



Building a Sustainable Heart

Managing Social Challenges in the
City of Terrace

Mayor Carol Leclerc

WHO WE ARE

Terrace is a small town with increasing big-city problems.

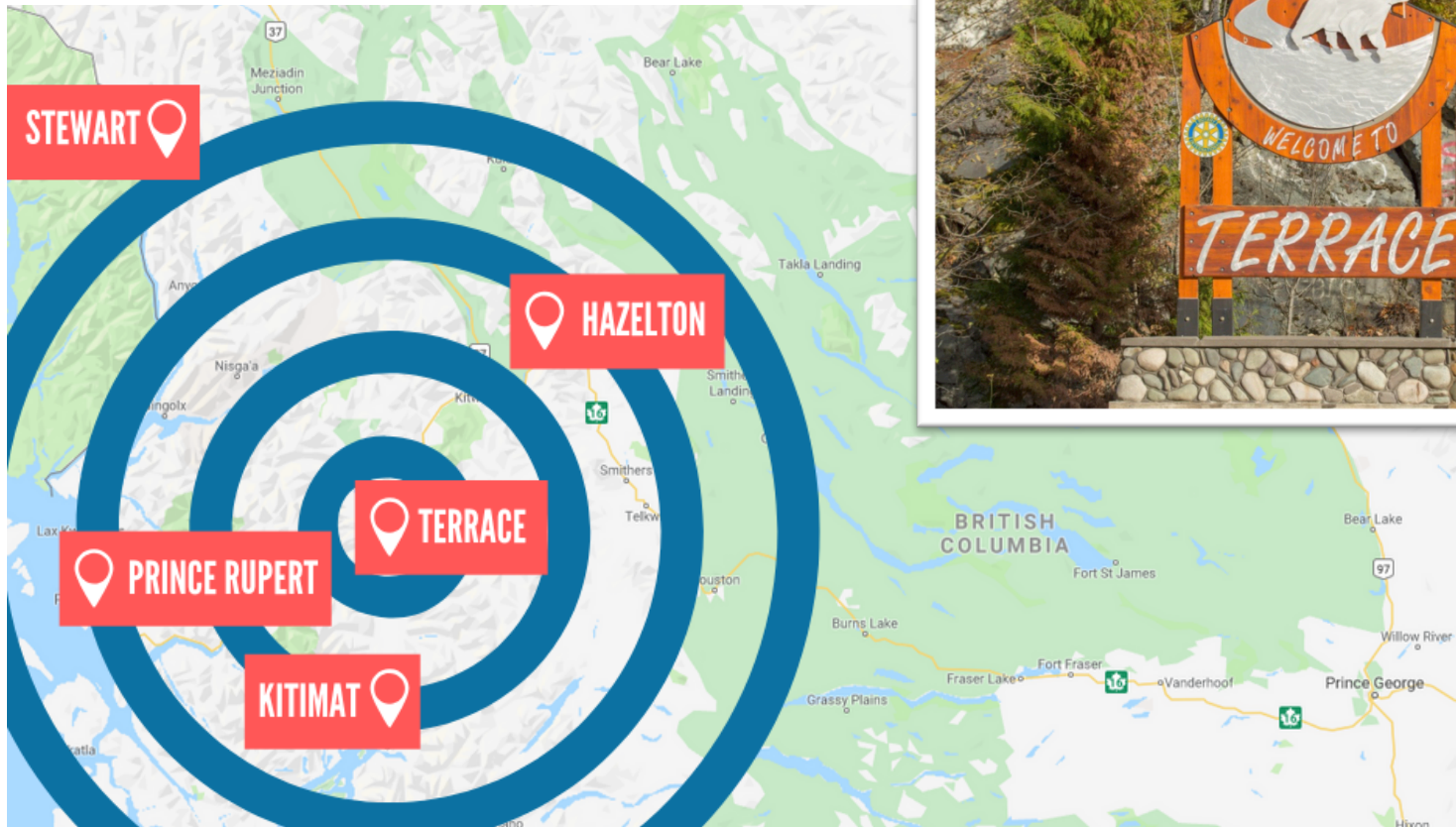


By the numbers

- Population: 11,643 (2016 census)
 - Projected 10.6% minimum population increase through 2025.
- Median age: 39
 - 15% seniors
 - 18% under age 15
 - 39% under age 30
- 22% aboriginal (provincial average is just over 5%)
- 11% immigrants
- Household size: 2.5 (provincial average is 2.4)



Where is Terrace?



