

REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Notice is hereby given of the following Land Use and Planning Committee:
February 1, 2016 at 12:00 p.m.
Committee Room 2, City Hall

AGENDA

Call to order.

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

MOTION to amend the Land Use and Planning Committee agenda.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. No items.

PRESENTATIONS

2. No items.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. No Items

REPORTS FOR ACTION

- 4. New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy**
 - a) Presentation**
 - b) Report**
- 5. New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan**
- 6. 518 Ewen Avenue: Proposed Rezoning from C-1 to RQ-1 to Permit Construction of a Single Detached Dwelling - Preliminary Report**

DIRECTOR'S / MANAGER'S REPORT (Oral Report)

7.

NEW BUSINESS

8. No Items

CORRESPONDENCE

9. No Items

ADJOURNMENT

REPORT

To: Land Use and Planning Committee **Date:** 2/1/2016
From: Beverly Grieve **File:** 13.2630.06
Director of Development Services **Item #:** 7/2016
Subject: New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee provide feedback on the attached draft New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy (2016).

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee request that staff format and revise the attached document based on any feedback received.

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee recommend that Council endorse the revised document.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to receive feedback from the Land Use and Planning Committee on the attached draft *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) and to request that the committee recommend that Council endorse the revised document. The *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016), which is based on an extensive community consultation process involving 840 residents, will inform the development of neighbourhoods which meet the needs of children, youth and families. The strategy is grounded on children's rights and is organized according to eight domains of influence, with each domain incorporating a vision, goals and actions. Regarding the actions, which involve multiple City Departments, they will be implemented over a three-year period starting in 2016.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 New Westminster Children's Charter

The *New Westminster Children's Charter* (2010), which is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, contains a number of provisions that the City can impact or influence. These include but are not limited to:

- *providing access to quality child care and early childhood development opportunities;*
- *providing a range of housing options that are suitable and appropriate for families;*
- *creating accessible, inclusive and safe neighbourhoods;*
- *maintaining a healthy, natural and sustainable environment;*
- *facilitating involvement and participation regardless of ability, culture or income;*
- *offering developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programming.*

2.2 Downtown Community Plan

The *Downtown Community Plan* (2011) includes the following strategy: *Support the Downtown as a family-friendly neighbourhood, with sufficient services and amenities to meet the needs of households with children and youth.* It also includes the following action: *To encourage housing which is suitable for families, guidelines will be established for unit size distribution in new developments (i.e., number of one, two and three bedroom units).*

2.3 New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan

The *New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan* (2008) includes the following action: *The Parks and Recreation Department should build family-centred practices for delivering programs, including strategies to support families; build strong relationships with families; develop a family-centred team; and strengthen linkages with other organizations.*

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Municipal Strategies for Implementing Child and Youth Friendly Communities

The Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY) approached the City of New Westminster (City) in March 2013 regarding its interest in participating in an initiative entitled *Municipal Strategies for Implementing Child and Youth Friendly Communities*. As proposed, the initiative would be funded by the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver Foundation.

Based on discussions between SCY and the City, it was determined that the initiative would benefit both organizations and that the results would be of extreme interest and relevance to other municipalities in British Columbia.

3.2 Need for a Unifying Vision

At this time, there was no unifying vision or strategy to guide the City in its ongoing efforts to work towards a child and youth friendly community. The proposed strategy would provide this vision. It would also document strengths and weaknesses and identify goals and actions to enhance the City's child and youth friendliness. Additionally, it would house and be supportive of the City's *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015), which is intended to facilitate the provision of more housing with ground-orientation and multiple bedroom counts. It would also be supportive of the City's ongoing efforts to develop five Child Development Hubs, which are intended to provide one-stop access to information and services for families.

3.3 Confirmation of Funding and Commencement of Strategy

The City was informed that the proposal had been funded in September 2013. During the fall, SCY and the City developed terms of reference; identified and assigned responsibilities; and prepared a consultation process, with the latter being implemented during the spring and summer of 2014. Strategy development took place during the fall of 2014 and winter of 2015. Given that the strategy involved multiple City Departments, review and sign-off occurred during the summer and fall of 2015, with the strategy being finalized in December 2015.

3.4 Corporate Strategic Policy Priority

In the spring of 2015, Council engaged in a strategic planning process to establish a set of policy and planning priorities that will guide the work of staff from 2016 to 2018. The strategic priorities resulting from this process are foundational to realizing Council's vision of *New Westminster as a sustainable, livable and thriving community fueled by a strong local economy and supported by active, engaged residents*. One of the policy priorities is the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016).

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Child and Youth Profile

According to the *2011 Census*, children and youth (0 to 17 years) comprised 15.8% of the population in New Westminster, which ranked 19th out of 22 municipalities in Metro Vancouver. For children 0 to 5 years, New Westminster ranked 14th out of 22 municipalities in Metro Vancouver. For children 6 to 12 years and youth 13 to 17 years, New Westminster ranked 20th out of 22 municipalities in Metro Vancouver.

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of children and youth (0 to 17 years) increased by 2.5%. By comparison, the overall population increased by 12.7%. For children 0 to 5

years, there was an increase of 10.3%; for children 6 to 12 years, there was a decrease of 4.3%; and for youth 13 to 17 years, there was an increase of 2.1%.

4.2 Need for a Strategy and Policy

It would appear that families, especially those with children reaching school age and those anticipating the arrival of a second or third child, assess their housing situation and the ability of their neighbourhood and community to meet their needs. Given the lack of housing with ground-orientation or three-plus bedroom counts, as well as other considerations such as affordability and child and youth friendliness, increasing numbers of families with school age children are moving from or are choosing not to locate in New Westminster.

The *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) and the *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015) will inform the development of neighbourhoods which meet the needs of children, youth and families; will provide opportunities for families to be an integral part of the municipal decision-making process; will enhance family connections with neighbourhoods and the larger community; and will provide a range of housing choices for families, including ground-oriented and three-plus bedroom counts. This will contribute to the City's child and youth friendliness, while providing a framework for other municipalities.

4.3 Strategy Goals

A child and youth friendly community is one in which municipal policy, planning, programs and services support children and youth to be healthy and safe; to actively participate in decisions that affect them; and to develop to their fullest potential.

The strategy has the following goals:

- to assist the City and other community-led coalitions to understand the principles of child and youth friendliness;
- to identify promising practices based on case study research;
- to identify strengths and weaknesses of the City and its systems;
- to create an overarching vision and strategy as a guide for future actions;
- to develop family-friendly housing policy and design guidelines;
- to create an engagement strategy that facilitates input from children, youth and families; and,
- to develop a set of indicators to measure progress.

4.4 Consultation Process

The strategy is based on an extensive community consultation process involving 840 residents, including 156 children aged 6 to 12 years, 228 youth aged 13 to 17 years and 320 parents, as well as 136 children, youth and parents who completed a 'dotmocracy' exercise at a Family Day event. As such, the strategy reflects the voices, needs and

priorities of those that it is primarily intended to benefit. As part of strategy development, SCY prepared a *New Westminster Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit* (2015), which will act as a resource for City staff in engaging younger residents, thus ensuring that their voices will continue to be solicited and heard.

4.5 Organization Framework and Strategy

The strategy is grounded on children's rights, which became an organizing framework and underlying principle with regard to its development. The strategy incorporates the following overall vision:

The City of New Westminster is a child, youth and family friendly community in which all children and youth are able to reach their full potential.

The strategy incorporates the following eight domains of influence: belonging, caring, engaging, learning, living, moving, playing and working. Each domain includes the corresponding children's rights; its importance to children and youth; some key considerations derived from case study research and a literature review; a situational analysis based on relevant local initiatives and survey results; and a vision, goals and actions.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

City staff proposes that Council would receive the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) for review and endorsement in February 2016, with the City's Senior Social Planner being assigned the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of the actions under the eight domains with relevant City Departments. The actions will be implemented over a three-year period ending in December 2018. To inform Council of progress in implementing the strategy, annual updates will be produced each December, which will review the status of the actions for that given year.

6.0 OPTIONS

There are four options for consideration:

1. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide feedback on the attached draft *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016).
2. That the Land Use and Planning Committee request that staff format and revise the attached document based on any feedback received.
3. That the Land Use and Planning Committee recommend that Council endorse the revised document.
4. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide staff with other feedback.

Staff recommends options 1, 2 and 3.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy

This report has been prepared by:

John Stark, Senior Social Planner
Tristan Johnson, Planning Analyst

This report was reviewed by:

Jackie Teed, Manager of Planning



Beverly Grieve
Director of Development Services

Attachment 1

*New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly
Community Strategy*



NEW WESTMINSTER

Please note that this final draft document has not been formatted. Photos, profiles and other visual images will be incorporated into the final document.

New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy

February 2016

Acknowledgements

The *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) would not have been possible without the generous support of the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver Foundation. Both organizations, through their financial contributions to this project and countless other initiatives in New Westminister, are enabling children and youth to reach their full potential.

The strategy would also not have been possible without the leadership and direction of the Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY), who, with City of New Westminister staff, designed and conducted the community consultation process and prepared the strategy. Throughout the project, SCY ensured that the project was grounded on children's rights and informed by the lived experiences and voices of children, youth and families. A special thanks to Andrea Lemire and Anique Ross of SCY.

Additionally, the strategy would not have been possible without New Westminister City Council, who allocated staff resources and made the strategy one of the City's policy and planning priorities that will guide the work of staff from 2016 and 2018. It would also not have been possible without the involvement of the 840 children, youth and parents who completed a class assignment or survey and who shared their ideas and suggestions for a child and youth friendly community.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	p. 4
Background	p. 6
Introduction	p. 7
Child and Youth Profile	p. 9
Community Engagement Process	p. 12
Overall Vision and Goals	p. 13
1. Belonging Domain	p. 15
• Action Plan	p. 23
2. Caring Domain	p. 25
• Action Plan	p. 30
3. Engaging Domain	p. 31
• Action Plan	p. 37
4. Learning Domain	p. 38
• Action Plan	p. 45
5. Living Domain	p. 46
• Action Plan	p. 52
6. Moving Domain	p. 53
• Action Plan	p. 61
7. Playing Domain	p. 63
• Action Plan	p. 71
8. Working Domain	p. 73
• Action Plan	p. 79
References and Resources	p. 80

Executive Summary

The *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) will inform the development of neighbourhoods which meet the needs of children, youth and families. The strategy is based on a unique partnership and an organizing framework grounded on children's rights as enshrined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC).

The strategy was developed by the Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY) and the City of New Westminster (City), with funding support from the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver Foundation. This innovative partnership benefited all parties involved, enabling them to contribute their particular expertise related to children's rights and child and youth friendly communities, while providing a template for other municipalities.

The strategy was based on an extensive community consultation process involving 840 residents, including 156 children aged 6 to 12 years, 228 youth aged 13 to 17 years and 320 parents, as well as 136 children, youth and parents who completed a 'dotmocracy' exercise at a Family Day event. As such, the strategy reflects the voices, needs and priorities of those that it is primarily intended to benefit. As part of strategy development, SCY prepared a *Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit* (2015), which will act as a resource for City staff in engaging younger residents, thus ensuring that their voices will continue to be solicited and heard.

The strategy is grounded on children's rights, which became an organizing framework and underlying principle with regard to its development. The strategy incorporates the following overall vision:

The City of New Westminster is a child, youth and family friendly community in which all children and youth are able to reach their full potential.

The strategy incorporates the following eight domains of influence: belonging, caring, engaging, learning, living, moving, playing, and working. Each domain includes the corresponding children's rights; its importance to children and youth; some key considerations derived from case study research and a literature review; a situational analysis based on relevant local initiatives and survey results; and a vision, goals and actions. The actions, which involve multiple City Departments, will be carried out over a three-year period starting in 2016.

The strategy, which Council has identified as one of its policy and planning priorities for 2016 to 2018, will help ensure that municipal policy, practices, programs and services support children and youth to be healthy and safe; create opportunities for children and youth to actively participate in the decisions that affect them; and, as noted in the overall vision, assist children and youth to reach their full potential. The strategy builds on other related City initiatives such as the *Child Care Needs Assessment* (2015) and *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015), as well as work towards the realization of five Child Development Hubs. It also builds on the work of other community partners. While Council is committed to implementing the strategy, it is recognized that for children and youth to reach their full potential, the senior levels of government also have a critical role to play.

The strategy and Council's commitment to implement it are evidence of the City's intention to be a leader and innovator in the area of child and youth friendly communities. The partnerships developed to date and those which will happen as a result of having a strategy will also be essential to its implementation.

Background

The Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY) approached the City of New Westminster (City) in March 2013 regarding its interest in participating in an initiative entitled *Municipal Strategies for Implementing Child and Youth Friendly Communities*. As proposed, the initiative would be funded by the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver Foundation.

Based on discussions between SCY and the City, it was determined that the initiative would benefit both organizations and that the results would be of extreme interest and relevance to other municipalities in British Columbia.

Regarding the City, the Development Services Department was planning to start work on a *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015), which would facilitate the provision of more housing with ground-orientation and multiple bedroom counts. The Development Services and Parks, Culture and Recreation Departments are also working towards the development five Child Development Hubs and have been extremely active in facilitating new child care spaces in New Westminster.

At the time, there was no unifying vision or strategy to guide the City in its ongoing efforts to work towards a child and youth friendly community. The proposed strategy would provide this vision. It would also document strengths and weaknesses and identify goals and actions to enhance the City's child and youth friendliness. Additionally, it would house and be supportive of the City's *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015). This would increase the sense of belonging and connectedness of children, youth and families, including those that may be at-risk, marginalized or vulnerable.

The City was informed that the proposal had been funded in September 2013. During the fall, SCY and the City developed terms of reference; identified and assigned responsibilities; and prepared a consultation process, with the latter being implemented during the spring and summer of 2014. Strategy development took place during the fall of 2014 and winter of 2015. Given that the strategy involved multiple City Departments, review and sign-off occurred during the summer and fall of 2015, with the strategy being finalized in December 2015.

Introduction

The following provides an introduction to the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) and the eight domains of influence, as well as providing contextual information related to children's rights and child and youth friendly communities. As will become evident, there was a strong foundation in which to develop the strategy and the commitment and partnerships in place to implement it.

Children's Rights

The Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY) is a provincial organization dedicated to the wellbeing of children and youth through advocacy, education, and community engagement. The basis of its work is children's rights and the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC). The UNCRC reflects a well-researched global consensus on what childhood should be and outlines minimum standards for the healthy development of children and youth.

New Westminster City Council endorsed the *New Westminster Children's Charter* (2010), which is based on the UNCRC. More specifically, it contains a number of provisions that the City can impact or influence, including but not limited to:

- providing access to quality child care and early childhood development opportunities;
- providing a range of housing options that are suitable and appropriate for families;
- creating accessible, inclusive and safe neighbourhoods;
- maintaining a healthy, natural and sustainable environment;
- facilitating involvement and participation regardless of ability, age, culture or income; and
- offering developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programming.

As such, there is an alignment between SCY and the City and children's rights as enshrined in the UNCRC became an organizing framework and underlying principle of the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016).

Child and Youth Friendly Communities

UNICEF defines child and youth friendly communities as "local systems of good governance committed to fulfilling children's rights. They are communities where the voices, needs, priorities, and rights of children and youth are an integral part of policy, practices, programs, and services."

Child and youth friendly communities use a child and youth friendly lens when looking at policy development and the built environment, while also engaging directly with younger people. Many municipalities have started to recognize the value in this approach and it has spread to become a truly global movement. It is not one model but rather a philosophy that is adaptable to any context or environment.

Eight Domains of Influence

The *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) contains eight domains of influence. Each domain includes the corresponding children's rights; the domain's importance to children and youth; some key considerations derived from case study research and a literature review; a situational analysis based on relevant local initiatives and survey results; and a vision, goals and actions.

The eight domains are:

- Belonging (Connectedness and Sense of Place);
- Caring (Child Development, Resiliency and Support);
- Engaging (Involvement and Participation);
- Learning (Education and Skill Development);
- Living (Housing and Neighbourhood Amenities);
- Moving (Mobility and Access);
- Playing (Leisure, Parks and Recreation); and
- Working (Employment and Work/Life Balance).

Corporate Strategic Policy Priority

In the spring of 2015, Council engaged in a strategic planning process to establish a set of policy and planning priorities that will guide the work of staff for 2016 to 2018. The strategic priorities resulting from this process are foundational to realizing Council's vision of "New Westminster as a sustainable, livable and thriving community fueled by a strong local economy and supported by active, engaged residents."

One of the policy priorities is the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016). By being selected as a priority, this demonstrates Council's commitment to the strategy and its implementation. Together, with the recent Council endorsement of the *Family-Friendly Housing Policy* (2015), in which New Westminster became the first municipality in British Columbia to mandate minimum percentages of three-bedroom units in new ownership and rental multi-family housing developments, and the recent completion of a *Child Care Needs Assessment* (2015) and the commencement of a new *Child Care Strategy*, the City is well positioned to be a leader and innovator in the area of child and youth friendly communities.

Next Steps

Council will receive the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) for endorsement in principle in February 2016, with the City's Senior Social Planner being assigned the responsibility to coordinate the implementation of the actions under the eight domains with relevant City Departments. The actions will be implemented over a three-year period ending in December 2018. To inform Council of progress in implementing the strategy, annual updates will be produced each December, which will review the status of the actions for that given year.

Child and Youth Profile

It is important to understand the current situation as it applies to children, youth and families in New Westminister. This information was not only used to inform the goals and actions but it can provide critical benchmark information to understand if the actions are contributing to enhanced outcomes for children and youth.

The information was also essential to the development of the *New Westminister Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy (2016)* and *Family-Friendly Housing Policy (2015)*. More specifically, a review of the Census found that while New Westminister's overall population increased by 13% between 2006 and 2011, the child and youth population aged 0 to 17 years only increased by 3% and, during this time period, children aged 6 to 12 years actually decreased by 4%. Additionally, New Westminister had the lowest proportion of ground-oriented and three-plus bedroom units among Metro Vancouver municipalities.

New Westminister City Council, with this information in hand, recognized the need to develop housing and neighbourhoods which meet the needs of children, youth and families. To this end, Council endorsed the City entering into a partnership with the Society for Children and Youth of BC to develop the strategy and endorsed and provided funding for the development of the policy.

Children and Youth – Population Overview¹

- In 2011, New Westminister had 10,400 children and youth aged 0 to 17 years, including 3,785 children aged 0 to 5 years, 3,710 children aged 6 to 12 years and 2,905 youth aged 13 to 17 years.
- In 2011, children and youth comprised 16% of New Westminister's population, which was below the Metro Vancouver average of 19%. In 2011, New Westminister ranked 18th out of 21 Metro Vancouver municipalities in terms of children and youth as a proportion of its population.

Children and Youth – Population Dynamics

- Between 2006 and 2011, New Westminister had a 3% increase in the child and youth population, compared with a 13% increase in New Westminister's total population. Between 2006 and 2011, children aged 0 to 5 years increased by 10% and youth aged 13 to 17 years increased by 2% but children aged 6 to 12 years decreased by 4%.²
- New Westminister is expected to be home to 12,567 children and youth by 2021 and 13,898 children and youth by 2041.³

Family Types

- In 2011, there were 1,875 children and youth in New Westminister living in lone parent families. Children in lone parent families comprised 18% of the child and youth population in New Westminister, which was slightly higher than the Metro Vancouver average (17%).⁴

Diversity

- In 2014/15, 552 New Westminster School District students had disabilities or 8% of the student population. The most common disability types noted were learning disabilities, physical disabilities/chronic health challenges, and Autism.⁵
- In 2011, New Westminster had 475 Aboriginal children and youth (5% of the child and youth population), 5,080 Visible Minority children and youth (49% of the child and youth population) and 820 recent immigrant children and youth (8% of the child and youth population).⁶
- In 2011, there were 2,875 children, youth and young adults aged 0 to 19 years (24% of child, youth and young adult population) in New Westminster who spoke a non-official language regularly at home. The most commonly spoken non-official languages among those aged 0 to 19 years were Panjabi and Mandarin.⁷

Family-Friendly Housing

- In 2011, 32% of New Westminster's housing stock consisted of ground-oriented dwellings, the lowest proportion among Metro Vancouver municipalities and well below the Metro Vancouver average of 60%.⁸
- In 2011, 27% of New Westminster's dwelling units had three-plus bedrooms, the lowest proportion among Metro Vancouver municipalities and well below the Metro Vancouver average of 50%.⁹
- In 2014, the median sale price for a detached house in New Westminster was \$701,550, more affordable than the median sale prices for detached houses in most Metro Vancouver municipalities, including Burnaby (\$1,025,000) and Richmond (\$1,038,000).¹⁰
- In October 2014, the median rent for two-bedroom rental apartments/townhomes in New Westminster (\$1,114/month) was slightly more affordable than the Metro Vancouver median rent for two-bedroom rental apartments/townhomes (\$1,200/month).¹¹
- In 2014, 48% of New Westminster parents felt that their current housing situation met their family's needs.¹²

Income¹³

- In 2012, there were 1,790 children and youth in low-income households in New Westminster. This represented 18% of all children and youth in New Westminster, a slightly lower incidence of low-income than the Metro Vancouver average for children and youth (20%).
- In 2012, the median before-tax family income of families with children was \$78,130 in New Westminster and \$76,700 in Metro Vancouver.

Education¹⁴

- In 2014/15, the New Westminster School District had eight elementary schools, two middle schools and one secondary school. In 2014/15, there were 7,309 students in the New Westminster School District Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.
- During the 2011/12 and 2012/13 school years, 33% of New Westminster Kindergarten students were deemed to be vulnerable on one or more development domains (i.e., physical health and

well-being, language and cognitive development, social competence, emotional maturity, and communication skills and general knowledge), the same as the provincial average of 33%.¹⁵

- The “graduation rate” of secondary school students in the New Westminister School District increased from 74% in 2009/10 to 80% in 2013/14, still slightly below the provincial average of 84% in 2013/14.

Play

- In 2015, New Westminister had 29 outdoor playgrounds/play areas.¹⁶
- In 2013/14, 40% of Grade 3 and 4 students reported being ‘physically active’ on all of the previous five school days,¹⁷ compared with 44% of Grade 3 and 4 students in British Columbia public schools.¹⁸

Friendship and Belonging¹⁹

- In 2014, 48% of New Westminister youth felt involved in their city.
- In 2014, 49% of New Westminister youth felt connected to other youth in their neighbourhood.

Safety²⁰

- In 2013/14, 9% of Grade 7 students in the New Westminister School District reported being bullied, teased or picked-on at school “many times or all of the time,” compared with 8% of all Grade 7 students in British Columbia public schools.
- In 2013/14, 68% of Grade 10 students in the New Westminister School District felt safe at school “many times or all of the time,” compared with 75% of all Grade 10 students in British Columbia public schools.

Transportation

- In 2011, 55% of New Westminister children and youth walked or cycled to school, much higher than the Metro Vancouver average of 40%. New Westminister was tied for the second highest rate of children and youth walking or cycling to school among Metro Vancouver municipalities.²¹
- In 2015, New Westminister as a whole was rated ‘very walkable’ (score of 70 out of 100), which was the fourth highest Walk Score™ among Metro Vancouver municipalities.²²

Child Care

- In 2011, New Westminister had 18 child care spaces per 100 children 0 to 12 years, which was higher than the Metro Vancouver average of 16.²³
- As of November 2014, New Westminister had 79 child care facilities, which provided 101 child care programs and 1,691 child care spaces.²⁴

Community Engagement Process

The purpose of the community engagement component was to ensure that the voices of children, youth and families were heard and used to inform the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) and to ensure both legitimacy and buy-in. Three surveys were developed to reach the main target populations: a child survey, a youth survey, and a parent survey. For the purposes of the survey, children were defined as 6 to 12 years old and youth were defined as 13 to 17 years old.

The surveys were piloted to ensure that they were clear, easy to understand, and elicited important and relevant information. The youth survey was piloted with the New Westminster Youth Advisory Committee and the parent survey was piloted at New Westminster Family Place. Surveys for youth and parents were similar with some minor changes in language and content to ensure they were appropriate for each group. The children's survey employed child friendly language and had pictures associated with each question. While the children's survey was quite different from the other two, it sought to mirror the same themes to allow comparability.

Surveys were advertised in CityPage and through various community groups. The children's survey was distributed as class assignments in six different elementary schools: Connaught Heights, Herbert Spencer, Lord Kelvin, Lord Tweedsmuir, Queen Elizabeth, and Richard McBride. The youth survey was available online and distributed through New Westminster Secondary School and the Youth Centre @ Moody Park. The parent survey was available online, as well as in hard copy in various civic and community facilities. Surveys were also distributed at community events such as Family Day, the Official Community Plan Review public workshops and the WINS Multicultural Celebration. Surveys were conducted in the spring and summer of 2014 and analyzed throughout the fall.

