

APPENDIX C:

SUB-COMMUNITY RESULTS: CHILLIWACK

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 2023 FVRD Homelessness Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Survey took place on March 7-8, 2023 within Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Chilliwack River Valley, Mission, Kent, Harrison Hot Springs, Hope, and Boston Bar. The first PiT Count and Survey for the region was in 2004, with subsequent undertakings in 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, and 2020 (prior to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Although Point-in-Time counts and surveys are not able to, or intended to, enumerate every person experiencing homelessness, the consistent application of Point-in-Time Count and Survey methodology helps to uncover trends related to the extent of homelessness within a given area¹. Similar undertakings routinely occur in Metro Vancouver and across the Province.

The resulting data and survey findings help inform and improve supports for individuals experiencing homelessness, identify unmet housing needs, determine potential gaps in related health services, and support funding applications for local housing and homelessness initiatives.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Municipal and regional staff worked in collaboration with local service agencies and other partners to plan, prepare for, and administer the 24-hour point-in-time count and survey of individuals experiencing homelessness across the region.

As with past Point-in-Time homelessness counts and surveys, the 2023 project would not have been possible without the generous in-kind contributions of staffing resources, expertise, and other supports provided by a number of local service agencies and other partners throughout the region.

The following service providers, government agencies, and organizations contributed immensely to the undertaking of a 2023 Point-in-Time homelessness counts and survey within Chilliwack.

- Ann Davis Transition Society
- Chilliwack Community Services
- Cyrus Centre (Chilliwack)
- Fraser Health
- Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction (Chilliwack)
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (Chilliwack)
- Mountainside Harm Reduction
- Pacific Community Resources Society
- Pearl Life Renewal Society
- RainCity Housing and Support Society
- RCMP (Chilliwack)
- Ruth and Naomi's Mission Society
- Salvation Army
- School District #33
- Stó:lō Service Agency
- Wilma's' Transition House
- Xwchiyò:m (Cheam) First Nation

¹ For more information about project methodology, limitations, and ethical considerations associated with PiT Counts and Surveys, refer to the Introduction of the regional report.

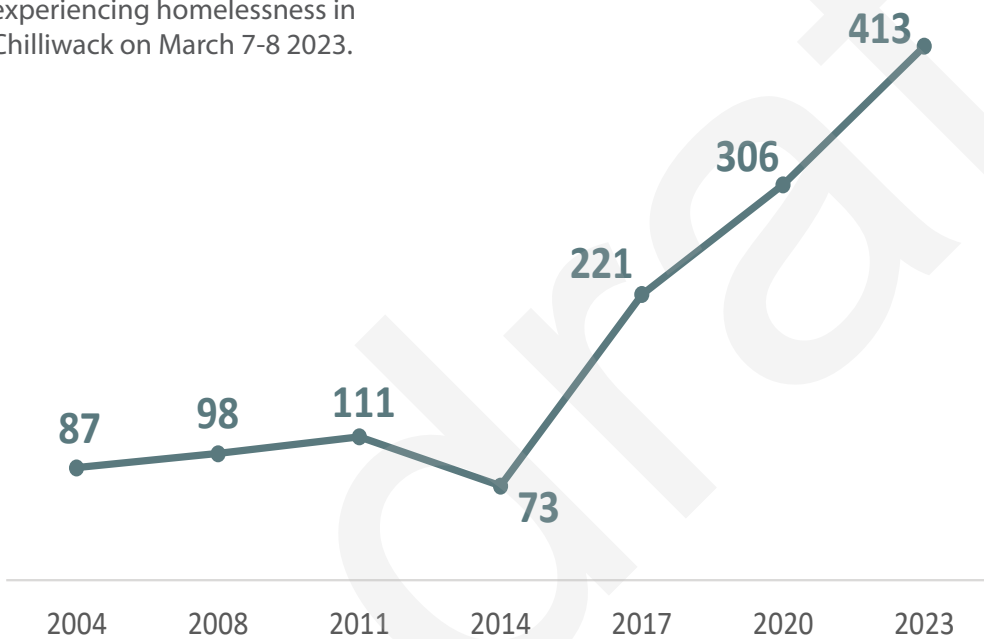
FVRD 2023 Point-in-Time (PiT) Homeless Count & Survey

Since 2004, communities in the FVRD have worked together to conduct a tri-annual Point-in-Time (PiT) Count and Survey of individuals experiencing homelessness within the region. The results provide critical information about the scope and nature of homelessness which is used to improve supports and services, as well as monitor homelessness prevention strategies.

ENUMERATION

413

individuals identified as experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack on March 7-8 2023.



- 107 additional people or an increase of 35% since 2020.
- Rates of physical and mental health challenges continue to increase.
- 50% have lived in Chilliwack for 10 or more years.



OVERNIGHT LOCATIONS

The increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack continues to outpace the increase in emergency shelter beds.



55%
Shelter



24%
Outside



10%
Couch-surfed



5%
Vehicle



6%
Hospital

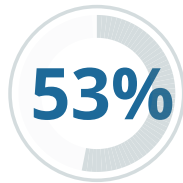
WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

Chilliwack saw an increase in older populations and fewer children and youth experiencing homelessness.



3%

are aged 19 or younger, a decrease from 11% in 2020.



53%

of the those experiencing homelessness are between the ages of 30-49



13%

are aged 60 or older, an increase from 10% in 2020.

42%

identified as **Indigenous** compared to 7.9% of the general population.

