

**DRAFT**

# **Community Wellbeing Strategy**

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The City of North Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territories of the Sḵw̱w̱mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. These Nations remain deeply connected to their lands and waters and as we build community here it is critical we acknowledge this has been their home since time immemorial. We thank them for sharing this land with us and for their ongoing partnership with the City on shared priorities.

## A COMMITMENT TO TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The City is committed to Truth and Reconciliation. We humbly recognize that we need to learn and share the truth about Indigenous history in Canada and are at the beginning of our journey of reconciliation with First Nations.

The City will work collaboratively, cooperatively, and respectfully with the Sḵw̱w̱mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations on policy, projects, programs, and services at the City and incorporate the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, support the principles and objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Province of British Columbia's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).

## APPRECIATION AND THANKS

The Community Wellbeing Strategy was developed with input and support from many residents, businesses, rights holders, stake holders, partners, non-profit organizations, community experts, City staff, and more. The City is grateful for the efforts and time provided by everyone in working to support our community wellbeing through this work.

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# 1. What is the Community Wellbeing Strategy?

This Strategy is a holistic framework for setting policy and taking action to improve overall community wellbeing in the City of North Vancouver over the next 10 years.

## WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

*A City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive.*

This includes a focus on:

- **Connection:** Our City connects people with each other and with daily needs closer to where we live.
- **Equity:** Our City is shaped by a diverse and inclusive representation of voices, experiences, and contributions.
- **Investment:** Our City's social infrastructure (spaces, places, services, and programs) is consistently invested in and maintained over time, to benefit both the economy and society.

## WHAT DOES THE STRATEGY INCLUDE?

This Strategy includes six pathways focused on enhancing and supporting our wellbeing. Each is connected to and supports one another, like a series of interlocking building blocks.

Each pathway provides clear policy directions and a series of objectives that communicate expectations and guide decision-making while remaining nimble within an evolving context.

The implementation of this Strategy requires support, partnerships, and action from City Council, the City organization, and the community at large. There is something for everyone to participate in and contribute to!

## DEFINING COMMUNITY WELLBEING

*“Community wellbeing is the combination of social, economic, environmental, health, cultural, and political conditions that are essential for individuals and communities to flourish and fulfill their potential.”*

*- Adapted from Wiseman and Brasher, “Community Wellbeing in an Unwell World”*

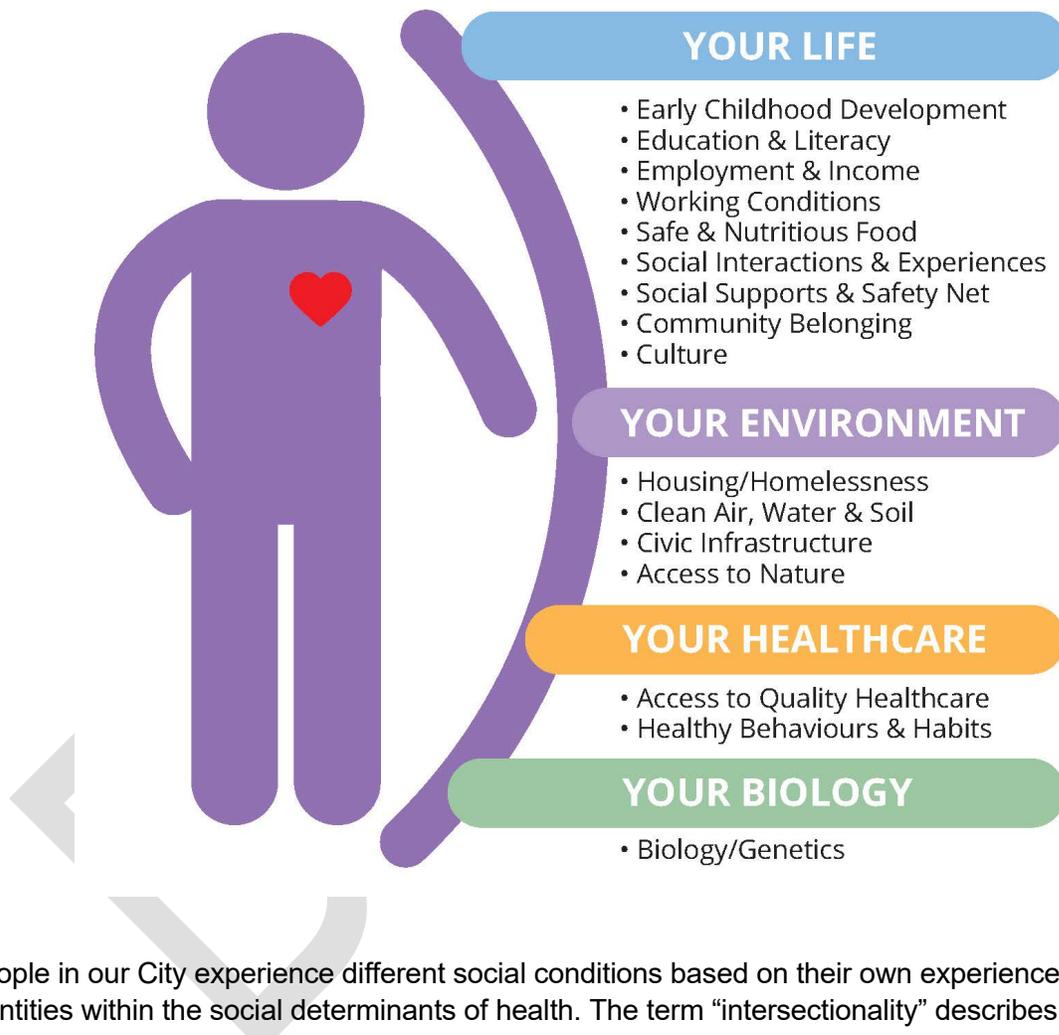
Wellbeing is a highly subjective and broad term. This definition recognizes that community wellbeing has many factors and is impacted by many things, but in its simplest form, it is about people’s **health, happiness, belonging, and quality of life.**



## WHAT INFLUENCES OUR WELLBEING?

Our health and wellbeing, both as individuals and as a whole community, are strongly influenced by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, and age. The social conditions that determine our health (called “social determinants of health”) include a mix of factors:

# Social Determinants of Health



People in our City experience different social conditions based on their own experiences and identities within the social determinants of health. The term “intersectionality” describes how our overlapping and interconnected identities work on multiple levels, resulting in unique experiences, barriers, and/or opportunities for each person.