In total, 156 children, 228 youth and 320 parents completed the survey. Extensive demographic analysis and cross-tabulations were done for the youth and parents surveys to assess the representativeness of the survey sample. Overall, they showed to be quite representative with the exception of lone parent families, which were under-represented. The children's surveys only collected minimal demographic information to ensure the privacy and safety of the children involved, thus no analysis of representativeness was conducted. However, since the surveys were conducted in six community schools, it is safe to assume that the children are from various neighbourhoods and socio-demographic backgrounds from across the city.

Overall Vision and Goals

The eight domains of influence which follow all contribute to the overall vision of a community “in which all children and youth are able to reach their full potential.” Essential to the realization of this vision is a committed Council, adherence to children’s rights, dedicated staff and sufficient resources, an oversight body to facilitate accountability, and regular monitoring and reporting.

The first two essentials have been addressed, as New Westminster City Council has identified the *New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy* (2016) as one of its policy and planning priorities for 2016 to 2018 and Council has endorsed the *New Westminster Children’s Charter* (2010), which is based on the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC). The following three overall goals address the other essentials to successful implementation of the strategy and enhanced outcomes for children, youth and families.

Vision - The City of New Westminster is a child, youth and family friendly community in which all children and youth are able to reach their full potential.

Goal 1 - Promote New Westminster’s commitment to child rights.

Proposed Actions:

- Ensure that the *New Westminster Children’s Charter* (2010), which was endorsed by Council, continues to inform the development of municipal policies, practices, programs, and services.
- Promote respect for diversity and equality for all children, youth and families in New Westminster.

Goal 2 - Promote New Westminster’s commitment to child, youth and family friendly communities.

Proposed Actions:

- Ensure that all actions within the strategy are assigned to designated staff and/or committees, and that sufficient resources are allocated to accomplish each action.
- Develop a *Child and Youth Friendly Community* (CYFC) communications plan to raise public awareness of CYFC goals and action, to share expertise and experience with partners and other municipalities, and to explore ways to raise regional awareness and promote New Westminster as an ideal community in which to live in order to retain and attract families.
- Advocate for funding and support from other levels of governments and other entities for projects related to the strategy.

Goal 3 - Assign the Community and Social Issues Committee the responsibility to monitor New Westminster’s commitment to children’s rights and child, youth and family friendly communities.

Proposed Actions:

- Report annually against strategy and plan for future actions.
- Review all relevant existing policies and plans for children, youth and families and ensure that they align with the strategy.
- Create a bi-annual state of the children and youth report to measure the wellbeing of children and youth in New Westminster, which may include data from:
 - Early Development Instrument (EDI);
 - Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI);

- Heart Mind Index;
- McCreary Adolescent Health Survey;
- Health Authority Data;
- School District #40 Data;
- Statistics Canada;
- Tax Filer Data;
- Child and youth surveys administered by the City of New Westminster and partner organizations; and
- other sources (e.g., Active Healthy Kids Canada, BC Representative for Children and Youth, First Call, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, World Health Organization, etc.).

Belonging Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

Developing a sense of place grows out of everyday activities, experiences and interactions. Place attachment is normally understood to be part of a person's overall identity consisting of the beliefs, feelings, meanings and memories associated with their physical surroundings (Jack, 2010).²⁵ Developing place identity, facilitating local social ties, investing place with personal meaning and linking significant life events to place takes time but the quality and intensity of experiences are also critically important (Tuan, 1977).²⁶

This is equally true for children and youth. Children are attached to a place when "they show happiness at being in it and regret or distress at leaving it" (Chawla, 1992).²⁷ Place experiences contribute to children's cognitive development but also their sense of self. The public realm is "where children and youth learn about society, where they explore it, observe it, absorb its values and gain a sense of belonging" (Freeman, 2006).²⁸

Children's physical environments communicate to them whether or not they are welcome and valued, which can affect self-esteem, feelings of competence and sense of rootedness (Wilson, 1997).²⁹ Youth are often portrayed as 'intruders' in and 'illegitimate users' of public spaces as they compete with other users (Valentine, 1996, Malone, 2002).^{30,31} Efforts to limit or restrict access to public spaces have sprung up all over the world and include regulatory policies and policing activities such as anti-congregation and move-on laws, curfews and surveillance (Malone, 2001).³²

The tendency to have separate spaces for children and youth, such as parks or schools, does not fulfill all their social and developmental needs. Indeed, "the landscape has been losing accessibility, diversity and intimacy as it has become increasingly privatized, uniform and dominated by traffic" (Chawla, 1992).³³ Integrated public spaces that are welcoming and accessible to children and youth are critical to help them understand how society works and their place within it.

The UNCRC and Belonging

Article 3 - Adults should always make a decision by considering what is in the best interests of the child.

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight "in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

Article 15 - Children and youth have the right to be with friends and join or set up clubs, unless this interferes with the rights of others.

Article 31 - Children and youth have the right to play and relax by doing things like sports, music and drama. It is essential to have spaces where children and youth have the ability to learn about themselves and the world through play.

Key Considerations

In recent years, researchers have become increasingly interested in how the built environment can influence social and mental wellbeing, and enhance a sense of cohesion, community, neighbourliness and social capital, which, in turn, affects our sense of place. Having a strong sense of place has been linked to a range of community level outcomes including feelings of community involvement, neighbourhood attachment, participation, resiliency and safety, as well as improved community coping skills (Chavis and Wandersman, 1990).³⁴

... the neighborhood remains the most basic environmental unit in which our social lives occur, and it necessarily affects the quality of life of residents.

Misun Hur and Hazel Morrow-Jones

The way in which neighbourhoods and streets are designed has the ability to influence people's interactions and movements. Several studies support the idea that more walkable environments and street networks promote neighbourly interaction, sense of community and social capital (Leyden, 2003, Rogers, Halstead, Gardner and Carlson 2011, Lund

2002).^{35,36,37} Additionally, positive perceptions of infrastructure for neighbourhood aesthetics, safety and walking are also associated with a greater sense of community (French, et al., 2013).³⁸

The following is a list of indicators of community quality from children's perspectives that should be taken into account when seeking to develop a sense of place:

Indicators of Community Quality from Children's Perspectives	
Positive Indicators	Negative Indicators
<p>Social Integration: Children feel welcome and valued in their community.</p>	<p>Social Exclusion: Children feel unwelcome and harassed in their community.</p>
<p>Cohesive Community Identity: The community has clear geographic boundaries and a positive identity that is expressed through activities such as art and festivals.</p>	<p>Stigma: Residents feel stigmatized for living in a place associated with poverty and discrimination.</p>
<p>Tradition of Self-Help: Residents are building their community through mutual aid organizations and progressive local improvements.</p>	<p>Violence and Crime: Owing to community violence and crime, children are afraid to move about outdoors.</p>
<p>Safety and Free Movement: Children feel that they can count on adult protection and range safely within their local area.</p>	<p>Heavy Traffic: The streets are taken over by dangerous traffic.</p>
<p>Peer Gathering Places: There are safe and accessible places where friends can meet.</p>	<p>Lack of Gathering Places: Children lack places where they can safely meet and play with friends.</p>

<i>Positive Indicators</i>	<i>Negative Indicators</i>
<p>Varied Activity Settings: Children can explore, play sports, shop and follow up other personal interests in the environment.</p> <p>Safe Green Spaces: Safe, clean green spaces with trees, whether formal or wild, extensive or small, are highly valued.</p> <p>Provision for Basic Needs: Basic services are provided such as adequate food, medical care and shelter.</p> <p>Security of Tenure: Family members have legal rights over the properties they inhabit through either ownership or secure rental agreements.</p>	<p>Lack of Varied Activity Settings: The environment is barren and isolating, with a lack of interesting places to visit and things to do.</p> <p>Boredom: Children express high levels of boredom and alienation.</p> <p>Trash and Litter: Children read trash and litter in their environments as signs of adult neglect for where they live.</p> <p>Lack of Provisions for Basic Needs: When basic services like adequate food and shelter are lacking, children feel these deprivations keenly.</p> <p>Insecure Tenure: Children, like their parents, suffer anxiety from fear of eviction, which discourages investment in better living conditions.</p> <p>Political Powerlessness: Children and their families feel powerless to improve conditions.</p>

Chawla and Malone, 2003³⁹

Specific Criteria

The way that neighbourhoods are designed affects sense of place and physical and mental health. Residents living in more mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods are more likely to know their neighbours, to participate politically, to trust others and to be involved socially (Leyden 2002).⁴⁰ Neighbourhoods that have natural gathering places, such as public squares, enhance the ability of residents to have chance encounters and to further develop a sense of place.

The following street design guidelines should be considered for constructing neighbourhoods that are healthy and encourage sense of place:

- **Connectivity.** Healthy streets connect places where people live, play, shop and work. Pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users should have more than one route to get to their destinations.
- **Diversity of People and Activities.** Healthy streets have a diversity of people ranging from children to seniors. Healthy streets have people engaged in different activities, including sidewalk café dining, sitting on benches, strolling, visiting with friends, walking dogs and window shopping.
- **Movement Choices.** Healthy streets allow for a diversity and co-existence of movement. The streets support people who want to walk, cycle, use transit or drive to their destinations.

- **Number of People.** Healthy streets have many people on them. The presence of people helps the streets to feel inviting and safe.
- **Creating a Civic Stage.** Healthy streets host people who go there to see and be seen, to meet others and to watch the daily “parade” of cars and pedestrians. The “drama” on the street is free theater for many people (Burden, 2000).⁴¹

An additional element that can be employed in creating a sense of place is the use of public realm art. Creating artistic public gathering places has been shown to foster social capital and cohesion (Semenza, 2003).⁴²

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

New Westminster is home to unique neighbourhoods with each having its distinct character and identity. Each neighbourhood also has a residents’ association, which takes an active interest in local issues. When required, they work with the City to assist on matters such as development applications, parks and recreation initiatives, social issues and traffic management.

Festivals are also an important way that residents come together to celebrate various cultural, historical and social events. New Westminster hosts such important festivals as the Cultural Crawl, Family Day, the Heritage Homes Tour and Tea, the Hyack Festival, RiverFest, the Twelfth Street Musical Festival and Uptown Live, amongst others.

The City has also taken efforts to create great public realm and community spaces such as the Boro All Wheel Park, the co-located seniors and youth centres in Moody Park, Hyack Square with the recently added ‘Wait for Me Daddy’ monument, Port Royal Riverfront Walk, Queen’s Park and Westminster Pier Park. These are some of the places that act as community gathering spaces, not to mention the numerous neighbourhood parks and community centres.

What Children Said

Across numerous questions, the importance of family, friends and neighbours was a major factor in how children felt about their neighbourhood. Of the children surveyed, 83% said that they have friends in their neighbourhood. Most children felt that people in their neighbourhood are nice to them (63%). A boy, aged 10, commented, “I see people help children in the park.” Many children



mentioned that they know people in their neighbourhood and if they were in danger they would go ask a neighbour for help.



However, some children did comment that



sometimes people are not very friendly or get mad at them when they are playing. A boy, aged 9, commented that “I was playing hockey and a person got mad at me.” This illustrates the potential conflict that sometimes emerges over noise or the use of space in neighbourhoods.



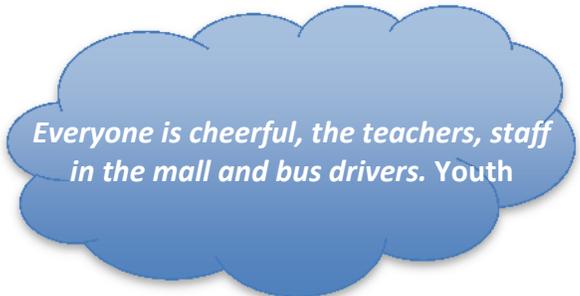
I like my neighbourhood because it has lots of trees.
Boy, age 7

Many children also commented on the environments in their neighbourhood. Nature was frequently mentioned as a pleasing element. Additionally, traffic and the presence of people or lack thereof was also a contributing factor to how children felt about their neighbourhoods. One child commented that there are “not a lot of people [on the street].”

Festivals and special events are also another means of creating a sense of place through shared experiences. Fifty-two percent of children said that they go to festivals and special events and 36% said they go sometimes.

What Youth Said

Youth generally identified specific places in the community that they felt were youth friendly and welcoming such as their home, school or youth centre. Those that felt positively about their neighbourhood often mentioned the presence of caring adults or a sense of community. For example, one youth commented that “[t]here are a lot of families in my neighbourhood so everyone keeps an eye out for one another” and another mentioned that “[t]here are people in my neighbourhood that I can trust and talk to for advice and help.”



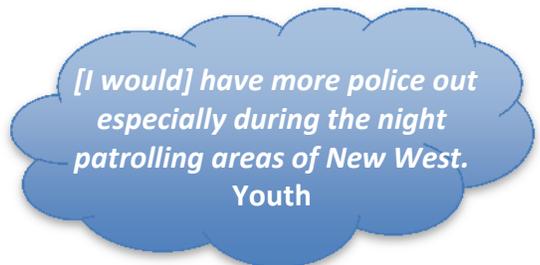
Everyone is cheerful, the teachers, staff in the mall and bus drivers. Youth



I haven't met or seen many people walk by my neighbourhood.
Youth

However, other youth touched on a sense of disconnection and isolation. Some youth commented on the fact that people keep to themselves or mind their own business in their neighbourhood. One youth commented that “[t]here’s a lot of old people in my neighbourhood and they stay home.” Some youth also felt that their neighbourhood did not have a lot to offer and that “[i]t’s a place to sleep. Other than that, there is little for youth.”

Safety also figured prominently with how youth felt about the places in their neighbourhood and community. Youth mentioned that they do not feel safe in certain places such as the Downtown, parks or SkyTrain stations, particularly at certain times of day or when “sketchy” or “strange” people were around. One youth commented that “[s]ometimes I



[I would] have more police out especially during the night patrolling areas of New West.
Youth

don't feel safe as there are people under the influence of alcohol and drugs who are yelling on the streets."

Some media stories lead to stereotyping. Don't talk about all the good things that youth are doing. Youth

Another theme that emerged from the survey with youth was that they feel judged by adults. Only 26% of youth felt that youth are viewed positively in the city. One youth felt that "youth are viewed as a nuisance" and another mentioned that "in groups, adults look at you differently." Businesses in particular, came up as places where youth feel particularly unwelcome and that people do not want them hanging around or are worried that they will shoplift. This is in contrast to how some youth felt in open spaces such as parks.

What Parents Said

[We feel welcome in] recreation centres and libraries. Staff is very friendly and children feel welcome. Parent

The places that parents felt most comfortable and welcome with their families were spaces generally associated with children and youth such as parks, recreation facilities and schools. While most survey respondents did not mention why they felt welcome in certain places, of those that did, the most common response was great staff. One parent commented that they felt very comfortable in community facilities since "we can meet different families." All this demonstrates the importance of human relationships in building a sense of place. However, only 40% of parents felt

connected to their neighbours. One parent commented, "parents need more opportunities to meet other parents. I feel quite isolated, with many of my friends living outside my neighbourhood."

Among private facilities, the River Market had, by far, the largest number of respondents mentioning it as a place they felt welcome. Many parents also mentioned specific restaurants that cater to families.

It's difficult to get to know others. Many people work elsewhere and don't do much in their neighbourhood. Would be great if we had a place to meet others and do activities. Parent

Provide more community access to schools after hours. These buildings sit idle much of the evening and afternoon. They could act as a focal point for their neighbourhoods. Parent

Many parents also mentioned feeling welcome in the neighbourhood in which they live. However, Downtown and Uptown were areas that were singled out for not being friendly places for children and youth. One parent mentioned that these areas are becoming "a place for childless couples and seniors." This reflects a broader theme that emerged with

respect to sense of place and housing. Some parents felt that the development community is unresponsive to the needs of families with regards to housing. Additionally, there are sometime conflicts with building strata councils and neighbours. One parent said that “other tenants complain about my kids. They are playing and not doing anything that a normal kid wouldn’t do. Expecting no noise is not reasonable.”

Many parents also recognized that City Council is supportive of children, youth and families and cited the *Children’s Charter*, the *Family Friendly Housing Policy* and this strategy as examples. Some parents commented that City Council is looking at the needs of families and has an opportunity to advocate on their behalf, particularly with developers.



Overall, parents felt that children and youth are view positively in the city with 56% agreeing and 33% stating somewhat. However, many also commented that there are many stereotypes regarding children and youth. One parent commented, “the media plays a role in casting a negative image. It would be great if there were more positive stories about youth.” Seeing these types of images of children and youth would not only breakdown stereotypes for the broader community but also present positive models and encourage a sense of place.

Vision, Goals and Actions

Vision - Children, youth and families feel connected to and part of New Westminster. The city is host to vibrant public spaces, activities and events, which promote social connections, play and meaningful participation in civic life.

Goal 1 - Increase the positive profile of children and youth in New Westminster.

Proposed Actions:

- Host a National Child Day event every year that raises the awareness of children’s rights amongst the community.
- Hold an annual competition for youth to create a citywide campaign around breaking down negative stereotypes of youth (based on survey responses that youth did not often feel welcome or comfortable in public places except as consumers and frequently felt judged).
- Work towards earned media coverage on children and youth involved in City initiatives.
- Provide opportunities for children, youth and families to create public art.

Goal 2 - Design the building and programming of public spaces (indoor and outdoor) to increase inter-generational interaction.

Proposed Actions:

- Create a pamphlet for the New Westminster Design Panel on providing a child and youth lens.
- Expand the Public Art Policy and develop child friendly and “playful” design guidelines for public art and spaces that facilitate unstructured play.

- In conjunction with School District #40, develop community and learning gardens which facilitate community-building opportunities and intergenerational interaction for children and youth.
- Increase the number of and participation in high quality, family-friendly outdoor events including festivals and one-off events (such as giant water slide, outdoor movie night, etc.).

Goal 3 - Support neighbourhood built environments to increase inter-generational interaction.

Proposed Actions:

- Reduce barriers for citizens planning local initiatives (as necessary adjust zoning and bylaws, create simplified processes for permits, instructional pamphlets for hosting street parties or applying for grants, etc.).
- Provide funding and support to encourage participation of children, youth and families in urban renewal/development activities and community-building projects (e.g., beautification, community gardens, flower planting, neighbourhood barbeques, spring cleaning, street parties, etc.).
- Promote the opportunities for community-led initiatives (information about grants, possible activities and potential partner organizations such as residents' associations).
- Increase low-cost public realm installations throughout the community (e.g., community gathering spaces, parklets, street furniture using objects like paint and plastic chairs) that encourage interaction and play.

Belonging Action Plan

Vision - Children, youth and families feel connected to and part of New Westminster. The city is host to vibrant public spaces, activities and events, which promote social connections, play and meaningful participation in civic life.

Goal 1 - Increase the positive profile of children and youth in New Westminster.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Host a National Child Day event every year that raises the awareness of children’s rights amongst the community.	X	X	X	X
• Hold an annual competition for youth to create a citywide campaign around breaking down negative stereotypes of youth.	X	X	X	X
• Work towards earned media coverage on children and youth involved in City initiatives.				X
• Provide opportunities for children, youth and families to create public art.				X

Goal 2 - Design the building and programming of public spaces (indoor and outdoor) to increase inter-generational interaction.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Create a pamphlet for the New Westminster Design Panel on providing a child and youth lens.	X			
• Expand the Public Art Policy and develop child friendly and “playful” design guidelines for public art and spaces that facilitate unstructured play.		X		
• In conjunction with School District #40, develop community and learning gardens which facilitate community-building opportunities and intergenerational interaction for children and youth.			X	
• Increase the number of and participation in high quality, family-friendly outdoor events including festivals and one-off events (such as giant water slide, outdoor movie night, etc.)				X

Goal 3 - Support neighbourhood built environments to increase inter-generational interactions.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Reduce barriers for citizens planning local initiatives (as necessary adjust zoning and bylaws, create simplified processes for permits, instructional pamphlets for hosting street parties or applying for grants, etc.).	X			
• Provide funding and support to encourage participation of children, youth and families in urban renewal/development activities and community-building projects (e.g., beautification, community gardens, flower planting, neighbourhood barbeques, spring cleaning, street parties, etc.).		X		X

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the opportunities for community-led initiatives (information about grants, possible activities and potential partner organizations such as residents' associations). 	X			X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase low-cost public realm installations throughout the community (e.g., community gathering spaces, parklets, street furniture using objects like paint and plastic chairs) that encourage interaction and play. 			X	

Caring Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

Community and social service organizations provide programs and services that help ensure the wellbeing of children, youth and families; build community and personal assets; offer resources; provide early interventions; and reduce isolation.

These programs and services are critically important to ensuring the health of the entire community, particularly for those in challenging situations, in crisis or going through transitions. They are varied and include counseling, educational services (such as ESL or religious instruction), employment assistance, housing advocacy, income security, mental health and crisis intervention, parenting programs, protection, settlement services and various supports for families living in poverty (such as food, shelter and clothing).

The wellbeing of children and youth requires the engagement and participation of multiple community partners and sectors as connectedness to multiple support networks serve as an important protective factor (Benson, et al., 2012).⁴³ Community, family, health and social service organizations can provide additional care for children and youth, help mitigate negative influences and provide for those in need. In addition, there is the possibility that these services can work to build assets and help address root causes rather than just focusing on acute problems.

Key Considerations

In recent years, there has been increased interest in how to promote healthy child and youth development by researchers, practitioners and policy makers. Some common approaches include prevention, resilience and positive child and youth development.

The prevention approach grew out of the realization that it can be more cost-effective and efficient to prevent problems from occurring initially than to treat them after they are established (Small and Memmo, 2004).⁴⁴ The problem with this approach is that it is deficit-oriented, potentially stigmatizing and gives limited importance to risk and protective factors.

As a result, resiliency emerged given the fact that most children who experience developmental adversity did not develop problematic outcomes (Garmezy, 1993 in Small and Memmo, 2004).⁴⁵ Resiliency is the capacity to exhibit positive adaptation despite adversity and stress; cope with change

The UNCRC and Caring

Article 4 - Children and youth have the right to have their rights made a reality by the government.

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight “in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”

Article 13 - Children and youth have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.

Article 15 - Children and youth have the right to be with friends and join or set up clubs, unless this interferes with the rights of others.

and uncertainty; and recover more completely from traumatic events (Newman, 2002).⁴⁶ However, resiliency approaches can result in a tendency to disregard environmental conditions. Furthermore, showing resiliency in one area does not necessarily make an individual invulnerable to other stressors.

Positive child and youth development is an umbrella term that emphasizes the positive aspects of development and health and seeks to build assets. It includes strength-base approaches to development (as opposed to a deficit model); focuses on relationships; involves diverse partners across multiple sectors; and promotes positive development in everyday, commonplace occurrences in which the whole community plays a role (Sesma, Mannes and Scales, 2013).⁴⁷ The most well-known example of this is the Developmental Assets Model, which includes 40 developmental assets that are crucial to promoting healthy child development and wellbeing (Benson, 1997).⁴⁸ As with the other models, this approach presents some challenges. Despite developing assets, the presence of risk factors can increase the likelihood of problem behaviours. Additionally, not all assets are equal in preventing problems or promoting positive development.

All these approaches have strengths and weaknesses, and while no single approach is best, taken together they can fulfill the various aspects necessary to creating a more caring and child and youth friendly community.

Specific Criteria

In order to ensure that services are structured to make them more available and accessible to children, youth and families and ensure that they promote and sustain resiliency, they should be:

- **co-located:** ensures resources are more easily accessible;
- **coordinated:** engages multiple service providers and informal supports to increase capacity and social capital;
- **continuous:** is sustained overtime to provide supports that are accessible;
- **negotiated:** ensures that services are needed and more likely to be used;
- **culturally relevant:** matches cultural values and are offered in ways that are congruent with how children and families view problems; and
- **effective:** are evidence-based (Ungar 2011).⁴⁹

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

Resilience relies on those who control resources to change the odds stacked against at-risk and marginalized children and youth by supplying them with what they need to cope under stress (Seccombe, 2002).⁵⁰ New Westminister is home to a vast array of community and social service organizations, some of which the City directly supports. On the City's website, there is an extensive listing of community and social service organizations under the following headings:

- Drop-Ins and Resource Centres;
- Education and Job Training;
- Emergency, Transitional and Supported Housing;
- Food Services;

- Government Services;
- Housing;
- Justice Services; and
- Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Additionally, the City annually publishes the *Helping Hand* and *Survival Guide* brochures. The former includes a broad listing of community and social service organizations, while the latter focuses more on acute needs such as food, shelter and support. The City is also working on a *Community and Social Services Asset Map* which will further facilitate awareness and access to information.

The City helps support local organizations through a variety of grants such as the Child Care, Community and City Partnership Grant programs. These grants are given based on their alignment with the City’s Strategic Priorities, which seek to create a high quality life for all residents of New Westminster.

Additionally, the City has been involved in the creation of early child development hubs that seek to strengthen family services and supports through co-location and coordination.

