

*"I just don't want to see this municipality give up. It's gonna be it's a long, hard road, but it's doable. ... It didn't happen overnight, and it's not going to be solved that way. Right?
So: Don't give up!"*

"We just would like a place to just... be.
You know?"

"You don't necessarily have to agree with drugs.
You just have to respect the person who does them."

"We need a place in town for us, that's not completely isolated and cut off, but like a little place for ourselves where we have all the resources we need, there's homeless shelter, there's everything that we need and we can have it in one space close by."

"It would be good because no one would get lost in the system."

"There is no centre. There should be a centre open to families, to men where they can go, and everything should be connected—you know, as a spider. Even medical, even welfare."

"Nobody wanted to listen to what we figured we needed.
They all figured they knew what we needed,
and that's what I really hate."

"Being homeless is, you know, not fun. You just want to die."

comments from homeless community members

"With addictions, you gotta wait.
You gotta wait, and wait, and wait just to see them."

"It's not just 'go get a job.' You need your health, you need to be clean. ... Abbotsford's the worst place. Where do you shower? There's one shower in Abbotsford for men: Salvation Army."

"You get clean, then you have nowhere to live."

"There are some people out there that are so entrenched in homelessness that jumping through hoops is almost impossible for them. And then they get looked down upon because they can't do something."

"There's so many [homeless] people there, more and more all the time."

“It’s f*ing hard to get off the street. Trying to pick yourself up, get that confidence boost, get yourself together, get a resume together, and f*ing get yourself off the street and stop doing those drugs that you so desperately every day crave. It’s f*ing—it’s a rough road to try to escape. I’m in the middle of trying to escape it right now. ... There isn’t so many, like, available jobs around here, and when you do get that chance, there’s not someone to give you the opportunity. They look at you like you’re a f*ing drug addict, you’re not dependable. You’ve become someone that’s just a fall down, ‘You’re not worth our time.’”

“I’m not about to discard everything—nowhere to put anything I got, just to stay in somewhere overnight? No, I’ll go find a tarp. I’m not getting rid of what’s all I have left in my life just so I can sleep on a mat.... Everybody thinks that’s junk, well it’s not just junk. A lot of that is what people’s lives consist of in that shopping cart. ... and you want them to go throw it away just so they can stay in a shelter? No it doesn’t work that way.”

“[Housing]’s getting far worse.”

“I get 610 a month from welfare, and my rent’s 775. ... I just, I can’t find work. I’ve got so many resumes out there, emailed resume, dropped off, phone calling... it’s tough.”

“My thought seriously is that the people that are running these services and that, right up to the hospital, is how judgemental people are about the homeless, people that are poor, who are addicts. ... They’re already feeling, you know, down and out as it is. And that just—I can’t understand how people that are so judgemental like that are doing first stage work and judging ones that really need the services. ... And that’s a real issue—doesn’t matter what service it is. It comes from all of ‘em.”

“I’ve been out on the streets now, oh, 15 years. ... Through the years I’ve done a lot, a lot of counselling. People will come up to me and tell me the most intimate things. And I won’t judge. I’ll sit there, and I’ll listen. ... And that is something that’s needed. But unless people can trust you, to come and talk to you, to share things with you, how are you going to know how to help?”

“There’s that moment where we are clean and ready to go back to work, but we don’t know what to do. Where to go. So by the time ... I don’t know, a lot go back to drug addiction again, or lose hope.”