32%

had been in **government care** as a child or youth.



Women are underrepresented in PiT Count data as they are more likely to experience hidden forms of homelessness.



68%

Male



31%

Female



1%

Transgender, two-spirit, non-binary, other.

HEALTH CHALLENGES

73% reported experiencing at least one health challenge.



63%

Addiction

38%

Medical Condition

43%

Mental Health Issue

30%

Physical Disability

20%

Acquired Brain Injury

22%

Learning Disability

Of those experiencing addiction:

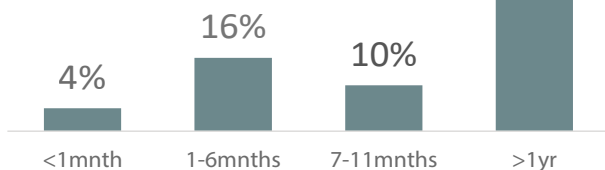
- 14% reported receiving treatment and 28% reported seeking treatment.
- 54% also identified as having a mental health issue.



DURATION AND CAUSE

55%

had experienced homelessness for 2 or more years.



31%

Housing and financial issues largely related to cost and income

35%

Health Issues including physical, mental, and addiction or substance use.

30%

Interpersonal and family issues, largely with spouse or partner

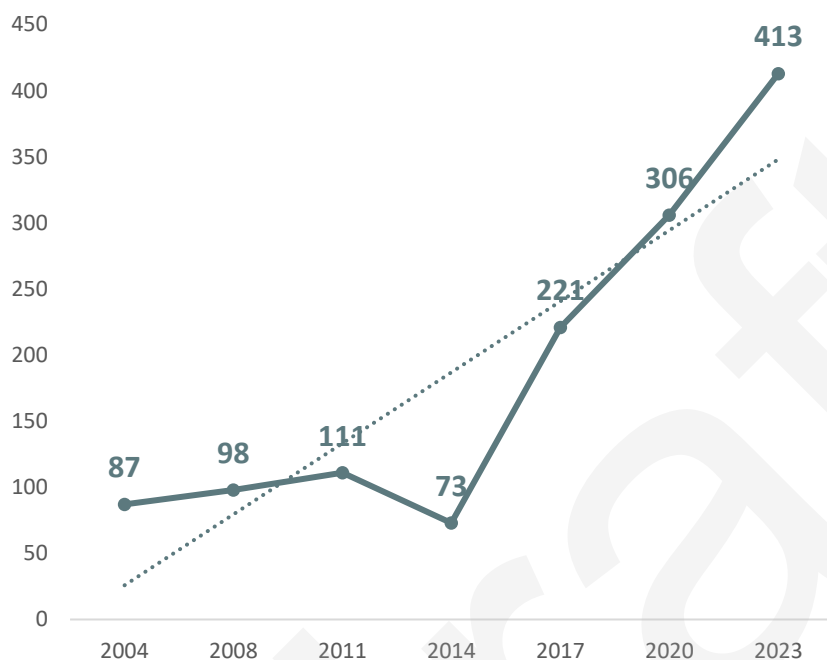


42% of respondents listed two or more reasons for their most recent housing loss.

POINT-IN-TIME (PIT) COUNT AND SURVEY RESULTS

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

FIGURE 1. TOTAL INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, CHILLIWACK (2004-2023)



There has been an upward trend in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack since 2014.

The total number of individuals experiencing homelessness enumerated in Chilliwack during the 24-hour period on March 7 and 8, 2023 was 413.²

This is an increase of 107 people or 35% compared to the previous count in 2020, the highest rate of increase per sub-community in the region.

Since 2014, there are an additional 340 people experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack, which is a 466% increase in nine years, the highest rate of increase for this period within the region.

TABLE 1: CHANGE IN NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, FVRD (2004-2023)

Community	2004-2008		2008-2011		2011-2014		2014-2017		2017-2020		2020-2023		2004-2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Abbotsford	9	4%	-118	-50%	34	29%	123	81%	59	22%	73	22%	180	80%
Chilliwack	11	13%	13	13%	-38	-34%	148	203%	85	38%	107	35%	326	375%
Mission	25	33%	-46	-46%	21	39%	-12	-16%	115	183%	-3	-2%	100	133%
Eastern FV ³	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	78	-	22	28%	100	-
Total	58	14%	-120	-26%	1	0%	260	75%	289	48%	199	22%	687	169%

² For more information on the methodology used, see Section 1 of this report.

³ The first PiT Count and Survey in Eastern Fraser Valley communities was in 2020.

The distribution of populations experiencing homelessness in the FVRD is largely reflective of the distribution of population within the region. That being said, Chilliwack makes up a greater portion of the region's PiT Count and Survey totals (38%), than portion of the the region's total population (30%).

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF REGIONAL POPULATION COMPARED TO PIT COUNT TOTALS, FVRD⁴ (2020-2023)

	2020				2023			
	PiT Count		Population		PiT Count		Population	
	Total	% of FVRD	Total	% of FVRD	Total	% of FVRD	Total	% of FVRD
Abbotsford	333	37%	152,267	51%	406	37%	172,488	52%
Chilliwack	306	34%	91,797	31%	413	38%	100,943	30%
Mission	178	20%	39,873	13%	175	16%	42,472	13%
Eastern FV	78	9%	15,635	5%	100	9%	15,635	5%
Total	895	100%	299,572	100%	1094	100%	331,538	100%

REASONS FOR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Respondents were asked to identify the reason(s) for their most recent loss of housing. A total of 157 or 42% of respondents said their most recent loss of housing was due to reasons that fall into two or more of the categories in Table 3, which aligns with the understanding that homelessness is typically due to the accumulation of impacts caused by a combination of factors, not a single issue or event⁵.