What Children Said

Seventy-six percent of children felt that there are adults who they feel safe talking to about their problems. However, of those that commented, all stated that they would talk to their parents or family members and none mentioned anyone outside the family. This is important given that the presence of supportive relationships with adults, both within and outside the family, is an asset in the promotion of health, resiliency and wellbeing (HELP 2014).⁵¹



The majority of children (86%) surveyed know how to get help if they feel in danger with most saying that they would contact 911. No other types of help or assistance were mentioned. With respect to health, 91% of children responded that there is a place they can go for health check-ups or when they are hurt. None of the children mentioned community or social service organizations.

What Youth Said

While many youth mentioned that they feel comfortable at various recreation facilities, school and the youth centre, very few included any community or social service organizations. However, many youth felt that they were unaware of things going on in the community and that there should be more promotion. A few did mention needing more supports, such as

I'd create more awareness about youth programs. Encourage and promote youth to join programs and get to know other youth.

Youth

Given that the city is really small, the services for youth are easy to access.

Youth

counsellors, to help with problems and stress. Interestingly, many youth mentioned not feeling safe and some commented that they would like increased policing and security at school and out in the community.

What Parents Said

Programs at various community and social service organizations were some of the places that parents felt most comfortable and welcome in New Westminster. While some parents mentioned particular organizations (e.g., New West Family Place) and programs (e.g., StrongStart Early Learning Centres), there was little mention of the types of services being used throughout the community. This is perhaps related to stigma that some parents may feel is associated with certain services. A very small number made specific suggestions like the need for enhanced access to mental health services, greater availability of settlement supports, increased assistance for families living in poverty, and more affordable programming.

There should be more options for working parents. Programming during late afternoons and evenings, as well as weekends. Parent

Vision, Goals, and Actions

Vision - Children, youth and families have the necessary supports and access to a range of programs and services that meet their needs and promote wellbeing.

Goal 1 - Improve access to community assets, programs and services.

Proposed Actions:

- As part of the *Community and Social Services Asset Mapping Project*, include family-friendly assets which promote access to existing resources and identify potential gaps.
- Complete and implement new Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy (2015/16).
- Continue to work towards the development of five Child Development Hubs.⁵²
- Continue to administer community grants and support community-based organizations to apply to build and/or enhance programs and services for children, youth and families.
- Ensure that the City's *Social Equity Policy* represents the needs of children, youth and families and improves their access to programs and services.

Goal 2 - Improve the systems and programs that enable families to care for their children.

Proposed Actions:

- Continue to be represented on and work with the Public Partners Child Development Committee, the Kids New West Committee, the Child Care Action Team and other bodies that address the needs of children, youth and families.
- Continue to implement the *Community Poverty Reduction Initiative* and work with the senior levels of government towards the alleviation of child, youth and family poverty.
- In conjunction with the Welcoming and Inclusive New West Local Immigration Partnership Council, ensure that the Five-Year Strategic Plan and Local Settlement Strategy address the needs of immigrant children, youth and families.
- Promote the opportunity for community-based organizations to access population-based data collected, analyzed and interpreted by the City that can inform program design and service delivery related to children, youth and families and highlight the needs of at-risk and vulnerable populations.

Caring Action Plan

Vision - Children, youth and families have the necessary supports and access to a range of programs and services that meet their needs and promote wellbeing.

Goal 1 - Improve access to community assets, programs and services.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the <i>Community and Social Services Asset Mapping Project</i>, include family-friendly assets which promote access to existing resources and identify potential gaps. 	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and implement the new Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy (2015/16). 	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work towards the development of five Child Development Hubs. 				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to administer community grants and support community-based organizations to apply to build and/or enhance programs and services for children, youth and families. 				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the City's <i>Social Equity Policy</i> represents the needs of children, youth and families and improves their access to programs and services. 	X	X	X	

Goal 2 - Improve the systems and programs that enable families to care for their children.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to be represented on and work with the Public Partners Child Development Committee, the Kids New West Committee, the Child Care Action Team and other bodies that address the needs of children, youth and families. 				X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the <i>Community Poverty Reduction Initiative</i> and work with the senior levels of government towards the alleviation of child, youth and family poverty. 	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In conjunction with the Welcoming and Inclusive New West Local Immigration Partnership Council, ensure that the Five-Year Strategic Plan and Local Settlement Strategy address the needs of immigrant children, youth and families. 	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the opportunity for community-based organizations to access population-based data collected, analyzed and interpreted by the City that can inform program design and service delivery related to children, youth and families and highlight the needs of at-risk and vulnerable populations. 				X

Engaging Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

Children and youth have a right to participate in the life of their community and to have a say in the decisions that affect them. They are in the unique position of having no vote or role in the conventional political process. Without special provisions, supports or mentoring, it is often challenging for them to access opportunities to participate and, as such, their valuable voices and lived experiences are often lost.

Listening to children and youth is one of the most powerful ways of acknowledging that they are valued. In doing so, they develop a sense of belonging and connection to their community (Cargo, et al., 2003, Chekoway, et al., 2003)^{53, 54}, which helps foster civic awareness and action. Children and youth who take active roles in organizations and their community have fewer problems, are better skilled, and tend to be lifelong citizens (Pittman, Irby, Ferber, 2001).⁵⁵

In addition, participation helps make initiatives, programs and services more effective and responsive to their unique needs.⁵⁶

Participation in the community has been shown to have numerous positive developmental outcomes including enhanced self-esteem and life satisfaction (Gilman, 2001).⁵⁷ Furthermore, participation has been shown to help develop autonomy, cognitive abilities, community identity, self-concept, and social competence and responsibility (Hart, et al., 1997).⁵⁸

Additionally, participation helps build healthy, safer and stronger communities. Participation provides children and youth with the opportunity to develop positive, empowering relationships with adults and peers. They learn valuable social and communication skills and become more socially connected. This mutual support and contribution to the community creates a positive cycle for further engagement (Camino and Zeldin, 2002).⁵⁹ Research has shown that in communities with higher levels of civic participation, anti-social behavior and crime is less likely to occur (Margo, et al, 2006).⁶⁰

Key Considerations

Respecting and supporting the right of children and youth to participate has benefits not only for them but also the community-at-large.

The UNCRC and Engaging

Article 4 - Children and youth have the right to have their rights made a reality by the government.

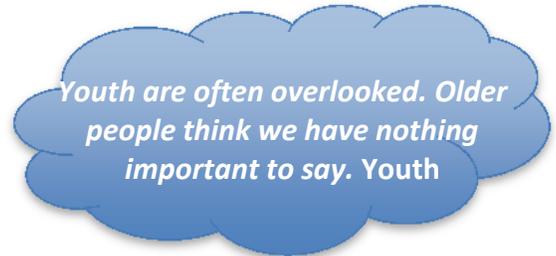
Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight “in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”

Article 13 - Children and youth have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.

Article 15 - Children and youth have the right to be with friends and join or set up clubs, unless this interferes with the rights of others.

Some of the benefits to children and youth include:

- creating opportunities for personal development, including building cognitive abilities, developing new skills, enhancing competencies and facilitating self-esteem;
- developing strong communication skills and learning to speak up and protect their rights and the rights of others;
- gaining a sense of achievement and an increased belief in their ability to make a difference;
- learning how to be active and responsible citizens;
- acquiring political and social knowledge and awareness of their rights and responsibilities;
- developing positive relationships with adults and important interpersonal skills;
- ensuring that they have a say in discussing plans, informing policies, designing services or making decisions that affect their lives;
- ensuring that policies, procedures and services are more effective, sustainable and achieve better outcomes; and
- promoting a positive image of children and youth within their community among professionals and among their peers.^{61,62,63}



Additionally, there is also significant value for adults who work with or for children and youth. Some of the benefits of their participation for adults include:

- being more attuned to their needs within the community and being able to improve policies, programs and services;
- benefitting from their creative ideas and suggestions, as well as fresh perspectives;
- finding out directly from them about their issues rather than assuming what they think;
- witnessing and valuing their capabilities and competencies;
- being motivated and accountable to their needs and rights;
- feeling more motivated about the value of their work; and
- working with children is energizing, fun and multi-dimensional.^{64,65}

Specific Criteria

There are a variety of ways that children and youth can become involved in their community. Broadly speaking, participation opportunities can be consultative, collaborative or child- or youth-led. Each of these types of engagement has value and should be selected based on what is appropriate in a given situation.

Given the proper opportunities ... [children and] youth can always make a significant contribution to the development of the communities in which they live.

John Kretzmann & John McKnight

Participation rights do not suggest that children and youth should, in all situations, make decisions for themselves but rather that they should be given a voice in decisions that affect them and that they should be able to make decisions that they are competent to take. The level of involvement and type of participation should take into consideration

their age and maturity, the time and resources available, and the willingness and capacity of adults to truly work with, support and take their ideas seriously.

For adults wishing to work with children and youth, it is important that participation is meaningful and not tokenistic. According to Save the Children, participation ought to:

- provide them with a genuine opportunity to influence decision-making while being based upon honesty and clarity about the extent of, and limits to, that influence;
- enable them to negotiate their participation to reflect their preferences and working methods;
- encourage the involvement of socially excluded and discriminated groups and ensure that their voices and lived experiences are given equal weight in discussions;
- ensure that they are able to express their views and opinions and have them treated with respect;
- promote their best interests and enhance their personal development;
- be a process which encourages the sharing of experiences;
- be flexible enough to respond to their expectations; and
- build self-esteem and self-confidence so that they feel they are able to contribute and have opinions which are worth listening to (Save the Children, 2003).⁶⁶

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

The City of New Westminster has already taken steps to ensure that there are opportunities for children and youth to participate and contribute to their community. For example, the City already has a Youth Advisory Committee that acts as a resource to City

Council on issues affecting youth in New Westminster. The development of the Youth Centre @ Moody Park also offers an interesting example of participation. A Youth Facility Space Advisory Committee, comprised of youth and adult advisers, was established for the project to act as a resource and to make recommendations for the centre to ensure that it would be a youth-friendly place. The project was highly successful and over 1,000 youth are currently members of the centre.

Another example was the development of this strategy, which involved a community engagement process to involve children, youth and families. It was important for the City to understand their views and to give them the opportunity to voice their opinions. The surveys were critical in gaining an understanding of their lived experiences, needs and ideas.



Despite these examples, the City recognizes that child and youth participation remains a challenge. Many adults may be uncomfortable or unsure of how to incorporate their voices or hold misconceptions about their ability to positively contribute to their communities. Children and youth may face barriers, lack support or find it difficult to find and access meaningful opportunities.

The City will take steps to build the internal capacity of staff to work with children and youth. Already, a Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit has been developed to assist staff who wish to work with them.

What Children Said

In comparison to some of the other areas surveyed, the responses to the questions related to engagement were much more divided. Fifty-two percent of children felt that their ideas are listened to by adults and 37% felt that they were sometimes. Additionally, 61% of children said that they get to make decisions about the things that are important to them. Many who did comment mentioned being able to make decisions around free time and recreational activities.



Many people listen and much less don't!
Girl, age 9

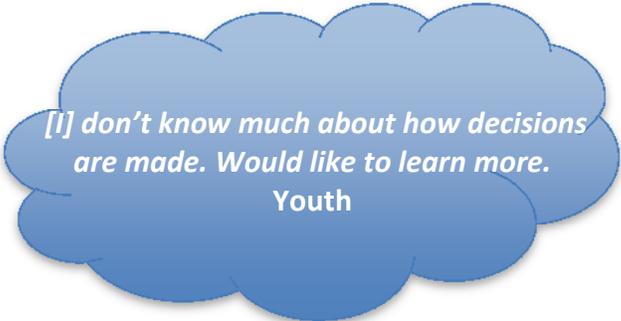


My mom and dad listen to my ideas for projects or school. Girl, age 10

Since part of being able to claim rights is being aware of them, it was interesting that only 52% of children had heard about their rights. As such, children are not aware of their participation rights. While, participation in activities, community life and recreation is generally thought of quite positively, it appears that children's voices are not always heard.

What Youth Said

Of the youth surveyed, 48% felt involved in their city; however, this includes all types of activities such as after-school programs, clubs and sports. Interestingly, many youth mentioned wanting to be more involved. Specifically, some youth were seeking civic engagement or volunteer opportunities. Others commented on limitations with one youth stating that they cannot vote and another commenting "we can't really be involved, we are too young."



[I] don't know much about how decisions are made. Would like to learn more.
Youth



People believe stories in the paper about all youth getting into trouble and being lazy.
Youth

This is not to say that all the survey respondents were negative. Many youth mentioned volunteering and felt quite positive about the Youth Advisory Committee. One youth mentioned that there should be grants for youth to hold events in the community. Another mentioned how youth should be consulted in the design of buildings and parks. Many of the youth surveyed were not aware of opportunities or did not know how to get involved and suggested that opportunities be more publicized.

What Parents Said

When asked if there are adequate opportunities for children and youth to participate in community life, 37% of parents responded 'yes' and 42% responded 'somewhat.' Parent survey respondents who responded 'yes,' were the most likely to answer that 'yes, the city is family-friendly' (76%). This question also had the largest gap between the 'yes,' 'no' or 'somewhat' respondents indicating that having adequate opportunities for children and youth to participate in community life may be an especially important point about whether or not the city is viewed as child and youth friendly.

There was also a similar affect with respect to viewing their neighbourhood as family-friendly. Seventy-three percent of the parent survey respondents who answered 'yes, there are adequate opportunities for children and youth to participate in community life' also answered 'yes, their neighbourhood is family-friendly' compared with 42% of the parent survey respondents who answered 'no' or 'somewhat' to the opportunities question.

Vision, Goals and Actions

Vision - The voices of children and youth are taken into account with regard to decisions that affect them and children and youth feel engaged and that their input is valued.

Goal 1 - Build the capacity of City staff to engage children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions:

- Gain Council endorsement of the City of New Westminster Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit.
- Train key City staff on child and youth engagement based on the toolkit and embed the training in new employee orientation.
- Identify and develop champions in each Department who will promote the principles of a child and youth friendly community and have the capacity to provide support to young volunteers or workers.

Goal 2 - Improve the processes and increase the opportunities for children and youth to be engaged with the City.

Proposed Actions:

- Require Departments to consult children and youth on matters that affect them. For example:
 - involve children and youth in the design of parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities and transportation systems;
 - consider including youth on the hiring committee for youth workers; and
 - consult children and youth regarding municipal programming and service delivery.
- Increase the number of volunteer and skill building opportunities for children and youth at the City and in the community. For example:
 - engage children and youth in implementing specific elements of the Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy;
 - consider employing youth as park/playground monitors;
 - offer leadership training for children and youth;
 - provide internship opportunities within the City for secondary school students;

- provide opportunities for children and youth to get involved in festivals (e.g., organizing, performing, etc.); and
- support children and youth to be members of adult-oriented Advisory Committees to Council and other municipal bodies.

Goal 3 - Improve the information and dissemination of information for children and youth to learn how they can become more engaged with the City.

Proposed Actions:

- Create communications materials that are child and youth friendly.
- Create a communications plan to disseminate the communication materials. This may include:
 - creating a child and youth friendly page on the City’s website;
 - building out of other City managed websites such as New West Youth; and
 - distributing content to various partners and networks.

Engaging Action Plan

Vision - The voices of children and youth are taken into account with regard to decisions that affect them and children and youth feel engaged and that their input is valued.

Goal 1 - Build the capacity of adults to engage children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Gain Council endorsement of the City of New Westminster Child and Youth Engagement Toolkit.	X			
• Train key City staff on child and youth engagement based on the toolkit and embed the training in new employee orientation.		X		
• Identify and develop champions in each Department who will promote the principles of a child and youth friendly community and have the capacity to provide support to young volunteers or workers.		X		

Goal 2 - Improve the processes and increase the opportunities for children and youth to be engaged with the City.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Require Departments to consult children and youth on matters that affect them.			X	
• Increase the number of volunteer and skill building opportunities for children and youth at the City and in the community.				X

Goal 3 - Improve the information and dissemination of information for children and youth to learn how they can become more engaged with the City.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Create communications materials that are child and youth friendly.	X			X
• Create a communications plan to disseminate the communication materials.	X			

Learning Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

The educational experiences of children and youth are fundamental to their development and successful transition into adulthood. While a great deal of schooling focuses on academic learning, knowledge acquisition and skill development, education accomplishes so much more. In school, children and youth develop interpersonal skills and self-esteem, discover strengths, face challenges and gain independence. Research also shows that education can improve health, life expectancy, and political engagement, while reducing involvement in criminal activity (OECD, 2014).⁶⁷

Canada's education system consistently scores well on international rankings (OECD, 2012)⁶⁸ and recently BC's was ranked the best education system in Canada (Conference Board of Canada, 2014).⁶⁹ However, for early childhood education and care, this is not the case with Canada being in last place in comparison to other developed Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development member countries (OECD, 2006).⁷⁰ Despite some positive indicators, there is still work to do to ensure that children and youth are receiving a quality education that will provide them with the competencies and skills necessary to participate in society and the economy and enjoy a high quality of life.

Key Considerations

Early childhood is a particularly crucial time of life in which children experience the greatest change and development of their brains. These years are critical in laying the groundwork for adult health, success and wellbeing (Campbell, et al, 2014).⁷¹ However, in New Westminster, 33% of children in Kindergarten are vulnerable on one or more aspects of their development (HELP, 2013).⁷² While the reasons behind this are complex, childhood development opportunities such as preschool and child care are particularly important in leveling the playing field and mitigating other adverse effects. For this reason, it is particularly concerning that there are not enough spaces available for infants and toddlers and that the cost of early childhood education and care are unaffordable for many families.

The UNCRC and Learning

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight "in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

Article 23 - Children and youth who have a disability of any kind have the right to special care and education they need to develop and lead a full life.

Article 28 - Children have the right to education. This means children have the right to learn how to read and the right to access the resources that will help them succeed in learning.

Article 29 - Children have the right to the best education that enables them to develop their own personality and abilities as much as possible. Children should be encouraged to respect other people's rights and values and to respect the environment.

Furthermore, early childhood education and care can also be seen as an economic development issue (Warner, et al, 2003).⁷³ It frees up parents (particularly women) to actively participate in the labour force, which helps them earn a living and avoid extended absences from the workforce.⁷⁴ Additionally, it can result in productivity gains from reduced absenteeism and health care costs associated with work/life balance and poverty (Kershaw, et al., 2009).⁷⁵ In a long-term sense, children benefit from early childhood education and care through the development of human capital that sees them through their school years into the labour market (Ibid).⁷⁶

For school aged children and youth, the school experience is equally important with school connectedness being associated with positive academic, emotional, health and social outcomes and helping mitigate aggressive, criminal and risky behaviour (Rowe, Stewart and Patterson, 2007).⁷⁷ However, in New Westminster, 9% of Grade 4 students do not feel that they belong in their school and an additional 9% are neutral (HELP, 2014).⁷⁸ Additionally, 21% could not identify one adult at school who was important to them (Ibid).⁷⁹

The sheer magnitude of what we ask of these institutions [schools] “to promote learning, prepare a workforce and create a citizenry” puts them at the heart of our communities and endows them with special status An active, engaged community—has an enormous role to play in supporting the schools’ mission.

Melaville, A., & Blank, M. J. (1998). Learning Together: The Developing Field of School Community Interaction.

For youth, the top priorities with respect to education and learning are seen as better curriculum and grading systems; more alternative education programs and awareness; reduced cost of education and increased school funding; and smaller class sizes (Vancouver Foundation, 2013).⁸⁰ Bullying has also become a major concern for all ages in recent years for the negative impact that it can have on the school environment and the individual.

Given the complexity and diversity of school composition nowadays, the ability of schools and communities to create environments that engage, inspire and motivate students is no easy task. Models looking at whole school and community approaches to education have proven promising. Elements that help contribute to a positive school climate include community partnerships, learning environments, parental engagement, social-emotional learning and student voice (Government of Ontario, 2012).⁸¹ Other factors that help contribute to student success include class size, early identification and intervention, school leadership, and teacher quality (Abraham and Gram, 2007).⁸²

Specific Criteria

UNICEF has developed a framework for rights-based, child-friendly educational systems and schools that are characterized as "healthy for children, effective with children, protective of children and involved with families and communities -- and children" (UNICEF, 1999). Within this framework:

- That the school is a significant personal and social environment in the lives of its students. A child-friendly school ensures every child an environment that is physically safe, emotionally secure and psychologically enabling.
- That teachers are the single most important factor in creating an effective and inclusive classroom.

- That children are natural learners but this capacity to learn can be undermined and sometimes destroyed. A child-friendly school recognizes, encourages and supports children's growing capacities as learners by providing a school culture, teaching behaviours and curriculum content that are focused on learning and the learner.
- That the ability of a school to be and to call itself child-friendly is directly linked to the collaboration, participation and support it receives from families.
- That child-friendly schools aim to develop a learning environment in which students are motivated and able to learn, and staff members are friendly and welcoming to children and attend to all their health and safety needs (UNICEF, 1999).⁸³

Social-emotional learning has also been shown to have extremely positive benefits on all areas of academic performance, as well as on attitudes and behaviours (Zins, Elias and Greenberg, 2003).⁸⁴ It includes five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2014).⁸⁵ A school's environment can enhance social-emotional wellbeing and learning when it:

- facilitates open, supportive communications;
- is friendly and warm and rewards learning;
- promotes cooperation rather than competition;
- views the provision of creative opportunities as important;
- prevents physical punishment, bullying, harassment and violence by encouraging the development of policies and procedures that promote non-violent interaction in class, on the playground and among staff and students; and
- promotes the rights of boys and girls through democratic procedures and equal opportunities (WHO, 2003).⁸⁶

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

The City of New Westminster does not have direct jurisdiction over education as this is a provincial area of responsibility; however, the City does have a role to play.

The City works closely with the various providers of educational services and enjoys a strong working relationship with these partners. The City is actively involved in the Public Partners Child Development Committee and the Kids New West Committee. These groups bring together a variety of stakeholders such as Fraser Health, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, School District #40, and a variety of community and social service organizations. The Public Partners are developing five Child Development Hubs (two are operational and one is under construction) that provide streamlined services to children, youth and families and are anchored by licensed child care. In 2008, the City, recognizing the variety of challenges with child care, undertook a Needs Assessment to inform its award winning Child Care Strategy.

School District #40 is *committed to ensuring that learners become self-assured, self-sufficient, caring, wise, flexible and able to live successfully in an ever-changing environment.*

Education and educational activities in New Westminster are delivered by a variety of partners and service providers, the largest of which is School District #40 (SD #40). SD #40 is comprised of eight elementary schools, two middle schools (with a third under construction), one secondary school, two Adult Learning Centres, three Youth Alternative programs and a Home Learners program that also has a satellite program on Bowen Island. SD #40 has an enrollment of 7,663 students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 and 212 in alternate programs taught by 472 teachers.⁸⁷ The student population is incredibly diverse and includes Aboriginal, English-as-a-Second Language and French Immersion students, as well as students with special needs. SD #40 also supports early learning through StrongStart and Ready, Set, Learn programs.

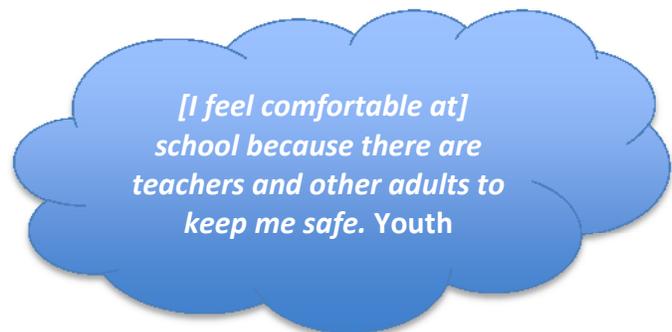
Another major piece of the educational landscape in New Westminster are the various early childhood education and child care services such as New Westminster Family Place, full-day child care for infants and young children, before- and after-school care for school age children, as well as child minding, occasional care and tiny tot playtimes for children of various ages. A range of providers throughout the city provides these services including community centres, home-based child care, non-profit and private centres, and pre-schools.

The New Westminster Public Library is also another important service operated by the City. New Westminster is home to two branches: the Main branch and the Queensborough branch. The Public Library provides a number of creative, educational, cultural and literacy activities for children, youth and families, as well as providing a variety of resources.

Another way in which the City contributes to educational opportunities for young people is through the various festival and special activities that occur throughout the year.

What Youth Said

In the survey, 65% of students felt safe and supported in their school. Many youth mentioned feeling safe, comfortable and supported at New Westminster Secondary School (NWSS). One youth commented, "Schools are for students. I feel most comfortable when I am at school." This reflects the feeling among many youth that they are often not welcome in public places and feel far more comfortable in spaces designated specifically for them (e.g., school, youth centre). Several



students mentioned that school is a safe place due to the presence of a lot of people with one stating, "It is the one place where I know for sure my safety is valued highly." However, many students also mentioned not feeling comfortable at NWSS due to the condition of the building itself and felt that it needed to be replaced. One student commented that NWSS is "too large and is falling down."



