

# WHAT WE HEARD

Community Wellbeing Strategy  
Public Engagement Phase 2 Summary







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## Engagement Context

The City of North Vancouver is creating a Community Wellbeing Strategy to plan for the services, resources, amenities, activities, and places that will help our community and the people in it to live healthy, happy, connected and fulfilled lives. The Strategy will serve as a guide for how we make decisions about social infrastructure and wellbeing over the next 10 years.

The Strategy will replace and update the City's 1998 Social Plan with a contemporary framework, with a renewed vision, goals, and tactics to guide community wellbeing for the future. It is one of the latest in an evolving series of City strategies and plans that set the vision for City decision-making in the coming years.

Two phases of public engagement have helped to shape the draft Strategy. In Phase 1 (2021), we sought input from the community on visioning, goal setting, and emerging tactics for the Strategy. After applying this input in the draft Strategy, the document was shared in Phase 2 (2023), to receive feedback on the pathways, directions, and tactics in the draft Strategy.

Phase 2 was at the “consult” level of engagement on the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement. (Learn more about the IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement at [iap2.com](http://iap2.com).) At the consult level, we commit to listening to and acknowledging concerns and aspirations and providing feedback on how input influenced the decision.



# Wellbeing Strategy

## 2 Housing for All:

Expand and improve the quality, diversity, and affordability of housing for all.

How do we make this happen in our community?

Companies should partner with city to offer housing incentives to staff

MEETINGS + COACHING

Housing where I'm here than just a house. The best idea.

## Engagement Objectives

During Phase 2 engagement, the City sought input on the draft Strategy, specifically in these areas:

- Feedback was sought from Sḵw̓x̓w̓7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) on the draft Strategy.
- We sought to learn whether the community feels that what we are trying to achieve, and the goals within the Strategy meet the needs of the community.
- We sought feedback on the proposed tactics within each of the six Pathways in the Strategy.
- We sought to provide a variety of opportunities for the community to provide feedback, and to hear from a breadth of community members, including those who may face barriers to engagement, those with lived experiences, and to hear from community agencies and organizations.



# How We Engaged

A variety of engagement activities and tools were used to receive input on the Strategy during a 12 week period between September and November 2023.



19 community agencies, partners and committees/collaborative tables provided input through committee meetings, workshops and written input.



Targeted outreach to various organizations connected with community groups and individuals that have been historically underrepresented in civic engagement.



104 respondents participated in the online survey (also available in hard copies).



1000+ residents were engaged at pop-up events at various locations.



A project webpage, social media, print and e-newsletters promoted the opportunity to provide input as well as relevant background information.

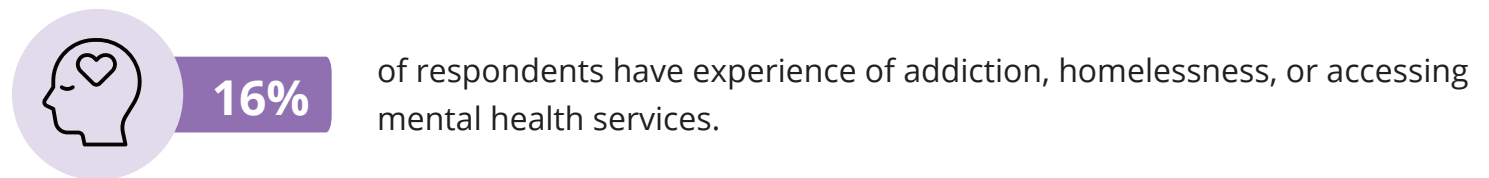
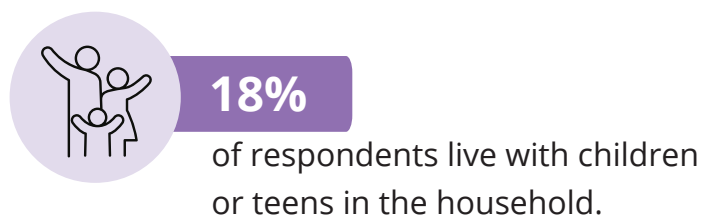
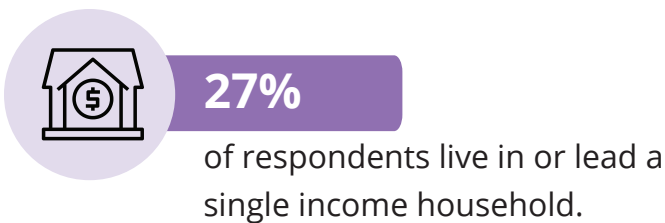
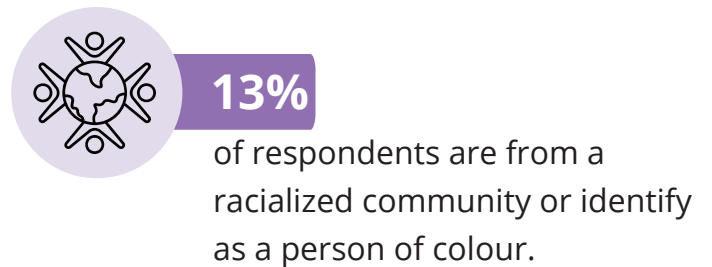
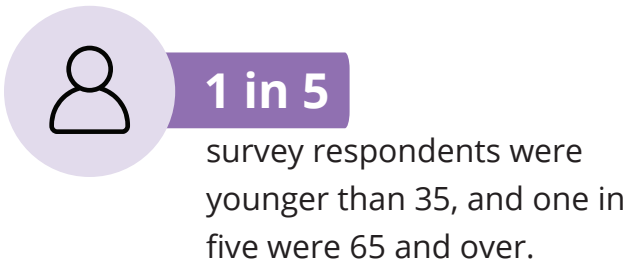
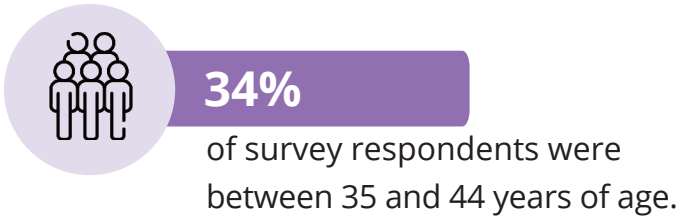
Targeted outreach included groups such as immigrants and newcomers at Impact North Shore, Tween Advisory Group, North Shore Women's Centre, North Shore Shelter & Housing Centre, and the North Shore Neighbourhood House.

