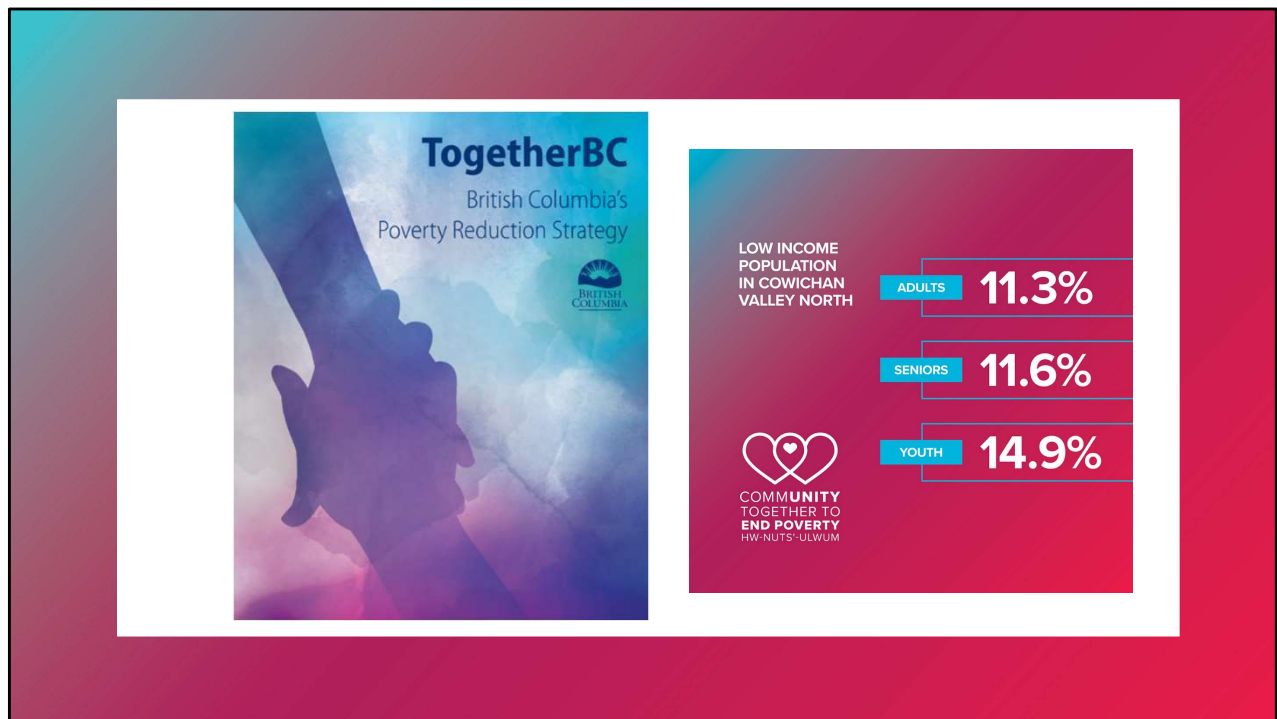




Here is our logo – the idea behind it’s design was to connect our caring communities to a sense of place, working together as the Town of Ladysmith & Stz’uminus First Nation Hw-nuts’-ulwum as one.

We were grateful to be able to work with Stz’uminus Councillor Margaret Seymour who consulted an Elder to select the right word to incorporate into the title and explain the intent of the project



Province of BC released *TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy*.