School is also seen as a hub of social activity where youth can interact with their friends. Youth who felt safe and supported in school were more likely to be connected to other youth in their neighbourhoods (53%) and feel involved in their city (51%). While some mentioned the presence of good friends, others mentioned being bullied, judged or teased by other students or witnessing it happening. Some mentioned that teachers do not do enough to help or intervene. A few students commented that school can be difficult. One youth said that they need “more counselors as being a teen can be stressful.”

Some students also mentioned the presence of caring adults and teachers. One student commented that “the teachers are great and the class environments are friendly.” Several students also commented on the quality of extracurricular activities available to them at school was excellent. However, many youth felt that there were not enough activities targeted towards youth, particularly older youth, or that they were not dispersed throughout the various neighbourhoods.



What Parents Said

Schools represent some of the places that parents felt most welcome and comfortable with their families. Schools play a critical role as hubs for children, youth and families in the community. However, some parents expressed concern about the public school system, particularly related to adequate funding and responsible governance. Some felt that there is a need to expand community schools and school-based programming or improve choice and access to specialized programs or services.

Some parents were also concerned about specific school infrastructure or developments. Many parents saw the replacement of NWSS as a critically important issue for the community. Some parents also commented that all new schools, such as Qayqayt Elementary, should have adequate playground facilities.

Many parents expressed concern around a lack of child care and felt that infant and toddler care and before- and after-school care should be expanded. Child care was mentioned as an area that parents' needs are not being met within their neighbourhoods. Some also expressed a desire that more child care should be located in school facilities and on school grounds. One parent stated that more programs should be offered in schools and “they should be hubs for their respective neighbourhoods.” Affordability was also an issue that came up in the surveys related to child care. One parent commented “it would be nice if employers could provide or subsidize child care.”

Vision, Goals and Actions

Vision - Children and youth in New Westminster achieve their full potential and their learning is supported by their families and the community.

Goal 1 - Support children and youth to be ready to learn.

Proposed Actions:

- Continue to implement the New Westminster Child Care Strategy.
- Analyse the results of the children's survey and other population level data to determine any unmet gaps or needs.
- Assess how library and recreation programming promotes healthy child development, inclusion, literacy, participation and social-emotional learning of at-risk and marginalized children.
- In conjunction with School District #40, explore or expand the following programming:
 - anti-bullying/empathy;
 - child rights;
 - mentoring/buddy for children transitioning between different levels of schooling;
 - merit-based scholarships; and
 - no-cost/low-cost programming.

Goal 2 - Provide parents and families with the skills, knowledge and opportunities that promote healthy child development.

Proposed Actions:

- Offer and support accessible programs at libraries and recreation centres that address knowledge gaps and reflect current research on important issues impacting children and youth.
For example:
 - bullying;
 - child rights;
 - food education, possibly in conjunction with the 5-2-1-0 campaign, community gardens or community kitchens;
 - hyper-sexualisation of children;
 - media literacy and on-line safety;
 - risky play; and
 - social emotional learning.
- Enhance the New Westminster Culture Map by creating a passport that encourages families to visit various cultural locations in the city. This could include receiving a stamp at each location and possibly receiving a discount for entry.
- In conjunction with the New Westminster Museum and Archives, place interpretative objects around the city that describe the history, nature and points-of-interest in a child and youth friendly manner.
- Consider establishing neighbourhood book/toy sharing libraries throughout the city.

Goal 3 - Improve knowledge of the City and its role.

Proposed Actions:

- Create age appropriate resources that teach children, youth and families about the City. For example:
 - develop an activity booklet that children and parents can do together; and
 - in conjunction with the Youth Advisory Committee, prepare a youth-friendly brochure or video.

- In conjunction with School District #40, foster an understanding of the City and its role. For example:
 - encourage City staff to educate children and youth about their jobs or speak to elements of the curriculum under discussion in class when there are links to work being done by the City;
 - explore curriculum opportunities whereby students can become more knowledgeable of their municipal government; and
 - facilitate class visits to City Hall and/or to attend a meeting of Council or School Board.

Learning Action Plan

Vision - Children and youth in New Westminster achieve their full potential and their learning is supported by their families and the community.

Goal 1 - Support children and youth to be ready to learn.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Continue to implement the New Westminster Child Care Strategy.	X	X	X	
• Analyse the results of the children’s survey and other population level data to determine any unmet gaps or needs.	X			
• Assess how library and recreation programming promotes healthy child development, inclusion, literacy, participation and social-emotional learning of marginalized children.		X		
• In conjunction with School District #40, explore or expand programming related to bullying, child rights, food education, etc.		X	X	

Goal 2 - Provide parents and families with the skills, knowledge and opportunities that promote healthy child development.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Offer and support accessible programs at libraries and recreation centres that address knowledge gaps and reflect current research on important issues impacting children and youth.		X		X
• Enhance the New Westminster Culture Map by creating a passport that encourages families to visit various cultural locations in the city. This could include receiving a stamp at each location and possibly receiving a discount for entry.		X	X	
• In conjunction with the New Westminster Museum and Archives, place interpretative objects around the city that describe the history, nature and points-of-interest in a child and youth friendly manner.			X	
• Consider establishing neighbourhood book/toy sharing libraries throughout the city.			X	

Goal 3 - Improve knowledge of the City and its role.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Create age appropriate resources that teach children, youth and families about the City.	X			
• In conjunction with School District #40, foster an understanding about the City and its role.		X		X

Living Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth

Ensuring that where children and youth live is a place that feels like home forms the most fundamental unit of building Child and Youth Friendly Communities. Children and youth need a positive environment for their living space—both indoors and outdoors designed with their safety, comfort and developmental needs in mind.

Research has shown strong links between various housing variables and child development outcomes that, in some cases, can have long lasting consequences into adulthood. Housing can influence:

- Physical Health and Well-being;
- Social-Emotional Development;
- Cognitive Development;
- Connectedness and Relationships; and
- Educational Outcomes.

Many of the factors contributing to child development and well-being are complex and interrelated. For example, housing that is unaffordable can adversely affect a family's ability to provide the basic necessities, thus directly impacting children's well-being and potentially increasing the likelihood of crowding, frequent moves or homelessness. Another example is how the lack of adequate space could influence parental practices, such as increasing stress when children spend most of their time indoors under parental supervision, or children and youth not having sufficient space to study or to be alone impacting their educational outcomes and social well-being.

Specific Criteria

The existing literature on factors in the home that influence children's development has identified the following aspects:

Physical Considerations

- Building height and opportunities for outdoor play;
- Cleanliness, housing disrepair and safety;
- Crowding;
- Environmental allergens; and
- Toxins.

The UNCRC and Housing

Article 3 - Adults should always make a decision by considering what is in the best interest of the child.

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 27 - Children and youth have the right to good enough standard of living. This means they should have food, clothes and a place to live.

Non-Physical Considerations

- Homeownership;
- Housing affordability;
- Frequent residential moves;
- Homelessness; and
- Neighbourhood characteristics (Dockery et al., 2010).⁸⁸

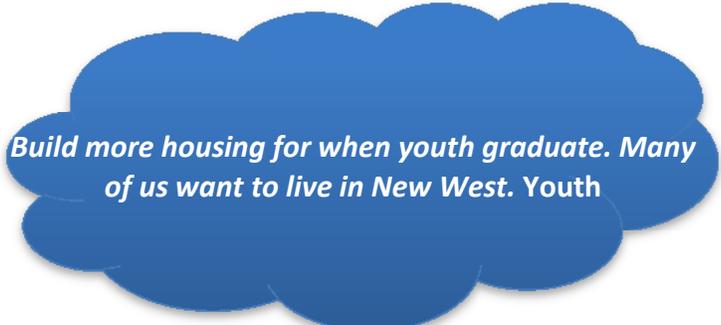
The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation defines core housing need for any individual or household if a home falls below at least one of the following standards:

- housing reported by the residents as not requiring any major repairs (adequacy);
- dwellings that cost less than 30% of total before-tax household income (affordability); and
- homes have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard requirements (suitability) (CMHC).⁸⁹

Most people that are in core housing need are there because of not being able to meet the affordability standard. However, all of the above-mentioned conditions have the potential to negatively impact children and youth.

Key Considerations

Key design factors for making a home child and youth friendly depend on the age of the child and the type of dwelling. For example, younger children require design and materials on a child friendly scale while older children and youth have a greater need for separate space. Younger children are greatly impacted by their immediate home environment, whereas youth are more impacted by their neighbourhood. Housing should be developed with the goal of long-term residency and should be adaptable to change as children and youth grow to reflect the different needs at different stages of their life course.



Build more housing for when youth graduate. Many of us want to live in New West. Youth

Some commonly held principles of design when considering housing for families that align with the needs of children and youth include:

- easy, casual access to other children without formal invitation to play;
- places in the communal environment that are undeniably their territories where they can expect to find other children;
- privacy;
- safe, uninhibited outdoor play for their physiological and mental health;
- unsupervised outdoor interaction; and
- ability to move around their home neighbourhoods safely and to take little trips farther and farther from home to gain a sense of independence (Marcus and Sarkissian, 1986).⁹⁰

Additional considerations include:

- a clear hierarchy of spaces;
- access to storage;
- adequate indoor and outdoor space;
- proximity to family-friendly amenities;
- secure bicycle parking;
- sight lines to play spaces; and
- soundproofing (Bohle, 2013).⁹¹

Finally, children and youth should be given an opportunity to participate in housing policy and planning, when possible.

The design approach is somewhat inconsistent with the literature on children's functioning in indoor and outdoor spaces ... adults perceive space mostly through aesthetics, form and function, whereas children perceive space as mostly based on its function rather than aesthetics ... the design of children's spaces must conform to their physical, cognitive and social functioning and development. Said, 2007

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

A great deal of renewal and growth is taking place in New Westminster. However, suitable housing remains a challenge for many families, particularly the lack of child and youth friendly housing.

Families, especially those with children reaching school age and those anticipating the arrival of a second or third child, assess their housing situation and the ability of their neighbourhood and

No, [my home is not big enough] because my apartment only has one bedroom. Boy, age 10

community to meet their needs. Considering the lack of housing with ground-orientation or three-plus bedroom counts, as well as other issues such as affordability, increasing numbers of families with school age children are moving from or not locating in New Westminster. This has implications on school closures and the general vibrancy of the community.

Additionally, while the predominant model for family housing in North America has historically been the single-family detached home, this is not always affordable, desirable, possible or sustainable for all families. Many families are increasingly living in higher density types of housing and demanding housing near civic facilities, employment areas, shops, transit and other amenities and services.

There are 3 bedrooms and we have to share. Boy, age 7

Some of the key challenges to creating child and youth friendly housing include:

- high cost of larger units;
- longer absorption periods;
- presale requirements for financing; and
- uncertainty about effective demand (Bohle, 2013).⁹²

Additionally, an article in Spacing Magazine points out that:

- without buildings specifically designed for families, the supply of child and youth friendly homes will be limited in high-density areas; and
- high-density areas have amenities that are geared towards adults while child-friendly spaces are limited (Bohle, Bennett, Taylor, 2012).⁹³

The City of New Westminster sees creating family-friendly housing as a priority. To this end, the City has developed a policy and bylaw to facilitate the provision of housing options for families, including ground-oriented and two- and three-bedroom counts. This includes addressing these issues in the Official Community Plan and the Zoning Bylaw, as well as creating Design Guidelines. A key component is consulting with families, the community and developers to ensure that those who will be creating and living in these spaces are on board.

What Children Said



We all have a room and we have lots of space. Girl, age 10

Children overwhelmingly felt quite positive about their homes. Of the children surveyed, 76% felt that their home is big enough for their families. Interestingly, of the children that did comment, some mentioned that their home is big enough, while many commented that their home is too small, mentioning living in apartments or townhomes.

Some children specifically commented on their bedroom within the family home, underlining the importance of their private spaces. Other children commented on the size of their rooms or the fact that they had to share their bedroom with siblings. Other spaces that played an important role in children's geography were the available outdoor areas. Some children mentioned having outdoor space and being able to play in their yards.



I like to play in my yard. Boy, age 10



We are growing bigger every day. Soon we are hoping to have renovations. Girl, age 10

An 11 year old girl did raise an interesting observation about perception between children and adults, stating "I say [my home] is big enough but my parents don't." Children may feel differently about the spaces they live in being physically smaller than adults, but they are aware of their parent's feelings and attitudes.

What Youth Said

Youth were less positive than children regarding their housing situation. Sixty-three percent of youth felt that their housing



[I] would like more personal space. Youth

situation meets their family's needs and 26% felt that it met their family's needs only somewhat. Many youth commented that home was one of the places that they felt most comfortable. The most common type of problems related to housing mentioned in the survey related to space. This is important given the developmental need of youth for privacy. Many youth felt that there was not enough space or that there was a need for more bedrooms or bathrooms.

*Don't want to live in [an] apartment.
Like to have basement and yard.*
Youth

Another commonly mentioned issue related to the affordability of housing. Youth mentioned the high cost of rents, and the fact that housing is unaffordable for their families. Youth also mentioned the form of their housing being a problem. Some youth wanted to live in a house as opposed to an apartment

and/or wanted a yard or outdoor space. While this may be related to preference, it could also possibly be related to affordability. Additionally, some youth mentioned the condition of their housing being run-down which could also relate back to housing costs.

*We have four people in our house
and can't afford a bigger house
because rents are ridiculously high.*
Youth

What Parents Said

Parents were less likely than both children and youth to say that their housing meets their family's needs. Forty-eight percent of parents felt that their housing situation meets their family's needs and 36% felt that it met their family's needs only somewhat. Additionally, 75.5% of the parent survey respondents who answered 'yes, their current housing situation meets their family's needs' also answered 'yes, their neighbourhood is family-friendly' compared with 38.5% of parent survey respondents who answered 'no' or 'somewhat' to the housing situation question.

*[I] would like to remain in my
neighbourhood but require larger
housing. Not many options. Parent*

There was also a distinct gradient in housing satisfaction by the age of children of the parent survey respondents. Parent respondents with children 0 to 5 years old were 45% satisfied with their housing, which is lower than parent survey respondents with children 6 to 12 years old (50%) and respondents with youth 13 to 17 years old (63%). This may be due to housing affordability at the time that the parents got into the housing market. The youth of the parents in the survey were born between 1996 and 2001, meaning that the parents likely had to get into the housing market (either renting or owning) between 1996 and 2001, when the market was more affordable. The toddlers and preschoolers of the survey were born between 2008 and 2014, meaning that the parents likely had to get into the housing market (either renting or owning) between 2008 and 2014, when the market was far less affordable.

Among parent survey respondents, lone parents households, two parent households with one parent working, renters or those living in co-ops, and recent immigrants were less likely to answer that their housing situation meets their family needs. Renters or co-op parents were slightly less likely than homeowners to view their city and neighbourhoods as family-friendly.

These results point to a strong level of housing inequality between more and less socio-economically disadvantaged groups (probably largely predicated on the ability to pay for adequate housing – one parent households, for example, have much lower household incomes than two parent households). However, even for the more socio-economically advantaged groups such as owner households, the proportion saying ‘yes’ was generally not very high (in all cases, less than three in five households), indicating that housing is a struggle for many households in New Westminster.

Vision, Goals, and Actions

Vision - There is adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for families with children as well as at-risk and vulnerable children, youth and families. There is the necessary amenities and infrastructure to meet the needs of children, youth and families within their neighbourhoods.

Goal 1 - Homes meet the needs of children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions:

- Implement and monitor the New Westminster Family-Friendly Housing Policy and Bylaw.
- Prepare and implement guidelines for use within the development approvals process that encourage family-friendly units to be generally located in lower priced per square footage portions of buildings.
- Review and assess existing planning, development and building policies, processes, regulations and standards and remove any barriers to the construction of family-friendly housing where deemed to be strategically advantageous.
- Provide annual orientation for the New Westminster Design Panel on using a child and youth friendly lens with regards to making recommendations.
- Work with BC Housing and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation to identify provincially-funded tools and techniques to support below-market affordability of family-friendly housing units in strategic locations.
- Consider the housing needs of at-risk and vulnerable youth in the development of a new Homelessness Action Strategy.
- Develop a Child and Youth Friendly Assessment Tool which will be used to assess new developments and make available to developers.

Goal 2 - Neighbourhoods meet the needs of children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions:

- Develop and implement a Family-Friendly Audit Tool, which will be used to evaluate neighbourhood amenities as to their ability to meet the needs of children youth and families.
- Involve children and youth in the audit process via participatory photomapping activities.
- Using the results of the above audit, assess gaps, work towards reducing policy and regulatory barriers and provide funding (where possible) that increases family-supportive amenities and infrastructure.

Living Action Plan

Vision - There is adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for families with children as well as at-risk and vulnerable children, youth and families. There is the necessary amenities and infrastructure to meet the needs of children, youth and families within their neighbourhoods.

Goal 1 - Homes meet the needs of children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Implement and monitor the New Westminster Family-Friendly Housing Policy and Bylaw (2015).	X			X
• Prepare and implement guidelines for use within the development approvals process that encourage family-friendly units to be generally located in lower priced per square footage portions of buildings.	X			X
• Review and assess existing planning, development and building policies, processes, regulations and standards and remove any barriers to the construction of family-friendly housing where deemed to be strategically advantageous.		X		
• Provide annual orientation for the New Westminster Design Panel on using a child and youth friendly lens with regards to making recommendations.		X		X
• Work with BC Housing and the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation to identify provincially-funded tools and techniques to support below-market affordability of family-friendly housing units in strategic locations.		X		X
• Consider the housing needs of at-risk and vulnerable youth in the development of a new Homelessness Action Strategy.		X	X	
• Develop a Child and Youth Friendly Assessment Tool which will be used to assess new developments and make available to developers			X	

Goal 2 - Neighbourhoods meet the needs of children, youth and families

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Develop and implement a Family-Friendly Audit Tool, which will be used to evaluate neighbourhood amenities as to their ability to meet the needs of children youth and families.	X			
• Involve children and youth in the audit process via participatory photomapping activities.	X			
• Using the results of the above audit, assess gaps, work towards reducing policy and regulatory barriers, and provide funding (where possible) that increases family-supportive amenities and infrastructure.		X	X	

Moving Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

The ability of children and youth to move around easily and safely in order to go to school, access public spaces, participate in leisure activities, and visit with family, friends and neighbours is an important component of building a child and youth friendly community. Children and youth are important users of transportation and active transport and independent mobility has numerous benefits including:

- developing motor skills;
- increasing physical activity;
- developing a sense of independence;
- developing way-finding abilities;
- facilitating contact with others;
- improving cognitive abilities; and
- instilling a love of nature and the environment (Fyhri, et al.)⁹⁴

More and more children and youth are being driven to and from leisure activities and school which limits their opportunities to experience the above cited benefits. This is due to a variety of factors including the built environment, inclement weather, inconvenience and safety concerns (Faulkner, et al., 2010).⁹⁵ In their efforts to protect children, parents may actually be doing them a disservice and ironically many may actually be “adding to children’s anxiety and lack of competence in assessing environmental hazards, therefore putting them in more danger should they find themselves alone in the environment” (Malone, 2007).⁹⁶

Some of the major barriers to more active forms of transport for children and youth are real and perceived issues around safety. Road safety and ‘stranger danger’ are major sources of concern for parents and are some reasons why parents may restrict children’s play and active transport opportunities (Carver, Timperio and Crawford 2008).⁹⁷ Indeed, motor vehicle traffic collisions are the leading cause of injury related mortality of young people in Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2012).⁹⁸ In order to protect their children, many parents opt to engage in avoidance behaviour, such

as driving their children to school, or defensive behaviour, such as accompanying children while walking to school (Carver, Timperio, Hesketh and Crawford, 2010).⁹⁹

Traffic-related air quality is another serious risk to children’s health given their developmental stage and vulnerability (WHO, 2005).¹⁰⁰ Additionally,

The UNCRC and Moving

Article 3 - Adults should always make a decision by considering what is in the best interest of the child.

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 31 - Children and youth have the right to play and relax by doing things like sports, music and drama.

I’m concerned about truck traffic. It makes crossing roads unsafe and it causes poor air quality. Parent

children and youth living in poverty are more at risk of exposure to environmental toxins and traffic related pollution because they tend to live in neighbourhoods that are nearer to pollution hazards and high traffic areas (Canadian Institute for Child Health, 1997).¹⁰¹ Precautions are needed to limit the number of vehicles on the road as well as to locate places that children and youth frequent away from high-traffic areas to decrease exposure to airborne pollutants.

Once youth reach a certain age and are able to drive themselves, there is the additional concern of them being operators of vehicles. While graduated licensing is in effect in BC, the relative inexperience of youth drivers makes them more vulnerable on the road. Accidents continue to be the leading cause of death among youth in which alcohol or drugs are often a factor (MADD Canada).¹⁰² Ensuring sufficient education around driving and road safety, negotiation skills, and ensuring that a variety of options for getting around are available to youth is important to ensure that they are able to make safe and healthy choices around transport.

Active transport to and from leisure activities or school represents an opportunity for children and youth to be more physically active since it is a behaviour that is easily incorporated into daily routines (Heelan et al., 2005)¹⁰³ and may also contribute to preventing obesity (Pabayo et al., 2010).¹⁰⁴ However, evidence from many different countries, including Canada, suggests a decline in more active forms of transport in the last 30 years.^{105,106,107} This is particularly concerning given the rising rates of obesity and the fact that the vast majority of children and youth in Canada do not meet the recommended physical activity guidelines (Statistics Canada, 2011)¹⁰⁸ which means additional expenditure in the health care system down the road.

Key Considerations

Traditionally, transportation planning has largely revolved around motorized vehicles; however, in recent years, attempts to encourage more active and sustainable modes of transportation have increased. This emphasis is not only good for the environment, health and safety but also for children and youth.

The Centre for Sustainable Transportation suggests the following checklist for municipal officials when seeking to create a child and youth friendly transportation system:

- Do Engineering and Planning Departments respond to children's transportation needs and trends?
- Do planning practices consider the potential harmful health impacts on children, as well as the benefits?
- Are sidewalks and bicycle paths planned with children's destinations in mind?
- Are streets planned to avoid potential sight obstructions for children?
- Are there sidewalks to all transit stops?
- Do traffic lights near leisure centres and schools allow adequate time for children to safely cross?

If we're going to talk about transport, I would say that the great city is not the one that has highways, but one where a child on a tricycle or bicycle can go safely everywhere.

Enrique Peñalosa

- Are child care centres situated away from busy roads?
- Are no-idling bylaws enforced, especially near child care centres and schools?
- Are transit fares low for children and youth to encourage use of transit?
- Can traffic be reduced by encouraging more complete communities?
- Has consideration been given to reducing permitted traffic speeds in residential areas?
- What opportunities exist to make transit more child and youth friendly? (Centre for Sustainable Transportation, 2005)¹⁰⁹

Specific Criteria

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in their report entitled *Keeping Children Safe in Traffic*, has come up with the following best practices to increase safety for children: conduct public education for drivers, children and parents; initiate traffic calming measures; and reduce traffic speeds. Much of the work on transportation planning as it relates to children and youth has focused on the journey to school. This focus has meant that other areas, such as journeys to and from leisure activities, land use planning around the location of child and youth friendly amenities, and neighbourhood design have often been overlooked. In a 2009 report on developing healthy communities, Smart Growth BC noted that:

You can design your community to make active forms of transportation safer, more attractive and convenient. Increasing the density, land-use mix and connectivity of your community's built environment has been found to be the most effective strategy to facilitate active transportation. A more connected roadway and multipurpose trail system reduces the distances that must be travelled to reach a destination. This is especially important for children and youth, as the two most important factors determining whether they walk to school are distance and walkability (Smart Growth BC, 2009).¹¹⁰

The Centre for Sustainable Transportation has come up with a series of guidelines around child and youth friendly land use and transportation planning in BC. The guidelines are as follows:

- In land use and transportation planning, the needs of children and youth should receive as much priority as the needs of people of other ages and the requirements of business.
- Within each municipality, designate a Council or staff member, or both, as responsible for bringing the perspectives of children and youth to consideration of land use and transportation planning issues.
- As may be appropriate, establish or adapt one or more forums for children and youth to ensure that their perspectives are considered by land use and transportation planners.
- Assess pedestrian routes used or to be used by children and youth to ensure that they are as safe and suitable for them as possible.