Inequities in health and wellbeing are largely caused by systemic, avoidable factors, and are often outside the control of the people who are affected. To reduce these inequities, we need to reduce barriers, create enabling conditions, and commit to progressing health, happiness, belonging, and quality of life for everyone.

## WHAT ROLE DOES GOVERNMENT PLAY IN WELLBEING?

All levels of government have a role in the achievement of community wellbeing. However, each level has its own responsibilities, jurisdiction, and priorities.

Federal Government	Provincial Government	Regional Governments	Municipal Governments
Responsible for policies and activities that affect the whole of Canada	Responsible for policies and activities that affect the individual Province	Work with municipalities to ensure equal services across regional areas	Regulate people and property, and provide local planning, infrastructure, and services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship + Immigration</li> <li>• Ports, Airports, Highways</li> <li>• Policing (RCMP)</li> <li>• National Defense</li> <li>• International Trade</li> <li>• Taxation</li> <li>• Natural Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Health Care</li> <li>• Education + Child Care</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Social Welfare</li> <li>• Environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Planning + Growth Management</li> <li>• Affordable Housing</li> <li>• Air Quality + Water Quality</li> <li>• Wastewater Treatment + Solid Waste Management</li> <li>• Public Transit</li> <li>• Regional Health Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building + Development</li> <li>• Streets, Parking + Mobility</li> <li>• Parks + Public Spaces</li> <li>• Local Police + Fire</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Utilities</li> <li>• Other programs + services</li> </ul>

Though each level has its own mandates, many of the issues related to wellbeing are more acutely felt at the municipal level, given it is the level of government that is closest to the people. However, municipalities do not have the same funding or regulatory mechanisms as senior levels of government. This means that in order to create solutions to the challenges we face (housing, affordability, climate change, aging infrastructure, health, etc.), all levels of government must work together. The City cannot do it alone and will require partnerships with other levels of government in order to meaningfully address challenges and share in the opportunities.

### WHAT IS THE CITY'S ROLE IN WELLBEING?

Essentially, the City is responsible for addressing many of the day-to-day needs that influence people's wellbeing. While the mandate for many of these subjects is with other levels of government, the implementation or local conditions are managed at the municipal level. The City has four main tools to do this work:

- **Partner** with a wide-range of partners to deliver community services and programs.
- **Advocate** to senior levels of government for funding and other supports.
- **Invest** in community to provide services, build public spaces and infrastructure, and support community through the use of public funds (e.g. property taxes, fees).
- **Regulate** property and people through the use of bylaws and policies. (e.g. Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaw, No Smoking Bylaw, Noise Bylaw, etc.).

#### DID YOU KNOW?

The City partners with many non-profits, organizations, and municipal affiliations such as the North Vancouver City Library, North Vancouver Recreation and Culture Commission (NVRCC), North Shore Emergency Management (NSEM), and others who are integral to delivering and implementing projects, programs, and services.

## WHY SHOULD WE INVEST IN WELLBEING?

Investing early, and supporting people before they are in crisis is critical to a thriving community. It supports solving the root causes and makes the downstream effects more manageable. The consequences of not proactively investing in community wellbeing have the potential to result in higher social and financial costs in future years as issues can become more acute and widespread (such as social disconnection, poverty, mental health, addiction, and crime). Research consistently shows that wise investments in people (through programs, facilities, and services) results in direct benefits to individuals as well as the broader community as a whole, along with longer term financial returns, cost savings, and other spin-off benefits (such as economic growth, participation, etc.).

### Return on Investment Example

Each \$1 invested in mental health promotion and mental illness prevention activities results in \$7 reduced health care costs and \$30 in reduced loss of productivity and social costs according to “Public Health: A Return on Investment” report by the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA).

Social investments have ripple effects – the investments create bigger returns and benefits in society which far outweigh the initial ‘cost’ of the investment. It is also worth noting, that no matter which level of government provides the investment, all levels will see indirect and direct benefits.

### Examples of Social Investment Benefits

Supporting individuals and benefits to broader community	Multiplying financial investments	Stretching short term benefits into long term benefits
<p>Programs that assist individuals such as women’s employment workshops benefits not only the program participants, but also improves the wellbeing of their children and families. This further enables or increases participation in the local economy and society.</p>	<p>The City’s financial support to a non-profit organization such as community grants enables the organization to leverage the City’s funds to increase confidence to receive funding from other sources, volunteers, and/or donations.</p>	<p>Investments in broader systems such as early childhood education results in short term positive outcomes for children’s kindergarten readiness, medium term improved rates of high school graduation, and longer term benefits of improved cognitive, social, and financial status as adults.</p>

# 2. The Big Picture

## OUR CITY TODAY



### Population

- The City of North Vancouver is 11.83 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 58,120 people (2021)
- North Shore projected growth by 2050: 63,400 residents and 29,200 jobs (2021)
- Children and youth represent approximately a quarter of the population (2021)
- Seniors (65+) represent 18% of the population in the City (2021)
- Average Age is 43 years old
- 47% of City residents are multi-lingual (2021)
- There are 100 + languages are spoken on the North Shore (2021)



### Housing

- 67% of homes are 'apartments' and 11% of homes are 'single detached houses' (2021)
- 43% of renters spend 30% or more of their income on housing (2021)
- 33% of households are in unaffordable housing (2021)
- 19% of households are in Core Housing Need (2021)
- 49% of residents have moved homes within the last 5 years (2021)
- Average Household Size is 2.1 people (2021)



### Employment + Income

- Median Household Income for 1-person family is \$50,400 and 2-person family is \$115,000 (2021)
- Unemployment Rate: 7.5% (2021)
- Top 3 Industry Sectors: Professional, scientific & technical services, Health care & social assistance, and Retail trade (2021)
- 4x more people worked at home in 2021 than 2016 (2021)
- 63% of residents commute outside the City for work (2021)



### Health and Wellbeing

- Child care access rate: 25 spaces / 100 children (2020)
- 48% of North Shore youth feel quite or very connected to their community (2018)
- 18% of people live alone (2021)
- 14% of North Shore immigrants have experienced an attack, harassment, or discrimination based on their skin colour, ethnicity, religious affiliation or race (2021)
- 25% of City households fall below the poverty line (2021)
- ~1,100 people per week are accessing the NSNH foodbank (2023)



### Partnerships + Funding Support

- The City's annual budget for all forms of supportive funding is ~\$4 million (2023)
- The City partners with 150 + organizations to deliver programs, services, and more (2022)

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As we look to the future, we must work to address challenges and take advantage of the opportunities to support our wellbeing.

