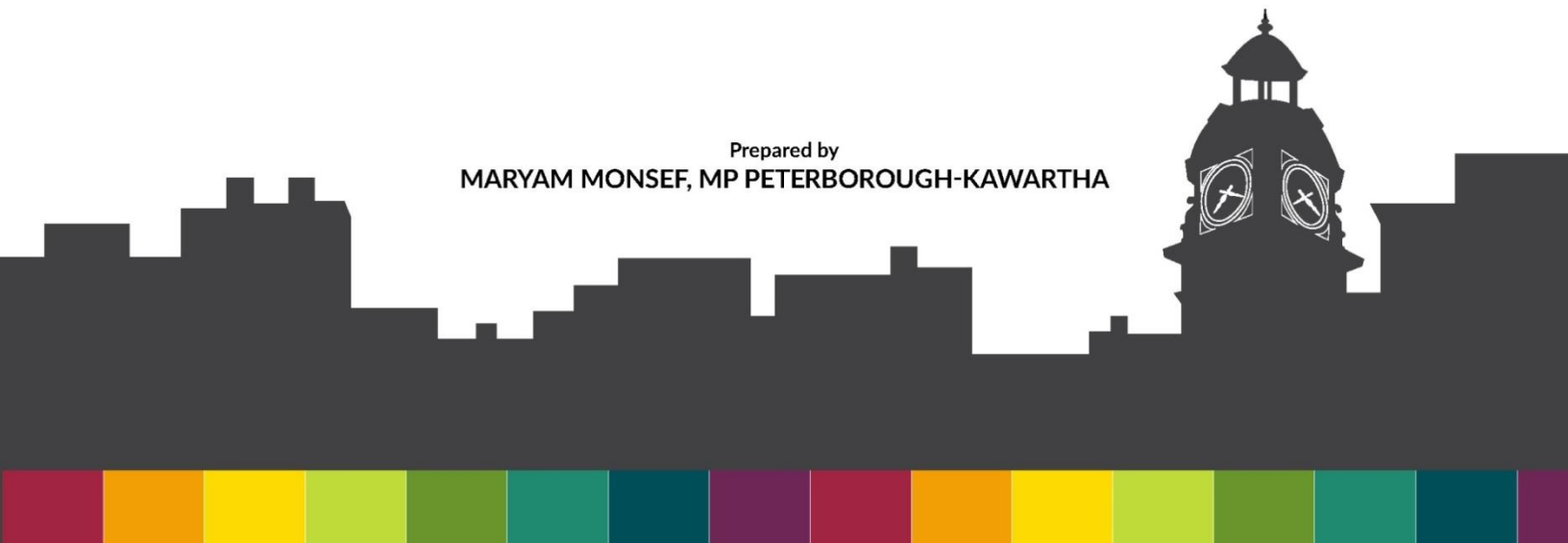
— REPORT —

## Toward a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy

June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Peterborough, Ontario

Prepared by  
MARYAM MONSEF, MP PETERBOROUGH-KAWARTHA



<a href="#">Background</a> .....	1.1
<a href="#">Peterborough-Kawartha Town Hall</a> .....	1.2
<a href="#">Key Themes</a> .....	1.4
<a href="#">Recommendations</a> .....	1.5
<a href="#">Community Discussion</a> .....	1.7
<a href="#">Appendix</a> .....	2.1
<a href="#">Current Projects</a> .....	2.1
<a href="#">Detailed Feedback to Dialogue Questions</a> .....	2.5
<a href="#">Additional Consultations and Information</a> .....	2.12

## Background

---

In April 2017, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Society Development, launched national consultations to assist with the development of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. In addition to the online and in-person consultations conducted by the Department, Members of Parliament were encouraged to consult their local communities and submit the feedback received to the Minister.

A comprehensive discussion paper was launched by Minister Duclos to accompany the consultations. It noted in particular that while many provinces, municipalities, and countries around the world have developed poverty reduction strategies, no such over-arching policy had ever been created in Canada.

Indeed, the paper stressed that poverty is a complex issue that affects more than 3 million Canadians. The purpose of the strategy will be to reduce poverty and improve the economic well-being of all Canadians, so that everyone can have a real and fair chance to succeed.

As part of the consultation, Minister Duclos put forward a number of questions to be considered as communities provided their input:

1. How do you define poverty? How should it be measured? Are there data gaps that need to be addressed to help improve our understanding of poverty in Canada?
2. What will success look like in a Poverty Reduction Strategy? What target(s) should we pick to measure progress?
3. Which indicators should we use to track progress towards the target(s)?
4. On which groups should we focus our efforts? Which dimensions of poverty should be prioritized?
5. Which Government of Canada programs and policies do you feel are effective at reducing poverty? Are there programs and policies that can be improved? What else could we do?
6. How can the Government of Canada align its Poverty Reduction Strategy so that it supports existing efforts by provinces, territories, municipalities and communities?
7. What are some initiatives/innovations in Canada or elsewhere that other governments, community organizations, academia, or businesses have introduced or proposed to effectively reduce poverty?
8. How can the Government encourage an on-going dialogue with other levels of government, community organizations, academia and businesses on its poverty reduction efforts?

Following a review of the discussion paper and information from Minister Duclos, Maryam Monsef, Member of Parliament for Peterborough-Kawartha proceeded to hold a public meeting in the riding on the subject of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy.

## Peterborough-Kawartha Town Hall

---

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Town Hall took place on Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM at Mark Street United Church in Peterborough. A total number of 61 participants registered in advance, with a final attendance of 60 people.

While the meeting was open to the public, a number of stakeholders in the field of poverty reduction were also specifically invited in order to ensure that the feedback received would include expert opinions and information about best practices in the riding of Peterborough-Kawartha. Additionally, MP Monsef's three advisory councils were invited – namely, the Jobs, Economic Development and Investment Council; the Social, Cultural and Arts Development Council; and the Youth Council.

