Strategic Plan Update

Engagement Summary

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1. Project Information

1.1. Project Background

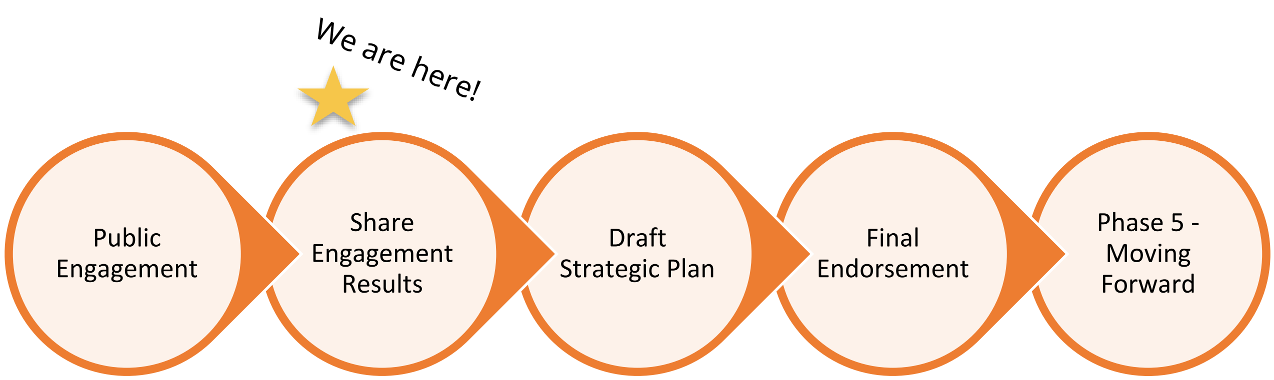
Coquitlam's current Strategic Plan (2020-2023) is the product of a robust engagement process that took place in 2019. The 2019 engagement process included in-person pop-up events throughout the city, formal presentations with a range of community groups and Council-appointed advisory committees, an online open survey for the public, and additional questions as part of the statistically-valid Community Satisfaction Survey administered by Ipsos.

The Strategic Plan guides the organization's formulation of other long-range and operational plans and currently includes five strategic goals, measurable performance indicators, a vision statement to 2032 and a mission statement as well as organizational values. The Strategic Plan is updated every four years following the municipal election, to ensure alignment with Council direction and emerging public expectations. The presentation to Council in March affirmed a focused scope for the Strategic Plan's 2023 renewal and engagement.

The 2023 renewal process updates the Strategic Plan's operating context, especially in light of organizational priorities - including equity, diversity and inclusion, and reconciliation – that have emerged since 2019. However, the 2023 process is not a full-scale renewal at the size and complexity of what was done in 2019.

1.2. Project Timeline

The Strategic Plan is a multi-step project expected to take approximately 10 months to complete.