Over the last few years, the overlapping and interconnected challenges of a housing crisis, affordability (rising interest rates and inflation), climate change (unprecedented wildfires and heat temperature records), deteriorating infrastructure, declining health outcomes, drug toxicity crisis, and broad demographic shifts have had significant impacts. Add to that the COVID-19 pandemic and the related economic, educational, and community health impacts.

These challenges have created difficult circumstances for families, businesses, and local governments and have further highlighted the rising inequity in our community. However, with careful planning and targeted social investment, we can create opportunities to improve wellbeing and enable the conditions for everyone to maximize their potential.

**Resilience** is our ability as individuals and as a community to withstand, respond to, and recover from change and adversity.

### A GROWING + CHANGING REGION

Our City is located in one of the fastest growing regions in Canada – Metro Vancouver. By 2050, the North Shore population is expected to grow by approximately 63,400 people and 29,200 jobs, many of which will land in the City. As a geographically small City, we need to make smart choices about how growth is accommodated. By supporting access to everyday needs close to home, people are more likely to walk or roll, be physically and mentally healthier, support local businesses, be more resilient, make more sustainable choices, and be more socially connected.

### MANAGING AFFORDABILITY + THE COST OF LIVING IS MORE DIFFICULT

With high housing and transportation costs, coupled with rising interest rates and high inflation, many people in our City are struggling. These financial burdens are disproportionately borne by lower income households that are challenged to pay for services and programs. Investing in and enabling more affordable housing options, affordable child care, transportation options, access to employment opportunities, and social services results in reduced costs, catching and supporting people before they are in crisis, and enables greater participation in community life.

### OUR HEALTH IS SHAPED BY THE OPTIONS + CHOICES AVAILABLE TO US

Personal and community health is impacted by a variety of factors beyond diet and exercise, known as the social determinants of health. If we lack opportunities, face discrimination or oppression related to these factors, it can have a significant impact to our health outcomes. By building community supports, providing gathering and social spaces, valuing diversity, acknowledging and reducing systematic barriers, supporting inclusion and fair treatment, and creating opportunities for the advancement of all people, we can address disparities and inequities, support a sense of belonging, and improve health outcomes.

## THE CITY'S POLICY LANDSCAPE

To further support the directions in this Strategy it is helpful to understand the City's broader policy landscape and how the different policy documents relate to one another.

### ABOUT THE OCP

The City's main city-building policy document is the Official Community Plan (OCP).

Official community plans describe the long term vision of communities and are governed by the Local Government Act in BC. They are a statement of objectives and policies that guide decisions on municipal planning and land use management.

OCP's must include statements or map designations for existing and future land uses, housing policies, community greenhouse gas emissions targets and policies, existing and future public facilities, phasing for major roads, sewer and water systems, and restrictions for land that is subject to hazardous conditions or that is environmentally sensitive.

The City's **Vision**, as stated in the Official Community Plan (2014):

*"In 2031, the City of North Vancouver will be a vibrant, diverse and highly livable community that is resilient to climate or other changes, and sustainable in its ability to prosper without sacrifice to future generations."*

### THE FUTURE CITY POLICY LANDSCAPE

To support the OCP and its vision for the City, the City is in various stages of developing a number of strategies that act as part of a "City Plan Series" (like books in a series) to guide our next decade of planning, decision-making, and action in key areas:



To ensure that each of the strategies reflect the City's values and priorities, the directions and objectives and their subsequent actions are vetted or filtered through the guiding principles of the OCP and Council's Strategic Plan, Corporate Business Plan, and the City's Financial Plan.

## REGIONAL POLICY

Beyond the City of North Vancouver, there are a number of regional and sub-regional policy documents that influenced the development of this Strategy in an effort to align and achieve common objectives:

- METRO 2050 is Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy. It is the vision for accommodating anticipated future growth in the region with considerations for diverse and affordable housing, transit and mobility, resilient employment, protected industrial, ecological and agricultural lands, and the impacts of a changing climate.
- TRANSPORT 2050 is TransLink's Regional Transportation Strategy that was adopted in early 2022. The strategy has five goals for regional transportation: convenient, reliable, affordable, safe & comfortable, and carbon-free.
- CLIMATE 2050 is Metro Vancouver's strategy on climate change action and policy. The strategy is split into three components: Strategic Framework, Roadmaps, and Online Reporting and Communication Tool that work towards achieving Metro Vancouver's goals of being carbon neutral by 2050, reducing emissions, and enhancing resiliency.
- A VARIETY OF NORTH SHORE PLANS, STRATEGIES AND CHARTERS have been created to address cross-jurisdictional subject areas and as a means to coordinate and collaborate in our efforts. Examples include the Dementia Friendly North Shore Action Plan, North Shore Food Charter, North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy, and more.

# 3. What are we trying to achieve?

## *A City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive.*

This recognizes that the social aspects of our city are incredibly important – from the day-to-day interactions with neighbours to the programs, services, and supports that offer opportunity and bring people together. The City is becoming increasingly diverse and must serve a complex variety of needs. It acknowledges that people have different feelings, beliefs, values, and ideas in how they participate in the City and community life. Building a City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive is a commitment to progressing health, happiness, potential, and quality of life for everyone.

With a focus on:



## CONNECTION

*Our City connects people with each other and with daily needs closer to where we live.*

Living in neighbourhoods that offer affordable and suitable housing close to convenient local places to shop, play, work, enjoy greenspace, and make social connections is beneficial for many aspects of wellbeing. Those who feel strongly connected to their neighbourhoods are 2.6 times more likely to report good physical health and 3.2 times more likely to report good mental health. Neighbourhoods with a balanced, local, compact mix of uses enable people to live more sustainably, support local economies, and contribute positively to our social determinants of health.

## EQUITY

*Our City is shaped by a diverse and inclusive representation of voices, experiences, and contributions.*

An equitable city includes and supports the principles of democracy, diversity, and justice in action. It is intended to enable fair and equitable opportunities to space, goods, services, rights, power, and democracy. The process and pathway towards achieving equity is through building inclusivity, equality, and diversity into all systems of the City. This means removing barriers and biases so that everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

## INVESTMENT

*Our City's social infrastructure (spaces, places, services, and programs) is consistently invested in and maintained over time, to benefit both the economy and society.*

The City's social infrastructure – the spaces, places, services, and programs that help individuals, families, groups, and communities meet their social needs and maximize their potential – is one of our great assets. Rather than simply being seen as a cost, the City's wise investments in social infrastructure, including preventative programs and assistance, are valued because of their long term financial value and public cost savings, as well as supporting economic development and positive quality of life outcomes.