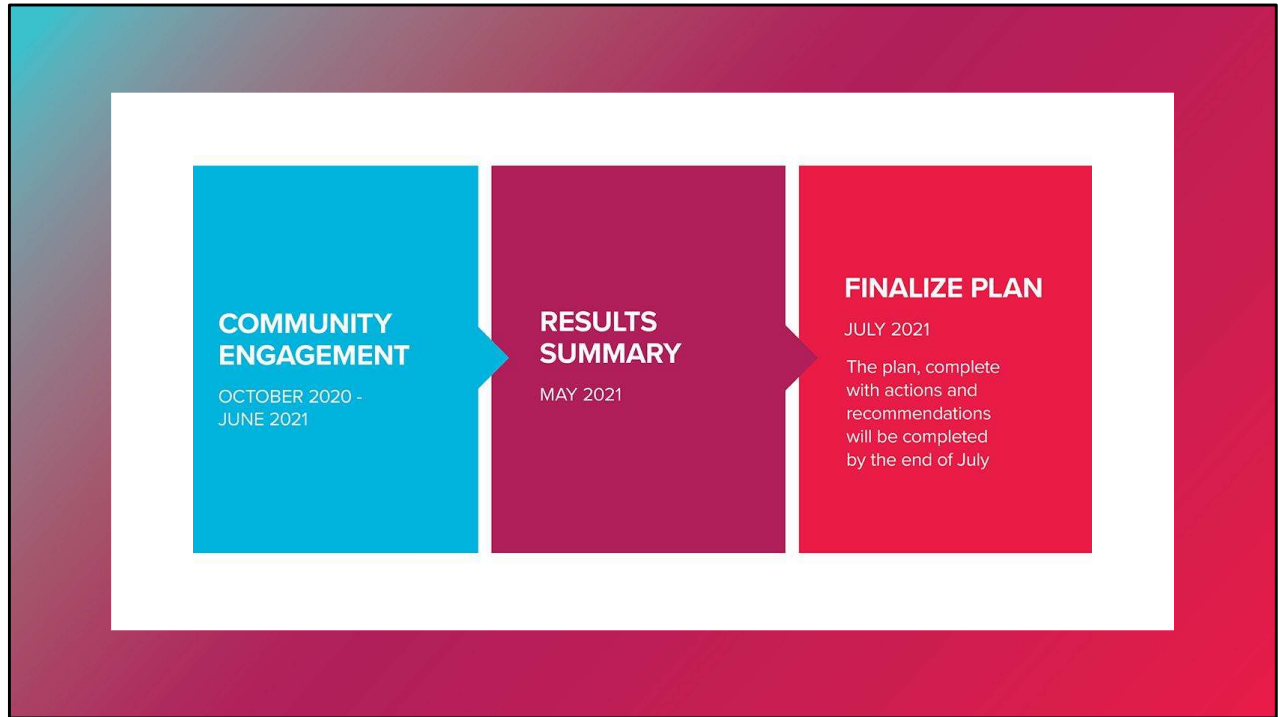
- targets to reduce the overall poverty rate in BC by at least 25%, and
- child poverty rate by at least 50%, by 2024.

\$5M over three years to support local governments

- Stream 1: *Poverty Reductions Plan and Assessment*
- Stream 2: Poverty Reduction Action (up to \$50,000)

Goals and Outcomes from this project is to develop

- A list of actions and solutions formulated into a Poverty Reduction Plan specific to Ladysmith & Stz'uminus residents that has Council and community support
- Community building among those with different backgrounds, experiences, among Indigenous and non-indigenous residents
- Education around poverty related issues and impacts
- A reduction in stigma around poverty and discrimination
- Participation by existing community service and health organizations will benefit by sharing and further understanding community needs, identifying gaps and opportunities for expanding services to support the needs.
- Apply for Stream 2 funds for actions



This is an overview of the project timeline, we have completed our community engagement as well as sharing a Summary of that Public Engagement for review and public comment and now we are working on the final poverty reduction plan. To share a bit of background how we got here.



We started by forming a Working Group of partners to guide the engagement process that included members from:

- Town of Ladysmith
- Stz'uminus First Nation, Health Centre
- Stz'uminus Primary School
- Nutsumaat Lelum Child Care Centre
- Ladysmith Resource Centre Association
- Boys and Girls Club Central Vancouver Island
- First Nations Health Authority
- Island Health
- OUR Cowichan Health Network
- Social Planning Cowichan

2. As a working group we identified Peers and Community Champions to help promote the project and conduct one-to-one interviews, relying on their relationships already established in the community as we could not host in-person gatherings due to COVID-19



### 3. Community Engagement:

- a. Poverty Questionnaire – online, print copies, interviews with peers and champions
- b. Communications – education, information & story sharing through social media and print news – thanks to the Chronicle and Take 5 for covering the project!
- c. Poverty Challenges – 3 day food allowance, 3 day public/active transportation and 12 hour no where to go challenges happened March 29 – April 9<sup>th</sup> (included a Debrief Session on Apr 9)

We were happy to have participation by MP Paul Manly and Mayor Aaron Stone participate in the 12 Hour No Where to Go challenges and share their experiences on their facebook pages.



