



Policy Watch

BC communities struggling with the impact of poverty, crime and overdose deaths are getting help from the BC government to start their own versions of a hub planning model that debuted in Saskatchewan – and one that's very much aligned with planning for better social outcomes, a Board Voice passion.

So-called "situation tables" bring community agencies together to collaborate on behalf of vulnerable citizens to address immediate needs, prevent crisis and reduce harms.

The most recent of three BC tables launched in [Penticton](#) this month. The Office of Crime Reduction and Gang Outreach (OCRGO) is the lead, providing \$50,000 grants.

Could a situation table help your community? OCRGO manager is Shannon Tucker, sgpcsb@gov.bc.ca.

Municipal governments negotiating with developers over zoning, density or other restrictions is common in BC, and the money agreed upon in exchange for relaxed restrictions goes into funds for "[Community Amenity Contributions](#)."

These funds are targeted for community social benefit and are being used to help non-profits like Board Voice member Pacific Community Resources Society, which joined with other partners and the Child and Family Development Ministry to buy a shared annex with the help of CAC funds.

Does your town council have a fund? The City of Vancouver brought in \$127 million in 2016 alone. Here are [BC's guidelines on CACs](#).

What you need to know...

The Board Voice Community Leads are our regional eyes and ears on the ground in BC. They've been getting our sector's views out there in diverse and timely ways, capitalizing on initiatives like [Foundry](#) to press the case for a collaborative, community-based and consistently funded approach to social health.

Community leads in Kamloops will be presenting to four municipal council advisory committees next month on seniors; youth, children and families; disabilities; and diversity. Other leads are connecting with visiting ministers passing through their towns. Others are starting conversations about social health and community well-being in unusual places – the fire hall, the hospital, the car repair shop.

Let's keep the dialogue going! Our members work every day on the front lines of the social determinants of health, and we are uniquely positioned to help British Columbians see the importance of planning for better social outcomes.

The government's [report](#) on its consultations to develop a poverty reduction plan highlights the critical role community non-profits will play.

The stakeholder consultations confirmed what Board Voice members already know —

reducing poverty requires a collaborative, community-based approach, and a wide range of steady, stable services.

Make sure your MLA knows that supporting and consistently funding the community social services sector is one of the most essential strategies for addressing poverty in B.C. Board Voice is keen to work with the government and MLAs and build on successes to develop and implement an effective poverty reduction plan.

Non-profits have one less thing to worry about. The Ontario Superior Court has [ruled](#) that the Canada Revenue Agency's requirement that charities not devote more than 10 per cent of their efforts and resources to advocacy was unconstitutional.

The court found that the CRA's definition of "political activity" was interfering with Canada Without Poverty's ability to fulfill its mission. The ruling was an "[incredible victory](#)" for CWP and Canadian democracy, said ED Leilani Farha.

Let's connect! Look for Board Voice on these social-media platforms:



Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:

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