# 4. The Path Forward

## WHAT DOES THE PATH FORWARD LOOK LIKE?

In a true “play book” form, this section includes six pathways, each with clear directions and objectives that will help us realize a City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive.

The pathways include:

- 1: Complete Communities**
- 2: Housing for All**
- 3: A City for All Ages**
- 4: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity + Accessibility**
- 5: Poverty Reduction + Inclusive Economy**
- 6: Partnerships, Advocacy + Financial Supports**

Each pathway includes context information, a policy direction, and clear objectives for what we are going to do.

In the final strategy, each pathway will also include how we will measure success, “did you know?” factoids, and other information to further support the directions and objectives. It will also include an appendix with a glossary and other information.

# 7 Complete Communities

## DIRECTION

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

## CONTEXT

The City of North Vancouver is already one of the Lower Mainland's most walkable cities.

Where we live and how we move has a direct influence on our health and wellbeing. For many, physical activity has been designed out of our daily lives due to a global shift to more sedentary forms of work, reliance on motorized vehicles to get us places, and communities designed around cars, not people.

The complete communities' concept aims to improve quality of life and overall health outcomes by building neighbourhoods where daily needs are met within a 15 minute walk or roll of every home (approximately 1,000 – 1,200 metres). Typically, 15 minutes is the amount of time people are willing to take before choosing transit or vehicles to get where they need to go. Building on existing successes, the City will focus on two critical components:

- **Land Use** - Creating the enabling conditions through our land use and zoning decisions to make welcoming, vibrant, and attractive places that encourage and provide people with easy opportunities to be social, build connections, feel safe, and to make healthy choices. This includes more mixing of land uses that support the ability to live, work, play, learn, and shop locally.
- **Quality Design** - Creating the enabling conditions for people to be social and enjoy the journey between their destinations. The quality of the public realm (the space between buildings and through blocks) contributes to community comfort and safety and is necessary to entice people to walk and bike (active transportation modes), use transit, and live more locally. The quality of both the destination and the journey is important.

The health and wellness of a community is rooted in how we design our communities. Our built environment can have a significant influence on how we interact with others and how we participate in our community. A successful city of complete communities enables a land use mix that supports community needs and community health along with convenient, comfortable, and safe ways to get around.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1 a) Plan at the neighbourhood scale to increase the diversity of uses and local destinations and provide greater flexibility and more opportunities to meet daily needs locally.
- 1 b) Enable residential densities and typologies that support commerce, employment, schools, community services, and transit.
- 1 c) Provide parks, mini parks, parklets, natural areas or open space within 5 minutes of every home.
- 1 d) Activate and enhance spaces through placemaking and pilot projects that add vibrancy, celebrate arts and culture, and enable people to connect and build relationships.
- 1 e) Make it easier for community members, organizations, and businesses to pursue public realm improvements or community projects (e.g. parklets, murals, sharing libraries, community cleanup, etc.).
- 1 f) Improve the experience of walking and rolling to make them the most comfortable, convenient, and best choice for short distance travel (e.g. wayfinding, accessibility, public art, benches, waste receptacles, street trees, etc.).
- 1 g) Strategically plan and acquire more City land to be used for community benefit (e.g. parks, recreation, amenities, affordable and/or supportive housing).
- 1 h) Deliver a wide range of community benefits through new development and City investment based on community needs assessments.
- 1 i) Build safe and resilient neighbourhoods by strengthening community networks, increasing community stewardship and volunteer opportunities, and enhancing community based emergency preparedness.

# 2 Housing for All

## DIRECTION

*Expand the supply and improve the quality, diversity, and affordability of housing in the City.*

## CONTEXT

For people to lead healthy lives, they need a secure and stable place to live. Ensuring that residents have access to the type of housing they need, at a rate they can afford, is key to achieving a vibrant and thriving community.

While housing is the mandate of the Provincial Government, the City plays a key role in shaping and regulating the type, tenure, and form of housing. The City also plays a role in advocating to and convening other levels of government, partners, stakeholders, and non-profit organizations involved in the delivery of housing and wrap-around supports to meet our community's housing needs.

Housing is generally deemed affordable if dwellings (either ownership or rental) cost less than 30% of total before-tax household income. In the City, 33% of households are in unaffordable housing (spending more than 30% of household income on shelter), and 19% of households are in Core Housing Need where they are experiencing at least one issue of affordability, suitability, and/or adequacy.

The number of people who are unhoused or at risk of being unhoused is increasing. Service providers indicate existing supports are often at capacity, and the number of shelter beds available on the North Shore is not enough to meet current demand.

### What is the Housing Crisis?

The City, and many municipalities across the province and country, are in the midst of a significant housing crisis. There are three essential aspects of this crisis:

1. **Lack of General Housing Supply** – the number of units being built is far less than the number needed to house people (the demand is greater than the supply).
2. **Increasing Gap between Incomes and Housing Costs** – housing prices are increasing faster than incomes due to demand and the economy (inflation, etc.), meaning fewer people are able to afford housing that meets their needs.
3. **Limited Non-Market Units** – the number of units at affordable or subsidized rates is less than the number of people in core housing need.

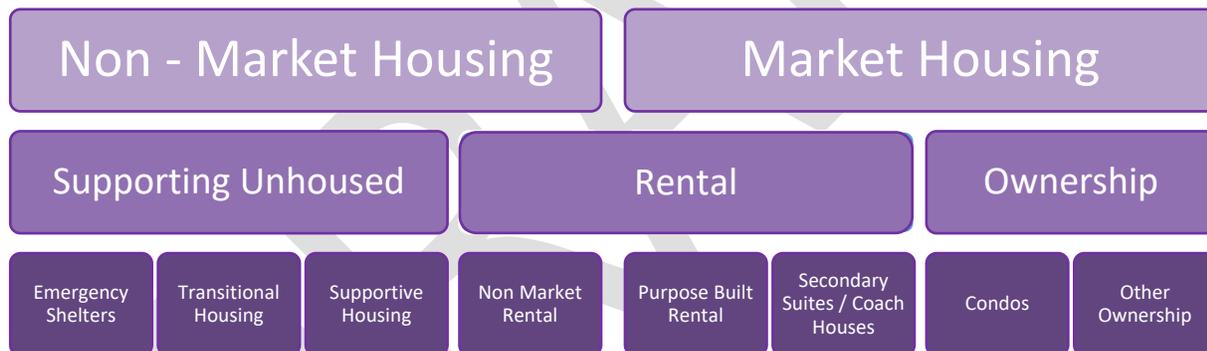
The City's 2021 Housing Needs Report (legislated requirement by the Province) highlighted a number of priority needs based on local demographic trends, including a need for:

- a wider **range of purpose-built rental options** for low to moderate income renters;
- more **family-sized units**;
- more housing with **adaptable and accessible design**, allowing seniors to age in place;
- more **assisted living and supportive housing units**;
- more **transition housing**; and,
- a greater **understanding of Indigenous residents housing needs** and more housing options off reserve.