The response categories with the most significant number of responses were health issues (34.7%), housing and financial issues (30.5%), and interpersonal and family issues (30.0%). An analysis of individual responses identified the most commonly reported reason for housing loss was addiction or substance use (13.3%), a lack of income (13.1%), spousal conflict or abuse⁶ (13.1%), mental health issues (9.3%), and physical health issues (6.9%).

TABLE 3. DETAILED LIST OF REASONS FOR EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS⁷, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Reasons for Experiencing Homelessness	2023	
	N of Responses	% of Responses
Housing and Financial Issues (Total)	270	30.5%
Not enough income	116	13.1%
Rental support stopped	1	0.1%
Unfit/Unsafe housing	46	5.2%
Building sold/renovated	17	1.9%
Owner moved in	3	0.3%
Landlord/tenant conflict	51	5.8%
Guest policy	7	0.8%
Complaint	12	1.4%

⁴ Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

⁵ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Homeless Hub (website), Causes Of Homelessness <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/causes-homelessness>

⁶ Analysis combines responses from "Conflict with spouse/partner" and "Experienced abuse by spouse/partner".

⁷ Respondents could check off or listed as many reasons as what apply to them having lost their housing. Therefore, numbers and percentages reflect all responses and not the total of respondents. In addition, respondents may also have provided multiple responses from a single category.

Place not physically accessible	2	0.2%
Left the community/relocated	15	1.7%
Interpersonal and family issues (Total)	265	30.0%
Conflict with spouse/partner	79	8.9%
Conflict with parent/guardian	46	5.2%
Conflict with other	16	1.8%
Experienced abuse by spouse/partner⁸	37	4.2%
Experienced abuse by parent/guardian/caregiver	19	2.2%
Experienced abuse by child/dependent	4	0.4%
Experienced abuse by other	6	0.7%
Death or Departure of family member	29	3.3%
Experienced discrimination	29	3.3%
Health issues (Total)	306	34.7%
Physical health issue	61	6.9%
Mental health issue	82	9.3%
Addiction/Substance use issue	117	13.3%
Hospitalization or treatment program	25	2.8%
Covid-19 Pandemic	21	2.4%
Incarceration (Correctional facility or jail) (Total)	20	2.3%
Incarceration (jail or prison)	20	2.3%
Other Reasons (Total)	22	2.5%
Other	22	2.5%
Don't know why	0	0.0%
Total Responses (all categories)	883	100.0%

DURATION OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Of those surveyed, 80% are experiencing chronic homelessness as defined by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness,⁹ which is a significant increase compared to under 63% in 2020 and 69% in 2017.

Chronic Homelessness refers to the experience of individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance use), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year and is associated with increased difficulty in getting back into housing and is often associated with long or repeated episodes of homelessness¹⁰.

In 2023, 70% of respondents had reported experiencing homelessness for more than one year, a significant increase from 50% of all respondents in 2020 and 2017. However, perhaps most alarming, is that 183 respondents or 55.1% reported experiencing homelessness for more than 2 years.

⁸ The analysis of individual responses combines the number of response associated with "Conflict with spouse/partner" and "Experienced abuse by spouse/partner."

⁹Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Homeless Hub (website), Addressing Chronic Homelessness, <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/prevention/addressing-chronic-homelessness>

¹⁰ National Alliance to End Homelessness, End Homelessness (website), Chronically Homeless, <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/chronically-homeless/>

TABLE 4. LENGTH OF TIME EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, CHILLIWACK (2017- 2023)

Length of Time	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 month	16	12%	19	10%	15	4%
1-6 months	27	20%	42	22%	53	16%
7-11 months	25	18%	27	14%	33	10%
1 year or more	69	50%	103	54%	231	70%
Total	137	100%	191	100%	332	100%

HEALTH CHALLENGES

Survey respondents were invited to share information about personal health challenges, including medical conditions, physical disabilities, mental health issues, addiction, acquired brain injuries, and learning disabilities.

In 2023, 273 or 73% of survey respondents reported at least 1 health challenge and 75 or 20% reporting three or more health challenges. Trends in historical data shows an increase in all categories of self-reported health challenges, with the largest rate of increase related to medical conditions. In 2023, 38% of respondents identified as having a medical condition, 30% a physical disability, 20% an acquired brain injury, and 22% a learning disability.

259 or 63% of survey respondents in Chilliwack responded “yes” to the question, “Do you identify as having an addiction at this time?” Of the 202 respondents who identified as currently experiencing addiction, 140 or 54% also reported mental health challenges, (referred to as a concurrent disorder), which further compounds the complexity of care, supports, and housing solutions required.

Of the 259 respondents who identified as currently experiencing addiction, 36 or 14% indicated they were receiving treatment and 72 or 28% indicated they were seeking treatment. Of those who reported experiencing addiction, using a combination of substances was most commonly reported (64%), followed by crystal meth (9%), opiates (9%), alcohol (9%), other (6%), and cocaine (1%).