Participants represented many organizations, businesses, and sectors including front-line service providers, municipal government, non-profit and community organizations, health, housing, immigration, and social services sectors. In addition to these stakeholder groups, a number of individuals participated who were not affiliated with any particular organization. Most of those in attendance also indicated that they have, or had, lived experience of poverty.



### Overview of Process

The meeting began with a review of the agenda and the goals for the afternoon. The goals for this town hall consultation were to ensure that the voice of Peterborough-Kawartha would be heard in the development of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy, to share existing best practices, solutions and success stories, and to continue to build community within the riding.

The agenda for the day was as follows:

#### Welcome & Goals

- Connecting Community
- Discovery Dialogues
- Report-back from the Dialogues
- Question & Answer with MP Monsef
- Wrap Up and Closing

In the Connecting Community portion of the event, MP Monsef asked participants to share the projects they were working on or their reasons for attending the meeting. The purpose was to gather the best practices and success stories from Peterborough-Kawartha, as well as introduce participants to one another. Post-It notes were made available, and participants put their completed responses up on the wall. These notes were collected after the meeting and the complete list of projects is available in the Appendix.

In line with principles of participatory democracy, whereby every person who attends the town hall is offered an opportunity to share their view, participants were asked to divide themselves into small discussion groups. These groups were organized around prioritized dimensions of poverty identified by the community in advance of the meeting – namely, housing and homelessness, income, employment, health, food security, and intersectional issues.

Once in their groups, participants were asked to nominate a note-taker and reporter to share highlights from their discussions with the broader group at the end of the discussion session. Groups were then asked to spend 15 minutes discussing each of three discussion questions as part of the Discovery Dialogue portion of the event.

MP Monsef also encouraged the groups to consider a Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA+) lens while discussing the questions. From this perspective, groups could highlight how their suggestions or ideas might have a different impact on diverse demographics in Canadian society, such as men or women, youth or seniors, Canadians with disabilities, etc.

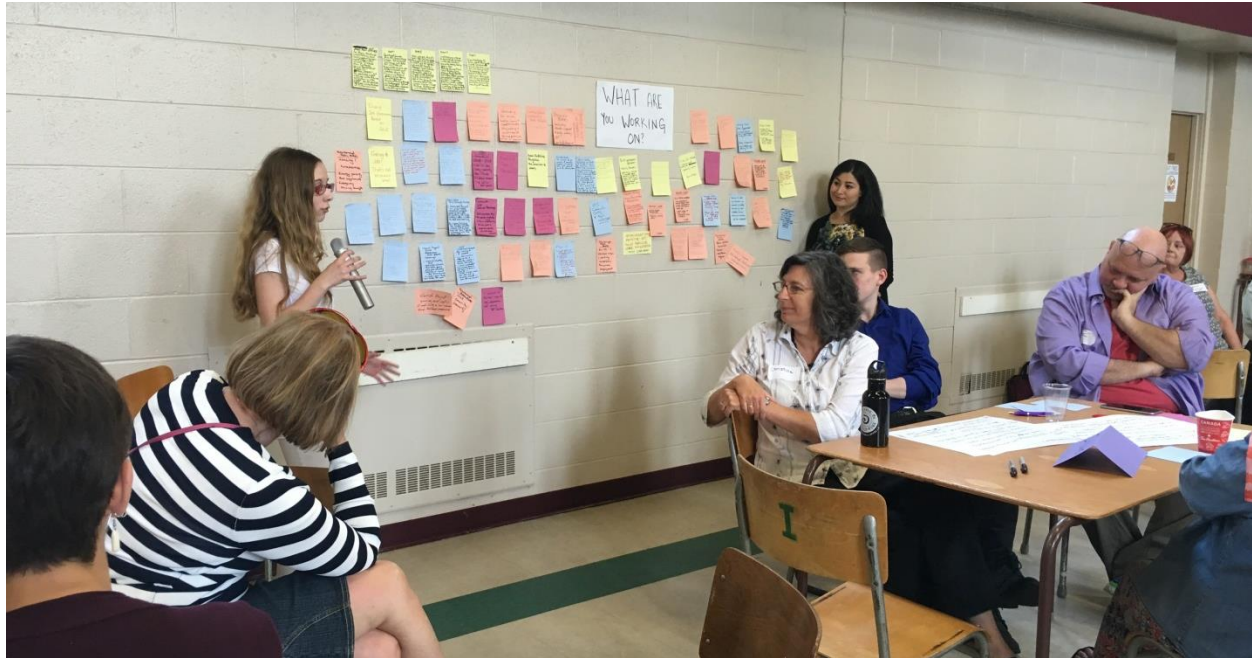
#### Dialogue Questions

After consulting with the Social, Cultural and Arts Development Council of Peterborough-Kawartha, MP Monsef outlined the following questions for discussion at the local town hall meeting:

1. What are some key services or types of programs that exist in Peterborough—Kawartha that really make a difference? What services or programs are currently missing in your community?
2. Which Government of Canada programs and policies do you feel are effective at reducing poverty? How can we ensure that these programs work in cooperation with existing programs at the local and provincial level?

3. Which Government of Canada programs and policies do you feel are effective at reducing poverty? How can we ensure that these programs work in cooperation with existing programs at the local and provincial level?

At the end of the discussion period, each group was asked to share a few key thoughts with the broader group. This was followed by a question and answer period with MP Monsef. The session closed with the reflections of a young participant, Emma, who challenged the group to recognize what is feasible to achieve in the current context, but not to stop working for positive change.



