Saint John’s poverty rate (after tax) was 18.8 per cent in 2012, higher than the provincial average of 14.3 per cent and the national average of 13.5 per cent. Lone-income families and children suffer more from poverty in Saint John. Saint John has one of the highest child poverty rates in Canada at 29.3 per cent.

The numbers of homeless and the costs of keeping people homeless are disturbing. A 2016 study conducted in Fredericton as part of the 20,000 Homes Campaign found 50 absolutely homeless people in the capital city in just one night. The Moncton study found 77; St. John, 60; Bathurst, 12. Absolute homeless refers to people who are unsheltered/sleeping outdoors or emergency sheltered, in shelter system.

The 199 people found homeless in four cities in New Brunswick in one night in late February 2016 are not the only people who face homelessness. The 2012 Homeless Hub’s Community Profile on Fredericton estimated that there were 1,300 New Brunswick citizens living in hidden homelessness and that over 9,500 households were at risk of homelessness, but there is reason to hope. In fact, there is a means to ending our current homelessness and to preventing future homelessness.

Working with the principles of Housing First, New Brunswick can end chronic/episodic homelessness. We can ensure that those facing homelessness in the future will not need to access costly emergency shelters and services for more than ten days. We can ensure that the homeless receive the services needed to keep them off the street, give the hidden homeless safe and affordable shelter, and reduce the number of households at risk of losing their homes.

Housing First has a proven success record in both Canada and the United States and, for our purposes, has shown to be a success here in New Brunswick. This community-based consumer-driven success has benefits that are not only measured in human savings but in economic costs.

Once a person is identified, the implementation of Housing First begins with quickly providing suitable, affordable housing without the extant restrictions (drug-free, sober, employed) and then providing any services required to keep the participants housed. Housing First research from across the country regularly shows savings of $50-100,000 per person per year.

The editor acknowledges that the deal had its flaws but argues that the city benefited from the tax break since the company has created about 100 jobs and donates hundreds of thousands of dollars to the hospital and community organizations.

The editor seems to forget that these charitable donations are possible precisely because Irving saves millions of dollars each year on the backs of taxpayers of Saint John.
Elsipogtog to launch Aboriginal title claim to protect ancestral lands

By DALLAS McQUARRIE

Elsipogtog First Nation is about to launch court action against the government to protect its ancestral lands in northern New Brunswick. The First Nation has filed a statement of claim for an Aboriginal title to the land, which it says was occupied by its ancestors for centuries. The claim will seek to protect the land from development that could harm its cultural and spiritual significance.

The claim is the latest in a series of legal battles by First Nations across Canada to assert their rights to land that they have traditionally occupied. The Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia and the Haudenosaunee in Ontario have also filed claims in recent years. The Elsipogtog case is significant because it is the first time a First Nation has challenged the government's Aboriginal title claim process.

The government has long been accused of failing to consult adequately with First Nations on major resource projects, including the proposed Energy East pipeline. In November 2015, the government announced a new legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes provisions for the recognition of Aboriginal title. The Elsipogtog case is likely to test the new legislation's effectiveness.

The claim is also significant because it brings attention to the impact of resource development on First Nations communities. Many First Nations have lost access to their traditional lands due to mining, logging, and oil and gas extraction. The Elsipogtog case is an opportunity to ensure that the government is adequately compensating affected communities.

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Independent journalism by the NB Media Co-op empowers those affected by the forest strategy to protect their land and culture. Join us today and help us continue to produce news and analysis that matters to you.

Community Calendar

Filipino Cultural Gala Night

A night of fun, food, and fashion. The event organizers are raising funds to operate the Filipino-Canadian CommUNITY Association of NB's community project. Join us to support our community and celebrate Filipino culture.

Asian Food Workshop: New Brunswick's Asian Community

A workshop to discuss food and culture in New Brunswick. The workshop will feature traditional recipes from various Asian cultures and highlight the unique flavors of New Brunswick's diverse community.

Record number of petition signatures against spraying the forest

People from across New Brunswick are gathering to protest a rally against herbicide spraying of the forest at the New Brunswick government's Campbellton Wind Farm. Supporters are calling on the government to stop the spraying and to consult with First Nations and community members.

Not an Irving paper

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calendar event and get info@nbmediacoop.org.