The online survey was available in several languages (via a Google Translation feature) and an accompanying information /summary document about the Strategy was available in English, Farsi, Simplified Chinese, and Tagalog.

11 pop-ups included a planting day event, sea bus commuters, festivals, seniors centre, a farmers market, and more.

# Who We Heard From

A variety of community members with different perspectives, experiences and demographics responded to the community survey.



**Survey respondents were asked optional demographic questions to help the City to learn more about who we are hearing from. The City is striving to reach an increasing breadth of the population and perspectives to inform City policy and decisions, and to support our work to break down barriers and to hear from diverse voices in the community.**



# Who We Heard From

## Community Organizations

In addition to the survey, we connected with community agencies, partners and committees/collaborative tables for discussion and input on the Strategy:

Advisory Committees	Community Partners	Community Groups and Tables
<p>Advisory Planning Commission</p> <p>North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues</p> <p>Social Planning Advisory Committee</p> <p>Integrated Transportation Committee</p> <p>Former CNV4Me Task Force</p>	<p>Vancouver Coastal Health</p> <p>North Vancouver Recreation &amp; Culture</p> <p>North Vancouver City Library</p>	<p>Community Housing Action Committee</p> <p>North Shore Seniors Working Group</p> <p>Table Matters</p> <p>Tween Advisory Group</p>

## Local First Nations Review of the Draft Strategy

Sḵw̓x̓w̓7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) each provided feedback through their respective review processes.

The local First Nations' comments will be considered and included in the final draft. This feedback is included in the summarized themes throughout this report.

# What We Heard

Throughout the Phase 2 engagement process, we asked for feedback on elements of the draft Strategy, including what the Strategy is trying to achieve, as well as on the goals within each of the six Pathways.

## 1 The community supports what the Strategy is trying to achieve, but are interested in the 'how'

The draft Strategy states that we are trying to achieve *"A City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive."*

**81%** of survey respondents indicated that this statement meets the needs of the community.

While there was significant support for what the Strategy is trying to achieve, many comments also indicated that how the City does this is important.

Some participants added that the statement highlighted the importance of inclusivity, diversity, equity, health and safety; all of which are key for residents' wellbeing. Others noted that belonging is a feeling, and that all community members should feel they belong. Concerns were raised on affordability and how it impacts people's ability to belong and thrive in the City.





# What We Heard



## There is strong support for the goals of Connection, Equity and Investment

The draft Strategy states that we are focusing on three goals: Connection, Equity, and Investment.

A majority of survey respondents somewhat and strongly agree with these goals:

- 84% of survey respondents agree with the Connection goal.
- 78% agree with the Equity goal.
- 79% agree with the Investment goal.

