PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

Highlighting

Equity and Inclusiveness

Owen Sound
COMMUNITY VOICES

*We envision – a poverty-free city where*

- People living in poverty are actively involved in decision making processes at the City and in the community.
- More affordable and well maintained housing is available.
- Healthy food is accessible close to where people live.
- Public transportation is affordable and available for employment and business hours.
- The City is free of financial predators that perpetuates the cycle of poverty.
- High quality, subsidized childcare is available throughout the city, and is easily accessible by public transit.
- The City leads by example in equitable committee membership practices.
- People in Owen Sound earn wages adequate to support a healthy, active standard of living.
- Living wage is instituted throughout Owen Sound.
- Options are provided to assist people in the payment of city utility bills.
- Recreational programs are accessible to all. The amount of programs and subsidies are increased, and information about and access to subsidies are improved.
- Education and training programs are offered at flexible times for people who work irregular hours.
- Amenities such as grocery stores and pharmacies are available in each neighborhood.
- People can find information about the programs and services offered in Owen Sound and Grey Bruce counties, and how to access them.
- High quality bridging programs are accessible to people transitioning from income assistance to the paid labour force.

“...

It is important that people living in poverty participate in solving community problems not just their own.

(Getting AHEAD 2013)
People Living in Poverty

We’re all living out the stories of our lives. Part of each person’s story comes from the past, from where and how we live, from the people in our lives. Just as who we are today was decided by what we did yesterday, who we’ll be tomorrow is decided by what we do today. We are all creating our future stories right now. (Getting AHEAD 2013)

Anyone could live in poverty. It is our life circumstances combined with systematic barriers that have deepened our experiences of poverty. We contribute to the economy and quality of life in the city as we care for our families and support each other and our community. (People Living in Poverty 2010)
Building relationships based on mutual respect

1. Who we are

Anyone could live in poverty. People come from a variety of different backgrounds and life circumstances, which have contributed to or deepened their experience of poverty (SPC 2008).

Whether people are working at low-wage jobs or on social assistance, they often struggle to meet their own and their families’ daily needs. Most of the minimum-wage jobs are part-time and offer no medical benefits for families. Low social assistance benefit levels, homelessness, and unstable housing have a negative effect on the community as well as the entire economy. In fact, temporary shelters for individuals and families cost more than investing in long-term, affordable housing.

Poverty affects children at an alarming rate: Child poverty happens because parents are living in poverty. Child poverty – living with insufficient food, shelter, clothing and supports – has lifelong consequences on our children’s health and future economic prospects (SPC 2000).

People have higher risk of living in poverty if they are Aboriginal or live with disabilities. When living on low-income in rural areas, people may feel isolated, and have trouble accessing transportation or paid employment. There are many things which further compound the situation, such as having mental health issues, being criminalized, dealing with addiction, or suffering from a chronic physical illness.

Snapshot

- 60 % of people on low income are working
- 20% of employees in Grey county have multiple jobs
- Minimum wage is $11.25 less than $24,000 per year
- Lone parent families with 2 children on OW receives as little as $12,500 per year
- Living wage is $14.77/hr in Owen Sound and is $16.76 /hr in rural Grey Bruce
- 17% of Grey Bruce children under the age of 17 are living in poverty (Ontario child poverty rate 17.1%)
Notes: OW and ODSP rates effective 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Income</th>
<th>Monthly Cost</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontario Works (OW)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ontario Disability Support (ODSP)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Person</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$379 Housing allowance</td>
<td>$479 Housing allowance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couple with one child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$655 Housing allowance</td>
<td>$816 Housing allowance</td>
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</tbody>
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(Most jobs are part-time or precarious)

**Defining poverty**

There is an ongoing debate as to how poverty is defined. The most common measure of poverty is the Low Income Cut Off (LICO), defined by Statistics Canada. It indicates an income threshold below which a family is likely to spend significantly more of its income on food, shelter and clothing than the average family (Statistics Canada 2007).

However, poverty is more than not being able to afford basic necessities such as food, shelter and clothing. According to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *poverty is deprivation of the resources, choices, and power necessary for civic, cultural, economic, political and social participation in society*. Poverty also concerns intangibles such as opportunities for meaningful employment, a sense of belonging, and a sense of citizenship (CWP 2007).