## Key Themes

---

From the group discussions centered on the questions outlined above, a number of key themes emerged in the development of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. The following themes were expressed in many of the discussion in a number of ways, and have been summarized below:

- **Co-operation & Integration** - The success of a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy must rely on the cooperation of many levels of government, service providers, not-for-profit organizations, and community organizations in order to effectively address poverty at all scales. Poverty has many contributing factors and symptomatic outcomes that are dealt with in “silos” and often at different levels of government. **The involvement of all levels of government is central to addressing poverty and all its causes.**
- **Increasing Capacity** - Many local programs and organizations were identified as having a positive impact on poverty reduction and the delivery of associated social services (i.e. housing,

employment, healthcare, etc.). While the work that is currently being done is having a positive impact in the community, **the capacity of core service providers must increase in order to meet the growing need for services in the community.**

- **Non-Partisan Approach** - The success of social service programs is dependent on long-term funding that extends beyond election cycles. If real progress is to be made on the reduction and elimination of poverty at a national level, **program funding should go beyond partisan goals and be incorporated into federal government transfer payments.**
- **Dignity & Resiliency** - Recognition that every individual has inherent dignity and worth is central to promoting well-being. Involving vulnerable people in contributing to policy development and decision-making gives them a real stake in working through government-administered services. When people feel engaged in the creation of the services they access, and involved in their own care, it provides a sense of dignity and worth that helps to establish the resiliency needed to break the cycle of poverty. **Dignity and resiliency were highlighted as core values that must be embraced by programs that will successfully address, reduce, and eliminate poverty.**
- **Universality & National Standards** - The universal entitlement and access to basic goods and services was highlighted as a priority in reducing poverty. Access to stable housing, consistent healthcare, and the provision of a living income allows individuals to do more than simply maintain themselves within the cycle of poverty. **Standardizing the cost and availability of core services** (i.e. childcare, housing, basic food items, post-secondary education) at a national level will work towards reducing widespread inequality.
- **Education** - Educating the general public about the causes and symptoms of poverty will work to break the stigma projected onto vulnerable individuals. The stigma that exists within society around the often compounding issues of mental illness and poverty result in barriers to accessing services. **A more informed public will help reduce barriers for those in poverty.**

## Recommendations

---

In addressing the discussion questions, groups were able to highlight a number of key recommendations for Minister Duclos to consider in the creation of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy. These recommendations speak to addressing poverty at a local and national scale.

- Of critical importance is the need to **address the disparity of access to basic services (i.e. clean drinking water, housing, education, and healthcare) between First Nations and Indigenous people, and other Canadians.** The ongoing and systemic poverty, of a social and financial nature, that exists in First Nations communities across the country must be rectified as a first step in developing a truly Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. The success of any strategy must include addressing the most drastic examples of systemic poverty and social distress

observed in First Nations communities across the country.

- The implementation of a universal **Basic Income Guarantee** at the national level was the most common recommendation across all groups. Regardless of the dimension of poverty being examined, a Basic Income Guarantee was put forward as a universal solution to the root causes and symptoms of poverty.
- **Universal access to pharma-care and dental care** was recommended by the group looking at the health implications of poverty. This group included healthcare practitioners and other social service providers who deal with vulnerable populations and those facing poverty. These professionals observe the effects that an ongoing lack of access to basic health services has on vulnerable individuals.
- **Implement programs to proactively address the root causes of poverty, including mental illness, addictions, and the cycle of poverty.** It was suggested that integrating preventative social services across silos of government service delivery will have a greater effect on reducing and eliminating poverty than a reactionary approach that divides responsibility between different jurisdictions.
- **Provide long-term or ongoing funding to core social service providers in order to increase capacity.** It was recognized that social services are available on a local scale but the capacity is not great enough to meet the current and growing need for affordable housing, mental health, and addiction services.
- **Regulate post-secondary tuition and eliminate student debt.** In 2017, good quality employment is dependent on having a post-secondary education. The rising cost of higher education creates barriers for middle class people to live without debt, and even greater barriers for low-income individuals to break the cycle of poverty and obtain a higher standard of education and employment.





## Community Discussion

---

Responses gathered from participants in small discussion groups are organized by theme and the suggestions offered below reflect a summary of the most frequently identified solutions to the discussion questions.

### **Question 1:**

**What are some key services or types of programs that exist in Peterborough—Kawartha that really make a difference? What services or programs are currently missing in your community?**

Overall, participants highlighted many existing programs in Peterborough—Kawartha that have a positive effect on addressing poverty, but also emphasized that the capacity these programs and organizations have to deliver their core services is limited by the availability of long-term funding.

### **Housing & Homelessness**

#### **What's working**

- The emergency shelters and warming rooms that exist in Peterborough were identified as important factors in helping homeless individuals.
- The limited number of supportive housing units that are available to individuals who require personal care assistance work well.
- Health services offered by the Victorian Order of Nurses 360 Degree Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic (VON 360 Clinic) are integral to providing health care access for those living in poverty.

- The Housing First program, which works to provide immediate housing to vulnerable clients and the necessary supports to remain housed. The program is run in cooperation between Peterborough Social Services and FourCAST (addictions centre), with funding from the Central Eastern Local Health Integration Network. This program provides rent supplements, homemaker services, a trustee program, and access to two Housing Support Workers for up to eight individuals.
- Establishing partnerships between organizations that raise awareness about housing and homelessness, while delivering key services increases the success of combined and individual efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness.

#### What's missing

- Mental health and addictions outreach service delivery to vulnerable people needs to improve to help prevent homelessness.
- The limited availability of shelter spaces, seasonal nature of the warming rooms (i.e. winter only), and other barriers that exist were identified as limiting factors in the programs' successes.
- The number of rent-geared-to-income housing units does not meet the needs in the community.
- More supportive housing units are needed.
- More education and public awareness around housing issues, as well as housing providers who are willing to work with service providers, specifically the City of Peterborough, are needed in order to provide more units that meet the needs of people facing poverty.

#### **Income**

##### What's working

- Programs that provide income security by putting money in peoples' pockets were identified as helpful in reducing poverty – including but not limited to the Canada Child Benefit, Employment Insurance, the Ontario Disability Support Program, Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Canada Pension Plan.
- Employment services offered through Employment Planning & Counselling, especially for those living with a disability. Four programs currently exist in Peterborough.