TABLE 5. SELF-REPORTED HEALTH ISSUES, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023) ¹¹

Health Issue	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Addiction	95	43.0%	144	47.1%	259	62.7%
Mental Health Issue	63	28.5%	92	30.1%	179	43.4%
Physical Disability	38	17.2%	60	19.6%	124	30.0%
Medical Condition	50	22.6%	77	25.2%	158	38.3%
Acquired Brain Injury	-	-	33	10.8%	83	20.1%
Learning Disability	-	-	-	-	89	21.5%

¹¹ Acquired brain Injury was not asked in 2017 and learning disability was not asked in 2017 and 2020.

“SHELTERED” AND “UNSHELTERED” HOMELESSNESS

A total of 226, or 55% of all individuals included in the Point-in-Time Count stayed at an emergency shelter, which is an increase of 60 people compared to 2020. Despite an increase in people staying in shelters on night of the count, the percentage of sheltered individuals increased by less than a percentage.

TABLE 6. RATIO OF “SHELTERED” AND “UNSHELTERED” INDIVIDUALS, CHILLIWACK (2020-2023)

Sheltered and Unsheltered	2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%
Sheltered	166	54%	226	55%
Unsheltered	140	46%	187	45%
Total	306	100%	406	100%

The remaining 187 or 45% of individuals experiencing homelessness reported unsheltered accommodations, which is an increase of 47 people compared to 2020. Despite an increase in people who were unsheltered on night of the count, the percentage of unsheltered individuals decreased by less than a percentage.

TABLE 7. ACCOMMODATION ON THE NIGHT OF THE SURVEY, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Place Stayed	2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%
Shelter	166	54%	226	55%
Hospital	11	10%	26	6%
Outside	83	27%	100	24%
Car, van, or camper	16	5%	19	5%
Someone else's place	30	4%	42	10%
Total	306	100%	413	100%

SHELTER BEDS

In Chilliwack, the increase in individuals experiencing homelessness who were “sheltered” on the night of the count was due to the increased utilization of shelter beds, as well as the number of beds available. With 226 of the 243 shelter beds occupied, Chilliwack had a shelter utilization rate of 93% on the night of the count, compared to the utilization of 166 or 81.8% of 203 shelter beds in 2020¹².

TABLE 8. DISTRIBUTION OF REGIONAL SHELTER INVENTORY, FVRD (2017-2023)

Community	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Abbotsford	230	58%	166	34%	213	35%
Mission	45	11%	87	18%	98	16%
Chilliwack	109	28%	203	41%	243	40%
Agassiz-Harrison*	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Hope-Boston Bar*	12	3%	36	7%	48	8%
Total	396	100%	492	100%	602	100%

*Sub-Communities of Eastern Fraser Valley

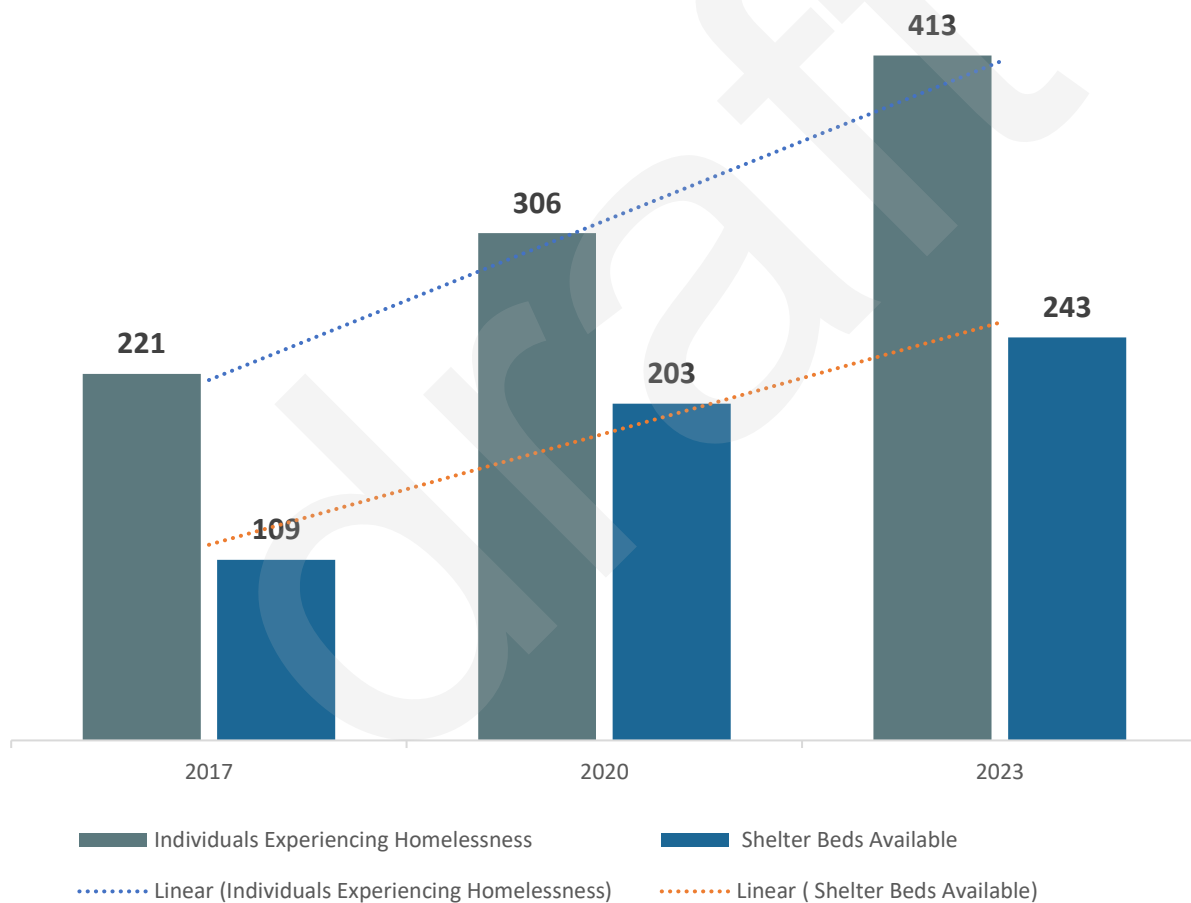
¹² The utilization of shelter inventory is calculated by dividing the number of sheltered individuals on the night of the count by the total number of shelter beds available obtained from shelter and municipal staff.