At Queen Elizabeth, the streets to get to school should have a crossing guard or light or stop sign. Girl, age 10

- Identify where children and youth want to go or need to go and, to the extent possible, provide ways of getting there by foot
- Separate sidewalks used by children and youth from heavily travelled roads.
- Ensure that sidewalks are always cleared of ice and snow.
- For older children and youth, ensure that destinations that cannot be a walk away are no more than a bicycle ride away.
- For those destinations to be reached by bicycle, provide separate bicycle paths or trails or, if not possible, install bicycle lanes on regular roads.
- At destinations, provide convenient and secure bicycle parking.
- Ensure that bicycle riders are well provided for at intersections and have sufficient priority for forwards movement.
- Ensure that every part of a transit system is affordable, safe and welcoming to children and youth.
- Avoid transfers by routing vehicles where children and youth want to and need to go; make transfers easy where necessary.
- Examine every aspect of a transit system from the perspective of a parent with a child in a stroller, and make adjustments to meet such a traveler's needs.
- For younger children, help arrange walking school buses and other means of supervision.
- Help ensure that school policies and practices favour cycling, walking and other modes of active transport for trips to and from school, and also regular public transportation where this is available and appropriate.
- Do what is possible to reduce amounts of motorized traffic generally and reduce its adverse impacts.
- Post and enforce much lower speed limits, particularly in urban areas.
- Where destinations cannot be reached by bicycle, foot or transit, arrange land uses so that in-car time is reduced (Gilbert and O'Brien, 2010).¹¹¹

Situational Analysis for New Westminster

As a centrally located, compact and well-connected city, New Westminister is in a fortunate position with respect to transportation. The city has an extensive sidewalk system, cycling network, and is one

*Transit is amazing. Walking is good too.
There is a lot to do in a small condensed
area. Parent*

of the best-served municipalities in the region for transit services with twenty bus routes, two SkyTrain lines and five SkyTrain stations.¹¹² New Westminister has the third highest rate of sustainable transportation commuting among Metro Vancouver municipalities (Statistics Canada 2011).¹¹³ It also has a high walk score and very high rate of walking or biking to school among school

aged children (55%).¹¹⁴ The City has made significant strides in improving the transportation system, as well as working closely with local, regional and provincial partners to ensure thoughtful and comprehensive development of the transportation network.

Transportation planning for children and youth has long been a priority for the City to ensure that they can make active, healthy and safe choices for moving around. The City and School District has undertaken School Travel Planning with various schools and neighbourhoods to increase the number of children choosing active transportation modes to get to and from school. Using a participatory process, including surveys and walkabouts with students, School Travel Planning helps to identify challenges faced by school communities and explore the resources and strategies to overcome them. Additionally, in some schools, the Cool Routes to School program, which employs a student leadership model to changing school transportation attitudes and behaviour, has been implemented to address barriers and capitalize on opportunities for promoting active transportation to and from school.¹¹⁵ Additionally, the City's Engineering Department has created Best Walking Routes to School pamphlets for all the elementary schools in New Westminster and the City has funded bike safety training for middle school students.



In September 2014, the City released a new Master Transportation Plan with various policies, strategies and actions around making New Westminster a leading edge community with regards to transportation over the next 30 years. The recommendations around improvements for all modes of transportation, including walking, cycling, public transit and vehicles, supports the development of both a child and youth friendly community, as well as a more sustainable future.

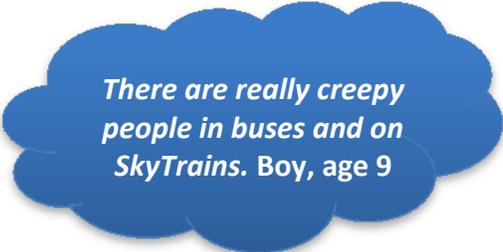
What Children Said

Overall, children felt quite positive about transportation in their city. Sixty percent of children felt that it was easy to get around their neighbourhood without a car with an additional 27% responding somewhat. Another positive finding was that 76% of children felt that it was safe to walk or cycle in their neighbourhood.



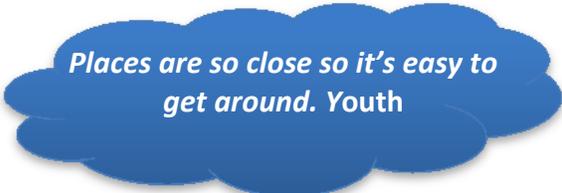
Many children mentioned that it is a very enjoyable experience to walk or bike for leisure and transport.

However, many children did not feel safe on the street outside their homes with the vast majority who commented citing traffic as the cause. Another area of concern is the fact that only 49% of children surveyed felt safe taking buses and SkyTrain. Many children commented that they felt safe when they were with an adult or family member but not alone and many stated this was due to the presence of strangers or strange people.



What Youth Said

Seventy-three percent of youth surveyed felt that it was easy to get around their neighbourhood



without a car with an additional 18% responding somewhat. However, this did vary slightly by neighbourhood with youth living in the Uptown, Downtown, Glenbrook North and Queens Park responding more positively than their peers in the East End, Queensborough and the West End.

It would be nice if buses operate more frequently at night. I attend meetings, hang out with friends and work. After 9:00 pm, I sometimes have to walk in the cold for up to an hour. Youth

Transit was a major area of concern for youth. Many youth commented on the fact that buses are unreliable, infrequent or slow. Youth in the East End and Queensborough in particular felt that more bus routes and more frequent service were needed. A number of youth also commented on the fact that transit is costly.

“promote cycling and a safe, eco-friendly community by developing bike routes and promoting use of public transit.” Other ideas included constructing crosswalks, developing the ‘Q to Q’ crossing and improving bus service.

In response to the question “If you were Mayor, what would you do to improve the city for youth?,” a number of respondents mentioned bike lanes. One youth said that they would

Transit is pretty available but it costs. Youth

What Parents Said

Sixty-four percent of parents felt that it was easy to get around their neighbourhood without a car with an additional 27% responding somewhat. Parents

We live near Columbia and 8th Streets which are very busy. I am concerned that my kids will have to cross them to get to school or parks or transit. Parent

that responded positively to this question were more likely to feel that their city is family-friendly than those who responded negatively. However, there were differences by neighbourhood. In all neighbourhoods except Queensborough, more than half of all parents surveyed responded that it was easy to get around their neighbourhood without a car.

How easy is it to get around your neighbourhood without a car?

Neighbourhood	Percentage
• Glenbrook North and Queens Park	80.0%
• Downtown	75.6%
• Uptown	73.0%
• East End	55.6%
• West End	53.3%
• Queensborough	32.4%

Parents who commented on what is working well in terms of getting around without a car mentioned that the city is compact, has good transit and is very walkable.

For parents who did have concerns, the most common challenges or areas of improvement related to transportation were busy streets (too much traffic), lack of sidewalks, poor bus service and steep topography. The majority of respondents who had concerns about sidewalks were from Queensborough.



Need better sidewalks. There are no sidewalks on side roads. Parent

Vision, Goals, and Actions

Vision - The transportation network enables children and youth to navigate their neighbourhoods independently, safely and make transportation choices that are physically active and environmentally friendly.

Goal 1- Facilitate transportation infrastructure that promotes safe, active and independent travel.

As per the Master Transportation Plan (see bracketed page numbers):

Access and Mobility

- Improve sidewalk coverage. (1A)
- Ensure adequate benches throughout the city. (1C.7)
- Ensure adequate bike lock-ups throughout the city. (2C)
- Improve bus shelters around the city. (3E.1)

Health and Safety

- Continue to support School Travel Planning by updating and promoting the 'Best Walking Routes to School' maps. (8A.1, 8E.1)
- Improve streets, sidewalks and safety features around schools. (1C.7, 7C.1)
- Increase security at SkyTrain stations. (3F.2)
- Ensure adequate lighting along bike routes and spaces used by children and youth. (1C.2)
- Provide signage for safe routes to school and to generally make travel easier for children with way-finding features (e.g., lighting, public art, signage, etc.). (1C.7, 8E.4)
- Avoid locating high traffic areas close to child and youth spaces, if possible. (7A)
- Ensure traffic calming measures in residential neighbourhoods. (7A.1, 7A.2)
- Lower speed limits in residential neighbourhoods. (7A.1, 7C.1, 7D.1)

Land Use and Transportation Integration

- Encourage land use planning that supports walkability and mixed use neighbourhoods. (4A.1)
- Design neighbourhoods so parks and schools are safely accessible by walking or cycling and act as central gathering places or hubs in the community. (1C.7)

Social Diversity

- Ensure transit is accessible to bikes, strollers and mobility aids (e.g., wheelchairs). (2C.6)
- Ensure accessibility throughout the city for people with special needs. (1C.8, 1C.12, 1C.13, 1C.14, 1C.15)

- Support accessible transport for children and families with special needs. (1C.8, 1C.12, 1C.13, 1C.14, 1C.15, 3E.2, 3F.1, 3F.4)

Sustainable Transportation Systems

- Continue traffic reduction planning. (7C)
- Continue to plan and advocate for more public transit in the community. (3A, 3B, 3C, 3G)
- Construct pedestrian bridge to Queensborough. (1D.3)
- Explore a bike elevator. (2B.5)
- Extend existing bike lane network. (2A)
- Improve connectivity and encourage walkability with shorter blocks in newly developed areas. (1C.7)

Goal 2 - Develop programming that promotes safe, active and independent travel.

As per the Master Transportation Plan (see bracketed page numbers):

- Encourage walking school bus for every school. (8A.1)
- Facilitate bike safety courses in conjunction with schools/community centres. (8D.2)
- Facilitate Bike or Car Free Days /Annual Cyclovia Day. (8D.3)
- Offer bus safety/familiarizing children with public transport. (8A.3)

Goal 3 - Ensure transportation planning integrates the needs of children, youth and families.

Proposed Actions:

- Encourage TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company to include child and youth consultation in future transportation planning processes.
- Work towards all new infrastructure projects completing a child impact assessment (e.g., does it impact children arriving at community centres, parks, schools, etc.) and conducting audits with local children to mitigate potential negative impacts.

Moving Action Plan

Vision - The transportation network enables children and youth to navigate their neighbourhoods independently, safely and make transportation choices that are physically active and environmentally friendly.

Goal 1 - Facilitate transportation infrastructure that promotes safe, active and independent travel (as per Master Transportation Plan).

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
Access and Mobility				
• Improve sidewalk coverage. (1A)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Ensure adequate benches throughout the city. (1C.7)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Ensure adequate bike lock-ups throughout the city. (2C)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Improve bus shelters around the city. (3E.1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Health and Safety				
• Continue to support School Travel Planning by updating and promoting the 'Best Walking Routes to School' maps. (8A.1, 8E.1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Improve streets, sidewalks and safety features around schools. (1C.7, 7C.1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Ensure adequate lighting along bike routes and spaces used by children and youth. (1C.2)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Increase security at SkyTrain stations. (3F.2)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Provide signage for safe routes to school and to generally make travel easier for children with way-finding features (e.g., lighting, public art, signage, etc.). (1C.7, 8E.4)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Avoid locating high traffic areas close to child and youth spaces, if possible. (7A)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Ensure traffic calming measures in residential neighbourhoods. (7A.1, 7A.2)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Lower speed limits in residential neighbourhoods. (7A.1, 7C.1, 7D.1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Land Use and Transportation Integration				
• Encourage land use planning that supports walkability and mixed use neighbourhoods. (4A.1)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Design neighbourhoods so parks and schools are safely accessible by walking or cycling and act as central gathering places or hubs in the community. (1C.7)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Social Diversity				
• Ensure transit is accessible to bikes, strollers and mobility aids (e.g., wheelchairs). (2C.6)	TBD	TBD	TBD	
• Ensure accessibility throughout the city for people with special needs. (1C.8, 1C.12, 1C.13, 1C.14, 1C.15)	TBD	TBD	TBD	

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support accessible transport for children and families with special needs. (1C.8, 1C.12, 1C.13, 1C.14, 1C.15, 3E.2, 3F.1, 3F.4) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Sustainable Transportation Systems				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue traffic reduction planning. (7C) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to plan and advocate for more public transit in the community. (3A, 3B, 3C, 3G) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct pedestrian bridge to Queensborough. (1D.3) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore a bike elevator. (2B.5) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend existing bike lane network. (2A) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connectivity and encourage walkability with shorter blocks in newly developed areas. (1C.7) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Goal 2 - Develop programming that promotes safe, active and independent travel.				
Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage walking school bus for every school. (8A.1) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate bike safety courses in conjunction with schools/community centres. (8D.2) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Bike or Car Free Days /Annual Cyclovia Day. (8D.3) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer bus safety/familiarizing children with public transport. (8A.3) 	TBD	TBD	TBD	
Goal 3 - Ensure transportation planning integrates the needs of children, youth and families.				
Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company to include child and youth consultation in future transportation planning processes. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards all new infrastructure projects completing a child impact assessment (e.g., does it impact children arriving at community centres, parks, schools, etc.) and conducting audits with local children to mitigate potential negative impacts. 			X	

Playing Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth

Play is the means by which children learn about the world. It is essential to development as it contributes to their physical, social-emotional, and cognitive well-being. Play can mean spontaneous or free play or organized and recreational activities such as sports. Both are important and a child and youth friendly community provides the spaces and opportunities for both of these types of play to occur.

Play is valuable as physical exercise for children and enables them to develop gross motor skills and comfort with their bodies. However, in New Westminster, 15% of Kindergarten students are considered vulnerable on the physical health and wellbeing scale (HELP, 2013).¹¹⁶ In recent years, the consequences of the decrease in physical activity are evident in the looming child obesity epidemic. According to Statistics Canada, only 7% of Canadian children and youth are meeting the new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines of at least 60 minutes per day (Statistics Canada, 2011).¹¹⁷ Encouragingly, 75% of 5 to 19 year olds participate in organized physical activity or sports (Ibid).¹¹⁸

Play is equally important for promoting social-emotional development and health. Research over the years has repeatedly illustrated that discovering how to negotiate the social and environmental context of a neighbourhood is important for developing children's independence and identity through environmental and social competence (Malone, 2001).¹¹⁹ Play helps children to develop social skills and understand their emotions and those of others. Play is a vehicle by which young children learn how to assess risk, cooperate, conquer fear, handle stress, practice adult roles and resolve conflict. As play is often child initiated and controlled, it also helps to develop confidence, creativity, independence and social competence that have critically been linked to the development of resiliency (IPA).¹²⁰

The right to play is the child's first claim on the community. Play is nature's training for life. No community can infringe on that right without doing deep and enduring harm to the bodies and minds of citizens.

David Lloyd George

The UNCRC and Playing

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight "in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

Article 15 - Children and youth have the right to be with friends and to join or set up clubs, unless this interferes with the rights of others.

Article 31 - Children and youth have the right to play and relax by doing things like sports, music and drama.

Studies indicate a positive relationship between play and learning and suggests that it can improve attention, planning skills, attitudes, creative and divergent thinking, language development, and memory (Isenberg and Quisenberry, 2002).¹²¹

Children today have less time and opportunity to play than children of previous generations (Evans, 1985).¹²²

This is due to a number of factors, including an emphasis on educational and organized activities, increased urbanization, a more hurried and pressured lifestyle, safety concerns, and the use of technology. Despite the numerous benefits of play

for healthy child development, play is still seen by some as frivolous or a waste of time. As children become more sedentary and spend more time indoors, the loss of play has serious consequences for their health, education and well-being. The skills and assets they gain through play not only help them to develop but also ensure that they succeed into adulthood.

Key Considerations

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in children's play and numerous issues and trends have emerged. One such discussion is around free play versus organized play. The majority of research on organized activities has shown positive consequences of participation for academic, civic, educational, physical and social development (Mahoney, Harris, Eccles, 2006).¹²³ However, there is concern that many children are over-programmed and lack opportunities for free, unstructured play. According to Statistics Canada, 46% of 6 to 11 year olds get three hours or less of unstructured physical activity per week, including weekends.¹²⁴ Free play offers children the opportunity to explore, learn, and gain the associated physical, cognitive, and social-emotional benefits discussed above. The value of spontaneous play is that:

- it contributes to sound mental health;
- it encourages creativity and flexibility, equipping children with 'survival' skills that cannot be taught through structured learning activities
- it is self-motivated and sustainable;
- it is 'tailored' by children to meet their own unique needs; and
- it lets children be in control (Society for Children and Youth of BC, 1999).¹²⁵

Well-intentioned parents are seeking to provide their children with every opportunity to excel in order to create well-rounded children that will transition into successful adults. Some also feel pressured to not let their children fall behind. While many highly scheduled children thrive, some are reacting to the associated pressure with anxiety and stress (Ginsburg, 2007).¹²⁶ Indeed, incidences of child mental health issues are on the rise. Play is an important way that children learn but it is also a means by which they relax.



Additionally, organized sports and activities often have associated costs, which act as barriers to access for some children and youth. While it is common for many children to participate in organized sports and activities, as they mature their interests broaden and social activities garner greater appeal. Creating suitable spaces and opportunities for play for older children and youth is often overlooked.

Appropriately designed and maintained playgrounds, parks and open spaces are important settings for play and recreation. They are necessary for creating a connection with nature and a respect for the environment. However, without taking the needs of children and youth and the concerns of parents into consideration when designing, these spaces are often unusable and unsuitable.

Additionally, fears of injury and liability issues have resulted in stricter regulations on playgrounds, which have made them less challenging and interesting for children (Copeland, et al. 2012).¹²⁷ Safe playground equipment quickly becomes boring for children, as they are able to master it quickly. This may result in reduced physical activity and opportunities for physical development (Copeland, et al., 2012).¹²⁸

For youth, they often feel that they are not welcome in public spaces or have no spaces to call their own. A variety of regulatory policies and policing activities, such as surveillance, anti-congregation, curfews and move-on laws, have been introduced in cities around the world with the specific aim of restricting youth access to public spaces (Malone, 2001).¹²⁹

Additionally, safety has become a major concern and, as a result, children today have less freedom than previous generations. Perceptions around safety have led to children spending more time inside. In families with two working parents or single parent families, organized activities provide a sense of security and allow them to know where and with whom their children are since they are not always available to supervise.



Sometimes I like to go [out] but I'm not allowed. Boy, age 9

Children are encouraged to participate only in regulated play environments in their homes, friend's houses and commercial facilities (McKendrick et al., 2000).¹³⁰ However, allowing children to play in their neighbourhood can actually enhance the safety by building social connectedness and increasing "eyes on the street" which benefits community members of all ages. As a result of trying to protect children,

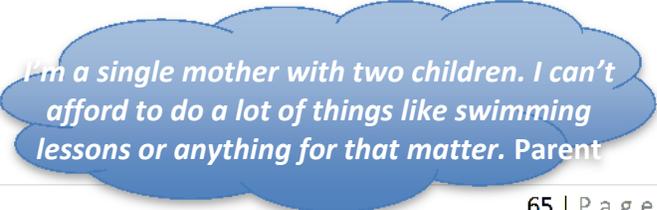
they are often ill equipped to deal with everyday risks and are at greater risk of falling victim to the dangers that parents strive to protect them from (Malone, 2007).¹³¹

Specific Criteria

The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines suggest that children and youth should:

- accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily;
- participate in vigorous-intensity activities at least three days per week; and
- complete muscle and bone strengthening activities at least three days per week (CSEP, 2011).¹³²

They also suggest that more daily physical activity provides greater health benefits and that following these guidelines can improve cholesterol levels, blood pressure, body composition, bone density, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, and aspects of mental health.¹³³ In this sense, play helps create positive behaviours and serves as a preventative measure against disease, which saves untold tax dollars being spent on health care throughout the course of children's lifetimes. While organized sports and recreation



I'm a single mother with two children. I can't afford to do a lot of things like swimming lessons or anything for that matter. Parent

represent the easiest way of working towards fulfilling these guidelines, we know that it is not enough. It is also important to encourage free, unstructured play, encourage outdoor activity, and reduce screen time.



Additionally, it is important to consider the barriers to play and look at ways to create more opportunities for all children and youth to participate. Children from higher income families have a 25% higher participation rate in organized sports and activities than those from lower incomes families.¹³⁴ As such, it is important to consider the policies, user costs and access for low-income families.

Planning new parks, open spaces and playgrounds should take into consideration where “play deserts,” or lack of play spaces exist in communities. When possible, children, youth and parents should be consulted and involved to ensure that the spaces are appropriate, safe, and enjoyable. Four elements to consider when creating play spaces include:

- built structures;
- loose parts;
- natural elements; and
- storage (SCY, 1999).¹³⁵

Additional elements can be included to increase safety such as sufficient lighting and traffic calming measures. For older children and youth, spaces to fulfill their social needs and specific interests, such as skate parks, are important.

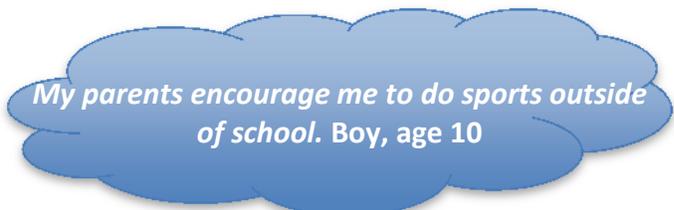
Situational Analysis for New Westminster



New Westminster is home to numerous recreational facilities, 14 community parks and many smaller neighbourhood parks. Additionally, in recent years, there has been the addition of the Anvil Centre, the Qayqayt Neighbourhood Learning Centre, the Queensborough Community Hub, the Youth Centre @ Moody Park and Westminster Pier Park, with an additional community hub under construction. These public spaces form a critical heart to the life of a community and are integral parts of the play and recreation scene.

What Children Said

In New Westminster, children surveyed had a largely positive view of their play opportunities. In total, 60% of children felt that



they have enough time to play, rest and enjoy themselves and 33% felt that they sometimes do. Many children mentioned being busy with homework and extracurricular activities. In fact, the majority of children, 73%, participate in activities outside of school, which is similar to the research on participation in organized sports and activities. Additionally, quite positively, 77% of children felt that they get enough exercise.

Many people don't go slow on my street. Girl, age 9

However, the spaces in which children play fared less positively. While 81% of children felt that there is space nearby their homes to play outside and 64% said there are places in their neighbourhood where they can be in nature, only 51% felt safe on the street outside their home.

[I feel safe] because I know everyone on my street. Girl, age 10

Many of the respondents mentioned traffic and strangers as reasons why they did not feel safe on their street. However, many children also commented on the feeling safe because of the presence of friends, adults or neighbours.

Another interesting finding was that only 35% of children felt that there are places where children who have difficulty walking, running or jumping can play. Twenty-one percent felt that there were not sufficient spaces for these children, 16% said only sometimes, and 29% did not know, which was the highest percentage of unsure responses in the entire survey. This perhaps reflects children's perceived need for more inclusive play spaces in the city.

What Youth Said

Parks and recreation facilities and things to do were major factors in youth's criteria for evaluating the youth friendliness of their neighbourhoods and city. The Youth Centre @ Moody Park and other civic and recreational facilities were consistently mentioned as positive places for youth.

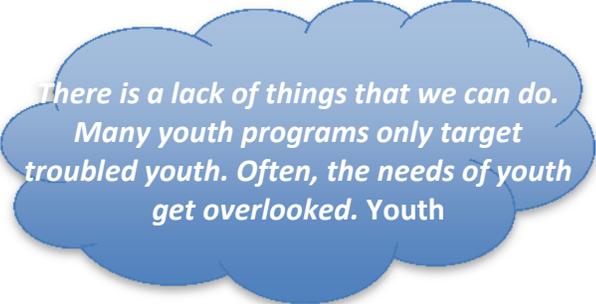
[I feel most comfortable in] parks and community facilities because that's where we can meet others. Youth

Parks were also mentioned frequently, however, many youth mentioned that parks were not always safe places, particularly after dark. Many youth referred to "sketchy" people and criminal activity with regards to why they were not comfortable in parks. In addition, many youth mentioned the fact that

there is not always appropriate equipment or options for play and recreation for youth. Some youth mentioned specific activities, such as basketball or volleyball, or dedicated facilities or spaces, such as hockey courts, pools, skate parks, or climbing walls. Many youth also suggested that they be consulted on designing parks and recreation facilities and held the process around designing

Ask youth what they want in parks. Most of the equipment is for kids. Youth

the Youth Centre @ Moody Park as a successful example of cooperation.



There is a lack of things that we can do. Many youth programs only target troubled youth. Often, the needs of youth get overlooked. Youth

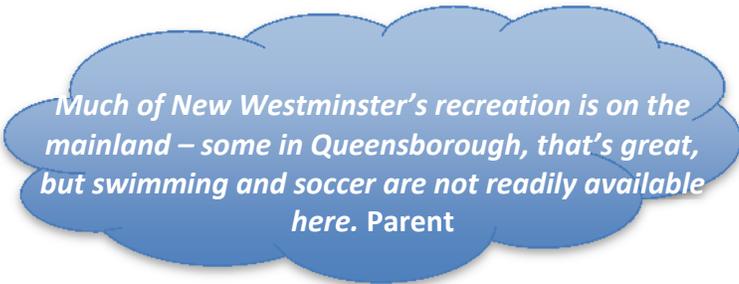
Of the youth surveyed, only 48% felt involved in their city (e.g., after-school activities, clubs, committees, drop-in programs, organized sports, or volunteering). With regards to things to do, an equal number of youth felt that there was a lot to do while others felt that there was not enough to do in New Westminster. This was also reflected in the fact that many youth are travelling to other communities (e.g., Vancouver or Burnaby) to recreate. There were concerns about the

lack of activities in particular neighbourhoods (e.g., Queensborough), time periods (e.g., weekends), or times of the year (e.g., winter). In addition, many youth felt that opportunities were not sufficiently advertised.