“*Poverty is the extent in which an individual, a community or an institution does without resources*”

(Bridges out of Poverty 2014)

> **The ability to leave poverty is more dependent upon the other resources than it is upon financial resources. Each of the resources plays a vital role in the success of an individual.**

(Bridges out of Poverty 2006)
2. Contributions we make

We contribute to the economy and quality of life in the city. The low income community often provides care for each other’s children and exchange food, sharing what each household has. There are networks of support, information exchanges, and some people become community activists. As community members living on low-income, people often come together to prevent crime in the communities. Many of those on social assistance or ODSP invest in the community by actively volunteering for community organizations. Volunteers sustain non-profit agencies such as day-away programs, shelters, and food banks.

When we are on social assistance, we often work part time and therefore receive a reduced amount of assistance. (Note: After receiving Ontario Works for three months, recipients are eligible for 50% earnings exemption, i.e. half of the net earned income is deducted from Ontario Works payments.) The minimum wage workforce contributes to the health and safety of people in society by providing much needed services (e.g.: cleaning offices, security, etc.). While the income from social assistance is not taxed, there are significant taxes associated with many of the goods and services on which money is spent. We contribute to the municipal tax base, as property taxes are included in our rent.

All people, regardless of income, have a capacity to participate in civil society. People vote, communicate with the members of parliament, and have the various experiences and ideas heard through media. Low income communities participate in the creation of art, music and culture. We participate in advocacy for equity and inclusion in our city, and raise future leaders by educating our children. Low income communities encourage the creation of programs that can benefit people across all income levels, by sitting on boards and committees, and by sharing stories with decision makers in social policy, government, and social service agencies.

“Community Voices is an action / advisory committee of the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force.

We examine issues in our community and address the barriers to help families create a better life for all.

We are active at community tables as we are the experts on ‘what life is like’ living in poverty.
3. Barriers and inequities

**Poverty costs us all.** Investment in social programs puts money in the hands of those most likely to spend it in Owen Sound (rather than saving), and has the effect of stimulating our economy. It also enables Owen Sound citizens to participate fully in city life. Investing in housing, health care and other social services improves physical and emotional health of the residents, as well as their educational attainment.

a) Income

People often find themselves living in poverty as a result of the low minimum wage, low social assistance rates (including ODSP), or living on a fixed income. Almost one in five Canadian workers earn less than $11.25 per hour. However, a basic living wage is estimated to be at least $14.77 per hour in Owen Sound and $16.76 in rural Grey Bruce (before tax, and without health benefits) for a single person living in Owen Sound. Even with these rates, many families would still be living far below the low income cut off (Campaign 2000: 2008). Not being able to afford the bare necessities (e.g., nutritious food, warm clothing, and adequate housing) undermines people’s overall health. People living in poverty are more likely to suffer from physical and mental health issues. **Inadequate income limits people’s ability to fully participate in daily life to their fullest potential.**

b) Employment

People living in poverty have difficulties transitioning from social assistance to the paid labour force, due to a lack of employment supports. **People living in poverty generally have precarious jobs – most part-time, offering low or minimum wages with no medical benefits, and are vulnerable.** Women are at a higher risk of living in poverty than men, as they are more likely to have precarious jobs. Women are also more likely than men to be lone parents and have to exit the paid labour force due to family responsibilities. Immigrants and refugees face unique barriers to employment – such as lack of recognition of foreign credentials, racism, and discrimination. Many of them may not be familiar with the services offered to low-income residents and to immigrants and refugees.

Some people are not able to work – for example, having certain disabilities, mental health issues, language barriers, and frequent illnesses which makes it difficult to participate in the paid labour force.

**Snapshot**

- 1 in 3 jobs in Ontario is temporary, contract or part time
- 60% of people on low income are working
c) Negative attitudes

Perhaps one of the biggest barriers that people living in poverty face is the negative attitudes and stereotypes from society. When people live in poverty, they often get blamed for it (“poor bashing”). In addition, many people living in poverty experience discrimination based on other factors in their lives. For example, young single mothers are often stereotyped as being irresponsible and unfit to care for children. People of colour in low income can face racial profiling. People who are homeless may be treated as if this was a choice due to their refusal to work in the paid labour force. **These attitudes are typically untrue and can lead to stigma and shame, impeding people from attaining paid employment and accessing social services.**

![Welfare is not a career](image)

**Images like this are repeatedly shared on social media sites**

d) Education and training

Many people are unable to pursue education due to the high cost. The ever changing nature of the economy and the labour market requires many people to get retraining; however its cost and structure create barriers for people. For example, many people do not have access to affordable childcare or transportation to attend a course. The course maybe offered in another community, but people cannot move due to family responsibilities. The course schedule and requirement may not accommodate people who have work shifts at irregular hours.