##### What's missing

- The current provincial Basic Income Pilot project should be expanded and receive federal support. The level of guaranteed income should reflect a living wage that considers local economic factors. The living wage level should also be applied to the Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security as forms of guaranteed income.
- Subsidized childcare should be universally available.
- Canada Pension Plan entitlements do not include unpaid work, such as work in the home. This disproportionately affects women.
- The availability of Employment Insurance needs to be expanded.

- Post-secondary tuition as well as income supports should be regulated and standardized at a national level.
- Student debt should be eliminated.

## **Employment**

### What's working

- The Canada Child Benefit.
- FedDev Ontario funding for education and employment.

### What's missing

- Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship funding for new Canadians, specifically effective ESL and enhanced language preparation for government sponsored immigrants.
- Matching employment needs with training and education.
- Promoting access to education in the form of tuition subsidies.
- Creating links between local food and local employment.

## **Health**

### What's working

- VON 360 Clinic provides excellent care recognizing its limited capacity.
- Kinark Child and Family Services provides supports for children and youth with complex needs, as well as their families. Five Counties Children's Centre also provides similar services, but families and individuals experience long wait times to get into either program.
- Peterborough Public Health Community Dental Clinic for eligible families.

### What's missing

- Universal dental care.
- A shelter health network for outreach to those who are already accessing shelter services.
- Access to primary care, psychiatry, and mental health supports as preventative social services.
- Access to social workers to help navigate social services.
- Hospice care spaces.

## **Food Security**

### What's working

- Local community gardens provide access to high quality, low cost food, as well as learning opportunities for all ages.
- Nourish Project, which provides access to healthy food for low-income families. Helps people grow, cook, and eat healthy local food.
- Transition Town Peterborough organization, which uses economic localization to increase the community's local resilience and self-sufficiency in food, water, energy, culture, and wellness.

### What's missing

- Ways to manage waste.

## **Intersectional**

### What's working

- Community Care Access Centres (CCAC) and other Local Health Integration Networks that promote integrated, patient-centered care on a regional basis.
- Many of the programs that were identified as helpful were shelters for various vulnerable communities (i.e. Youth Emergency Shelter, Warming Room).
- Addictions service providers were also highlighted (i.e. FourCAST, Four Counties Crisis Centre).
- VON 360 Clinic was highlighted as an important health care provider for those living in poverty.
- Employment and community services like Trent Valley Literacy, New Canadian Centre, John Howard Society and Elizabeth Fry Society were identified as helpful.
- Working Centre in Kitchener that helps homeless find work and dignity.

### What's missing

- Basic income guarantee and other strategies that prevent poverty.
- Mental health supports and preventative intervention programs delivered at street level to avoid contact with police.
- Healing lodges that offer culturally sensitive alternatives to the prison system for Indigenous people.
- Programs that involve vulnerable people in their own care, and in the decision making process that builds policies and programs that serve vulnerable communities.
- Access to 24 hour transitional housing and safe centre.

## **Question 2:**

**Which Government of Canada programs and policies do you feel are effective at reducing poverty? How can we ensure that these programs work in cooperation with existing programs at the local and provincial level?**

The Canada Child Benefit (CCB) emerged as the most effective federal government program towards reducing poverty. The most requested change in policy was to implement a national form of a basic income guarantee.

## **Housing & Homelessness**

- A federal level basic income guarantee would work to address poverty itself, as well as many of the associated symptoms of poverty that affect different sectors.
- The CCB and CMHC shelter funding were identified as federal programs that are effective at reducing poverty.
- A National Housing Strategy with the creation of a specific Ministry of Housing to develop and implement a federal social housing strategy.

- The creation of a national healthcare act that includes universal pharma-care was identified as a policy that would contribute to reducing poverty and the health symptoms that result from poverty.
- Establish long-term or ongoing funding for programs. Federal programs, and indeed all programs, are more effective with long-term or ongoing funding rather than a one-time commitment.
- Establish a funded homelessness partnering strategy that involves all levels of government.

### **Income**

- Highlighted federal government programs that are effective at reducing poverty include: OAS, CPP, GIS, CCB, and transit tax credits. Ensuring that people are aware of the services that exist and how to access them is crucial.
- Gaps exist in the eligibility for some of the forms of guaranteed income mentioned above (i.e. particularly people facing poverty ages 45-65), and this should be examined and addressed.
- The Federal Business Development Bank is an effective program, but should offer similar development tools for small and micro enterprises to make it accessible to low-income individuals and smaller enterprises.
- Climate change mitigation incentives are effective, but need to be offered in a way that makes them accessible to rental tenants, not just homeowners.
- The National Housing Strategy must be aligned with provincial and municipal programs.

### **Employment**

- CCB provides funds for basic living expenses (i.e. childcare).
- Funding for new Canadians to learn English, such as LINK language courses and ESL courses.
- Skills development programs for new Canadians that build on their existing skills and work to integrate those skills into the Canadian workforce. Effective skills integration is dependent on effective language training programs.
- Settlement services that help new Canadians in finding housing, education, healthcare, learning to shop, etc.
- Post-secondary subsidy programs to make training and education affordable.

### **Health**

- The Public Health Agency of Canada was highlighted as the only federal program that this group was aware of.
- Services that are needed with a high degree of emphasis include universal pharma-care and universal dental care.
- Better access to early mental health services and more long-term care spaces is also needed.

### **Food Security**

- In the context of food security the CCB was highlighted as effective at reducing poverty.
- Basic income guarantee should be implemented at a federal level.

- Federal portion of student grants should be increased.

### **Intersectional**

- CCB identified as very effective at reducing poverty from an intersectional perspective.
- National Housing Strategy and Standard for Income Equality should be implemented. These strategies must be designed to examine and address the root causes of poverty.
- This group was unfamiliar with many government programs. This acts as a barrier to accessing services, especially for those most in need of services. More outreach and education about services that exist, eligibility criteria, and how to access the services is needed. Service users should be involved in the development of policies and programs.
- Ensuring that mental health initiatives are funded will help reduce the stigma and criminalization of addictions and mental illness.