What Parents Said

Parents resoundingly mentioned parks and recreation facilities as the places that they felt most comfortable and welcome with their families (94% of respondents). However, some parents also mentioned that their needs around arts, culture and recreation were not being met within their neighbourhoods.

Of the parents surveyed, 37% felt that there are adequate opportunities for children and youth to participate in community life (e.g., after-school activities, clubs, committees, drop-in programs, organized sports, volunteering) and 42% somewhat agreed. Interestingly, when cross-tabulated with the age of their children, the positive responses of parents declined with respect to the age of their children (46% for 0 to 5 year olds, 36% for 6 to 12 year olds, and 21% for 13 to 17 year olds). This may point to a need to examine or provide more programming and services for youth, although there is room for improvement for all age groups. Additionally, 76% of the parent survey respondents who answered 'yes, there are adequate opportunities for children and youth to participate in community life' also answered 'yes, the city is family-friendly' compared with 41% of the parent survey respondents who answered 'no' or 'somewhat' to the adequate opportunities question.



Much of New Westminster's recreation is on the mainland – some in Queensborough, that's great, but swimming and soccer are not readily available here. Parent

Only 24% of parents felt involved in their city and 41% connected to their neighbours, which is significant when you think of how much parent's perceptions of safety and connectedness contributes to children's ability to play on the street. Many studies show that the safest and most resilient neighbourhoods are those where people know each other's names and where residents see each other and get together (Vancouver Foundation, 2012).¹³⁶ This lack of involvement in the city and connection to neighbours by parents could have profound impacts on children's own perceptions and their ability to freely play in their neighbourhoods. Additionally, 65.6% of the parent survey

respondents who answered 'yes, they feel connected to their neighbours' also answered 'yes, their city is family-friendly' compared with 44.9% of the parent survey respondents who answered 'no' or 'somewhat' to the connected to neighbours question.

Vision, Goals and Actions

Vision - Formal and informal play opportunities, activities and spaces are available, accessible, safe, welcoming, and promote healthy child development.

Goal 1 - Increase the accessibility of the Parks, Culture and Recreation Subsidy Program.

Proposed Actions:

- Engage in targeted outreach to low-income and vulnerable communities to take advantage of the program, including providing a brochure in multiple languages.
- Allow youth to apply for the program themselves, which may require alternative processing or proof of low-income.
- Consider increasing the low-income threshold of the program and indexing it annually.
- Decentralize the application process to allow individuals to also apply at their local community centre, train front desk staff to provide information, and provide both information brochures and application forms in public places.

Goal 2 - Increase accessibility of play opportunities.

Proposed Actions:

- Audit the use of municipal spaces to determine equitable access to all age groups. This could be a deliverable under the City's Social Equity Policy.
- Identify underutilized municipal facilities to create play spaces and activities geared towards older children and youth currently underserved (particularly in the east and west ends of the city).
- Increase the number of recreational and cultural programs that families can access during evenings and weekends and ensure that inter-generational opportunities exist for co-recreation.
- Promote local neighbourhood play initiatives. For example:
 - allow temporary street closures during off-peak hours on residential streets; and
 - create or adapt a kit for those wishing to develop their own play groups.
- Upgrade existing parks and playgrounds to ensure that they can be used year round and that washrooms are available, accessible and safe.

Goal 3 - Promote healthy child development through play.

Proposed Actions:

- Educate parents on the benefits of free and risky play.
- Explore the creation of a registered free play program.
- Hold city-wide 'Play Days' or 'Play Festival.'
- Identify and promote natural areas in the city where children and youth can play, explore and learn.
- Create a high profile play destination that serves to bring families to New Westminster. For example, consider creating:
 - an adventure playground (The Land, Wales);

- a nature playground (Speeldernis in Rotterdam, the Netherlands); and
- a net/web playground (Hakone Open-Air Museum, Japan).
- Work towards all existing and new built environments reflecting the research on the links between child development and play. For example:
 - ensure playgrounds are challenging, exciting and imaginative for a variety of ages groups; and
 - re-naturalize portions of parks (include natural elements, stones, streams and wood, as well as movable parts).

Playing Action Plan

Vision - Formal and informal play opportunities, activities and spaces are available, accessible, safe, welcoming, and promote healthy child development.

Goal 1 - Increase the accessibility of the Parks, Culture and Recreation Subsidy Program.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Engage in targeted outreach to low-income and vulnerable communities to take advantage of the program, including providing a brochure in multiple languages.	X			X
• Allow youth to apply for the program themselves, which may require alternative processing or proof of low-income.		X		
• Consider increasing the low-income threshold of the program and indexing it annually.		X		
• Decentralize the application process to allow individuals to also apply at their local community centre, train front desk staff to provide information, and provide both information brochures and application forms in public places.			X	X

Goal 2 - Increase accessibility of play opportunities.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Audit the use of municipal spaces to determine equitable access to all age groups. This could be a deliverable under the City's Social Equity Policy.	X			
• Identify underutilized municipal facilities to create play spaces and activities geared towards older children and youth currently underserved (particularly in the east and west ends of the city).		X		
• Increase the number of recreational and cultural programs that families can access during evenings and weekends and ensure that inter-generational opportunities exist for co-recreation.			X	
• Promote local neighbourhood play initiatives.			X	X
• Upgrade existing parks and playgrounds to ensure that they can be used year round and that washrooms are available, accessible and safe.			X	

Goal 3 - Promote healthy child development through play.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Educate parents on the benefits of free and risky play.	X			X
• Explore the creation of a registered free play program.		X		
• Hold city-wide 'Play Days' or 'Play Festival.'		X		X

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and promote natural areas in the city where children and youth can play, explore and learn. 		X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a high profile play destination that serves to bring families to New Westminster. 			X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards all existing and new built environments reflecting the research on the links between child development and play. 			X	X

Working Domain

How it Impacts Children and Youth?

While workplaces are generally adult environments, they affect the children of parents who work outside the home, as well as youth who have entered the workforce. Today's families are facing numerous complex challenges in their struggle to meet the demands of both family and work. The increased prevalence of dual income families and single working parents means that many parents are squeezed for time at home, squeezed for income because of the high cost of living, and squeezed for services like child care that would help them balance earning a living with raising a family.¹³⁷

Research suggests that work is more likely to interfere with family life than family is to interfere with work (Aycan and Eskin, 2005).¹³⁸ Parents with conflicts between family and work reported poor family functioning, less effective parenting and more depressive symptoms, as well as their children being more likely to have social and emotional difficulties (Strazdins, Clements, Korda, Broom and D'Souza, 2006).¹³⁹ Other outcomes associated with negative work-life balance can also include withdrawal from family interaction, greater likelihood to misuse alcohol, increased conflict in marriage, less involvement in housework, less knowledge of children's experiences, shorter period of breast-feeding and overall decrease in the quality of life (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris and Weitzman, 2001).¹⁴⁰

As work-life conflict has a number of harmful effects on the health and wellbeing of individuals and their families (Frone, 2002),¹⁴¹ it is detrimental to productivity and service provision and to the bottom line of organizations (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999).¹⁴² According to Mullen, Kelly and Kelloway's (2008)¹⁴³ review of the literature, work-life conflict has been associated with:

- stress, anxiety and depression;
- infectious disease and suppressed immune functioning;
- poor dietary habits, a lack of physical exercise and obesity;
- sleep disturbances;
- allergies and migraine headaches;

The UNCRC and Work

Article 3 - Adults should always make a decision by considering what is in the best interest of the child.

Article 12 - Children and youth have a right to participate in all matters affecting them, and those views should be given due weight "in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

Articles 19, 32 and 36 protect young workers - Children and youth have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated. They have the right to protection from work that is bad for their health or education. Children and youth have the right to protection from any other kind of exploitation.

Article 42 - All adults and children should know about this convention. Children and youth have a right to learn about their rights

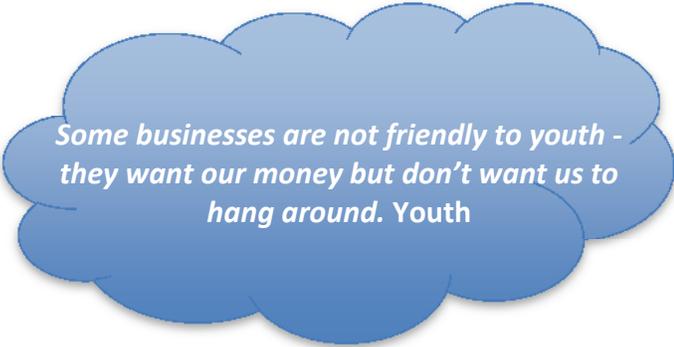
- burnout;
- hypertension, high cholesterol, coronary, digestive and musculoskeletal problems;
- increased costs for medical consultations and prescription drugs; and
- increased dependence on alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and medications.

For youth entering the workforce for the first time, it is critical that they are able to balance their home responsibilities and schoolwork with part-time or full-time work; that they are safe; and that they understand their rights. In a recent report, 43% of youth surveyed reported sustaining workplace injuries and about half did not receive adequate training.¹⁴⁴

Additionally, there is a significant relationship between the number of hours worked and the likelihood of dropping out of school.¹⁴⁵ Child and youth friendly workplaces respect the rights of young workers and seek to nurture and protect them.



[It's] hard to work and keep up with school work. Youth



Some businesses are not friendly to youth - they want our money but don't want us to hang around. Youth

Family-friendly businesses represent another aspect of child and youth friendly workplaces. These businesses are spaces that welcome children and families. By encouraging businesses to offer family-friendly amenities and services, and having family-friendly attitudes, businesses gain satisfied, loyal, and repeat customers, and families know where they are most welcome in the community when they conduct their day-to-day business.

Key Considerations

The provision of family-friendly workplace initiatives can have numerous benefits, not only for the families involved but also for the workplaces. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, work-life balance programs have reported benefits, such as:

- attracting new employees;
- building diversity in skills and personnel;
- helping to retain staff;
- improving morale;
- reducing sickness and absenteeism;
- decreasing stress and burn-out;
- encouraging employees to show more initiative and teamwork;
- enhancing working relationships between colleagues; and
- increasing levels of production and satisfaction.¹⁴⁶

For young workers, it is important that employers are aware of the issues particular to them and respect their rights. This may include being aware of the legal and regulatory aspects around

employing children and youth, knowing their age, and respecting the requirements for parental consent. Additionally, it may include imposing restrictions on the occupations, tasks and times of day that children and youth work, and respecting competing demands around family and school.

For businesses, providing family-friendly services, amenities and attitudes can have a positive impact on encouraging families to patronize their establishments. In fact, a survey of parents in New Westminster found that 96% of respondents said that a business being family-friendly would encourage them to shop more at that establishment.¹⁴⁷

Specific Criteria

The possibility of various family-friendly work initiatives depends on the needs of the employers and employees, the organizational culture, the size of the company, the type of work, and the finances available. Work-life initiatives can potentially deal with a wide range of issues including:

- on-site child care;
- emergency child care assistance;
- seasonal child care programs (such as Christmas or Spring Break);
- eldercare initiatives;
- family leave policies;
- parental leave for adoptive parents;
- other leaves of absence policies such as community service leave, educational leave and self-funded leave;
- employee assistance programs;
- fitness facilities or fitness membership assistance (financial);
- flexible working arrangements such as compressed workweeks, job sharing, paid and emergency time off, part-time, remote work, shift swapping and tele-work;
- internal and/or external educational or training opportunities;
- on-site seminars and workshops (on such topics as nutrition, smoking, stress, etc.); and
- referral program to care services, local organizations, etc.¹⁴⁸

The critical part of a balance in life is choosing priorities. If you are trying to balance a family and a career, the choices are complex because both are important.

Byron Pulsifer

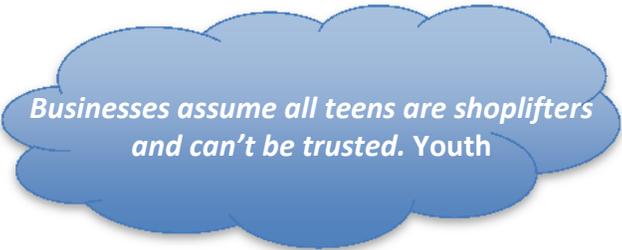
Child and youth friendly workplaces recognize the value of flexibility and supportive environments for parents and understand that it is important for parents to be available for their families.

Another factor is the issue of a living wage for workers. Living wage is a term used to describe the minimum hourly wage necessary for a family of four with two working parents working full-time to pay for food, shelter, support the healthy development of their children, escape financial stress, and participate in their community.¹⁴⁹ A living wage can help reduce the incidence of poverty, ensure greater equality and considers the needs of families.

Employment of children and youth is something that should be carefully managed. Both families and society have an obligation to protect and ensure that these years are primarily spent in the pursuit of

education and personal development.¹⁵⁰ Because provincial labour laws do not overtly protect the above mentioned priorities, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives recommends stringent requirements or changes in policy around the minimum age, allowable hours of work, the first job/entry level wage, and enforcement and monitoring of child and youth workers, including the involvement of parents and guardians.¹⁵¹

Family-friendly businesses can take many forms. Amenities such as booster seats or high chairs, change tables, children’s menus, easy open doors, and stroller parking can go a long way toward helping families take part in community life. Businesses can also offer services such as colouring sheets, events for families, play areas, or sponsor recreational activities that can make families feel welcome. Finally, ensuring that staff is friendly and courteous to families, children and youth ensure that they feel like valued members of the community.



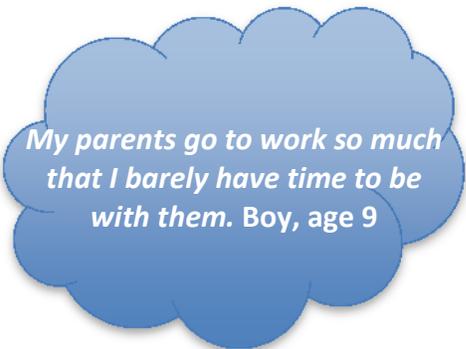
Situation Analysis for New Westminster

The City of New Westminister recognizes the challenges that today’s families are facing in trying to balance the requirements of family and work. While many aspects of working life do not fall under the jurisdiction of a municipality, the City is devoted to assisting where at all possible to encourage the creation of family-friendly work policies. For instance, as a means of leading by example, the City was the first municipality in the Canada to adopt a living wage policy for all city workers and contractors.

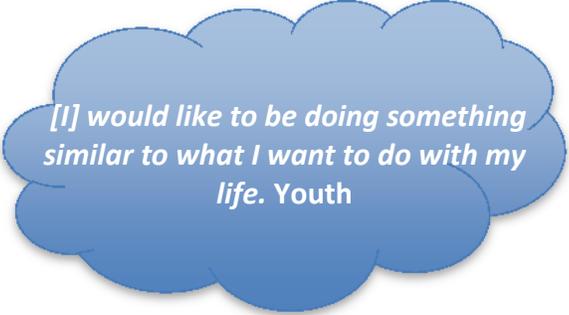
The City, in collaboration with community partners, has facilitated the development of over 600 licensed child care spaces since the development of the Child Care Needs Assessment in October 2008. The City has also enhanced the quality of child care and facilitated lower fees through the Child Care Grant Program. Since its implementation, the City has distributed \$148,000 in grants to non-profit child care providers.

What Children Said

While children were not specifically asked about work for the purpose of this survey, the work that their parents do can have a profound impact on them. Children were asked if they have enough time to spend with the people who are important to them. Sixty-two percent of children felt that they have enough time and 32% felt that they only did sometimes. While it is unclear about the exact reasons, it could potentially be related to the work schedules of their parents.



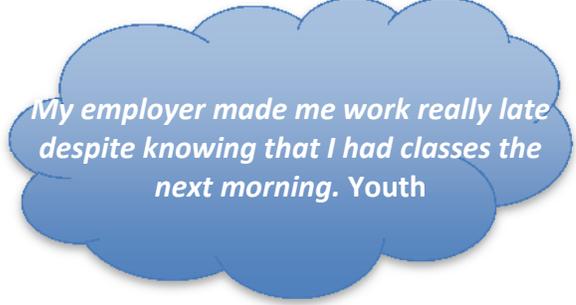
What Youth Said



[I] would like to be doing something similar to what I want to do with my life. Youth

While the vast majority of youth surveyed do not work (62%), of those that do, 65% felt that their working situation meets their needs. When asked how their working situation could be improved, youth mentioned wages, hours and flexibility. Additionally, some mentioned the difficulty of balancing school and work, while some mentioned the necessity of working to help out at home with some expenses.

Some youth commented on the importance of gaining work experience. One youth stated in response to the question “If you were Mayor, what would you do to improve the city for youth?” that they would “make a work experience program where youth can go to explore different career options.”



My employer made me work really late despite knowing that I had classes the next morning. Youth

What Parents Said

Of the parents surveyed, 47% felt that their current working situation meets their family’s needs and 40% felt that it meets their needs somewhat. Sixty-six percent of the parent survey respondents who answered ‘yes, their current work situation meets their family’s needs’ also answered ‘yes, their city is family-friendly’ compared with 43% of the parent survey respondents who answered ‘no’ or ‘somewhat’ to the working situation question.

The vast majority of respondents, 70%, live in dual-income households, with 28% living in single-income households. Among parent survey respondents, parents in single parent households, two parent households in which one parent is working, renters and those who live in co-ops, those who spoke a language other than English or French at home, and recent immigrants were less likely to answer that their current working situation meets their family’s needs.

Interestingly, satisfaction with one’s working situation decreases related to the age and number of children in the home. Fifty-two percent of parents with children 0 to 5 years old said that their current working situation meets their family’s needs as compared to 43% of parents with children 6 to 12 years old and 31% of parents with youth 13 to 17 years old. With regards to the total number of children in the household, 50% of parents with one child felt that their current working situation meets their family’s needs in comparison to 47% of parents with two children and 45% of parents with three or more children.

While differences were highlighted in the survey between more and less socio-economically advantaged groups, it is worth noting that, even among more advantaged groups (e.g., non-recent immigrant parent survey respondents), the rate of work satisfaction (‘yes’) is less than three in five respondents. This indicates that work situations are a challenge for all parents, regardless of socio-economic backgrounds. However, work does remain a greater challenge for those from less socio-

economically advantaged groups. For example, the largest gap in work satisfaction was between those parents who:

- rent or live in co-ops and owner survey respondents; and
- spoke a language other than English at home and English speaking survey respondents.

Language barriers may be a factor affecting both recent immigrant survey respondents (most recent immigrant parent survey respondents came from countries where English was not the main language) and non-English speaking parent survey respondents.

Vision, Goals, and Actions

Vision - Youth and families have positive experiences in their place of work and where they shop and the retail sector meets the needs of children, youth and families and contributes to the community.

Goal 1 - Promote principles of family-friendly workplaces.

Proposed Actions:

- Examine internal City policies and practices and explore ways for the City to be a leader in promoting family-friendly workplaces.
- Support an increase of the minimum wage.
- Work with community partners to create a family-friendly workplace accreditation or recognition program.

Goal 2 - Support child, youth and family friendly retail experiences.

Proposed Actions:

- Develop opportunities to recognize businesses and individuals that are making a notable contribution to children, youth and families.
- Help promote the Family-Friendly Business Program.
- Provide population level data that demonstrates a customer base of families in order to attract family-serving businesses that address unmet needs.

Goal 3 - Prepare youth to join the workforce.

Proposed Actions:

- Offer workers' rights and safety programs for youth at community centres or the Youth Centre @ Moody Park.
- Work with Fraser Works Co-op, the Immigrant Services Society of BC and other employment service providers to host job or career fairs for youth for the purpose of sharing information about different career paths, employment skills and work experience opportunities.

Working Action Plan

Vision - Youth and families have positive experiences in their place of work and where they shop and the retail sector meets the needs of children, youth and families and contributes to the community.

Goal 1 - To promote principles of family friendly workplaces.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Examine internal City policies and practices and explore ways for the City to be a leader in promoting family-friendly workplaces.		X		
• Support an increase of the minimum wage.		X		X
• Work with community partners to create a family-friendly workplace accreditation or recognition program.			X	

Goal 2 - To support child, youth and family friendly retail experiences.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Develop opportunities to recognize businesses and individuals that are making a notable contribution to children, youth and families.	X			X
• Help promote the Family-Friendly Business Program.		X		X
• Provide population level data that demonstrates a customer base of families in order to attract family-serving businesses that address unmet needs.		X		X

Goal 3 - Prepare youth to join the workforce.

Proposed Actions	Y1	Y2	Y3	Ongoing
• Offer workers' rights and safety programs for youth at community centres or the Youth Centre @ Moody Park.	X			X
• Work with Fraser Works Co-op, the Immigrant Services Society of BC and other employment service providers to host job or career fairs for youth for the purpose of sharing information about different career paths, employment skills and work experience opportunities.			X	

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- 157 Ibid.

REPORT

Development Services

To: Land Use and Planning Committee **Date:** 2/1/2016

From: Beverly Grieve **File:** 13.2630.05
Director of Development Services

Item #: 6/2016

Subject: New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION

***THAT** the Land Use and Planning Committee provide feedback on the attached draft New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan (2016).*

***THAT** the Land Use and Planning Committee request that staff format and revise the attached document based on any feedback received.*

***THAT** the Land Use and Planning Committee recommend that Council endorse the revised document.*

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to receive feedback related to the attached draft *New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan (2016)*.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In October 2014, the City applied for an Age-Friendly Community Planning and Project Grant from the Province of British Columbia. The application was in support of the development of a Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan. In February 2015, the City received word that its application for \$20,000 was successful and the project was launched the following month. The project goals included:

- creating an action plan to inform the City's Official Community Plan and the work of City Departments;

- developing action guides to inform and educate the larger community, including businesses and workplaces;
- educating elected officials and design professionals about dementia and its impacts;
- fostering collaboration and partnership opportunities with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Fraser Health Authority, as well as community, faith, settlement and social service organizations; and,
- providing a voice for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Age- and Ability-Friendly Community Initiatives

The City is working to create an age- and ability-friendly community, which encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation, safety and security to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age- and ability-friendly community adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.

Since 2007, the City has undertaken the following projects in support of being an age- and ability-friendly community:

- Adaptable Housing Policy and Bylaw;
- Age Friendly Business Initiative;
- Century House Inclusion Project;
- In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fair: Connecting Seniors to Services;
- Seniors Engagement Toolkit;
- Seniors Services Directory; and,
- Wheelability Assessment Project.

3.2 Dementia-Friendly Community Initiatives

At the Committee of the Whole meeting on October 7, 2013, Council endorsed the following Seniors Advisory Committee motion:

***THAT** the City of New Westminster provide communications support in raising awareness about the increasing incidence of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.*

***THAT** the City of New Westminster consider a dementia friendly component as part of its ongoing planning for an age- and ability-friendly community.*

***THAT** the City of New Westminster lobby the senior levels of government for a comprehensive, fully-funded Dementia Plan, which would include policies and*

programs that support early diagnosis and intervention; enhanced support for family caregivers; and tools for health care professionals to provide the best care possible.

Based on the motion, the City established a Dementia-Friendly Community Working Group, which included representation from the Seniors Advisory Committee, the Seniors Planning and Action Network|50+ and the Alzheimer Society of B.C., as well as people living with dementia and their caregivers and family members. Working group activities in 2014 included:

- conducting research on dementia-friendly communities and identifying promising practices for New Westminster;
- creating a Dementia-Friendly Community Profile for New Westminster;
- developing and publishing a series of CityPage ads to increase understanding of dementia and awareness of community resources; and,
- holding a panel discussion on dementia and dementia-friendly communities as part of the City's 2014 Seniors Festival.

The City, in conjunction with City of Burnaby, also drafted a resolution in support of a National Dementia Plan, which was endorsed by the Lower Mainland Local Government Association and the Union of BC Municipalities and was referred to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

In January 2015, New Westminster became the first Dementia-Friendly City Council in British Columbia and Canada, with Council members and senior managers and staff participating in Dementia-Friends training

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Definition

Dementia is an overall term for progressive deterioration of cognitive abilities, including memory, judgment, motor coordination, perception and verbal ability. Dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is also not a specific disease – as many different diseases can cause dementia. The most common is Alzheimer's disease, followed by vascular dementia which is usually due to strokes.

4.2 Prevalence

Based on dementia rate projections as provided by the Fraser Health Authority and based on population projection data as provided by BC Stats, the New Westminster Local Health Area had about 940 people living with dementia in 2014. This number will almost double (i.e., 1,830 people) by 2034.

4.3 Impacts on Municipalities

Given that about half the people with dementia live in the community, the built environment plays an important role in facilitating independence. More specifically, the built environment affects their ability to access, negotiate and utilize their surroundings. For example, complicated building designs negatively impact orientation and way-finding; excessive signage can increase confusion and disorientation; and patterned and uneven surface treatments can result in falls. These areas, plus others, fall under the influence of municipalities.

4.4 Dementia-Friendly Communities

Dementia-friendly communities are ones which exhibit a high level of public awareness and understanding so that people with dementia and their caregivers and family members are encouraged to seek help and are supported by their community. They are also ones that adapt their facilities, infrastructure, programs and services to be accessible to and inclusive of people living with dementia.