The last part of community engagement included

- a. Summary of Public Engagement that included an additional Survey for feedback on the themes heard from the & Actions



Each Theme was explained in 2 parts:

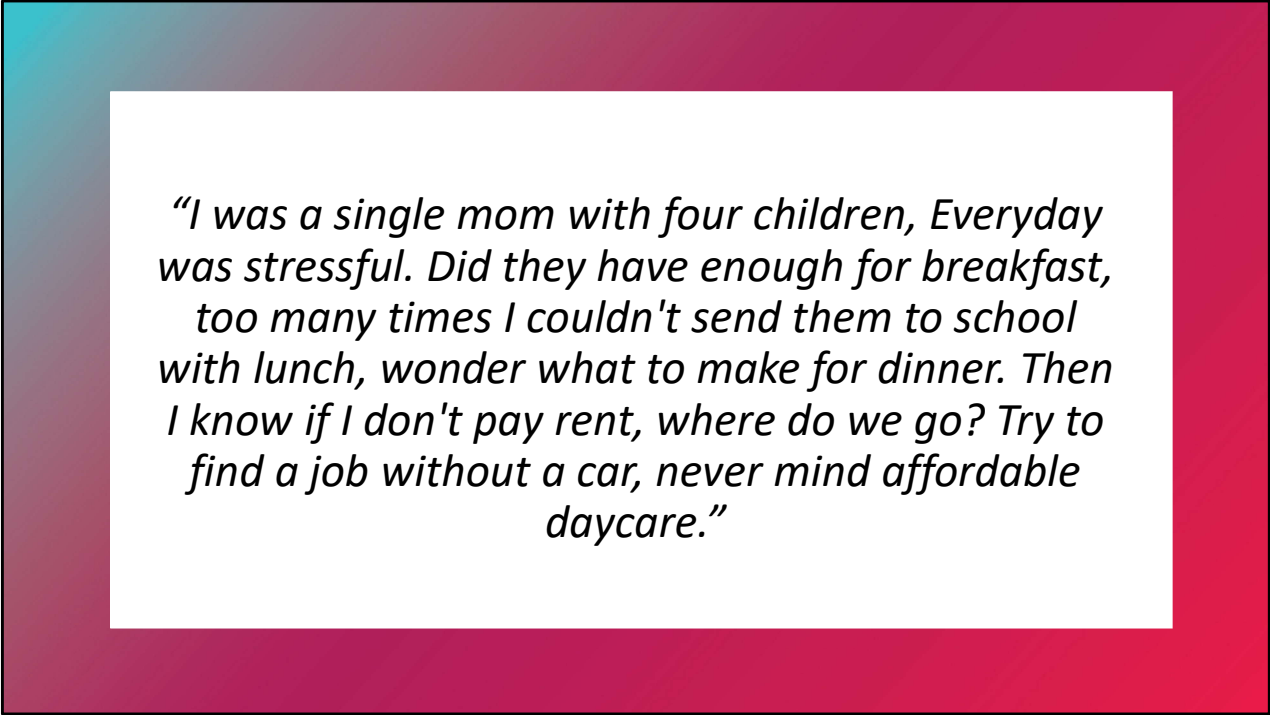
Challenges we heard

Why this is important

- Do you think that we have captured the main impacts of poverty within the summarized 10 themes?
- What else would you like to add to the identified themes?
- What ideas do you have for taking local actions to address these issues?
- Additional comments
- Contact details for updates & further participation

