

3.0 Social Plan Goals, Objectives and Actions

3.1 Community Life

Residents of the City of North Vancouver have come to expect a high quality of life. Two significant ways local government can significantly influence community well-being and quality of life are through provision of services and Council decisions. Direct services impacting community life include planning and development services, as well as the less recognized responses to social issues. Other sections of the Social Plan refer to these aspects.

The Social Plan objectives for this section seek a range of services, programs and amenities available in the City which meet the expectations and needs of community members. Involvement of residents, business, and community agencies in defining what, when, and how is essential in meeting these objectives. Participation of those affected provides the essential aspect of community responsibility in making the community a better place in which to live, work, and play. Community involvement also facilitates development of informal support among local neighbours, and fosters a sense of community.

GOAL

Maintain and enhance well-being and quality of life for all community members.

Objective 1: Improve the awareness and understanding of municipal systems and community issues.

Actions

The City will:

1. Develop a checklist for City consultation processes which requires accurate description of the role of community input in a consultation process, recognition of the input, and communication to the community and those consulted, on how the input has been included in City decisions.
2. Explore ways to explain City hall functions, Council meetings, and the role of City advisory bodies to City residents, businesses, and community organizations.
3. Explore ways to increase awareness about social issues and educate the public about the interrelationships between the social, economic, and physical aspects of the community, and community responsibility in social issues.

Objective 2: Improve opportunities for residents and business owners to become active members of the community.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to involve community members in municipal decision-making processes, such as advisory committees and project consultations.
2. Encourage more community participation in the planning processes of all City departments through use of the methods contained in the City's Public Involvement Program manual.
3. Consider specific outreach to seniors, families, people with disabilities, and youth in all municipal initiatives which address their concerns, and when undertaking City consultation processes generally.
4. Continue to support community development initiatives that assist residents in becoming more active in the community.
5. Support intergenerational programs resulting from community partnerships.
6. Explore, with the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, ways to encourage City business owners to become more active in community initiatives.
7. Investigate ways, in cooperation with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, to involve children in municipal decision-making processes that affect them.

Objective 3: Integrate a social perspective in planning practices and initiatives for land use, urban design, and parks, recreation and open space, to support City social goals and objectives.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to implement social related guidelines and policies in planning department activities.
2. Ensure that livability and quality of life considerations are as important as financial return to the City in making development decisions.
3. Establish a process and mechanism to include social impacts in the assessment of all development proposals that will ensure livability, positive social interactions, pedestrian orientation, and resident-friendly buildings and landscapes.

4. Incorporate social aspects into the “Agenda 21” process which defines an inter-departmental framework of City policies and actions regarding sustainability.
5. Seek creative ways of retaining and expanding the amount of green space throughout the City as an essential component of quality of life.

Objective 4: Ensure that existing and new public facilities and amenities are available for community use, and address local priority needs.

Actions

The City will:

1. Ensure that the main objectives for new community amenities and facilities are to create a sense of community, and maximize opportunities for social interaction.
2. Continue to pursue the “Joint-use of Public Facilities” process with School District #44, the Recreation Commission, and the District of North Vancouver to improve community use of public facilities, and in particular, improve access to school facilities for after-school/community use.
3. Ensure that public facilities are made available at affordable rates for public and local community uses.
4. Give priority to services and programs which are part of the network of coordinated and integrated community services when leasing City-owned buildings and land.
5. Consult broadly with community service providers regarding location and space requirements and their immediate needs in determining and revising the City’s community amenities and facility priorities.
6. Identify sites for community amenities and facilities in Central and Lower Lonsdale neighbourhoods in reference to established priorities.
7. Develop and implement a policy to encourage high-density residential and commercial developments to contribute to or provide community amenities.
8. Review existing procedures for leasing City land, buildings, and facility space, and develop guidelines for providing them for community uses at market and subsidized rates. Using the guidelines, review existing lease agreements for City-owned buildings and facilities.

Objective 5: Promote child and family friendly neighbourhoods.

Actions

The City will:

1. Explore ways that new multi-family housing developments, parks and public open space can be made more child and family friendly.