From 2020 to 2023, Chilliwack’s shelter inventory on the night increased by 40 beds, while the region’s shelter inventory increased by 110 beds. Shelter beds in Chilliwack make up 40% of all shelter beds available in the region on the night of the count, compared to 41% in 2020, and 28% in 2017.

The total number of shelter beds available in Chilliwack has increased but they have not kept up to the increase in individuals experiencing homelessness based on PiT Count figures. With every shelter bed utilized, Chilliwack’s current shelter inventory could only provide shelter for 59% of those identified as experiencing, which is a decrease from 66% in 2020¹³.

Since PiT count figures can only provide an undercount of actual populations experiencing homelessness, the gap between Chilliwack’s capacity to provide shelter and the need for shelter is likely even greater.

FIGURE 2. SHELTER BEDS COMPARED TO THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)



¹³ The potential capacity to provide shelter is calculated by dividing the number of shelter spaces available on the night of the count by the number of people identified as experiencing homelessness.

GENDER IDENTITY

Individuals who identify as male consistently account for roughly two-thirds of all individuals who experience homelessness in the region as per Point-in-Time counts. However, PiT Count methodology does not capture all persons experiencing homelessness, especially those in hidden forms of homelessness noted in section one of this report.

Women make up a more significant proportion of those experiencing hidden homelessness, and are therefore undercounted in Point-in-Time counts and surveys¹⁴. Individuals who identify as male account for 68.0% of Chilliwack's PiT count figures and survey findings. Those who identified as female made up 31.1%, and less than 1% identified as transgender, two-spirit, non-binary, or other gender not listed.

TABLE 9. GENDER OF SURVEYED INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)

Gender	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	112	62.2%	158	60.3%	249	68.0%
Female	67	37.2%	104	39.7%	114	31.1%
Transgender	1	0.6%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Two-Spirit	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Non-binary	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.3%
Total	180	100%	262	100%	366	100.0%

Survey respondents were asked, "Do you identify as someone with a trans-experience? (your gender is difference than what was assigned at birth)" A total of 7 or 1.9% of respondents yes to this question. In comparison, the 2021 Census of Population reports that 0.19% of Canada's population aged 15 and older identify as transgender.¹⁵

These figures suggest an over-representation of individuals that identify as transgender within populations experiencing homelessness, which reflects research findings, which note more significant rates of homelessness among LGBTQ+ populations¹⁶.

FIGURE 10. TRANS EXPERIENCE, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Trans Experience	2023	
	N	%
Can Identify with trans experience	7	1.9%
Cannot identify with trans experience	325	87.1%
No Response	41	11.0%
Total	373	100%

¹⁴ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. "The Pan-Canadian Women's Housing & Homelessness Survey." Homeless Hub. 2021. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/EN-Pan-Canadian-Womens-Housing-Homelessness-Survey-FINAL-28-Sept-2021.pdf>

¹⁵ Statistics Canada "Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and non-binary people" April 27, 2022. Census of Population 2021. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/220427/dq220427b-eng.pdf?st=JB7Vb5sN>

¹⁶ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. "Creating LGBTQ2S Inclusive, Affirming and Safe PiT Counts" Homeless Hub. 2019. www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/LGBTQ2S-PiT-Count.pdf

AGE

Similar to 2020, the single largest age category in Chilliwack is age 30-39 (28.9%), followed by age 40-49, which combined make up more than half (53.3%) of individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack.

The proportion of youth experiencing homelessness (19 and younger) in 2023 was 3%, which is a decrease from 10% in 2020, and 22% in 2017. It should be noted that youth homelessness is often more hidden which is known to result in an under-representation of young people within PiT Counts¹⁷. The portion of those aged 60 and older was 12.5%, an increase from 9.9% in 2020 and 5.8% in 2017.

TABLE 11. AGE OF SURVEYED RESPONDENTS, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)

Age	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 15	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
15-19	37	21.5%	28	10.7%	9	2.5%
20-29	22	12.8%	48	18.3%	63	17.2%
30-39	31	18.0%	65	24.8%	106	28.9%
40-49	37	21.5%	49	18.7%	90	24.5%
50-59	34	19.8%	46	17.6%	52	14.2%
60 or older	10	5.8%	26	9.9%	46	12.5%
Total	172	100%	262	100%	367	100.0%

Compared to the general population of Chilliwack, those under age 29 or over age 60 are underrepresented among individuals experiencing homelessness as identified in the PiT Count, while adults, especially those 30-49 were overrepresented.