### **Question 3:**

#### **How can the federal government work with service providers at the local and provincial level to foster an on-going dialogue about poverty reduction initiatives?**

Engaging all levels of government with service providers and those with lived experience is crucial to the long-term success of any program.

### **Housing & Homelessness**

- Federal government should focus on effective programs that specifically address the chronic poverty of Indigenous Peoples and equalize access to local healthcare and mental health services, clean drinking water, local education, housing.
- Fostering an ongoing dialogue requires the engagement of people with lived experience of poverty as well as service providers to ensure that policies and programs address the needs of vulnerable populations.
- Integrate education and information collection across all levels of government and ensure that representatives are in communication about the priorities identified within their jurisdiction.
- Make housing funding (i.e. social housing, rent-geared-to-income, transitional housing, shelters) available on a long-term, non-partisan basis as a means of demonstrating a genuine commitment to reducing and eliminating poverty.
- Recognize the inherent dignity of every person and ensure that poverty alleviation programs (i.e. ODSP, OW, EI) are not punitive in their administration, that is to say that the programs do not lead a person deeper into the cycle of poverty.

### **Income**

- Federal funding should be delivered on a long-term or ongoing basis, one that extends beyond election cycles, in order to demonstrate a concrete, non-partisan value on reducing and eliminating poverty.

- Participatory budgeting should be employed in order to effectively deliver core funding to local services.
- Representatives from all levels of government must engage in setting priorities and developing action plans.
- Establish the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy with clear indicators and provide an annual report and feedback sessions to measure success.

### **Employment**

- Establish an ongoing schedule of roundtable discussions that involve vulnerable people and service providers who deal with the challenges of poverty in the community.
- Ensure that all levels of government agree on a list of priorities (i.e. specific healthcare outcomes, education outcomes, and social outcomes) to focus transfer payment spending before transfer payments are committed.

### **Health**

- Involve all levels of government in the development of more specifically targeted funding of poverty reduction from a healthcare lens.
- Ensure that national strategies are flexible enough to serve diverse communities with differing needs and abilities.
- Provide access to an up-to-date database of social services and resources that are available from federal, provincial, and municipal governments.

### **Food Security**

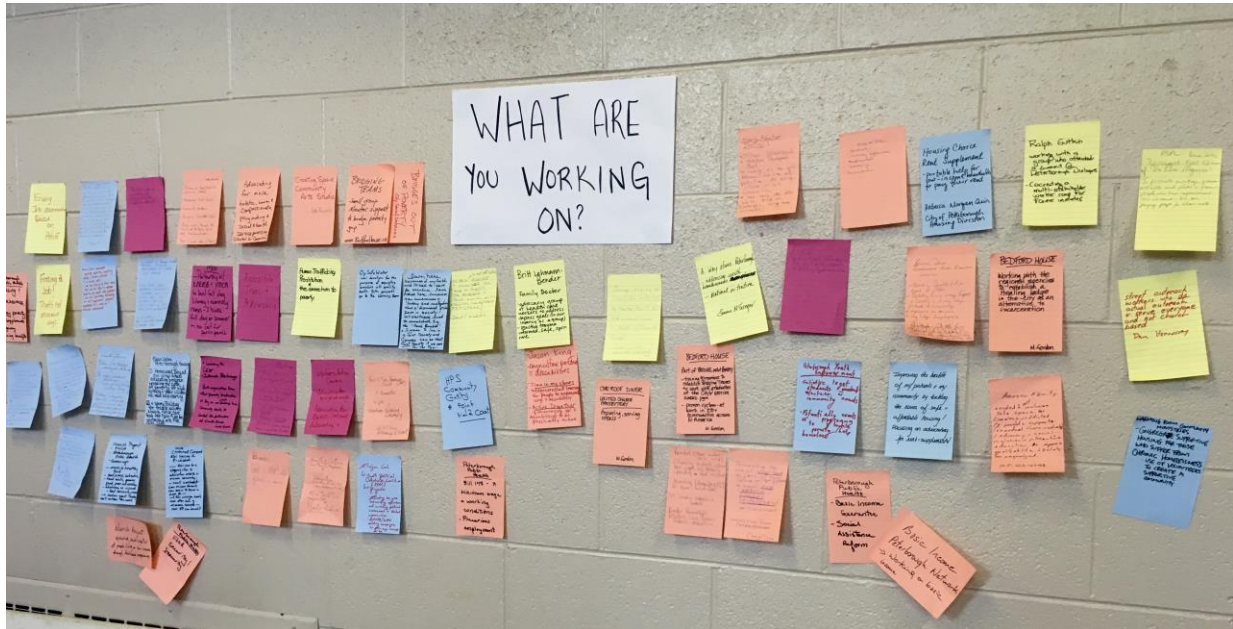
- Fund research done by service providers into what is working at a local level, and make use of this research in the development of federal level policies.

### **Intersectional**

- Engage in outreach and education to remove stigmas around poverty and mental illness and emphasize individual dignity as a driver of success.
- Establish national standards for appropriate levels of government to engage with service providers and stakeholders with lived experience on priorities and best practices.

## APPENDIX

### Current Projects



In an effort to harvest the current work being done to reduce poverty in Peterborough-Kawartha, MP Monsef asked participants at the town hall meeting to share the projects they were working on or their reasons for attending the meeting. The following is the comprehensive list of these projects.

Name	Current Projects
Transition Town Peterborough	Research on the role of local food in making food supply chain complete and therefore more secure. This will create new jobs and economic development opportunities, and is all part of poverty reduction.
Elisha	Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network
	Peterborough Food Charter
	Community Gardens
	Precarious Arts WORK Festival
	Paying writers through the Show and Tell Poetry Series and bird, buried press
Deb	Basic Income videos with Nourish
Bedford House (www.bedfordhouse.ca)	Creating Space Community Arts Studio
	Part of “Bridges out of Poverty” – training 40 mentors to establish Bridging Teams to work with graduates of the City’s Getting Ahead Program. Proven system at work in 370+ communities across North America.