Immigrants often find that their foreign education is not recognized in Canada, but lack access to ‘bridging programs’ or opportunities for retraining. People with low literacy levels also find it difficult to access appropriate education and training programs. Post–secondary education is inaccessible for many low-income youth when the above challenges are combined with the rising cost of living.

*For children living in poverty, school fees, pizza days, field trips, musical instruments, school supplies such as agendas are not affordable* (Ontario Association of Food Banks 2008). School boards have an obligation to provide the tools necessary for children to get their education; however, there is an expectation that children and parents will have computer access for school work and communication with the school. **These factors exclude many children from actively participating in their education, and increase their likelihood of leaving the school system early, or achieving lower than average grades.**
e) Transportation

While there is public transit available in Owen Sound many people living in poverty often cannot afford to use it or it doesn’t meet their scheduled needs. Transportation costs may be covered for people on ODSP to attend medical appointments and for people on Ontario Works to participate in employment related activities or to attend medical appointments. For those who are paying full price for transportation, the cost to perform daily activities is often too high (e.g., grocery shopping, doing laundry, going to medical appointments). People who cannot afford a car and rely on public transit often find it very time consuming to make transfers and go to multiple destinations throughout the day.

Snapshot

- City of Owen Sound Transit Fares
  - Children 1-5 years old Free
  - Students $2.75 – Monthly pass Elementary $40, High school & College $45
  - All others $3.00 – Monthly pass Adults $70, Seniors $55
  - Family of 3: 1 adult 2 school age children $8.50 x return trip = $17.00

  Mon- Fri 6:30 am - 6:00 pm, Sat 9:00am – 4:00pm, Sunday / Stat holidays no service

f) Housing

The high average market rent and the increase over the years puts many people at risk of homelessness or living in substandard conditions (Alliance to End Homelessness 2008). The County of Grey is unable to meet the number of requests for safe and affordable housing. A result, people’s only affordable option may be to access a temporary shelter. Rent subsidy programs also have a long waiting list, but are the most efficient way of providing affordable housing. When people living in poverty do find housing they can afford, the housing is often inadequate, unsafe, or overcrowded with conditions that are not well maintained.

Snapshot

- 70% of low income renters spend more than 50% of their income on shelter
- 873 average number of individuals/families on a waitlist for subsidized housing in GB
- 17% of tenant households in GB live in subsidized housing (Ontario 16%).
- 2,375 subsidized housing units exist in GB
- 95% of Ontario Works beneficiaries rent, 78% of ODSP beneficiaries rent (2013)
- In 2016 YMCA Housing Support Services assisted 3,901 households with housing related struggles. This included 727 youth (age 16-29)
- Average rents in Owen Sound: $568 (Bachelor), $712 (1 bedroom), $847 (2 bedroom)
g) Nutritious food

People living in poverty often struggle to buy nutritious food for themselves and their families. For a family of four, nutritious food can cost $869.16 per month. While the price of nutritious food increases, minimum wage and social assistance rates have not increased at the same rate. As a result, more people are falling deeper into poverty. Almost half of food bank users are children. Locally, food bank usage has increased by 93% from 2013 to 2015.

Snapshot

- 1 in 6 children under 18 do not have access to enough food.
- 26,000 visits to Grey Bruce food banks in 2015 an increase of 93% from 2013
- 21 food banks serve Grey Bruce.
- It costs $200.73 per week ($869.16 per month) to feed a family of four healthy food
- OSHaRE in Owen Sound serves on average 100 meals per day (Based on Monday to Friday) and recently started a new take-away lunch program on Saturdays.

h) Family responsibility

Many people living in poverty are responsible not only for childcare, but for caring for elderly parents and other family members, they are the centre of supports. Women are often accountable for the majority of family responsibilities

Affordable, quality childcare can help women (re)enter and remain in the workforce. Lack of affordable, quality childcare is one of the greatest barriers for parents who are trying to leave social assistance (Child and Youth Health Network 2009). The average cost of child care spaces for a child 0 to 12 years old are unaffordable and with limited availability to families without financial subsidies.