## We Heard Some Common Themes in Response to the Goals

Respondents shared comments regarding what they felt was important in order to create a Strategy to effectively achieve the City's goals of Connection (connecting with daily needs where we live), Equity (diverse representation of voices) and Investment (investment in social infrastructure).

### Reconciliation:

- The Strategy's reference and connection to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was noted and appreciated. Respondents felt the strategy and actions should clearly reference and connect to the calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.

### Acknowledging Significant Factors that Impact Community Wellbeing:

- There are significant concerns regarding affordability in the city's housing market and access to transit.
- Mental health, trauma, abuse, gender-based violence, racism, and anti-trans discrimination are very real challenges affecting wellbeing.
- Community wellbeing involves supporting each other through difficult times. Real community is built around relationships, common purpose, and mutual reliance.
- Equity is about justice and equal opportunity; this goes further than objectives and intentions of inclusion.

# What We Heard

## Context and Community Building:

- The Strategy aligns and resonates with many of the social services, community groups, and non-profit organizations, and addresses relevant trends and issues.
- Social investment makes a big difference in the community, for example City support for non-profit spaces that deliver key services to the community.
- Some key issues and opportunities should be more prominently addressed in the Strategy: the importance of volunteerism, recognizing the role of community organizations in program delivery, and growing civic participation.
- There was appreciation that the Strategy includes culture, public art, and events.

## Equity and Social Determinants of Health:

- There was support for framing the Strategy with a holistic consideration of social determinants of health (e.g. access to safe food, active transportation infrastructure, childhood development, and harms from substance use). Municipal efforts and policy can contribute to mitigating negative impacts.
- There was support for the intentional use of an equity lens throughout the Strategy, and emphasizing equity as a core priority within each pathway.

### 3

## Respondents Supported the Pathways and Tactics in the Strategy

Respondents supported each of the six pathways as they meet the needs of the community, and prioritized the tactics in order of importance to respondents.

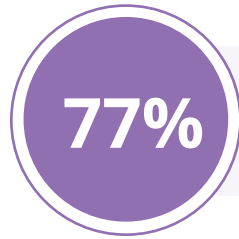




# What We Heard

## Pathway 1. Complete Communities

The direction is to create a city that is complete, connected, socially active, and where daily needs are met within a short walk or roll of every home.



*77% of survey respondents feel this pathway meets the needs of the community.*

### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Ensure that residents' walking and rolling experience is comfortable and convenient.
2. City land should be used for the community's benefit such as parks, amenities and more.
3. The diversity of community daily needs should be met at a neighbourhood scale.

### Other key themes heard:

- **Local jobs:** Focus on creating well-paid jobs that are accessible by walking, rolling, or transit; allowing residents to work in the same city they live in.
- **Infrastructure:** Ensure sidewalks are consistently provided and infilled throughout all areas of the city, and ensure public spaces that are welcoming and safe are provided.
- **Food access:** Foster the opportunity for food to bring people together and reduce isolation. Assess the need for community gardens and kitchens, and include food access into neighborhood planning.

# What We Heard

## Pathway 2. Housing for All

The direction is to expand the supply and improve the quality, diversity and affordability of housing in the City.



*of survey respondents feel this pathway meets the needs of the community.*

### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Develop inclusionary housing policy, regulations, and incentives to increase the supply of non-market housing.
2. Reduce stigma about people who are unhoused through education/increasing awareness.
3. Increase extreme weather response by working with government and other partners.

### Other key themes heard:

#### Importance of Housing:

- Housing is at the top of humans' hierarchy of need; all people need their housing needs met to achieve wellbeing.
- The City cannot manage rapid growth and housing priorities on its own. Collaborating with the Province is essential.
- Engage with local First Nations to understand, identify and help to address their housing needs through partnership.

#### Inclusion and belonging:

- Promote social interaction and community gathering in housing developments and neighborhoods.
- Continue and expand library services to support individuals with housing needs. Ensure residents of below-market and mid-market rentals in mixed-income housing projects are included and welcome.
- Prioritize the creation of deeply affordable rental units.
- Work to provide more certainty for people that may face eviction due to redevelopment, and will not be able to afford other housing in the community.

#### Livability:

- Well-designed outdoor space makes multifamily living more livable and desirable.
- Noise from construction negatively affects wellbeing.



# What We Heard

## Pathway 3. City for All Ages

The direction is to create a City that contributes to wellbeing for all ages and phases of life.



*of survey respondents feel this pathway meets the needs of the community.*

### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Enhance social connectedness and neighbour relationship-building by supporting and promoting community-based programs.
2. Collaborate with agencies to support mental health and addiction services.
3. Design the community to support people living with dementia and varying cognitive abilities.
4. Enhance support for seniors.