To meet our housing needs and address the housing crisis, we need to provide the “right supply” of housing. This means ensuring that all neighbourhoods offer a variety of housing choices (types, forms, affordability levels, and tenures that support all stages of life, abilities, incomes, and needs) so that people don't have to move away from their communities and support networks as their circumstances change. In addition, the design, quality, and sustainability of housing are critical to meeting peoples' needs and building healthy, complete communities.

The following 'Housing Continuum' is used to illustrate the types and tenures of housing:

### HOUSING CONTINUUM



Housing for all is about improving housing supply, choice, and affordability by implementing a range of solutions that take into account the entire continuum, but with a particular emphasis on:

- supporting individuals who are or are at risk of becoming unhoused;
- providing new non-market housing;
- enabling affordable options for middle income earners;
- increasing missing middle housing forms; and,
- supporting renters.

**NOTE:** This Housing For All pathway represents the City's updated 'Housing Action Plan'.

## OBJECTIVES

### ***Supporting Unhoused Individuals and Families***

- 2 a) Use a people-centered approach that focuses on the needs of the individual to guide decisions and provide support that is respectful and responsive.
- 2 b) Advocate to and work with other levels of government for systems change including 'single point of entry' and 'housing first' approaches.
- 2 c) Work with other levels of government and partners to increase the number of extreme weather response spaces, emergency shelter beds, and transition and supportive housing with wrap-around supports.
- 2 d) Support partners to provide outreach programs, enable access to services, and explore opportunities for new programs based on needs or gaps in support.
- 2 e) Expand the number of publicly accessible indoor daytime gathering places, core services, and hygiene and washroom facilities.
- 2 f) Reduce the stigma associated with being unhoused by increasing awareness of the root causes, including the individual, economic, and societal factors.

### ***Non-Market Housing***

- 2 g) Develop inclusionary housing policy, regulations, and incentives to increase the supply of non-market housing in the City.
  - Examples include pre-zoning, policy options for middle income earners, Affordable Home Ownership (AHOP), Mid-Market Rental (MMR), co-location of non-market housing on public and institutional lands, expanding supportive housing options, updating the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (AHRF), etc.
- 2 h) Reduce or eliminate parking requirements for non-market housing (e.g. set parking maximums, eliminate parking minimums, etc.).
- 2 i) Prioritize and fast-track development approvals for non-market housing projects.
- 2 j) Work with other levels of government and partners, and leverage City resources, partnerships, and influence, to deliver more non-market housing.
- 2 k) Align and evolve affordable housing policies and programs with existing and new external funding programs.

### ***Market Housing***

- 2 l) Continue to streamline, monitor, and improve the development approvals process to increase supply.
- 2 m) Enable and promote higher density development and building complete communities in alignment with Provincial housing policy direction and legislation.

- 2 n) Enable more ground oriented infill and missing middle housing through OCP and Zoning Bylaw updates.
- 2 o) Enhance multimodal access, livability, and safety through changes to vehicle and mobility device parking, electrical charging, circulation, and site access requirements (e.g. set parking maximums, eliminate parking minimums, decouple parking from units, etc.).
- 2 p) Enable rent-to-own developments with guidelines and/or protections for renters / owners.
- 2 q) Require new market developments with 5 or more units to provide a minimum of 15% family friendly units (units with 3 or more bedrooms).

### ***Supporting Livability***

- 2 r) Explore opportunities for new housing forms, types, and tenures to meet the City's housing needs.
  - Examples include reviewing guidelines and requirements to enable greater variety and livability of unit types.
- 2 s) Increase the sustainability of the City's housing stock through green building requirements and energy retrofits.
- 2 t) Incentivize and/or require more on-site amenities and social spaces in multi-unit buildings to support livability, wellbeing, and aging in place.
- 2 u) Support renters using the Tenant Displacement Policy and advocating to the Province for additional renter supports.
- 2 v) Improve safety, maintenance, and thermal comfort of housing.
- 2 w) Increase public access to the City's housing data, policies, and information.

# 3 A City for All Ages

## DIRECTION

**Create a City that contributes to wellbeing for all ages and phases of life.**

## CONTEXT

An age friendly city is about belonging. An age friendly city is intentionally designed to work well and include people in all stages of life. It is generally acknowledged that a city that works for its youngest and oldest residents will work for everyone. It is “a place that adapts its services and physical structures to be more inclusive and receptive to the needs of its population to improve their quality of life as they age.” – *World Health Organization*

When we think about “age” as it relates to policy and statistics as well as community and individual needs, it is typically broken down into categories, with some overlap or transitional years where a person can fit a few categories, as follows in the chart below:

<b>Children</b>	Under 12 years of age <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Infants (0 – 18 months)</li><li>• Toddlers (18 – 36 months)</li><li>• Pre-school (3 – 5 years)</li><li>• School Age (5 – 12 years)</li></ul>
<b>Youth</b>	12 to 25 years of age
<b>Adults</b>	18+ years of age
<b>Seniors</b>	65+ years of age

### Did you know?

In 2015 the Province of BC recognized the City of North Vancouver as an Age-Friendly Community.

Age is one aspect of many intersecting categories (such as gender, race, age, class, sexuality, religion, disability, weight, and physical appearance) that contribute to our identity and our experiences throughout life. When it comes to city building, age is one lens to ensure that the City is planning for the needs of everyone.

Across the age spectrum, there are both broad and overlapping needs that are best addressed through an intergenerational lens, as well as age-specific needs that are best addressed through a more targeted age group focus. The City is committed to creating a City for all ages by enabling and providing the places, spaces, programs, and services that support our health and wellness as we grow and age.