4.5 Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan

The *New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan* (2016) (see attachment #1) was informed by a Project Working Group, which included representation from three City Departments, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Fraser Health Authority, as well as persons living with dementia, caregivers and seniors. It was also informed by a literature review to identify promising practices; a survey of 52 people living with or impacted by dementia; a community conversation event which involved more than 60 people; and a resource table at the City's 2015 Seniors Festival, in which over 100 seniors visited the table, with many sharing their experiences related to dementia and providing their ideas and suggestions regarding dementia-friendly communities.

The action plan primarily focused on City actions; however, it should be recognized that the senior levels of government also have an important role to play, as there is a need to provide adequate levels of home support, affordable and appropriate housing, and respite care. There is also a need for adequate and affordable residential care options when community living is no longer desirable or possible.

The action plan will be implemented over a three-year period and will involve all City Departments, with the City's Senior Social Planner being responsible for coordinating its implementation. It is recognized that the plan will evolve and change to reflect unforeseen opportunities and challenges.

When implemented, the action plan will assist the City in realizing the shared vision which emerged as a result of the consultation process: ***People in New Westminster who live with dementia and their caregivers are safe, supported, connected and valued.*** In addition to benefitting people with dementia and their caregivers and family members now and in the future, the action plan demonstrates the leadership of the City in this important area and can act as a model and template for other municipalities in British Columbia and elsewhere.

5.0 OPTIONS

There are four options for consideration:

1. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide feedback on the attached draft *New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan (2016)*.
2. That the Land Use and Planning Committee request that staff format and revise the attached document based on any feedback received.
3. That the Land Use and Planning Committee recommend that Council endorse the revised document.
4. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide staff with other feedback.

Staff recommends options 1, 2 and 3.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan

This report has been prepared by:

John Stark, Senior Social Planner
Tristan Johnson, Planning Analyst

This report was reviewed by:

Jackie Teed, Manager of Planning



Beverly Grieve
Director of Development Services

Attachment 1

*New Westminster Dementia-Friendly
Community Action Plan*



NEW WESTMINSTER

Please note that this final draft document has not been formatted. Photos, quotes and other visual images will be incorporated into the final document.

New Westminster Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan

February 2016

Acknowledgements

The Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan would not have been possible without the leadership and commitment of New Westminster City Council, who unanimously endorsed the grant application in support of the plan; participated in Dementia-Friends trainings and in the process became the first Dementia-Friendly Council in British Columbia; and attended the Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation.

The plan would also not have been possible without the involvement and work of the project working group, who met on nine occasions and dedicated countless hours in support of the literature review, the survey, the two events, and plan development.

Project Working Group Members:

- Gwilym Davies, Community Member
- Pat Dunnett, Community Member
- Fabio Feldman, Fraser Health Authority
- Tristan Johnson, Planning Division, City of New Westminster
- Mariam Larson, Project Coordinator
- Rebecca Morris, Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- Annette Oakes, Community Member
- Wolf Strecko, Community Member
- Maria Przydatek, Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- Antonia Reynolds, Engineering, City of New Westminster
- Patricia Smith, Community Member
- Shelly Schnee, Parks, Culture and Recreation, City of New Westminster
- John Stark, Planning Division, City of New Westminster

In addition to those cited above, the plan owes a debt of gratitude to the many people with dementia and their caregivers and family members who completed the survey or attended one of the events. Their voices carried much weight and their ideas and suggestions shaped the plan and added to its relevance. It is hoped that the plan will help to facilitate independence and an enhanced quality of life for those who gave of their time so willingly.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	p. 4
1. Introduction	p. 5
• Overview	p. 5
• Dementia-Friendly Community Concept	p. 6
• Benefits of a Dementia-Friendly Community	p. 7
• Framework for a Dementia-Friendly New Westminster	p. 8
2. Background	p. 10
3. Methodology	p. 12
4. Vision	p. 16
5. Action Plan	p. 17
6. Next Steps, Implementation and Monitoring	p. 22
References and Resources	p. 23

Executive Summary

The City of New Westminster (City), with funding support from the Province of British Columbia and in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Fraser Health Authority, developed this Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan.

The action plan is in response to the increasing incidence of dementia in society and New Westminster City Council's interest and commitment to becoming more dementia-friendly. In fact, City Council became the first Dementia-Friendly Council in British Columbia after they and Senior Management participated in Dementia-Friends training.

The City has an important role to play in facilitating independence and contributing to the quality of life for people with dementia through infrastructure investments, parks and public spaces, programming and services, and signage, as well as its ability to influence or inform the built environment, including private development.

While the action plan is primarily focused on City actions, it should be recognized that the senior levels of government also have an important role to play, as there is a need to provide adequate levels of home support, affordable and appropriate housing, and respite care. There is also a need for adequate and affordable residential care options when community living is no longer desirable or possible.

The action plan will be implemented over a three-year period and will involve all City Departments, with the City's Senior Social Planner being responsible for coordinating its implementation. It is recognized that the plan will evolve and change to reflect unforeseen opportunities and challenges.

When implemented, the plan will assist the City in realizing the shared vision which emerged as a result of the consultation process: ***People in New Westminster who live with dementia and their caregivers are safe, supported, connected and valued.*** In addition to benefitting people with dementia and their caregivers now and in the future, the plan demonstrates the leadership of the City in this important area and can act as a model and template for other municipalities in British Columbia and elsewhere.

1. Introduction

Overview

In New Westminster, it is estimated that 940 people have dementia, with about half living in the community. This number is projected to almost double to 1,830 by 2034.

Dementia is an overall term for progressive deterioration of cognitive abilities, including memory, judgment, motor coordination, perception and verbal ability. Dementia is not a normal part of aging. It is also not a specific disease – as many different diseases can cause dementia. The most common is Alzheimer’s disease, followed by vascular dementia which is usually due to strokes.

Community refers to the physical and social environment where people live, play, shop and work. It is where they engage in activities and events that provide them with a sense of belonging, purpose and safety. Community can mean a city or neighbourhood, as well as groups of people who share common activities, beliefs or interests.

The onset of dementia has considerable implications for a person’s daily life and engagement. Cognitive impairment and dementia are consistently rated among the top three health concerns for older adults. About half of those with dementia live in the community, where they strive to maintain their independence and quality of life for as long as possible. As such, dementia impacts individuals, families and communities.

The stigma and progression of dementia, as well as the presence of physical and social barriers, can make daily life and ordinary routines more difficult. This can lead to withdrawal from familiar places and people, resulting in isolation, inactivity, decreased independence and reduced quality of life. For example:

- complicated building designs, excessive signage and loss of landmarks due to new development can increase confusion and disorientation;
- people may not know how to effectively communicate or work with someone with dementia; and
- program policies or event formats may not provide enough clarity or support for participation.

People with dementia say that the areas that make the most difference in their lives are the:

- built or physical environment;
- civic facilities;
- community, social and support services;
- local groups; and

- social networks (Creating a Dementia-Friendly York, 2012).

Dementia-Friendly Community Concept

The dementia-friendly community concept is relatively new. A dementia-friendly community focuses on the inclusion of people with dementia and on stigma reduction (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015). It takes an “asset-based” approach – building on what people living with dementia can do and the contributions they can make – as opposed to a “deficit model” which emphasizes the activities they cannot do (Creating a Dementia-Friendly York, 2012).

A dementia-friendly community is defined by both its physical and social characteristics. Physical characteristics include accessible public bathrooms, clear and legible signage, distinctive structures and landmarks for orientation and way-finding, and welcoming and inclusive civic facilities, open spaces and parks. Social characteristics include recognizing that people with dementia are more than their diagnosis and that dementia can affect a person’s cognition, behaviour, emotions and physical capabilities (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015).

Municipalities can use four ‘cornerstones’ to assess their dementia-friendliness:

- **People:** How do caregivers, family members, friends, neighbours, health care professionals, social service workers and the wider community respond to and support people with dementia?
- **Place:** How do housing, neighbourhood physical environments and transport systems support people with dementia?
- **Resources:** Are there sufficient facilities and services for people with dementia and are they appropriate to their needs and supportive of their capabilities? How well can people with dementia access civic, community and social resources?
- **Supports:** Do those who support people with dementia communicate, collaborate and plan together sufficiently well to provide the best support and do they use people’s own ‘assets’ well? (Creating a Dementia-Friendly York, 2012).

Municipalities can make a significant difference through policy and bylaw changes, development review functions, education and training initiatives, infrastructure investments, and programming and service delivery enhancements, which all play an important role in facilitating independence and contributing to quality of life for people with dementia.

Municipal leaders and staff can work to:

- be inclusive of people with dementia;
- eliminate the stigma and address misinformation associated with dementia;
- provide patient, respectful and responsive customer service;
- reduce barriers to engaging in civic and community activities;

- support understanding in the business community and professional sector; and
- use a dementia-friendly lens to inform the design of built environment features such as buildings, public spaces and signage.

Benefits of a Dementia-Friendly Community

A dementia-friendly community exhibits a high level of public awareness and understanding so that people with dementia and their caregivers and family members are encouraged to seek help and are supported in the community.

Becoming a dementia-friendly community offers the potential to reduce injury and isolation. “For example, everyone benefits when community members can recognize and respond appropriately when a person with dementia is experiencing disorientation or wandering” (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015).

In a dementia-friendly community, people with dementia maintain their social networks and can continue to attend community events, conduct their banking, order their meals at restaurants, participate in recreational activities, volunteer their time and even work for as long as possible (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015; Local Government Association, UK, 2012). More specifically, they can:

- access programs, resources and services designed with their needs in mind and provided by people who respect and understand their needs;
- experience control over the decisions that impact their lives;
- locate housing and supports to live as they choose for as long as possible; and
- realize a sense of belonging, independence, safety and value in social and community settings (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015; Green and Lakey, 2013).

People who are not living with dementia also benefit, as:

- clear, simple and standardized signage supports people who speak different languages or who have a visual impairment;
- enhanced accessibility supports families with strollers and people with mobility limitations;
- leisure, recreation and social programming that addresses a range of needs is more inclusive, inviting and responsive; and
- well-designed parks and public spaces increase participation in community activities and events.

Additional outcomes of a dementia-friendly community can include:

- healthier lifestyles to help prevent or delay the onset of dementia;

- increased knowledge about dementia and understanding of the signs of dementia;
- more people seeking early diagnosis and intervention;
- high levels of public awareness and support for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members;
- improved capacity to live well with dementia; and
- increased knowledge about how to respond in situations where someone is disoriented or wandering (Alzheimer Society of B.C., 2015; Alzheimer’s Society, U.K., 2013; Ontario Action Plan for Dementia, 2010).

Framework for a Dementia-Friendly New Westminster

New Westminster is well positioned to become a dementia-friendly community. Extensive work in support of becoming an age- and ability-friendly community provides a solid foundation to expand the focus to address dementia-specific concerns.

Existing policy and practice which is supportive of a dementia-friendly community includes:

- Adaptable Housing Policy and Bylaw;
- Age-Friendly Business Initiative;
- Age-Friendly City Consultation Report;
- Century House (Seniors Centre) Inclusion Project;
- Extreme Heat Plan;
- In My Back Yard (IMBY) Fair: Connecting Seniors to Services;
- Master Transportation Plan;
- Seniors and Access Ability Advisory Committees;
- Seniors Engagement Toolkit;
- Seniors Festival;
- Seniors Services Directory; and
- Wheelability Assessment Project.

The City, as part of its Official Community Plan Review, is incorporating a number of policies and actions in support of an age-, ability- and dementia-friendly community.

City strengths include:

Leadership

- The first Dementia-Friendly City Council in British Columbia, with Council members and senior managers and staff participating in Dementia-Friends training;
- a corporate commitment to creating an age- and ability-friendly community (e.g., Adaptable Housing Policy and Bylaw, Century House Inclusion Project and Seniors Engagement Toolkit);

- a regional leader in planning for the needs of at-risk, marginalized and vulnerable populations (e.g., families living in poverty, new immigrants and refugees, people who are homeless, etc.);
- a rich history and abundance of heritage resources (i.e., numerous landmarks to assist in orientation and wayfinding); and
- a willingness to coordinate planning and collaborate with non-municipal organizations in health, housing, social services, transportation, etc.

Programs and Services

- A seniors centre with over 2,000 members that offers a range of leisure, recreation and social activities, as well as emotional wellbeing programs; and
- a strong network of civic facilities, parks and public spaces, including two community centres and a new conference facility and museum.

Geography

- A compact community (i.e., 15.6 square kilometres) with distinct, well-defined neighbourhoods;
- a pedestrian-oriented and walkable community with an average Walk Score® of 70; and
- an excellent public transportation system, including five SkyTrain stations and four community shuttles in addition to regular bus service.

A dementia-friendly New Westminster will:

- enable people living with dementia to stay in familiar environments for as long as possible, with minimal dislocation and disruption;
- minimize the need for professional care;
- reduce the stigma and isolation related to dementia;
- support relationships with family members, friends and neighbours; and
- validate, inform and support caregivers as essential partners with the person living with dementia.

2. Background

In September 2013, the City's Seniors Advisory Committee, which acts as a resource and provides advice to City Council on long-term planning issues related to present and future seniors, discussed the increasing prevalence of dementia, its potential impacts on municipal services and the research related to dementia-friendly communities. Based on this discussion, the committee developed the following motion, which was unanimously endorsed by Council:

***THAT** the City of New Westminster provide communications support in raising awareness about the increasing incidence of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.*

***THAT** the City of New Westminster consider a dementia friendly component as part of its ongoing planning for an age- and ability-friendly community.*

***THAT** the City of New Westminster lobby the Province for a comprehensive, fully-funded Dementia Plan, which would include policies and programs that support early diagnosis and interventions; enhances support for family caregivers; and tools for health care professionals to provide the best care possible.*

Based on the motion, the City established a Dementia-Friendly Community Working Group, which included representation from the Seniors Advisory Committee, the Seniors Planning and Action Network|50+ and the Alzheimer Society of B.C., as well as people living with dementia and their caregivers and family members. Working group activities in 2014 included:

- conducting research on dementia-friendly communities and identifying promising practices for New Westminster;
- creating a Dementia-Friendly Community Profile for New Westminster;
- developing and publishing a series of ads in the local newspaper to increase understanding of dementia and awareness of community resources; and
- holding a panel discussion on dementia and dementia-friendly communities as part of the City's 2014 Seniors Festival.

In October 2014, the City applied for an Age-Friendly Community Planning and Project Grant from the Province of British Columbia. The application was in support of the creation of a Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan. In February 2015, the City received word that its application was successful and the project was launched the following month. The project goals included:

- creating an action plan to inform the City's Official Community Plan and Parks, Culture and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, as well as the work of City Departments;
- developing action guides to inform and educate the larger community, including businesses and workplaces;

- educating elected officials and design professionals about dementia and its impacts;
- fostering collaboration and partnership opportunities with the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Fraser Health Authority, as well as other community, faith and social service organizations; and
- providing a voice for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members.

3. Methodology

Project Working Group

A project working group was established to engage community members and service providers in project development and delivery. The goal was to be inclusive and representative of people with dementia and their caregivers and family members.

Community members included a person with dementia and seniors with experience as caregivers and family members of people with dementia. Several members were familiar with the project context through their participation with the Dementia-Friendly Community Working Group, as well as the Seniors Planning and Action Network |50+.

Organizational members represented the City's Engineering, Planning and Parks, Culture and Recreation Departments, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and the Fraser Health Authority.

The project working group met on nine occasions between April and December 2014. They were actively involved in the literature review and survey development and distribution. They also played a key role in the development, promotion and delivery of the Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation.

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to identify promising community engagement strategies and dementia-friendly community actions which may be appropriate for New Westminster.

Dementia-friendly community articles, reports and studies were identified as part of an on-line literature scan and project working group members reviewed and summarized the materials and reported back on their findings. Many of the materials were derived from Australia and the United Kingdom, which are considered leaders in the area of dementia-friendly communities. Additional resource materials were provided by the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

Survey

A survey was developed to engage people with dementia and their caregivers and family members in sharing their experiences and their ideas for becoming a more dementia-friendly community.

The format was based on surveys conducted in other communities. Language and layout needed to be clear and easy to navigate to support completion by people with dementia. Caregivers, family members and health care professionals were requested to assist with completion if needed.

The survey was promoted heavily in the community through newspaper ads, articles, posters and word-of-mouth. It was also distributed by e-mail through the Alzheimer Society of B.C., Century House (Seniors Centre), Fraser Health Home Health and Specialized Seniors' Clinic, residential care facilities and senior serving organizations.

Hard copies were mailed to community members on request and were also available at Century House, City Hall and Public Library branches. Completed surveys were returned by mail and through drop-boxes at the pick-up locations at civic facilities.

Survey Results

A total of 52 surveys were completed and returned and responses were compiled in a report. The report was forwarded to community members and service providers who requested a copy, with 60 copies being distributed at the Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation and 100+ copies being distributed at the 2015 Seniors Festival.

Respondents

The majority of respondents were women who were aged 65 or older and living with their partner or spouse. Care providers completed the most surveys (62%). While twenty people with dementia participated in the survey, only eight did so without assistance.

Housing Types

The two most common housing types were apartment or condominium and single-family home. Several respondents in single-family homes reported that they were considering downsizing due to the cost and time of maintenance. Others commented on the high cost of adding accessibility features to a home.

Social Contact, Connections and Community Involvement

While most respondents (60%) leave their home four or more times a week; others are at risk of social isolation due to infrequent outings. The vast majority of responses (68%) reflect limited connections with neighbours, with several commenting on the difficulty of making such connections in multi-family buildings such as high-rises.

Only seven respondents (19%) felt involved in their community, with the vast majority of responses reflecting limited community involvement.

Welcome and Comfortable Spaces

Century House and the Public Library were the top two places where respondents felt most welcome and comfortable. They found staff to be friendly, helpful, patient and respectful. They also appreciated the relevant information and responsive programming such as Minds in Motion. Respondents felt least welcome and comfortable in busy or crowded areas or when using public transit.

Knowledge and Perception

The vast majority of respondents (91%) felt that knowledge about dementia was very limited. The perception of people living with dementia is also an issue, with only three respondents (9%) feeling that people with dementia are viewed positively.

Challenges to Living and Participation

The majority of respondents felt that the built environment was somewhat accessible and easy to use. However, the most significant challenges to living and participating in the community were related to accessibility and mobility.

The majority of respondents felt that civic programs and services were somewhat welcoming and inclusive, with many offering suggestions to enhance them.

Suggestions to Improve Quality of Life

Most respondents made at least one suggestion to improve independence and quality of life for people with dementia, which is reflected in the action plan.

Community Engagement

In addition to the survey, there were four key activities to support community engagement in becoming more dementia-friendly – i.e., CityPage ads and a press release, dialogue with individuals and organizations, the Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation and the 2015 Seniors Festival.

CityPage Ads and Press Release

Six CityPage ads and a press release promoted the project and encouraged people to participate in the survey and to attend the event. Based on the ads, there were numerous inquiries with regard to accessing information and resources related to dementia. The press release was picked-up by local and national media, including a segment on CBC Radio.

Dialogue with Individuals and Organizations

Project working group members distributed the survey and promoted the event. As community leaders, they shared information with individuals and organizations.

Dialogue was often triggered when members distributed posters to more than 50 businesses, faith groups and senior serving organizations. The dialogue highlighted a strong desire for greater understanding of dementia and a growing need for information and resources.

Community Conversation Event

The Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation was held at Century House on Saturday, October 3, 2015. The purpose of the event was to raise public awareness about dementia, to share the survey results and to enable the community to have input the action plan.

The event included presentations, a panel discussion and resource tables, as well as interactive activities to engage residents in sharing their ideas. Panelists included a person with dementia, a caregiver and a representative from the Alzheimer Society of B.C. More than 60 people attended the event, including four City Councilors and a Member of Parliament.

Participants used post-it notes to share their experiences and ideas for becoming a more dementia-friendly community. They also spoke with and received resources from Alzheimer Society of B.C., the Fraser Health Specialized Seniors Clinic, the Parks, Culture and Recreation Department and the Seniors Services Society. An unexpected demographic was represented by the New Westminster Secondary School Initiative for Neuroscience and Dementia, a new club working to increase awareness of dementia and its impacts among younger people.

New Westminster Seniors Festival

Project working group members supported a resource table at the annual Seniors Festival, which was held at Century House on Saturday, October 17, 2015 and attended by 250+ people. The table was adjacent a table staffed by the Alzheimer Society of B.C., which provided an opportunity to direct people for information and resources and to share concerns and questions. Working group members spoke with many people about the project, listening to their concerns and sharing information about dementia, as well as distributing 100+ copies of the survey results.

4. Vision

Based on the literature review and community engagement process, the following vision emerged:

People in New Westminster who live with dementia and their caregivers are safe, supported, connected and valued.

They experience:

- **Safety** through confidence and trust in the physical and social environment.
- **Support** with home, community and work related activities.
- **Connection** through sustaining and developing relationships.
- **Value** through understanding, respect, independence and meaningful engagement.

There is a need to be both practical and ambitious about what might be achievable. By setting the aspirations in context of resource availability and service capacity, the aim is to develop a realistic and realizable vision and action plan. But while there is no doubt a compelling business and resource case for a dementia-friendly community, there is also an overriding moral case – one that recognizes the worth of all residents, particularly those who are elderly and affected by dementia, and that affirms their rights as residents to have access to all the aspects of their normal lives that they have previously enjoyed (Creating a Dementia-Friendly York, 2012).

For elderly people with dementia, the world is small. Great deeds no longer count. It's the simple things that make life worth living: your own home, a safe place, and – if possible – doing what you feel like doing (Dementia Village Architects).

5. Action Plan

The action plan is based on the knowledge, experience and feedback of project working group members; the literature review; the survey; and the visioning exercise which formed part of the Dementia-Friendly Community Conversation and the 2015 Seniors Festival.

The action plan is primarily focused on City actions and its implementation will involve all City Departments. As such, there will be a need to communicate the importance of realizing the vision of a dementia-friendly community; aligning with Corporate and Departmental priorities; demonstrating the key role to be played by each Department; working within the resource constraints of each Department; and providing flexibility for the plan to evolve and change to reflect unforeseen opportunities and challenges.

While the action plan is primarily focused on City actions, it should be recognized that all levels of government, community partners and the public-at-large have a key role to play. Regarding the senior levels of government, there is a need to provide adequate levels of home support, affordable and appropriate housing, and respite to enable people with dementia to live as independently as possible in the community, and adequate and affordable residential care options when community living is no longer desirable or possible.