With only minimum wage salary without benefits, there is rarely a paid sick day. Parents often make the choice to work sick, or drive on closed roads during the winter, because not working means not getting paid. When the children are sick at home, that means a day’s work is missed or pay a sitter. There is still the cost of medical prescriptions which may or may not be covered.
i) Access to information

Many people living in poverty are not aware of what services are available to them because they have trouble accessing broader community information and understanding the requirements to access programs. When information is not presented in diverse mediums and plain language, many people may not be able to make use of it. The emphasis of using the internet to find and apply for services is a barrier to people with no technology or barriers to accessing the internet.

When subsidies are available, the information is often only found in the fine print of documents, and many people do not end up benefitting from the subsidies. People who face stigma and negative attitudes about living in poverty may feel shame in disclosing poverty in order to get information about services.

The way that some of the information is posted assumes that people have access to and have good command of computers and the Internet. People with low literacy levels may experience difficulty when information is presented mainly in written forms. Getting to a library or community centre to access a computer costs people both time and money. People may not be able to access information in the language they speak and read. When people living in poverty own a computer, they often find it too expensive to upgrade and repair on a regular basis. Viruses and scams also negatively impact the ability for people to access internet based services.

j) Income Inequity

Globally and across Canada, levels of poverty are deepening, and Owen Sound is no exception with its geographical challenges. The gap between rich and poor is increasing. In Owen Sound, families headed by a lone parent have the widest income gap.

Snapshot

- 95% of all new jobs created in Ontario (2013) were part-time
- 1 in 3 jobs in Ontario is temporary, contract, or part-time.
- October 2016 we added 200 full time jobs and 3,800 part time jobs (Four County Labour Planning Board)
- Income Inequality in Ontario - a family in the highest income decile earned on average $262,000 more than a family in the lowest income decile.
- 60% of people on low-income are working
- An individual working full-time at Minimum Wage of $11.25/hr ($23,400) falls well below Ontario’s Low Income Measure of $23,861 (1 person), $29,706 (2 persons), $36,520 (3 persons)
**k) The Cycle of Poverty**

Often people who are on social assistance face significant obstacles to entering or re-entering the labour force. When people earn income from the paid labour force, their social assistance benefits are reduced and their incomes are taxed. Since 2003, the provincial government has made positive changes to social assistance including (1) a straight exemption rate of 50 percent on employment and training income and (2) drug, dental and vision care benefits have been extended to cover people leaving social assistance for employment (Government of Ontario, 2008).

A person who was in receipt of income assistance and, due to starting employment or having increased earnings, is no longer eligible for income assistance, is eligible for the Extended Employment Health Benefit (EEHB) if:

- they meet all other conditions of eligibility for income assistance except the condition that their budgetary requirements exceed their income, their assets are within the allowable limit and participation requirements;
- they are exiting income assistance due to employment income;
- they are not eligible for the EHB; and
- the benefits payable under the EEHB are not recoverable, partially or completely, under a benefit plan available from an employer.

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**My Story:**

*I am a graduate from a community college trades program. I am so proud to be a college graduate….the first in my family to graduate from high school and then college. I have been applying for work in my field. I have an outstanding résumé. The culture in the community is that my trade is a “man’s” job so no one will hire me. In my determination to get off welfare, I work in the food services industry. Sometimes I am called on very short notice which makes finding last minute childcare very difficult. I am still on the social services support system since my work schedule is so unpredictable. I am established in my community and participate in poverty advocacy and would prefer not to move but the job opportunities are mostly precarious work (part time, low wages with no benefits).*

*M.S. Community Voices member*
5. Council mandates and legislation

The city will continue to support a variety of other important initiatives being led by other organizations in our community. Areas such as poverty reduction, health and wellbeing and affordable housing are all areas where action is being led by the County, Public Health or other community groups. These themes are recognized as important parts of our quality of life in Owen Sound and as such the City is, and will continue to, support these actions through the City policies, programs and ongoing Council support.

Owen Sound’s strategic plan identifies values of Caring, Creativity, Integrity and Sustainability as core values. (City of Owen Sound 2015 Strategic Plan 2020 Making our Vision Clear)

Caring
- We care about our community.
- We are a welcoming, inclusive, and age-friendly City.
- We strive for positive change and are committed to continue working in a collaborative fashion towards the City’s vision of being "Where You Want To Live."