## OBJECTIVES

### ***Supporting All Ages***

- 3 a) Support and enable a fun and engaging city through innovative events, festivals, programs, initiatives, and activities hosted by the City or by partners.
- 3 b) Apply all ages design principles to planning, development, and design to meet multi-generational needs, and a healthy urban environment to live in (e.g. urban design that supports sustainability, noise reduction, etc.).
- 3 c) Support and promote community-based programs and activities that enhance social connectedness, reduce isolation, support healthy outcomes, and build relationships among neighbours, cultural groups, and community.
- 3 d) Collaborate with agencies to support mental health and addiction services, and reduce harm to individuals and community.
- 3 e) Work with partners to encourage life-long, multi-cultural and intergenerational learning, activities, and programs.
- 3 f) Monitor trends that are impacting various population groups and ages, and convene partners for a community response.

### ***Supporting Children and Youth***

- 3 g) Improve and increase the accessibility, affordability, and quality of child care through:
  - achieving 1,063 new licensed child care spaces by 2031;
  - expanding child care and afterschool care spaces and programs; and,
  - providing child care and/or afterschool care on existing and future school sites.
- 3 h) Support the creation of new child care facilities that meet the following criteria:
  - The maximum capacity for child care facilities in residential areas is 16 children, and it is accessory to the residential use.
  - In multi-family, institutional, and commercial areas, new child care facilities should include a maximum capacity of 100 children and give consideration for site context and local need. Additional capacity beyond 100 spaces requires individual consideration and authorization by Council.
- 3 i) Create spaces, places, and programs for children and youth that promote physical literacy and activity and physical health, influence mental health and wellbeing, and contribute to belonging, social connection, wellbeing, and independence. Particular focus is on the creation of safe space for those experiencing discrimination for race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, physical and mental health challenges.
- 3 j) Encourage youth leadership and/or youth engagement and participation in the creation of places, spaces, and programs – enable design for and by youth.

- 3 k) Support organizations, programs, services, grants, events, engagement, volunteer opportunities, and awards and the community's capacity to support children and youth.

***Supporting Adults and Seniors***

- 3 l) Work with partners to increase community trust, social connectivity, and emergency preparedness to support capacity building and community response, recovery, and resiliency.
- 3 m) Strengthen and increase independent living supports, adult day programs, and other adult care options.
- 3 n) Support participation and integrated services for multicultural seniors and adults in the community.
- 3 o) Support people living with dementia and varying cognitive abilities with inclusive community design, services, and awareness.

DRAFT

# 4 IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity + Accessibility)

## DIRECTION

*Create an inclusive City, where we celebrate diversity, and we commit to equity and accessibility for all.*

## CONTEXT

Not everyone has had an equal voice in how we build and grow our City.

IDEA is about designing for a diversity of people and needs to ensure public spaces, programs, information, and services are welcoming to all. It is about learning, recognizing, acknowledging, and deconstructing or removing historical and current systemic oppressions, colonialism, racism, marginalization, social inequities, and barriers.

There are many layered and intersecting physical, social, and perceived barriers that can deter people from using spaces and programs. These include varying mobility, cognitive, and accessibility needs, sense of safety, attitudes and discrimination, how welcoming and inclusive spaces and programs feel, cost considerations, wayfinding and communication needs, and other obstacles.

When people experience barriers it can lead to feelings of isolation, loneliness, judgement, and poor mental health.

By eliminating these barriers, engaging with under-represented groups, and by providing more inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible spaces and programs for people to convene, socialize, and build relationships, we support residents with building strong social connections and community ties, which results in higher levels of happiness, more public participation, greater physical and mental health, and greater resilience to stress and hardship.

### Defining IDEA

**Inclusion:** is where everyone is welcome and thoughts, ideas, and perspectives of all individuals are valued.

**Diversity:** is all the ways in which people and their ideas, perspectives, and values differ. It includes all the ways in which we experience advantages or encounter barriers.

**Equity:** is the recognition that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities accordingly to reach an equal outcome. It is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people while identifying and removing barriers.

**Accessibility:** refers to whether a space, program, service, or product can be used by everyone. Access can be thought of in many ways – physical, financial, locational, social, cognitive, lingual, digital, visual, and audio needs.

## OBJECTIVES

### ***Engagement + Community Action***

- 4 a) Use an equity lens to shape all City operations, services, programs, policies, funding, and decisions to enable a just community through:
  - Diverse representation and input, particularly with under-represented groups;
  - Data to better understand community diversity and existing discrimination;
  - Developing new and updating existing tools and policies to support IDEA; and,
  - Reducing and removing barriers for all forms of access, information sharing, participation, and engagement.
- 4 b) Engage and collaborate with groups that support access and inclusion such as the North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership, and other organizations in the community.
- 4 c) Provide staff training and education to support the City's work in the community on IDEA.
- 4 d) Provide staff education on truth and reconciliation, including Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and how to incorporate them into the City's work.
- 4 e) Provide skills based staff training in Indigenous relations, intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, cultural safety, and anti-racism.
- 4 f) Provide staff training and education on the Accessible BC Act, United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and other supports for persons with disabilities.
- 4 g) Improve access to City information by creating an accessible communications protocol and practice that identifies criteria for all City communications to:
  - Reduce barriers related to language; age; cognitive ability; digital access; and visual, hearing, speech, neural abilities and impairments; and,
  - Consistently use inclusive language that is free from words or phrases that reflect discriminatory views of particular groups or people and does not inadvertently exclude people from feeling accepted (e.g. ableist language).
- 4 h) Celebrate diverse communities by sharing traditions and events, special celebrations, food, arts, and culture.
- 4 i) Take action to eliminate bullying, racism, discrimination, ableism, and gender based violence through policies, communication, partnerships, programs, and education.

### ***Community Design***

- 4 j) Create buildings and spaces that are designed to include and express varied cultural, social, physical, cognitive, safety, and demographic needs and interests.

- 4 k) Meet or exceed best practice design criteria for age friendliness, ability friendliness, dementia friendliness, neuro-divergent friendliness, sensory friendliness, and universal design, with these features central to the design of buildings and spaces.
- 4 l) Expand the number of universally accessible public realm features and facilities (e.g. public washrooms, covered and shaded spaces, street furniture, etc.).
- 4 m) Actively work with local Indigenous communities to identify and incorporate Indigenous history throughout City spaces and update the City's heritage program.
- 4 n) Identify, track, and prioritize accessibility improvements for public spaces and buildings including:
- Expand the CityFix App to include the ability for the public to report on accessibility issues;
  - Update the City's accessible parking standards for both on street and onsite parking;
  - Review the City's Adaptable Design Guidelines in alignment with new Provincial Legislation and the Zoning Bylaw update;
  - Explore creating guidelines or information for improving accessibility related to patio design, public washrooms, and community gardens;
  - Develop an Equalities Impact Assessment tool that uses a series of questions and prompts to identify and address potential negative impacts to specific groups. This tool will be applied to the design and delivery of City services, policies, spaces, and engagement to create more equitable outcomes; and,
  - Develop Social Wellbeing Design Guidelines for multi-unit developments to reduce social isolation, enhance social equity, and promote opportunities for growing community connections through building design.
- 4 o) Recognizing that physical and perceived safety is multi-layered and experienced differently by each individual:
- Engage the community to better understand safety issues and to identify any spaces that feel unsafe or unwelcoming and use the results to prioritize improvements.
  - Take a holistic approach to managing safety by collaborating with first responders, City enforcement, health and service providers, community groups, and local businesses to maintain a safe environment within public spaces and at community events and engagement activities.