Proposed Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Awareness and Education		
Recognize Alzheimer's Awareness Month every January through the reading of a Council Proclamation.	Seniors Advisory Committee and Council	Annually
As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, develop a public campaign to increase awareness and understanding about dementia. This could include working with local media outlets to profile personal stories.	Communications and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	Annually
As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, host a movie or video screening evening (e.g., Still Alice, Jim's Story, etc.), which would be followed by a conversation circle.	Century House	Annually (starting 2017)
As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, host a public dialogue with seniors to increase awareness and understanding about dementia and to provide information on resources and supports.	Century House and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	Annually (starting 2017)
As part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, engage and educate students about dementia.	School District #40 and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	Annually (starting 2017)
Recruit a champion to be the face and spokesperson for dementia in New Westminster. This person could receive the Council Proclamation and participate in awareness and education events.	Century House and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	Annually (starting 2017)
Promote New Westminster as a Dementia-Friendly Community and as a welcoming, inclusive and safe place for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members to live, play, shop and visit.	Economic Development and Tourism New West	Ongoing (starting 2017)
Compile booklists for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members. This could include picture and talking books, which would encourage conversation, and resource and self-help books.	New Westminster Public Library and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2016

Proposed Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Awareness and Education, Cont.		
Collect and display culturally-sensitive and multilingual educational materials about dementia.	New Westminster Public Library and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2016
Display selected educational materials about dementia and include a website link, possibly in the form of a bookmark, to access additional materials.	All Civic Facilities and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2016
Develop and distribute three community guides related to creating welcoming spaces, inclusive workplaces and businesses, and receptive communities. These guides would be four or eight pages in length and would build on the action plan.	Planning Division	2016
Incorporate dementia-friendly clubs, groups and organizations as a separate layer on the City's Community and Social Services Asset Map.	Planning Division	2016
Increase awareness about dementia, as well as programs, services and supports to assist people living with dementia and their caregivers and family members, amongst cultural and ethnic communities. This could include educational sessions as part of ESL classes and incorporating information in the update to the 'Your New West Newcomers' Guide.'	Planning Division and WINS Local Immigration Partnership Council	2016-17
Increase awareness about dementia to community, faith, settlement and social service organizations. This could include information dissemination, presentations and webinars.	Homelessness Coalition, Inter-Agency Council, Inter-Ministerial Association and WINS	2016-17
Civic Facilities, Parks and Open Spaces		
Create 'parklets' incorporating accessible seating and landscaping in high pedestrian traffic areas. These public spaces would provide places of refuge and relaxation.	Parks, Culture and Recreation	2016-18
Ensure clear directional signage to civic facilities and points-of-interest and develop maps to facilitate orientation and way-finding in larger community parks (e.g., Glenbrook Ravine, Queen's Park, etc.).	Parks, Culture and Recreation	2016-18
Develop a welcoming assessment tool and involve people with dementia and their caregivers in assessing civic facilities and making suggestions for enhancements.	Planning Division and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2017-18
Civic Engagement and Programming		
Continue to provide opportunities for people with dementia to participate in parks, cultural and recreational programming as their abilities and needs change.	Parks, Culture and Recreation	2016-18
Develop a memory exhibit of film and visual images of the past to prompt memories and aid reminiscence. Its purpose would be to prompt conversation and facilitate social engagement.	New Westminster Museum and Archives	2017
Explore establishing a read-aloud club for people with dementia, which could also incorporate a life story and photo activity component. The purpose would be to aid reminiscence, to encourage participation and to facilitate social connectedness.	New Westminster Public Library	2017-18
Host an art exhibit featuring works by people with dementia. The purpose of the exhibit would be to raise awareness about dementia and to highlight their abilities and contributions.	Arts Coordinator and The Arts Council of New Westminster	2017-18

Proposed Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Civic Engagement and Programming, Cont.		
Explore not charging an attendant or companion when accompanying a person with dementia who is participating in a civic activity or event. If part of a paid program, then up to two sessions could be free of charge.	Parks, Culture and Recreation	2017-18
Explore 'try-out' sessions for people with dementia so they can determine if an activity meets their abilities and needs prior to committing to the cost of a full paid program.	Parks, Culture and Recreation	2017-18
Facilitate volunteer opportunities for people living with dementia, as well as people wanting to support their participation.	Volunteer Coordinator and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2017-18
Provide support for people with dementia to join civic committees and participate in civic engagement opportunities.	Legislative Services, City Departments	2017-18
Mobility and Accessibility		
Continue to implement the Master Transportation Plan (MTP, October 2014), with particular reference to Policy 1C (Improve Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility) and Actions 1C.1 to 1C.15 and Policy 3F (Improve Safety and Accessibility of Transit) and Actions 3F.1 to 3F.4.	Engineering and TransLink	2016-18
Provide a safe and accessible pedestrian system which offers a quality walking experience. (As part of the MTP, action 1C.14 states: "Continue to maintain and rehabilitate sidewalks and pathways so they are free of trip hazards, debris and clutter (e.g., sandwich boards); use smooth materials; and are designed to be comfortable for users of strollers, wheelchairs and other mobility aids.")	Engineering	2016-18
Ensure a universally accessible transit system to enable all transit users, including those with cognitive challenges, to access the entire transit network. (As part of the MTP, action 3F.1 states: "Retrofit all remaining inaccessible bus stops in the city, where feasible, to provide 100% accessible transit stops by 2016.")	Engineering and TransLink	2016-18
Orientation and Way-Finding		
Enforce regulations related to sandwich boards and other non-permitted signage which add to visual clutter and obstruct sidewalks.	Licensing and Integrated Services	2016
Improve directional signage in civic facilities and incorporate colours, symbols and other visual images to facilitate orientation and way-finding.	Civic Buildings and Properties	2016-17
Review City standards related to public realm signage to ensure that it is consistent, easily-recognizable and uncluttered. Additionally, consider using colours, symbols and other visual images to facilitate orientation and way-finding.	Engineering	2016-17
Recognize the importance of heritage buildings and historic landmarks with regard to orientation and way-finding and ensure that this is a consideration with regard to their retention or preservation.	Planning Division and Community Heritage Commission	2016-17
Recognize the importance of public art with regard to orientation and way-finding and ensure that this is a consideration with regard to the design and placement of such installations.	Parks, Culture and Recreation and Public Art Advisory Committee	2016-17
Incorporate information maps or kiosks at key locations throughout the city to assist in orientation and way-finding.	Economic Development and Tourism New West	2017-18

Proposed Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe
Private Development		
Distribute the 'Creating an Age-Friendly Business in B.C.' publication to businesses in New Westminster. This publication includes suggestions related to comfort, respect, safety and visibility, which is of assistance to people with dementia.	Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce and Business Associations	2016-17
Include information about dementia-friendly built environments as part of the orientation for members of the New Westminster Advisory Planning Commission and New Westminster Design Panel.	Planning Division	2017-18
Facilitate learning exchanges by having people with dementia lead walkabouts with elected officials and design professionals. The purpose of the learning exchanges would be to share experiences in navigating the built environment.	Planning Division, Engineering, and Seniors and Access Ability Advisory Committees	2017-18
Review the City's Adaptable Housing Bylaw, with a view to increasing the percentage of adaptable units. (Currently, 40% of all single-storey, multi-family housing units must be adaptable.)	Planning Division	2018
Safety and Emergency Services		
Educate and train first responders on how to recognize and support people with dementia, other cognitive disabilities and mental health disorientation.	Human Resources	2016-17
Ensure that the Police Department's Missing Persons Policy is compliant with the new Provincial Missing Persons Standards.	Police Department	2016-17
Designate the Police Station and all Fire Halls as reception centres where people who are confused, disoriented or lost can come or be brought for assistance. Explore expanding the designation to all civic facilities in 2017 and 2018.	Police and Fire and Rescue Services	2017-18
Increase public awareness about resources to protect people with dementia from emotional, financial, physical and sexual abuse.	New Westminster Police Elder Abuse and Victim Assistance Units	2017-18
Work with local taxi companies to educate drivers about dementia and to accept rides at no charge for persons who may be disorientated and require transport to the hospital or a reception centre.	Police, Fire and Rescue Services and Local Taxi Companies	2017-18
Staff Education and Training		
Create information sheets or protocols for serving vulnerable populations, including people with dementia or cognitive disabilities.	Human Resources and Alzheimer Society of B.C.	2016
Distribute the Dementia-Friendly Local Government Toolkit, which was prepared by the Alzheimer Society of B.C., to City Councilors, senior managers and design professionals in City Departments.	Planning Division	2016
Incorporate information and messaging about dementia as part of staff orientation, customer service and 'Safe Harbour' training. This will include understanding the signs of dementia and the need to be non-judgmental, patient and respectful.	Human Resources	2017-18

Other Actions – Involving Advocacy or External Funding	Responsibility	Timeframe
Enter into negotiations with the Fraser Health Authority regarding an active role in the implementation of the Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan. New Westminister could be seen as a pilot and it could incorporate an evaluation component, including cost savings to the Fraser Health Authority.	City of New Westminister and Fraser Health Authority	2016
Advocate for enhanced disability benefits for people living with dementia to enhance access to appropriate housing and to enable them to be more involved in the community.	City of New Westminister and Province of B.C.	2016
Enhance access to appropriate health services and supports for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members.	Fraser Northwest Division of Family Practice	2016-18
Provide adequate home support and respite services to assist people with dementia to live in the community.	Fraser Health Authority	2016-18
Support the development of more local support groups for people with dementia and their caregivers and family members.	Fraser Health Authority	2016-18
Work with a non-profit organization and seek funding for a welcome ambassador program to support persons with dementia to become more involved in community activities and events.	Century House and a Non-Profit Organization, depending on funding	2017-18
Educate and train transit staff about understanding the signs of dementia and need to be non-judgmental, patient and respectful.	Alzheimer Society of B.C. and TransLink	2016-18
Partner with residential care facilities to provide leisure and recreation activities to enable residents to stay active as long as possible and for caregivers to remain healthy and connected.	Parks, Culture and Recreation and Fraser Health Authority	2018

6. Next Steps, Implementation and Monitoring

The action plan will be forwarded to City Council for endorsement in principle in February 2016. If endorsed, the City's Senior Social Planner will be responsible for working with City Departments with regard to implementing the three-year action plan. It is recognized that the timeframe is only a guide and the actual timing of actions will be determined by Departments. It is also recognized that certain actions may change or evolve based on discussions with Departments.

The project working group will be convened in November of each of the three years in which the action plan is to be implemented to review progress in implementing actions for the year in question (e.g., 2016, 2017 and 2018). Based on the review, a progress report will be developed and forwarded to City Council. The progress report will state whether each action has been fully, partially or not implemented, as well as providing reasons as to why an action has only been partially or not implemented.

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REPORT

Development Services

To: Land Use and Planning Committee **Date:** 2/1/2016

From: Beverly Grieve **File:** REZ00078
Director of Development Services

Item #: 5/2016

Subject: 518 Ewen Avenue: Proposed Rezoning from C-1 to RQ-1 to Permit Construction of a Single Detached Dwelling - Preliminary Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee request staff to proceed with the processing of the rezoning application for 518 Ewen Avenue as outlined in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides preliminary information on a rezoning application that would see the owners of 518 Ewen Avenue rezone the property from (C-1) Local Commercial Districts to (RQ-1) Queensborough Neighbourhood Residential Dwelling Districts in order to build a single detached house. This rezoning would be in keeping with the land use designation in the Queensborough Community Plan.

1.0 PURPOSE

This application would allow the owners to build a single detached house.

2.0 POLICY AND REGULATIONS

2.1 Official Community Plan Land Use Designation

(RL) Residential – Low Density: this area will contain low density residential uses including single detached houses, houses with a secondary suite, duplexes, detached townhouses, low density multi-family uses, churches, and may contain small scale local commercial uses such as home based businesses and corner stores. As the proposal involves an existing single detached dwelling it complies with the OCP designation.

2.2 Zoning Bylaw

Queensborough Neighbourhood Residential Dwelling Districts (RQ-1): The intent of this district is to allow single detached houses with one secondary suite.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Site Characteristics and Context

The property is located one-and-a-half blocks west of the intersection of Ewen Avenue and Derwent Way; adjacent to Old Schoolhouse Park in an area that is almost completely zoned (RQ-1). An aerial photo showing the subject property and surrounding neighbourhood is included in Appendix A.

As is the case throughout Queensborough the property is flat and close to sea level. All new houses in Queensborough must be built above the Flood Construction Level. There are no trees or shrubs on the property.

Ewen Avenue is classified as a Major Collector street and experiences high traffic counts at certain times. The street is undergoing upgrading to a more urban standard (i.e. with curbs and street trees) along much of its length, including the 500-block, with the addition of a central boulevard, multi-use path and extensive landscaping.

3.2 Project Description

The applicant proposes to rezone the property in order to be able to build a single detached dwelling with a secondary suite. Off-street parking would be provided by an attached garage accessed from the rear lane. A site plan, elevation drawings and a streetscape drawing and photograph are attached in Appendices B and C.

3.3 Project Statistics

Site dimensions: Frontage: 44 ft. (13.4 m.)
Depth: 120.5 ft. (36.6 m.)
Total site area: 5,280 sq. ft. (490.5 sq. m.)

	RQ-1 Zoning Bylaw	Proposed
Floor Space Ratio: (floor space)	0.567 (including bonus for covered front porch) (2,996 sq. ft./278 sq. m.)	0.567 (2,996 sq. ft./278 sq. m.)
Site coverage:	35 percent	33.3 percent
Accessory Site Coverage	15 percent	13 percent (includes a front porch, rear deck and portion of the attached garage that extends beyond the upper floor)

4.0 DISCUSSION

4.1 Rationale for Rezoning

The property has been vacant since a mixed use commercial-residential building on the site was demolished in 2008. The present owners made an application to rezone to (RQ-1) in 2012 but were unable to proceed until the updated Queensborough Official Community Plan was adopted in 2014. The new OCP re-designated the remaining four commercially zoned properties in the 500- and 600-blocks of Ewen Avenue to Low Density Residential. One of those four properties completed the (RQ-1) rezoning in July 2015. A second is in the midst of a rezoning to a residential Comprehensive Development zone. The third property appears to be a viable commercial property that will likely remain so for the foreseeable future. The subject rezoning of 518 Ewen Avenue is in keeping with the intent of the Queensborough Community Plan and the recent rezoning applications noted above.

5.0 PROCESS

Application made	September 19, 2012
Queensborough OCP adopted with Residential Low Density Designation for Subject Property	February 3, 2014
Applicant Public Open House and Presentation to Queensborough Residents' Association	October 14, 2014
Preliminary Report to Land Use and Planning Committee	February 18, 2016
Applicant Presentation to Advisory Planning Commission	February 23, 2016
Report to Land Use Committee Re: Consideration of First and Second Readings of Rezoning Bylaw	Spring 2016
Council Consideration of First and Second Readings of Rezoning Bylaw	Spring 2016
Public Hearing and Consideration of Third Reading of Rezoning Bylaw	Spring 2016

OPTONS FOR CONSIDERATON

The following options are presented for the Land Use and Planning Committee's consideration:

1. That the Land Use and Planning Committee request staff to proceed with the processing of the rezoning application for 518 Ewen Avenue as outlined in this report.
2. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide staff with alternative feedback.

Staff recommends Option 1.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Aerial Photo of Neighbourhood

Attachment B: Proposed Site Plan and Elevation Drawings

Attachment C: Streetscape

This report was prepared by:

David Guiney, Senior Planning Analyst

This report was reviewed by:

Jackie Teed, Manager of Planning

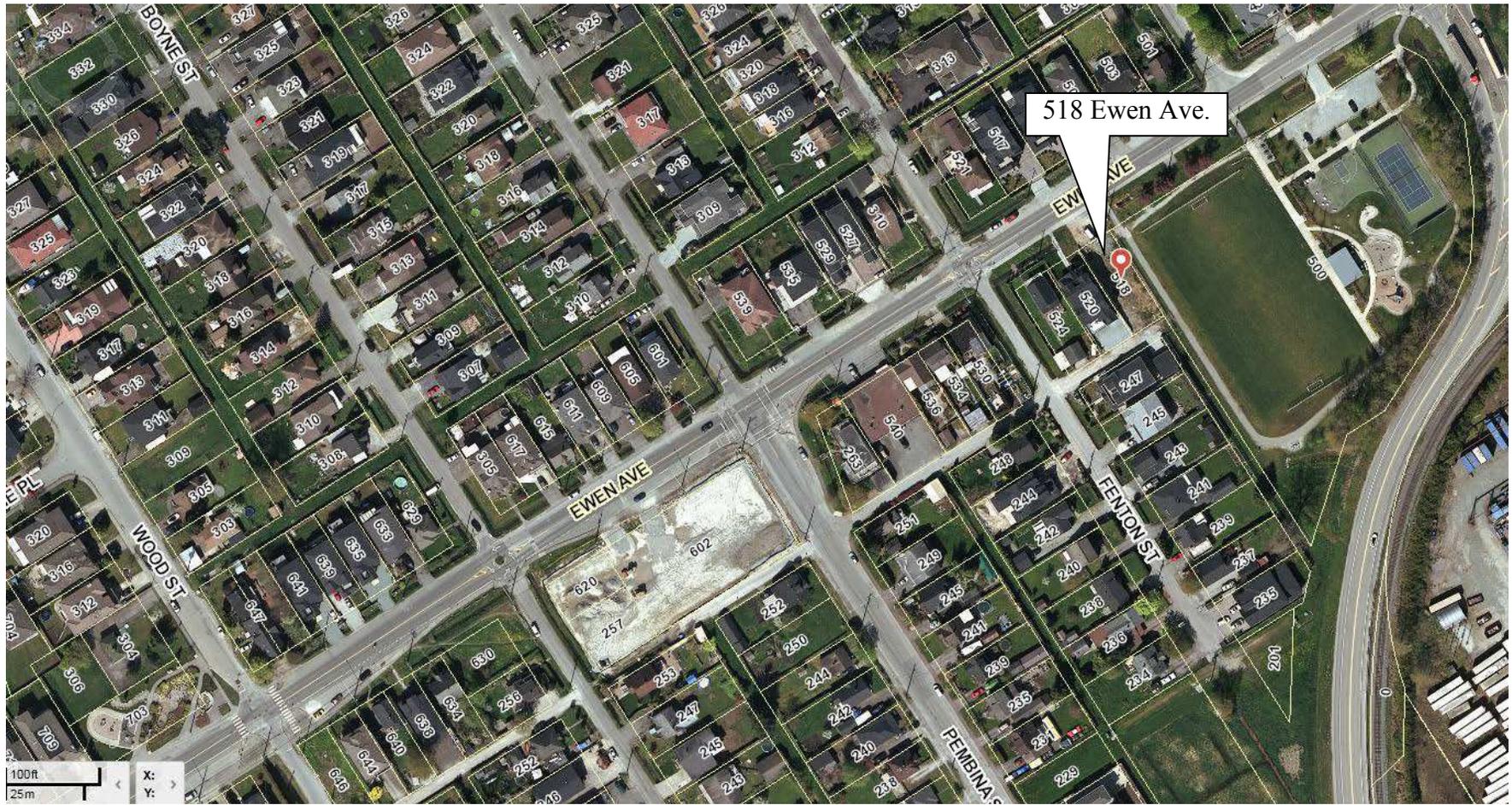


Beverly Grieve

Director of Development Services

Attachment A

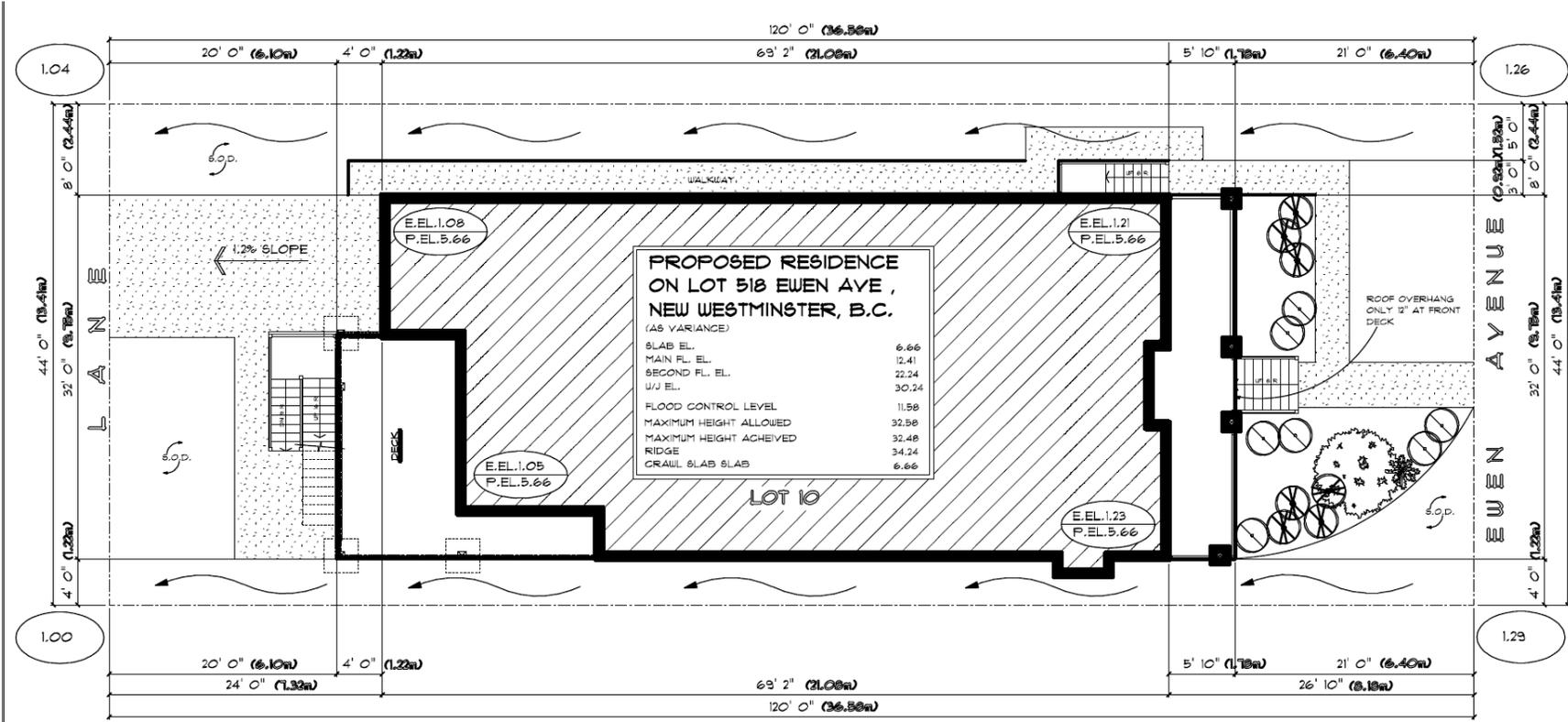
Aerial Photo of Neighbourhood





Attachment B

Proposed Site Plan and Elevation Drawings





E.E.L.108
P.E.L.5.66

LEFT SIDE ELEVATION

TOTAL WALL AREA:	155.00 SQ.FT.
PERCENTAGE AREA OF WINDOW OPENING :	1%
WINDOW OPENING ALLOWED:	30.00 SQ.FT.
WINDOW OPENING PROPOSED:	84.00 SQ.FT.



E.E.L.123
P.E.L.5.66

FRONT ELEVATION

E.E.L.101
P.E.L.5.66



E.E.L.108
P.E.L.5.66

REAR ELEVATION

E.E.L.105
P.E.L.5.66



E.E.L.121
P.E.L.5.66

RIGHT ELEVATION

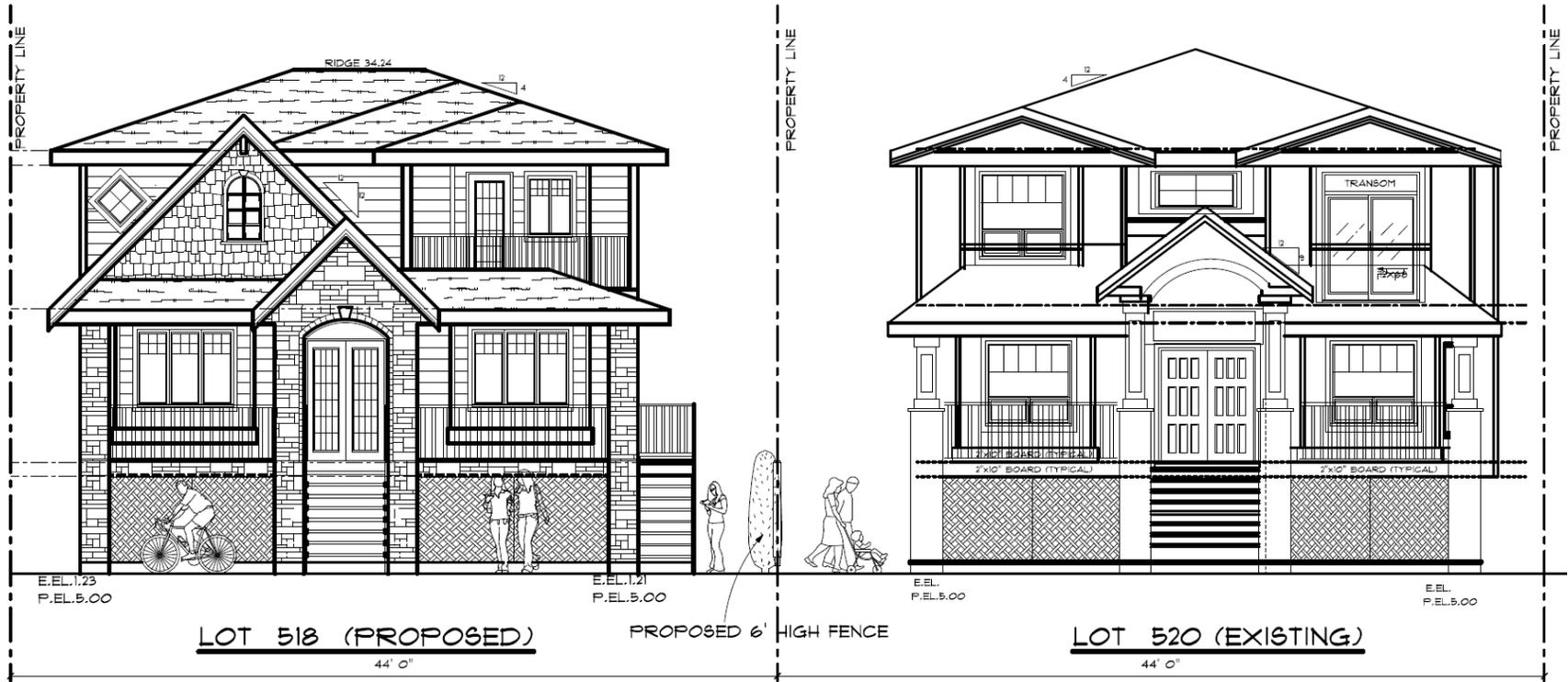
E.E.L.108
P.E.L.5.66

TOTAL WALL AREA:	150.00 SQ.FT.
PERCENTAGE AREA OF WINDOW OPENING :	8%
WINDOW OPENING ALLOWED:	30.00 SQ.FT.
WINDOW OPENING PROPOSED:	11.00 SQ.FT.

Attachment C

Streetscape

Proposed



Existing