Creativity
- We are a creative community that embraces innovation to find solutions with the greatest benefit for Owen Sound.
- As a City, we are resourceful and creative in order to thrive, regardless of external pressures.

Integrity
- We demonstrate integrity by being open, transparent and communicative.
- We believe that continuing to communicate in an honest and informative way with residents will lead to more fruitful two-way conversations.

Sustainability
- We demonstrate sustainability by acting in a financially, environmentally and socially responsible manner.
6. What’s happening in Owen Sound

- *Bridges Out of Poverty* approach to the work on poverty and community issues
- Getting AHEAD programs in partnership with Grey County, United Way BG and the ALC
- Healthy Community Partnership Table
- Grey Bruce Children’s Alliance
- Community Foundation Grey Bruce Vital Signs
- Home and Community Support Services MOVIN’GB Transportation
- United Way Bruce Grey
  - Food Bank Summits
  - Financial Literacy Program
- RentSafe Above Standard Housing Roundtable
- Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force
  - Income Security Action Group
  - Food Security Action Group
  - Housing Action Group
  - Transportation Action Group
- Bruce Grey Data Information Sharing Collaborative (BGDISC)
- The Salvation Army Food Bank
- OSHARE
- Safe N Sound
- Resource Centres for low income neighbourhoods
- The Good Food Box

7. Relevant practices in other communities

**Hamilton Ontario**

The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction was formed in 2005 to tackle the City’s unacceptable levels of poverty. Roundtable members come from across Hamilton and include leaders from the business and non-profit sectors, from government, education and faith communities as well as individuals who experience poverty daily. Our goal: to reduce and eliminate poverty through the aspiration of Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child. The Roundtable doesn’t offer programs or direct services; our role is to build understanding about the need to invest in poverty reduction to create a healthier, inclusive and more prosperous Hamilton. We work locally, provincially and nationally on policy and systems-level change to achieve long-term solutions to poverty.

**Guelph Ontario**

Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination
The PTF has identified four priorities for the next three years – income inequality, affordable housing & homelessness, food insecurity, and health inequities. Each priority includes a goal aimed at improving opportunities, access, and resources for everyone in Guelph and Wellington in order to eliminate poverty and its impact.
8. What can the City do

- **Remember** that people living in poverty experience high levels of stress, trying to meet their basic needs.

- **Ensure 211 has all the** services and support workers who can assist in navigating the complex City systems. (211 is rural 311)

- **Use plain language** when providing information. Be patient and kind. Write out in step 1., 2., 3 format.

- **Be inspired** at how people living in poverty can do far more with less.

- **Provide prompt**, accurate service. Transportation is too costly for people to come back another day.

- **Recognize mental illness** as a health issue.

- **Validate efforts** of people striving to live above the poverty line.

- **Stay current** on the Advisory Committees that reflect the concerns of affected citizens.

- **Regularly acknowledge** that poverty affects us all. We are all entitled to City services.

- **Acknowledge** that people living in poverty can enrich the city.

- **Understand** the barriers of people who lack resources.

> “It is important to hold the community accountable for its quality of life.

*(Getting AHEAD 2013)*
8. Sources and data

- People Living in Poverty Diversity Snapshot 2010 City of Ottawa
- United Way Bruce Grey reports
- 2015 Hunger Report W. T. F. Where’s The Food
- Vital Signs: Community Foundation Grey Bruce 2016
- Grey County Social Services
- Bruce County Social Services
- Ontario Association of Food Banks
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Ontario Child Poverty
- Statistics Canada
- OSHaRE
- Bridges out of Poverty
- Getting AHEAD in a Just – Getting’ by World
- City of Owen Sound 2015 Strategic Plan

- Bridges Out of Poverty Fact Sheet Grey Bruce Georgian Region April 2017

**Community Indicators of Poverty**
- 17% of Grey Bruce children under the age of 17 are living in poverty (Ontario child poverty rate 17.1%)
- 1 in 6 children under 18 live in poverty in Ontario. (Stats Can 2014)
- 1 in 5 children under 6 live in poverty in Ontario (Stats Can 2014)
- 31% of children entering school in GB, have vulnerabilities in 1 or more domains of school readiness, as compared to 28% in Ontario
- United Way’s backpack program has seen a growth from 200 to 2,200 backpacks/year since 2005.
- Good news: high school graduation rates are at 91% and 83% respectively (Provincial average 86%)
- Bad news: On average, less than 60% of GB youth do not expect to find a job or live in the region after school.