# 5 Poverty Reduction + Inclusive Economy

## DIRECTION

*Include all residents in local economic opportunities and work together to break the cycle of poverty.*

## CONTEXT

The growing gap between incomes and the cost of living means that many households are challenged to meet their basic needs. The situation is particularly acute for groups such as lone parent households, seniors, and people with disabilities. An increasing number of households are also experiencing working poverty, with women, immigrants, and young people particularly impacted by low paying jobs and long hours. These circumstances lead to personal and family stress, and many residents living in poverty feel there is a stigma associated with accessing the services they need.

Although poverty is often hidden, it is a reality in the City and it cuts across all demographics. Nearly a quarter of City households earn less than \$50,000 dollars a year. These households are struggling to meet their basic needs including food, housing, health care, and education.

Recent global stressors have, in some cases, highlighted gaps and led to transformative solutions, while in others, they have further exasperated chronic health conditions and social isolation, and disproportionately impacted those facing poverty.

While other levels of government play a significant role in poverty reduction, at the local level it is important to provide easy access to services and work closely with partners to encourage stable employment opportunities, fair wages, and access to affordable housing to help mitigate the impacts of poverty.

### **North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy (2023)**

The NSPR Strategy was a cross-jurisdictional effort to develop actions that the five jurisdictions (City of North Vancouver, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Sḵw̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations could collaborate on, given that poverty does not stick to jurisdictional boundaries.

The policies and actions in this section represent the specific opportunities that the City can undertake relative to poverty reduction and building an inclusive community economy, under an overarching umbrella of the NSPRS (continuing to work together; enhancing access to Services; creating a more inclusive North Shore; and addressing the cost of living).

## OBJECTIVES

- 5 a) Work with partners to improve access to affordable housing and child care, food security, affordable transportation options, employment literacy and training, recreation, and other supports.
- 5 b) Work with partners and non-profit organizations to reduce barriers in navigating support systems. (e.g. North Shore Solutions Navigators program)
- 5 c) Work with partners to share information on poverty reduction, de-stigmatize and raise awareness in the community about poverty, share information on available services and resources, and to motivate the community to take action.
- 5 d) Collaborate with Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and sə̓lilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, District of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, community partners, and non-profit organizations to implement the North Shore Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- 5 e) Improve affordable community access to healthy food and food sharing initiatives.
- 5 f) Build a local economy that shares prosperity throughout the community by promoting payment of living wages, encouraging inclusive employment opportunities, and engaging local businesses.
- 5 g) Partner with the North Shore Chamber of Commerce and other community agencies to support new businesses.
- 5 h) Collaborate with local community agencies, non-profits, and businesses to provide a coordinated approach to resilience by strengthening community networks, support services, information sharing, and communication to residents, with a particular focus on reaching vulnerable groups.

# 6 Partnerships, Advocacy & Financial Supports

## DIRECTION

***Build equitable and supportive partnerships that advance the City's priorities for wellbeing, align City resources and funding, and advocate for the community's needs.***

## CONTEXT

The implementation of the Community Wellbeing Strategy is significantly enabled by the City's collaboration with other organizations and government jurisdictions that offer important expertise, responsibility, and commitment to the City and its residents. It is critical to pursue partnerships, undertake advocacy, and provide supportive funding to achieve the needed social infrastructure in the City:

**Partnerships:** The City frequently partners with First Nations, other municipalities, Provincial and Federal governments, Regional agencies, non-profit organizations, post secondary institutions, the business community, and other stakeholders to provide services, programs, amenities, affordable housing, and many other activities that support wellbeing and community building.

These partnerships provide the opportunity to pool resources, capitalize on expertise and experiences, share responsibilities, complement strengths, and tackle complex issues.

**Advocacy:** The City advocates to other levels of government to represent the local needs on a wide range of topics including housing, child care, seniors' services, public health, safety, transportation, infrastructure, and more. Advocacy is one method for how we achieve and influence policy, legislation, funding, infrastructure, and other programs or supports that require a comprehensive approach and multi-jurisdictional or multi-partner solutions.

**Partnership:** is broadly used to describe any policy, project, financial support, or advocacy work that is done in collaboration. These partnerships can be short-term, long-term, or ongoing. They can also be formal or informal in nature.

**Advocacy:** is the active support of an idea on behalf of the community to influence change to achieve positive outcomes for City residents.

**Supportive Funding:** Investing in people and community results in long term public cost savings and benefits. Many social and community programs, services, and activities in the City are provided by non-profit organizations, community groups, and social agencies. The City’s (and other) financial supports are intended to help service providers to do what they do best: provide services and programs that contribute to individual and collective community wellbeing.

Due to the overlapping nature of jurisdictions and mandates related to community wellbeing, the City is focused on and committed to partnerships, advocacy, and funding opportunities that are mutually supportive, based on shared participation, trust, respect, and common values, and deepens the long term impact to see greater returns and better community health outcomes.

## OBJECTIVES

### Partnerships

- 6 a) Engage, develop, and maintain partnerships and relationships that are mutually beneficial, transparent, effective, and organized.

Types of Partnerships in Social and Community Planning	
<b>Policy</b>	Policy work (writing and implementation) that requires external collaboration or support.
<b>Project</b>	Specific projects or tasks that are defined with roles, responsibilities, and deliverables.
<b>Financial</b>	<p><b>Internal (City) Supports:</b> Providing funding to organizations to support services, programming, and/or operations to achieve City priorities.</p> <p><b>External Supports:</b> Working together to access external funding opportunities.</p>
<b>Advocacy</b>	Clearly describing and articulating directions, needs, and desired outcomes of the City. This includes advocating on behalf of partners (for example, writing letters of support).
Formality of Partnerships	
<b>Informal</b>	Based on information sharing, engagement and input, participation in committees and tables, and requires limited or no documentation.
<b>Formal</b>	Documented, with clear roles, responsibilities, timeframes, and outcomes or deliverables.