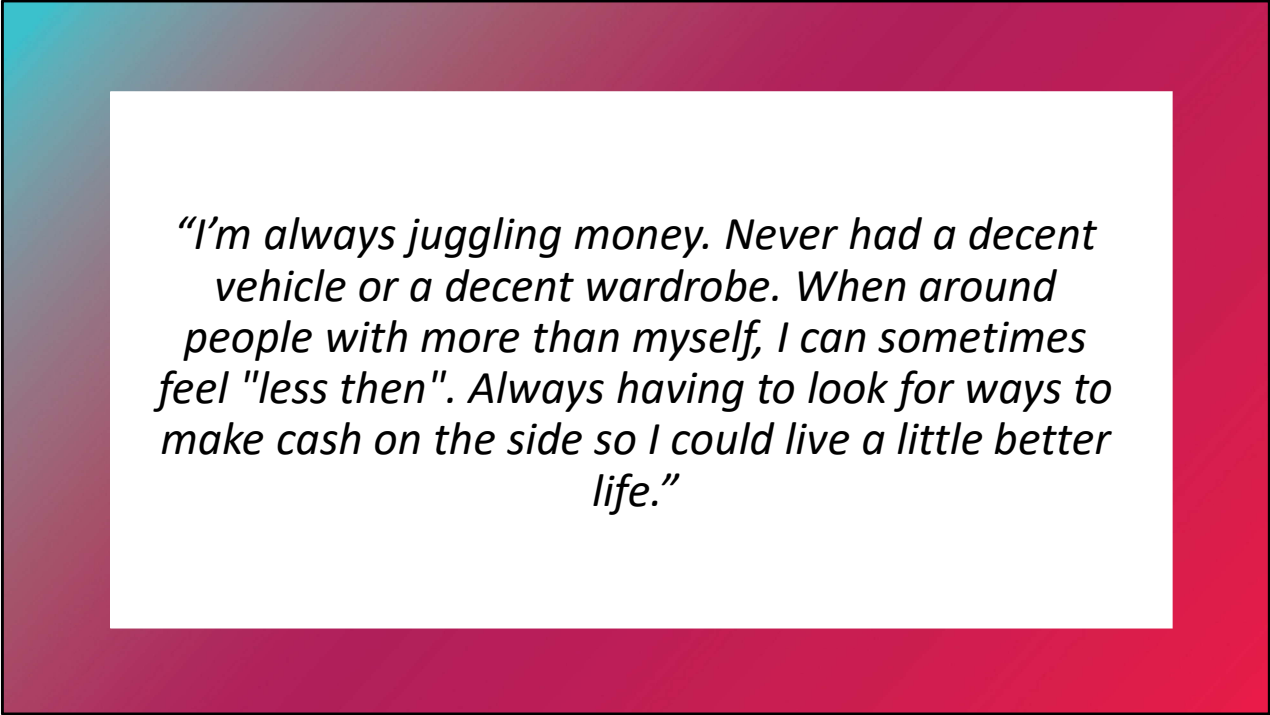
Input wrapped in the middle of this month

But most importantly it was the stories we heard.