**Food Security**
- 1 in 6 children under 18 do not have access to enough food.
- 7% of residents sometimes or often ran out of food and they could not afford to buy more.
- 26,000 visits to Grey Bruce food banks in 2015 – an increase of 93% from 2013.
- 21 food banks serve Grey Bruce. There are also food cupboards through churches
- The 2016 Nutritious Food Basket survey found that it costs $200.73 per week ($869.16 per month) to feed a reference family of four (two parents, two children) in Grey and Bruce Counties.
- 42% of GB residents consume fruits and vegetables 5 or more times a day (Stats Can 2011)
- OSHaRE in Owen Sound serves an Average meals served - 100 per day (Based on Monday to Friday) Have started a new take-away lunch program on Saturdays.
Income Security
- 95% of all new jobs created in Ontario (2013) were part-time
- 1 in 3 jobs in Ontario is temporary, contract, or part-time.
- October 2016 we added 200 full time jobs and 3,800 part time jobs (Four County Labour Board)
- 13% of Bruce County employees have multiple jobs (20% in Grey County)
- 18-19% of GB employees believe they are underemployed.
- Income Inequality in Ontario - a family in the highest income decile earned on average $262,000 more than a family in the lowest income decile.
- 60% of people on low-income are working
- Social Assistance:
  - ODSP: $479 single, $753 couple, $816 couple + child/month
  - Ontario Works: $379 single, $602 couple, $655 couple + child
- An individual working full-time at Minimum Wage of $11.25/hr ($23,400) falls well below Ontario’s Low Income Measure of $23,861 (1 person), $29.706 (2 persons), $36,520 (3 persons)
- Living Wage for Owen Sound $14.77/hr and Rural Grey Bruce $16.76/hr

Housing
- 1 in 3 renter households with at least 1 child under 19 is in Core Housing need in Ontario. (CHMC, 2011)
- 30% of renters in Ontario are in housing that is unaffordable, requires major repair or is overcrowded, compared to 7% of home owners. (CMHC, 2011)
- 95% of Ontario Works beneficiaries rent (2013)
- 78% of 2013 Ontario Disability Support Program rent (2013)
- Average market rent for 2 bedroom in GB is $847 (CMHA, 2011). To afford the apartment, a household must earn at least $34,440 per year or $16.56/hr/40 hr work week.
- Renters made up 28% of Ontario households overall, but 45% of energy-vulnerable households
- 70% of low income renters spend more than 50% of their income on shelter
- Over the past year, $1 million of support was provided by GB social agencies to help people stay connected to utilities.
- More than 3,500 people have accessed the YMCA Owen Sound GB Housing Support Program.
- 2,375 subsidized housing units exist in GB
- 17% of tenant households in GB live in subsidized housing (Ontario 16%).
- 873 average number of individuals/families on a waitlist for subsidized housing (2009-2013) in GB
- Average rents in Owen Sound: $568 (Bachelor), $712 (1 bedroom), $847 (2 bedroom)

Connect with us!
Website: http://povertytaskforce.com Twitter: @BGTaskForce
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BruceGreyPovertyTaskForce/
Bruce Grey Food Asset Map
9. Acknowledgements

Highlighting Equity and Inclusion Owen Sound is an initiative by Community Voices. This report is an adaption of the City of Ottawa’s People Living in Poverty Diversity Snapshot. It reflects many of the issues that we face in the City of Owen Sound. We appreciate the generous permission by the Diversity Snapshot Committee in Ottawa for allowing us to use their document as a foundation to reflect on Owen Sound with a community inclusiveness lens.

People Living in Poverty Diversity Snapshot 2010 City of Ottawa
Community Voices Committee – Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force
City of Owen Sound 2015 Strategic Plan 2020 Making our Vision Clear
United Way Bruce Grey
Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force

“The Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force has become a recognized advocate for change in our local community, regionally and provincially. Working in partnership with 51 agencies and community groups; universities, institutes and policy-makers we have created a structure that allows for meaningful dialogue, education and purposeful partnerships that address the root causes of poverty in our community.”