TABLE 12. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS COMPARED TO POPULATION, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Age	Population (2021 Census) ¹⁸		2023 PiT Count		% Difference
	N	%	N	%	%
Less than 15	20,390	17.9%	1	0.3%	-17.6%
15-19	6,520	5.7%	9	2.5%	-3.2%
20-29	11,985	10.6%	63	17.2%	+ 6.6%
30-39	14,615	12.9%	106	28.9%	+ 16.0%
40-49	13,190	12.1%	90	24.5%	+ 12.4%
50-59	14,775	13%	52	14.2%	+ 1.2%
60 or older	32,320	28.4%	46	12.5%	-15.9%
Total	113,770	100.0%	367	100.0%	0.0%

¹⁷ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. "Point-in-Time Count Toolkit." 2018. Homeless Hub. www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/download-chapter/PiT%20Count%20Toolkit%202020%20Final.pdf

¹⁸ Statistics Canada. 2023. Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

In 2023, those who identify as heterosexual accounted for 88.4% of all respondents in Chilliwack, which is consistent with previous survey results, while 11.6% of respondents described their sexual orientation as bisexual, pansexual, two-spirited, gay, and other.

In comparison, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ account for 4% of Canada's total population aged 15 and older¹⁹ which suggests an over-representation of individuals who do not identify as heterosexual or straight within populations experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack and throughout the region. This is consistent with research findings, which note higher rates of homelessness among LGBTQ+ populations²⁰.

TABLE 13. SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)

Sexual Orientation	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Heterosexual/Straight	121	91.0%	168	89.8%	298	88.4%
Bisexual	9	6.8%	10	5.4%	23	6.8%
Two-Spirited	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%
Gay	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	3	0.9%
Other	2	1.5%	1	0.5%	4	1.2%
Questioning	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	1	0.3%
Don't know	0	0.0%	4	2.2%	0	0.0%
Pansexual	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	2	0.6%
Lesbian	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	4	1.2%
Total	133	100.0%	187	100.0%	337	100.0%

INDIGENOUS IDENTITY

Based on 2021 Census data, there is an overrepresentation of Indigenous populations within populations experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack. In 2023, 41.5% of respondents identified as Indigenous in Chilliwack compared to 7.9% of Chilliwack's general population²¹.

TABLE 14. INDIGENOUS IDENTITY COMPARED TO POPULATION, FVRD (2023)

Community	2021 Census		2023 PiT Count		Difference
	N	%	N	%	%
Abbotsford	6,850	4.5%	88	31.8%	27.3%
Chilliwack	7,250	7.9%	134	41.5%	33.6%
Mission	3,380	8.3%	59	43.7%	35.4%
Eastern Fraser Valley	1,425	10.0%	22	32.8%	22.8%
FVRD	24,010	7.6%	303	37.8%	30.2%

¹⁹ Statistics Canada. "A statistical portrait of Canada's diverse LGBTQ2+ communities" June 15, 2021. 2018 Canadian Community Health Survey. www.150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/210615/dq210615a-eng.pdf?st=72rw-AmE

²⁰ Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. "Creating LGBTQ2S Inclusive, Affirming and Safe PiT Counts" Homeless Hub. 2019. www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/LGBTQ2S-PiT-Count.pdf

²¹ Statistics Canada. Indigenous Population Profile, 2021 Census of Population. www.12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/ipp-ppa/index.cfm?Lang=E

A total of 134 or 40% of respondents in Chilliwack identified as Indigenous (including First Nations, Metis, Inuit, or other Indigenous ancestry), compared to 38% in 2020. Of the 134 individuals who identify as Indigenous, 95 identified as First Nation or Indigenous, and 22 as Metis.

TABLE 15. INDIGENOUS IDENTITY BY RESPONSES, CHILLIWACK (2020-2023)

Indigenous Identity	2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%
First Nations	66	33.7%	95	28.1%
Indigenous/Aboriginal Ancestry	4	2.0%	13	3.8%
Metis	5	2.6%	22	6.5%
Inuit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not listed	0	0.0%	4	1.2%
Don't Know/Unsure	0	0.0%	15	4.4%
Does Not Identify as Indigenous	121	61.7%	189	55.9%
Total	196	100.00%	338	100.00%

LENGTH OF TIME IN CHILLIWACK

Survey results show individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack are most likely to be long-term residents. A total of 268 or 84.0% have lived in Chilliwack for more than one year, while 149 or 46.7% had lived in Chilliwack for more than 10 years.

TABLE 16. LENGTH OF TIME LIVING IN CHILLIWACK (2023)

Length in Chilliwack	2023	
	N	%
Less than 6 months	28	8.8%
6-11 months	23	7.2%
12-23 months	18	5.6%
2-5 years	59	18.5%
6-10 years	42	13.2%
11+ years	82	25.7%
Always lived in the community	67	21.0%
Total	319	100.0%

COMMUNITY LIVED IN PREVIOUSLY

TABLE 17. COMMUNITY LIVED IN PRIOR, CHILLIWACK²² (2017-2023)

Previous Community	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Within the FVRD	23	27.7%	35	28.7%	63	25.7%
Within Metro Vancouver	10	12.0%	19	15.6%	70	28.6%
Another Part of BC	31	37.3%	22	18.0%	53	21.6%
Another Part of Canada	13	15.7%	38	31.1%	48	19.6%
Another Country	6	7.2%	8	6.6%	11	4.5%
Total	83	100.0%	122	100.0%	245	100.0%

²² Table excludes respondents who indicated always living in Chilliwack.