*Note: Different types of work require different forms of relationships and often multiple forms of relationships with the same partners.*

- 6 b) Engage and learn as a government, as an organization, and as individuals in long-term relationship-building, learning, and healing processes with Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations and urban Indigenous people.

- 6 c) Commit to the principles of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA), and seek to undertake the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action to address structural inequalities.
- 6 d) Support non-profit and community organizations with funding opportunities, collaboration with community tables and committees, open data, promoting programs, services, and events, and creating affordable community spaces.
- 6 e) In collaboration with North Shore Emergency Management, work with non-profits and local agencies to build capacity for emergency situations and related recovery events.

### **Advocacy**

- 6 f) Strategically advocate to senior governments for financial support and partnerships for identified community needs and priorities.

Advocacy efforts to focus on:

- Affordable housing, including rental protections, non-market housing, supportive and transition housing, temporary shelter, and sustainable funding models.
  - Systems change, including single point of entry and housing first models.
  - Programs, services and practices to support people who have been historically discriminated against or marginalized due to race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender identity, socio-economic circumstances, disability, and/or other identities.
  - Support for safe and efficient mobility options, particularly those with different abilities.
  - Affordable, accessible, and high quality child care and afterschool care.
  - Poverty reduction, including economic supports for low to moderate income earners, aligned with cost of living.
  - Mental health supports, treatment, and related services.
  - Substance use, including harm reduction, recovery supports, and addressing community impacts
- Emergency recovery programs to support medium to long-term displacement of individuals due to urban fires and other emergency events.

### **Supportive Funding**

- 6 g) Provide supportive funding under a framework that is focused on alignment with City priorities and desired outcomes, transparent and simplified processes and administration, flexible to changing needs, and efficient use of City resources.
- 6 h) Strategically pursue grants and funding sources to fast-track action, enable partnerships and co-benefits, support social services and programs, and address emerging issues.
- 6 i) Actively invest in the City's social infrastructure in alignment with community needs and development opportunities.

# 5. Implementation: Delivering Community Wellbeing

This is a 10-year Strategy and it is intended that the directions and objectives will be delivered over this timeframe. The implementation of this Strategy requires strong teamwork, adequate resources, staff time, partnerships, and an engaged community to be successful.

## WORKING TOGETHER

There is an opportunity for everyone, including city residents, staff, community organizations, businesses, political and community leaders, and other levels of government, to contribute to this work.

Each of the six pathways in this Strategy provide directions and objectives to communicate expectations and guide decision-making while remaining nimble to changing conditions. Because this is a fully integrated Strategy, the resulting work will be delivered by various departments and divisions within the City. Much of the work will also require partnerships with other governments, rights holders, non-profit organizations, the business community, other stakeholders, and the public. The delivery and timing of the work will be dependent on Council's objectives and priorities, along with community needs, annual budgets, and the City's capacity.

This Strategy establishes clear pathways to achieve a City where everyone belongs and has opportunities to thrive. It establishes the enabling conditions and capacity to overcome issues and challenges, as well as capitalize on opportunities as they arise.

## FUNDING AND RESOURCES

Given that funding and resources are limited, and that many components of this Strategy need to build on one-another and on other City policies, the decisions as to when actions will be undertaken must be thoughtfully and strategically considered. We cannot do it all at once.

The typical opportunities for allocating funding and resources in the City include:

- The **Annual Financial Planning Process** at which time all City departments propose a list of projects and/or programs to be included in the City's operating and capital budgets in the Financial Plan. These projects are then evaluated and selected based on how well they support the City's objectives and strategic priorities.

- **Work Programming** which happens annually and by each City department, to guide the staff's work and budget allocation for the calendar year. Policy development and implementation are typically considered through this process.
- **Partnerships and External Funding Sources** may enable the City to deliver projects and/or programs on expedited timelines, as funding or partnerships are secured.

For this Strategy, it means that staff will bring forward funding and resource requests to undertake work that delivers on the directions and objectives through the above processes and as opportunities arise.

## HOW WE DO THE WORK

As the City implements the strategy, we want to ensure consistency and coordination as well as learning and information sharing:

### 1. MONITORING AND REPORTING:

We cannot improve what we do not measure. Strategic monitoring and reporting programs will be established to encourage continual improvement. This includes proactively collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data, mitigating inequities by amplifying key indicators, and regularly reporting out on progress.

### 2. TALK AND ENGAGE:

Conversations and engagement make it possible to better understand the needs of the community and find collective solutions. This includes ongoing engagement with other governments, stakeholders, and the community at large, reducing barriers to participation, and increasing representation and diversity of view points.

### 3. PILOT, LEARN, ADAPT:

Planning can go a long way in anticipating outcomes, but we can often learn just as much, if not more, from monitoring on-the-ground outcomes. The world is changing quickly and being nimble is critical. The City will continue to be open to piloting (or testing), learning as we go, and adapting as required to enable faster implementation and more opportunities to try new things.

### 4. EDUCATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND STEWARDSHIP:

Much of the success of the actions in this Strategy will depend on a high level of community participation. This includes building awareness, knowledge, and empathy, working with non-profit and other community organizations to expand education opportunities, offering internal training, and creating opportunities for volunteering and community involvement.

### 5. FINANCING WELLBEING:

To support the implementation of the Strategy, building partnerships and relationships, participating in grants and other funding opportunities, documenting the social return on investment (and community outcomes), strategically investing in our community, and advocating to higher levels of government to support social infrastructure will be necessary.

# 6. Appendix

The following are links to City of North Vancouver plans and strategies that relate and complement the Community Wellbeing Strategy.

Please refer to the [City of North Vancouver website](#) for additional plans and strategies.

## **Community Planning Plans and Strategies:**

[Child Care Action Plan](#)

[Dementia Friendly North Shore Action Plan](#)

[Housing Needs Report](#)

[Housing Action Plan](#) (will be superseded by the Community Wellbeing Strategy)

[Poverty Reduction Strategy](#)

## **Additional City Plans and Strategies:**

[CNV4ME](#) (will be superseded by the Community Wellbeing Strategy)

[Official Community Plan](#)

[Mobility Strategy](#)

[Draft Climate and Environment Strategy](#)

[Parks Master Plan](#)

In the final strategy, the appendix will include a glossary of terms and other supporting information.