Our staff and resources

- Staff: 103
- Operating budget: \$24 million





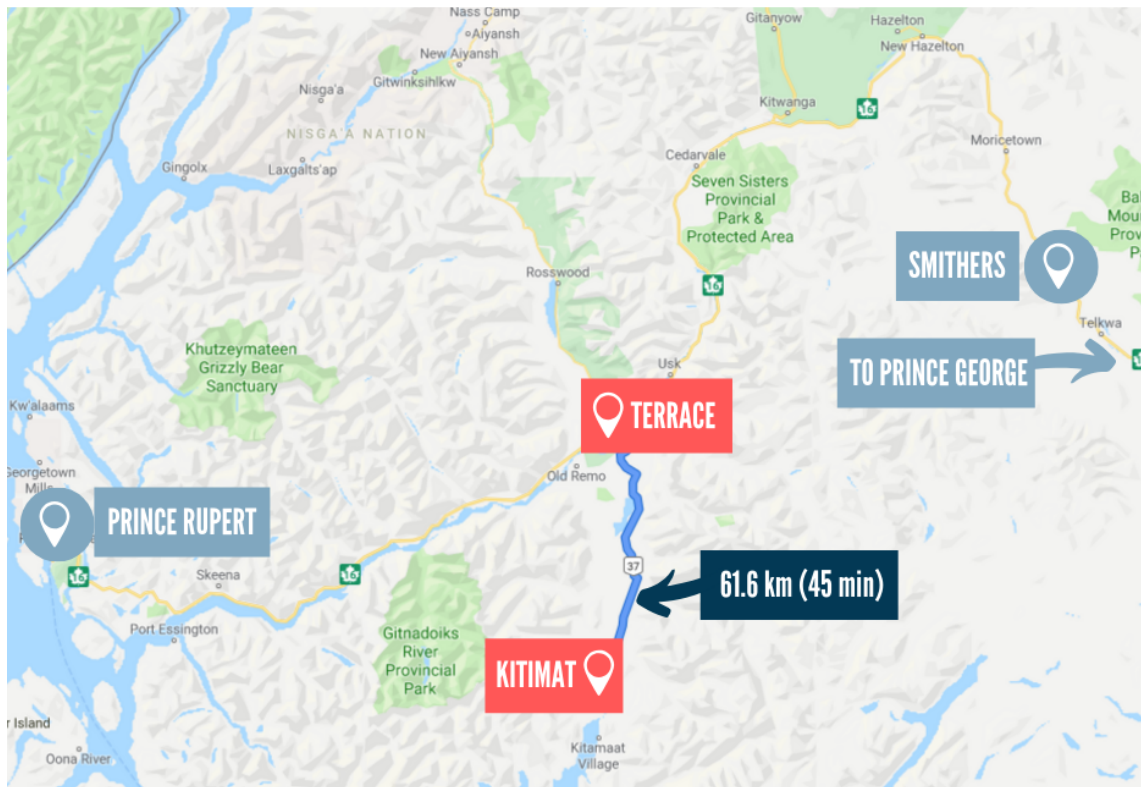








What was happening?



Major industrial projects in the region → like LNG in Kitimat, just 45 min. south.

Result: more people coming to Terrace for work opportunities that may or may not exist just yet.

What was happening?

- Homelessness:
 - 96 homeless in Terrace (2018)
 - 28% increase over previous 4 years' average
 - Compared to approx. 4 homeless in Kitimat
- Drug types: Northern Health gave out approx. 58,000 needles in 2018
 - 56% of homeless population affected by addiction



WHAT WE'RE DOING

We are taking proactive steps across multiple channels.



Housing - \$1 million invested

Housing Committee

- Established 2011 following Housing Needs Task Force recommendation
- Supported projects including low-income seniors housing, the Tuck Avenue Project
- Established Affordable Housing Reserve Fund and policy to manage it

Homelessness Task Group

- Established late 2015
- Developed Housing Resource Directory and street survival guide

Land for housing projects

- City leased land and gave \$250,000 to Ksan House Society for Haugland Housing Project
- City provided land to BC Housing for Rapid Response to Homelessness project

Drug use and safety

Safe Needle Disposal Task Force

- August 2018 to January 2019
- Prepared guides and precipitated installation of needle drop boxes around the downtown
- Clean Team created but not deployed



Security and compliance

Terrace Downtown Improvement Area Society

- City contributed \$20,000 for private security to patrol downtown

Bylaw compliance

- Resources available: 1 permanent bylaw officer
 - Temporary bylaw compliance officer also hired for summer months



Pressures on staff

- Handling and disposing of drug paraphernalia
 - Often called to collect needles that the public and businesses won't handle
- Checking parks daily (sometimes multiple times a day)
 - Staff dealing with increased litter all around the community
- Cleaning public washrooms more frequently
 - Addressing vandalism
- Cleaning up feces
- Dealing with an increased volume of complaints from the public
- Dealing with the increase in break-ins at City facilities and to City vehicles
- Handling passed out people and calls about disorderly conduct (first responders)

The price tag

- Estimate \$75,000 in costs to the City dealing with addiction, homelessness, and vandalism
- Doubled up on staffing in Sportsplex facility at night and on garbage runs
 - Increased volume of work but also for staff safety



Public forum

- Held Sept 3, 2019
- Numbers:
 - 140 in attendance, plus Mayor and Council, as well as City staff
 - 17 speakers, plus 18 letters received after the event
- Positive, respectful event with many views and recommendations presented
- City building a report to share with Council and the public



Photo: Brittany Gervais (Terrace Standard)

Good Neighbour Bylaw

- Council is considering a Good Neighbour Bylaw
- Purpose: Mitigate unwelcome behaviour, vagrancy, and loitering, while also providing improved public safety and awareness of City bylaws

Proposed:

- Increase the number of Bylaw Officers from 1 to 3
- Increase the City's legal budget to hire a municipal prosecutor
- Organize a “Court Watch” group to monitor activities in the courtroom.

WHAT WE NEED SO WE CAN DO MORE

We need more support to
bring about change in our
community.



What's next?

- We need the Provincial Government to adequately fund policing, health care services including addictions treatment, and social services so our residents can access supports that will help keep our community healthy and safe.
- We need access to revenues to offset the increased costs our taxpayers are facing as a result of the growing social challenges we face.



Thank you

Questions or comments?