Survey respondents were asked what community they lived in prior to living in Chilliwack. 25.7% of respondents had lived in the FVRD, 28.6% within Metro Vancouver, 21.6% elsewhere in B.C., 19.6% elsewhere in Canada, and 4.5% outside of Canada. In 2023, there was a notable increase in respondents who had previously lived within Metro Vancouver.

SOURCE OF INCOME

Similar to 2017 and 2020 PIT Count and Survey results, income assistance (both standard income assistance and disability allowance) was the most commonly reported source of income. In 2023, the proportion is 48.6% compared to 46.5% in 2020 and 38.2% in 2017. However, in 2023 income from disability allowance reached 25.8%, surpassing income assistance as the most commonly reported source of income.

A total of 42 or 7.5% of responses reflect formal and informal (binning) employment, compared to 48 or 15.2% in 2020. Income from employment insurance increased from 2 or 0.6% of responses in 2020 to 94 or 16.8% of responses in 2023.

TABLE 18. SOURCE OF INCOME, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)²³

Source of Income	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Income Assistance	55	25.3%	87	27.5%	128	22.8%
IA (Disability Allowance)	28	12.9%	60	19.0%	145	25.8%
Binning/Bottles ²⁴	25	11.5%	27	8.5%	24	4.3%
No Income	18	8.3%	18	5.7%	23	4.1%
Other ²⁵	24	11.1%	32	10.1%	45	8.0%
Panhandling	10	4.6%	11	3.5%	0	0.0%
Family/Friends	20	9.2%	12	3.8%	13	2.3%
Part-time Job	8	3.7%	20	6.4%	18	3.2%
Vending (sex-work)	2	0.9%	19	6.0%	12	2.1%
Disability (CPP)	5	2.3%	7	2.2%	5	0.9%
CPP	4	3.2%	10	3.2%	47	8.4%
Honoraria/Stipend	0	0.0%	0	0%	2	0.4%
Youth Agreement	10	4.6%	0	0%	0	0.0%
Other Pension	3	1.4%	5	1.6%	1	0.2%
Old Age Security	3	1.4%	5	1.6%	4	0.7%
Full-time Job	2	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Employment insurance	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	94	16.8%
Total	217	100.0%	316	100.0%	561	100.0%

²³ Respondents could select more than one sources of income that apply to them, therefore, the number in the “N” column accounts for multiple responses, and provides the number of unique individuals.

²⁴ In 2023 the option was informal employment which was captured under binning.

²⁵ Includes GST/HST refund and Child and Family tax refund.

SERVICE USAGE

Respondents in Chilliwack indicated accessing various services as outlined below. Service usage reported in 2023 was largely similar to 2020; however, there was a notable increase in the number of responses related to harm reduction, overdose prevention, and addiction services.

In Chilliwack, respondents were most likely to report using emergency shelter, harm reduction, meal program/soup kitchen, emergency room, or ambulance services.

TABLE 19. SERVICES USED, CHILLIWACK (2020-2023)²⁶

Service Used	2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%
Ambulance	62	5.6%	116	5.6%
Cultural Services ²⁷	-	-	15	0.7%
Dental Services	24	2.2%	14	0.7%
Emergency Room	98	8.8%	178	8.9%
Emergency Shelter²⁸	227	20.6%	367	18.3%
Employment Services	27	2.5%	45	2.2%
Financial Services ²⁹	-	-	42	2.1%
Food Bank	79	7.2%	158	7.9%
Harm Reduction	58	5.3%	199	9.9%
Health Clinic	53	4.8%	19	0.9%
Hospital (Non-Emergency)	59	5.4%	100	5.0%
Housing Help/ Eviction Prevention	13	1.2%	26	1.3%
Meal Programs/Soup Kitchen	136	12.4%	196	9.8%
Mental Health Services	36	3.3%	78	3.9%
Newcomer Services	-	-	2	0.1%
None	52	4.7%	4	0.2%
Other	13	1.2%	19	0.9%
Other Addiction Services	24	2.2%	48	2.4%
Outreach	84	7.7%	170	8.5%
Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) ³⁰	0	0.0%	125	6.2%
Probation/Parole	26	2.4%	58	2.9%
Transitional Housing	27	2.5%	29	1.4%
Total Responses	1098	100.0%	2,008	100.0%

²⁶ Respondents could check off all that applied, hence the number column represents all respondents and not individual respondents.

²⁷ Cultural Services was not included in 2020 list of services.

²⁸ Includes both emergency shelter and extreme weather shelter

²⁹ Financial Services was not included in 2020 list of services

³⁰ Overdose Prevention Site (OPS) was not included in 2020 list of services

BARRIERS TO SERVICES

In total 163 respondents indicated that they experience barriers to access available services while 125 respondents answered no to the question: “Are there any barriers preventing you from accessing services”?

Of the types of barriers to accessing services reported, transportation issues was most commonly reported (19.6%), followed by health and mental health issues (8.0%), substance use issues (5.0%), and mobility challenges (4.3%).

TABLE 20: BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SERVICES, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Barriers to Accessing Services	2023	
	N	%
Transportation issues	32	19.6%
Mobility issues (difficulty walking or access using a wheelchair)	7	4.3%
Not having required identification	2	1.2%
Not having knowledge or information about services	2	1.2%
Substance use issues	8	5.0%
Health and Mental health issues	13	8.0%
Other	99	60.7%
Total	163	100.0%

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Individuals experiencing homelessness were asked to identify what additional services might be meaningful or helpful to them. Although responses related to a range of services, the largest proportion of responses were linked to affordable housing, including supportive housing, rent support, etc.