	Working with regional agencies to establish a Healing Lodge in the city as an alternative to incarceration
Margaret	I am a low-income senior with a project of staying in my own home. I rent 3 units to people who need accommodation at reasonable rents. All 3 are stretched due to precarious work and limits of ODSP. I worry that I will not be able to continue to offer homes to all 4 of us, as the economy tightens.
Health Care providers against poverty working group (name to be formalized)	Trying to find ways that we can help address poverty as health care providers
	Currently focused on rent-supplement program expansion as a way to stabilize individuals
Peterborough Public Health	Housing & homelessness
	Energy poverty
	Rent supplements
	Emergency housing benefits
	Food security and insecurity
	Employment – precarious employment and Bill 148 (minimum wage and working conditions)
	Basic income guarantee and social assistance reform
Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network	In partnership with the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board and the YMCA, hosting full day literacy and numeracy camps for 3.5 weeks in the summer (no cost to participants)
Bill	Volunteering with One Roof Community Diner for meal preparation and service
Workers Action Centre	Advocating for minimum wage
	Advocating for basic income
	Advocating for support of provincial legislation for workers
Roy	Our Space & Peterborough Health Coalition
	Trying to fill social justice gaps
	Ensure health system works properly and is publicly funded
Linda	Localizing the LEAP manifesto
	Sustainable Peterborough – poverty eradication is key as we must develop true community equity in order to combat the difficulties of climate change
YWCA Centennial Crescent	Providing rent-geared-to-income housing for women and children, which can be a stepping stone to education access and income security. Small investments can ensure tenants can begin to thrive and move on. If rent-geared-to-income changes hands more often because of economic success, more women and children benefit.
City of Peterborough Social Services	Municipal Community Well-Being Plan for City and County of Peterborough
	Implementation of Age-Friendly Plan
	Healthy Kids Community Challenge
	Homeless Service System – coordinated access, information system, case conferencing, applications to province for more funds for supportive housing, and Away Home Peterborough Youth Homelessness Prevention Strategy

	Income security – information reports to Council on Basic Income, provincial committee providing advice on social assistance reform
Morgan	Youth Political Activist Coalition (YPAC), with projects to include networking opportunities, increasing political involvement in student communities, letter writing campaigns on issues like minimum wage increase
United Way Peterborough	Point in Time 2 <sup>nd</sup> Homelessness Count & enumeration Homelessness Partnering Strategy
Op Safe Winter	Seeking local donations for the purpose of equipping homeless with quality boots. Extra proceeds go to the Warming Room.
Dawn	Sustainable Peterborough – “Future of Food and Farming” Working Group, as access to food starts with preserving food lands
	Peterborough Immigration Partnership – challenge of integration socially and economically of newcomers in Peterborough
	Research project with Fleming CREW on building employment capacity for refugees and newcomers to Peterborough
Peterborough Housing Corporation	Homeward Bound – 4 year wrap-around education program breaking the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children. Need help from community to get started.
	In partnership with PHC, LHINS and CCRA, working on a 6-story building for fragile seniors, with 24 hour care.
Peterborough Council for Persons with Disabilities	Time In My Shoes – experiential learning for people to experience living with disabilities
	Active Together – encouraging people with disabilities to be physically active
Carol	Trying to work for reforms to Mental Health Act and criminal code regarding people with mental health challenges
Workforce Development Board	Looking at the split between full-time and part-time jobs being offered in the local community
	Trying to find out how many jobs offer salaries based on Peterborough’s living wage estimates
Trent Student Union	Educating students about their rights as tenants and providing food assistance
	Advocating for lower tuition fees, alongside the Canadian Federation of Students
Peterborough Youth Empowerment	Initiative to get students involved and volunteering with community events, including potentially events or programs to tackle poverty.
City of Peterborough Housing Division	Housing Choice Rent Supplement – portable help for low-income households to pay their rent
Peterborough Social Planning Council	Updating the Quality of Life Report for Peterborough
	Updating Living Wage Report and creating a Living Wage Network to encourage employers to pay employees a living wage
	Publishing the first edition of “The River Magazine” – to promote writings, stories, artwork and photos from people who have experience living with low income. Contributors will be paid for their work.

Ralph	Working with a group who attended a summit with Peterborough Dialogues in order to create a multi-stakeholder worker coop for former inmates
Warming Room Community Ministries	Congregate supportive housing for those who suffer from chronic homelessness
	Use of volunteers to create a supportive community
Basic Income Peterborough Network	Working to promote/establish a basic income
Maureen	Needed: all-inclusive safe space for homeless & addicted to provide supports (i.e. medical harm reduction), advocacy, social inclusion, informative education to improve quality of life and safety for the marginalized.
Dan	Needed: street outreach workers who do actual outreach and serve everyone – not church-based
Bill	Needed: getting people the training they need to be employable
Joanna	A Way Home Peterborough – addressing youth homelessness
M.	One Roof Diner – preparing and serving meals
Trish	Consciousness raising of social services work students
Janet	Unpaid (i.e. not affiliated) advocate & volunteer for those in poverty, the homeless and those living with mental illnesses and addictions
Nourish Project	Access to healthy food, food across subsidies
	Food skills like growing food and peer advocacy
	Growing social capital of people living on low income through food-based programming
Chemong Village Housing	Local schools have breakfast programs – instead, we need to make sure every family has enough income for their basic needs (i.e. a basic income guarantee)
	Peterborough parent-child Mother Goose Program
	Find a job! That's not minimum wage
	One to one advising for children with learning disabilities
	Ending job discrimination based on age
	Advocating for more holistic, human and compassionate policy making and social/health service provision
	Investigating human trafficking and prostitution and the connection to poverty
	Improving the health of my patients and my community by tackling the issues of safe, affordable housing
	I am here because of my faith and its call to care for creation. I am also here because of an awareness of history and realization that a dismissal of the poor in society will eventually lead to revolution (e.g. the French revolution). I want to live in a Just Society and Canada can be that society if we care for the poor.
	Health and wellness in the workplace – promoting education of a wellness model, not an illness model
	Accessible transit advocacy

## Detailed Feedback to Dialogue Questions

---

Participants at the town hall were asked to divide into small groups so that every person who attended the meeting had an opportunity to share their views. These groups designated a note taker who was responsible for recording the conversation points as the group discussed each question. The following is a detailed account of every piece of feedback that was recorded by group note takers.