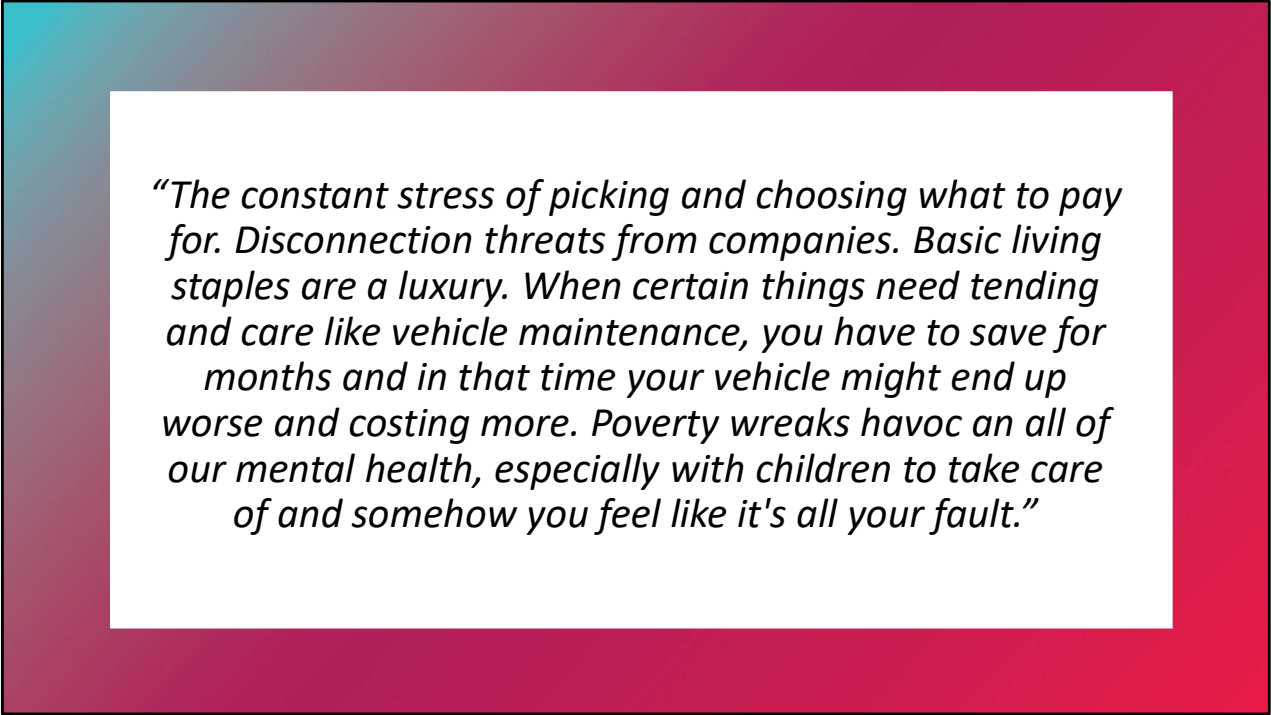


*"I was a single mom with four children, Everyday was stressful. Did they have enough for breakfast, too many times I couldn't send them to school with lunch, wonder what to make for dinner. Then I know if I don't pay rent, where do we go? Try to find a job without a car, never mind affordable daycare."*





*"I'm always juggling money. Never had a decent vehicle or a decent wardrobe. When around people with more than myself, I can sometimes feel "less than". Always having to look for ways to make cash on the side so I could live a little better life."*



*“The constant stress of picking and choosing what to pay for. Disconnection threats from companies. Basic living staples are a luxury. When certain things need tending and care like vehicle maintenance, you have to save for months and in that time your vehicle might end up worse and costing more. Poverty wreaks havoc on all of our mental health, especially with children to take care of and somehow you feel like it's all your fault.”*

Because the impacts of how people experience poverty are often unseen or hidden, and with the added isolation and loneliness of coming out of the covid 19 pandemic, this project was very timely in hearing from those who are most impacted to understand the needs of the community and explore appropriate actions to take.



So we all wear many hats, but what can we do as residents, business owners and employees, in community as volunteers, as a member of the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce, what can we do about these very complex issues and challenges that are also inter-related?



I like to think that it's similar to this also very complex pie. ☺

No one is expected to eat a whole pie by themselves – although it would be impressive if they could... haha

But we recognize and actually want to emphasize that there is no silver bullet solution.

It isn't JUST up to the Town, or Stz'uminus, the province, federal government, Island Health, our non-profits, and certainly not entirely up to businesses.

Its up to all of us.

It's literally going to take each and every one of us, working together –hw-nuts'-ulwum – as one, to...



- Utilize subsidies, etc. for more FTE that pays a living wage (\$19.10/hr)
- Build on partnerships for employment connections with Stz'uminus, WorkBC, schools, etc.
- Support local community-led affordable housing projects.
- Encourage discussions about challenges and issues of poverty, stigma and racism.
- Participate in connecting community through asset and resource sharing.

Take a piece of the pie – or at least a bite! by collaborating on solutions and taking multiple actions, together.

Some of the actions suggested through the engagement process that I thought might be good for discussion with this group include:

- Utilizing subsidies or other programs that may allow for more full time employment that pays a living wage (\$19.10/hr) ideally with benefits
- Build on partnerships for employment connections with Stz'uminus, schools, WorkBC, etc
- Support local community led affordable housing projects – this could be through partnerships, donations, volunteer time, gathering support, etc
- Encourage discussions in the workplace about challenges and issues of poverty, stigma, racism and discrimination.
- Participate in connecting community through asset and resource sharing
  - Share skills, activities, workshops, etc
  - Supporting hosting free social event opportunities and gatherings for all ages
  - Organize/participate donation drives based on the local need



COMMUNITY  
TOGETHER TO  
END POVERTY  
HW-NUTS'-ULWUM

[www.communitytogethertoendpoverty.ca](http://www.communitytogethertoendpoverty.ca)

**Thank you all! Huy tseep q'u!**

Thank you for listening to me today – I hope you're feeling curious and open to having more conversations about how we can end poverty in our community and I'm happy to answer any questions!

Thank you all, Huy tseep q'u!