### Other key themes heard:

- **Family support:** Provide support for families, parents, caregivers, nannies, and grandparents. Ensure children have support to develop healthy social relationships.
- **Volunteerism & participation:** Think about what excluded people need to become more engaged in our community.
- **Youth and young adults:** There is an opportunity to include younger adults (18-39) in the community and in City strategies. The City needs to play a supportive role in enhancing youth mental health.
- **Multigenerational needs:** Develop multigenerational housing and creative types of housing that meet varied needs.
- **Aging in place:** More independent living supports are needed. Think what people need to live in the City for their entire lifespan, from early childhood to older senior.

**We are well in our community when we both give and receive – being part of things results in dignity and health.**

– Community table participant speaking about volunteerism



# What We Heard

## Pathway 4. Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The direction is to create an inclusive City, where we celebrate diversity, and we commit to equity and accessibility for all.



*of survey respondents feel this pathway meets the needs of the community.*

### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Provide skills-based staff training on all aspects of Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.
2. Actively work with local First Nations to identify and incorporate local First Nations culture and history throughout City spaces, and update the City's heritage program.
3. Engage and collaborate with groups and organizations that support equity and inclusion.

### Other key themes heard:

- Collaborate with local First Nations to enhance access, inclusion, and training related to Truth and Reconciliation, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (DRIPA), and incorporate these into city initiatives.
- Increase local First Nations cultural representation through art, language on signage, and in naming of places.
- Ensure transportation, housing, policing and emergency services are safe and equitable for local First Nations people.
- Definitions in this pathway needed clarification, especially related to accessibility.
- We need to proactively design for inclusion, going beyond removing barriers.
- Create opportunities for diverse communities and ethnicities to connect, create a family and a home that builds a sense of belonging.
- Create public places where all are welcome, such as outdoor covered spaces.



The Community Wellbeing Strategy is separate from the City's Accessibility Plan, which is underway to advance accessibility in the City.



# What We Heard

## Pathway 5. Poverty Reduction & Inclusive Economy

The direction is to include all residents in local economic opportunities and work together to break the cycle of poverty.



*of survey respondents feel this pathway meets the needs of the community.*

### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Working with partners to improve affordability in housing, child care, food security, transportation options and other supports.
2. Collaborating to implement the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy.
3. Building, supporting and enhancing our local economy throughout our community.

### Other key themes heard:

- Leverage the Strategy to help build opportunities with local First Nations' priorities – businesses, access to education, health treatment, local First Nation languages.
- The increasing cost of food is really challenging especially for lower income earners. Consider food in the social infrastructure needs, as well as emergency preparedness.
- Address issues related to people living in their cars / motor homes and in poverty – policies, outreach programs, and support networks.
- Take a multi-generational long term view of how inclusive our economy can become; it takes time to build.





# What We Heard

## Pathway 6. Partnerships, Advocacy & Financial Supports

The direction is to build equitable and supportive partnerships that advance the City's priorities for wellbeing, align City resources and funding, and advocate for the community's needs.



### Respondents prioritized their top objectives:

1. Advocate to senior governments for financial support and partnerships for identified community needs and priorities.
2. Support non-profit and community organizations with funding opportunities and collaboration.
3. Actively invest in the City's social infrastructure in alignment with community needs and development opportunities.

### Other key themes heard:

- Pursue partnership and procurement opportunities with local First Nations.
- Respect, support and adhere to principles and protocol agreements that are in place between the City and local First Nations.
- Support office and programming space for non-profit organizations.
- Enhance/encourage collaboration among non-profits, and support the capacity of the non-profit sector to serve the community.



# Key Takeaways

The community supported the statement of what we are trying to achieve, the goals, and pathways and tactics in the Strategy.

The City is working to incorporate key themes heard in the engagement process in the Community Wellbeing Strategy, including:



There are opportunities for Reconciliation and collaboration with Sḵw̱x̱w̱7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and sə̓lilwətał (Tseil-Waututh Nation), as we move forward to implement the Strategy.



The City is recognized and valued as a community partner and leader that cares about the community and its people.



Housing and affordability are significant issues that affect wellbeing of individuals and the community as a whole.



Community connections, and being included in the community, are very important for mental health and wellbeing.



Equity in the community is of high importance, to ensure that the community is built on fair opportunities and access in our city.



People want to see meaningful action, and are asking the City to prioritize work that “moves the dial,” or truly makes a difference in community wellbeing.



# Next Steps

The City is revising and finalizing the Community Wellbeing Strategy and reviewing and implementing the feedback heard in Phase 2 engagement. The final Community Wellbeing Strategy will be presented to Council for endorsement in summer 2024, after which a plan for implementation will begin.