### Question #1:

**What are some key services or types of programs that exist in Peterborough—Kawartha that really make a difference? What services or programs are currently missing in your community?**

### Responses

- **Theme: Housing & homelessness**
  - What's working
    - Emergency warming room
    - Housing First program
    - Partnerships between organizations
    - Community and City is much more aware of homelessness
    - The few supportive housing units that do exist work well
    - 360 Clinic offering healthcare
  - What's missing
    - Year-round warming room
    - Year-round shelter that is low barrier
    - More education and public awareness around housing and homelessness
    - Effective health outreach
    - Mental health and addiction outreach
    - Mothering house
    - Transition house
    - More supportive housing
    - Landlords who are willing to work with City on housing
    - More rent-geared-to-income housing
    - More rent supplements
- **Theme: Income**
  - "Money in peoples' pockets"
  - ODSP, OAS, CPP, GIS- these provide needed income security
  - Employment services e.g. Employment Planning & Counselling (EPC)
  - Provincial Basic Income Pilot should be expanded, have federal support
  - Canada Child Benefit (CCB)
  - Employment Insurance (EI)- need to expand availability

- CPP- doesn't include unpaid work, i.e. work in the home
  - Subsidized childcare should be universal
  - Basic income → call it "Universal Guaranteed Income"
  - Universal income needs to be a living wage
  - Employment support for persons with disabilities- we are down to four programs in Peterborough, which is not sufficient
  - CPP, OAS, guaranteed income should be increased to a living wage
  - National standard for income supports
  - Regulate post-secondary tuitions to ensure they are affordable
  - Currently have local living wage report for Peterborough and area (PSPC). Living wage here is \$17.65/hour.
  - Any federal summer employment program should pay at least minimum wage as defined by the province
  - Eliminate student debt
- **Theme: Employment**
    - What's working
      - Employment services- Service Canada, TPA (transfer payment agreements??) to province
      - IRCC funding for new Canadians
      - CCB
      - Funding for education and employment (FedDev)
    - What's missing
      - Matching unemployment with training
      - Promoting access to training (tuition subsidy)
      - More comprehensive and effective ESL services and enhanced language preparation, particularly with government sponsored immigrants
      - Research on the role of local food in the food supply chain
      - Creating a more secure chain and new jobs
- **Theme: Health**
    - What's working
      - 360 clinic- provides excellent care, could use more staff/capacity
      - Kinark- long wait times
      - 5 Counties- long wait times
      - Peterborough Youth Services
      - Community dental clinic
    - What's missing
      - Core funding for community services
      - Shelter health network
      - Inadequate access to primary care especially for people living in poverty
      - Dental care

- Access to psychiatry
  - Hospice
  - Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) being revamped hopefully to provide more care
  - Access to social work for navigating social services
  - Question: Is there an option at the provincial level to mandate taking vulnerable patients into family practice?
- **Theme: Food security**
    - What's working
      - Gardens
      - Seasoned Spoon- local food coop restaurant at Trent University
      - Transition Town
      - Nourish
    - What's missing
      - Ways to manage our waste
- **Theme: Intersectional**
    - What's working
      - YES shelter
      - Nourish
      - Warming Room/One Roof Diner
      - Bridges out of poverty
      - New Canadian Centre
      - VoN 360
      - Employment services
      - Trent Valley Literacy
      - Community Futures
      - Four Counties Crisis Centre
      - Four Cast
      - City of Peterborough
      - John Howard Society & Elizabeth Fry
      - Need an "Independence at Home" program for all seniors, such as Veterans' Affairs *Veterans' Independence Program (VIP)* to assist with physical, social, mental health issues, etc.
      - Basic Income Guarantee to deal with the cascade of issues and more effectively use funds, provide dignity and support local economy.
      - Working Centre Kitchener- project working that helps homeless
      - CCAC and other provincial Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN)
    - What's missing
      - Involving people in their own care

- Worker co-ops for former offenders- self-sustaining with a community focus where people in similar circumstances can work together and have more reliance on themselves and each other, rather than the government
- Different government ministries not talking to each other
- Strategies that prevent poverty, not just deal with the results
- 24 hour transitional housing and safe centre
- Early and preventative intervention programs at street level to avoid conflict with police
- More mental health support
- More connection with school boards
- Healing lodges
- “Poverty elimination”

#### Question #2:

Which Government of Canada programs and policies do you feel are effective at reducing poverty? How can we ensure that these programs work in cooperation with existing programs at the local and provincial level?