Many responses reflected the types of services already offered in Chilliwack, which may reflect barriers to accessing these services, or the need to increase, improve, or expand existing services, as well as the high value placed on these service types.

Common responses to the question, “What additional services might be meaningful or helpful to you?” from respondents in Chilliwack include, but are not limited to the following types of services or service improvements:

- More affordable housing
- Rent support
- More outreach services
- Easier access to treatment
- Training/employment readiness

GOVERNMENT CARE

A total of 134 individuals or 32.4% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack had previously been in government care, which is an increase from 22.2% in 2020 and a decrease from 36.2% in 2017³¹. These figures suggest an overrepresentation of adults previously in government care within populations experiencing homelessness. Of respondents who reported previously being in government care, 52.2% had lived in foster care, 25.4% in youth group homes, and the remaining 22.4% had youth or independent living agreements.

TABLE 21. TYPES OF GOVERNMENT CARE, CHILLIWACK (2017-2023)

Government Care	2017		2020		2023	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Government Care	80	36.2%	68	22.2%	134	32.4%
Total	221	100%	306	100%	413	100%

FIGURE 22. TYPES OF GOVERNMENT CARE, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Type of Government Care	2023	
	N	%
Foster Care	70	52.2%
Youth Group Care	34	25.4%
Youth Agreement	10	7.5%
Independent Living Agreement	20	14.9%
Total	134	100.0%

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

A total of 99 or 24.0% of all individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack, responded “yes” to the question “Were you, your parents, or grandparents ever in a residential school?” This was the first time this question had been asked in the PIT Count and Survey; however, personal experience in residential school was previously captured within the survey question on government care.³²

Of the 99 respondents who identified as having a personal connection to residential school, 16 had personally attended residential school, 40 had a parent attend residential school, and 43 had a grandparent attend residential school.

TABLE 23. RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL EXPERIENCE, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Residential School Experience	2023	
	N	%
Personally attended	16	16.2%
Parent attended	40	40.4%
Grandparent attended	43	43.4%
Total	99	100.0%

³¹ In 2017 and 2020, the examples of government care included “residential school”.

³² Interviewers were instructed to ask the question with sensitivity and to request consent prior to asking the question.

RACE

Most respondents in Chilliwack identified as White/Caucasian/European (69.7%) or Indigenous (21.9%) with the remaining 8.4% of respondents identifying with a range of other racial categories. This was the first time this question had been asked in the PIT Count and Survey.

FIGURE 24. RACIAL GROUP IDENTIFICATION, CHILLIWACK (2023)

Racial Identity	2023	
	N	%
White	178	69.7%
Indigenous	56	21.9%
Multi-racial	4	1.6%
Black	6	2.4%
Metis	5	2.0%
South Asian	1	0.4%
Metis/white	0	0.0%
Middle Eastern	2	0.8%
Hispanic	1	0.4%
East Indian	0	0.0%
Eurasian	0	0.0%
Jewish	1	0.4%
Mexican	0	0.0%
Latino/white	0	0.0%
Asian	1	0.4%
West Indian	0	0.0%
Total	255	100.0%

BARRIERS TO HOUSING

The number one barrier reported in Chilliwack in response to the question, “What barriers, if any, have you experienced when trying to find housing?” was the unavailability of affordable housing.

A total of 275 or 74 % of the total respondents indicated experiencing at least one barrier in attempting to find housing. The most common barrier stated was a lack of affordable housing (53.5%), followed by insufficient income in relation to cost of living (18.9%) a lack of references (7.3%) and stigma and prejudice (5.1%); however, a range of barriers were shared by respondents.

TABLE 25: BARRIERS TO HOUSING, CHILLIWACK (2023)³³

Barriers to Housing	2023	
	N	%
Lack of affordable housing	147	53.5%
Insufficient income in relation to cost of living	52	18.9%
Stigma or prejudice	14	5.1%
Lack of references	20	7.3%
Criminal record	11	4.0%
Poor credit score	10	3.6%
Other	21	7.6%
Total	275	100.0%

³³ The total represents total number of responses.

FAMILY MEMBERS AND PETS

A total of 61 or 14.8 % of respondents in Chilliwack said they had company with them at the time of the survey; of which, 43 were accompanied by a spouse or partner, 4 had a child/children with them and 14 had a pet.

AREAS FREQUENTED

Respondents were asked to identify where they spent most of their time. For privacy reasons, detailed responses will not be identified in this report.

The largest proportion of Individuals experiencing homelessness in Chilliwack spent most of their time in the downtown areas of Chilliwack. As far as location types, indoor and outdoor public spaces, such as parks, natural areas and retail malls, as well as shelters and outreach centres were common types of places that people reported frequenting.

REASONS FOR RELOCATING TO CHILLIWACK

Respondents were asked to identify the reason they moved to the community where they were interviewed. The following are the most common reasons provided for relocating to Chilliwack:

- To be with or closer to family
- Employment
- To be with significant other
- Treatment
- Friends
- Housing

“DIRECTED/INSTRUCTED” TO RELOCATE TO CHILLIWACK

Respondents were asked: “Did a worker, counselor, officer, official, etc. of an organization send or direct you to come to Chilliwack?” In total, 22 or 6% of all those surveyed stated that they were “directed/instructed” to relocate to Chilliwack and 217 (58%) responded with “no” to this question, and the remaining 134 (36%) did not respond to the question.