#### Responses

- **Theme: Housing & homelessness**
  - Federal social housing programs
  - Get behind basic income guarantee
  - Homelessness partnering strategy- especially when it was better funded
  - Federal programs work better with ongoing funding rather than one-time funding
  - Need National Housing Strategy
  - National healthcare/pharma-care act
  - Federal Minister of Housing
  - We ensure it works by different levels of government working together
  - CMHC shelter funding
  - Having a vehicle that works and can work
  - CCB
  - Want to see how National Housing Strategy works
  - Hopeful that changing tuition fees will help
- **Not Helpful**
  - Provincial policy where kids reach certain age and no longer get rent breaks. Income put into household income even though...
  - Programs don't focus on helping dignity
- **Theme: Income**
  - Transfer payments go back 80% : 20% split
  - Ensure people know which programs are available to them

- Gap in 50-65 income programs → eligibility criteria for CPP
  - Eliminate service kiosks and hire real people for employment counselling
  - Free tuition
  - OAS, CPP, GIS, CCB
  - Transit tax credits were helpful for some people
  - National Housing Strategy- align with provincial and municipal programs
  - Climate change measures (e.g. energy conservation) need more support for rental housing, both landlords and tenants
  - Federal Business Development Bank- an equivalent should be available for small and micro enterprises
  - Close tax evasion loopholes
  - Address increasing income inequality
- **Theme: Employment**
    - Employment services: getting people jobs, resume help, interview training]
      - Increased awareness of these programs
    - CCB tax benefit: provides money for basic living expenses
    - Funding for new Canadians- LINK language courses, ESL courses, and effective skills development, building on existing skills
    - Settlement services- finding a house, learning how to shop, finding education, finding healthcare
    - Post-secondary education programs
    - Healthcare not sustainable
- **Theme: Health**
    - **Effective**
      - Not sure what programs exist for health at a federal level
      - Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
    - **Missing**
      - Palliative care is not mandated nationally and receives inadequate funding
      - Access to early mental health services
      - \*universal pharmacare\*
      - \*universal dental care\*
      - Limited access to optometry and physiotherapy
      - More long-term care capacity
- **Theme: Food security**
    - CCB is effective
    - Federal portion of student grants should be increased
    - We need a basic income policy



- **Theme: Intersectional**
  - Gender Based Analysis- somewhat new language
  - CCB- very effective
  - Many programs are unfamiliar to us in general. Those most in need of services may experience barriers to access and understanding
  - Need for more national standards/universality
  - National Housing Strategy
  - National standard on income equality
  - Looking at root causes for each strategy
  - More involvement of people who use the services in decision making process
  - Remove stigma and criminalization of drug addictions and other social issues
  - If mental health is not funded all other initiatives won't work

Question #3:

How can the federal government work with service providers at the local and provincial level to foster an on-going dialogue about poverty reduction initiatives?

Responses

- **Theme: Housing & homelessness**
  - Listen to people on the ground
  - Funding- bring a nice, big cheque
  - Have the MP be directly involved and fund the local plan
  - Peterborough has a plan, we just need continuous funding- not project specific funding
  - Non-partisan federal support to fund housing
  - Federal government education on homelessness and poverty
  - Social housing
  - Need program to help people keep dreaming
  - Take steps to strengthen training and education
  - California policy- every housing project 10% for housing
  - Geared-to-income, affordable
  - Housing will lower healthcare costs
  - We have many one-night houses but still not enough (e.g. Cameron House, Brock Mission, Warming Room)
  - People on ODSP and OW are only allowed to have a certain amount of money in the bank. Why not allow them to save or get help to own a house?
  - Great job of collecting information and collaborating. No lack of will, but lack of finances.
- **Theme: Housing & homelessness PLUS**
  - Reconciliation: Federal government should be implementing effective programs to address the poverty of Indigenous people

- Safe housing
  - Clean water
  - High quality education close to home
  - Equitable access to healthcare
  - **STOP** contesting federal responsibilities to Indigenous people in the courts
  - **Poverty elimination**
    - Basic income- use the Robin Hood strategy- take from the rich and give to the poor
  - Communication- programs not well known by the people who need them → chronic
  - Stop nickel-and-diming the NFP sector and worrying about our accountability
    - Focus on government accountability
- **Theme: Income**
    - Ongoing dialogue with service providers
    - Need longer term commitments and committees, beyond election cycles
    - Federal funding delivered by more local governments more efficiently and effectively
    - Commit to ACTION- will build buy-in and engagement and ongoing dialogue
    - Involve labour
    - Participatory budgeting for part of federal level budget
    - Representatives from provincial and municipal levels in federal bodies to bring their perspectives
    - Equalize funding for First Nations education
    - Be bold and transformational
    - Talk about “poverty elimination” not reduction
    - Core funding for programs and services at a local level
    - Approve a non-partisan National Poverty Reduction Strategy with clear indicators and focus areas. Provide an annual report to measure successes
    - Follow through and accountability
    - Adopt a Canadian Disability Act
  - **Theme: Employment**
    - Continue an open door policy on poverty reduction initiatives
    - Also, meet with who was not here
    - Ongoing series of roundtable discussions with all service providers dealing with the challenges of poverty in the community
    - More conditional transfer payments from federal government to specific government services, i.e. specific health, specific education, specific housing (subsidized housing)
    - Have federal, provincial and municipal stakeholders agree on priorities before transfer payments are allocated
    - This should always be non-partisan

- **Theme: Health**
  - Include all levels of government in town hall conversations and community consultations
  - National Strategies need to be flexible to better serve different communities and work on those communities' strengths
  - Regularly updated database of federal, provincial and municipal social resources that are available
  - More specifically mandated funding to address poverty in a healthcare setting
  - Federally supported maternity leave
  
- **Theme: Food security**
  - Have the federal government really listen to local ideas, research and initiatives and respond accordingly
  - Working with service providers and others
  - Funding for research into what is working locally
  
- **Theme: Intersections**
  - Federal government role should NOT be to work directly with service providers but to encourage province to work directly with community and local service managers, including stakeholders and those with lived experience based on national standards
  - See info on Basic Income Guarantee
  - Remove labels and stigmas around all issues related to poverty
  - Educate the general public to recognize the dignity of each person regardless of their circumstance
  - Establish compassion as a basis for policy and action

## **Additional Consultations and Information**

---

As mentioned at the town hall, the following are a few additional resources regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategy and other relevant consultations:

[Poverty Reduction Strategy Discussion Paper \(click here\)](#) – PDF document. [Large print, braille, audio cassette, audio CD, e-text diskette, e-text CD and DAISY are available on demand.](#)

[Report on National Housing Strategy consultations \(click here to start the download\)](#) – PDF document.

[Investments in Housing since April 2016.](#)

[Canada Food Policy consultations](#)