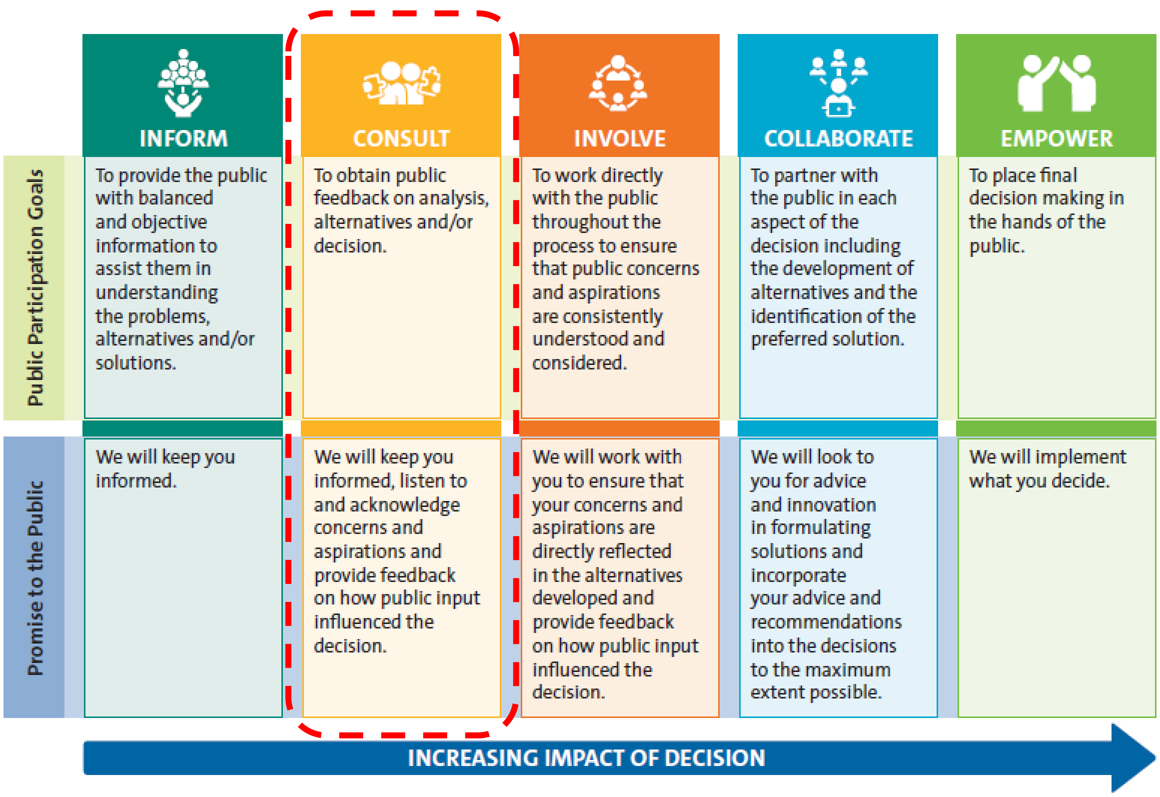
2. What We Did

2.1. Level of Engagement

We look to the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation to help us determine the level of involvement from the public and/or specific interested parties. The Spectrum demonstrates visually that engagement goals change depending on the level of influence the public or a specific group of people has on the decision being made.

For this early phase of the Strategic Plan, the engagement activities took place at the “Consult” level, as it was important to gather public feedback on the community’s goals, challenges and values in order to update the Plan.

At this level, the goal is “to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. The promise to the public is that we will keep them informed, listen to, and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input has influenced the decision”.



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goals	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

INCREASING IMPACT OF DECISION

It is also important to recognize the multiple streams of input and analysis that will inform this project. "The Weave" diagram below shows how this project will integrate planning expertise, statistically valid data (e.g. Community Satisfaction Survey), public engagement, and Council and staff direction in order to create a well-supported Plan.

2.2. Summary of Activities

Engagement Activity	Date	Participants
Public Survey	June 7 - July 30	550
Presentations to seven Council Advisory Committees *	June – October 2023	60
In-person pop-up engagement	July 1 (Coquitlam's Canada Day event)	Over 150
Presentation to Tri-Cities Local Immigrant Partnership	June 22, 2023	8
	TOTAL	**Over 768**

** Council Advisory Committees engaged: Community Safety, Culture Services, Economic Development, Multiculturalism, Sports and Recreation, Sustainability and Environment, Universal Access-Ability.*

2.3. Engagement Activities

Engagement activities involved a combination of public activities (open to anyone) and focused activities (targeted to specific groups or organizations). A combination of in-person and online activities were used.

Public Survey

The City of Coquitlam gathered community input on our corporate Strategic Plan, so that the plan continues to reflect the current and future needs of the Coquitlam community. City staff will use the results of this survey to better understand community priorities and issues for achieving the core mandates of local government.

A survey to collect this input was live from June 7 to July 30, 2023. The online survey was available at LetsTalkCoquitlam.ca/StrategicPlan.

Anyone had the opportunity to participate and 550 total valid submissions were received.

Small Group Discussions / Interviews

From June 6 – October 12, there were seven additional engagement sessions involving seven advisory committees and one community partner. The following groups participated:

- Council Advisory Committees
  - Community Safety Advisory Committee
  - Culture Services Advisory Committee
  - Economic Development Advisory Committee
  - Multiculturalism Advisory Committee
  - Sustainability and Environment Advisory Committee
  - Universal Access-Ability Advisory Committee
  - Sports and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Tri-Cities Local Immigration Partnership

In-Person Pop-Up Engagement

In addition to the survey and small group discussions / interviews, there was one pop-up table at Coquitlam's Canada Day event at Town Centre Park to engage the public / event attendees.

Online Reach

During the engagement phase, the project information reached many people through online channels including:

- 2,200 visits to LetsTalkCoquitlam.ca/StrategicPlan

- Over 26,000 people reached via the City's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter / X) through both organic and paid content.

2.4. Who Participated (Public Survey)

The following is a summary of the demographics represented by the online survey. We did not collect demographic data from participants who attended the small group discussions or pop-up engagements. *See Appendix 1 for a more detailed breakdown of the survey demographic data.*

Connection to Coquitlam: Survey participants were largely Coquitlam residents (95%) from throughout the city and largely long-time residents reporting living in Coquitlam for 10 or more years (70%). In addition to those who have resided in Coquitlam for a longer period of time, we also heard from new residents (4% reported living in Coquitlam for under two years). Participants represented nearly every neighbourhood in the city. *1% of residents preferred not to share their neighbourhood.*

The neighbourhoods were represented by percentage of residents as follows:

- Central Coquitlam (18%)
- City Centre (16%)
- Burquitlam / Lougheed (13%)
- Westwood Plateau (9%)
- Northeast Coquitlam / Burke Mountain (8%)
- Ranch Park (7%)
- Eagle Ridge (7%)
- Hockaday Nestor (5%)
- Cape Horn (5%)
- Maillardville (4%)
- Austin Heights (3%)
- River Heights (2%)
- River Springs (1%)

Beyond living in Coquitlam, 65% of participants access and enjoy nature in Coquitlam, 62% shop, have fun, enjoy entertainment and cultural events in Coquitlam (62%), 50% visit friends and family in Coquitlam, 50% play or participate in recreational activities in Coquitlam, 50% attend medical / health and wellness appointments in Coquitlam, 25% has someone in their household who works in Coquitlam, 24% volunteer in Coquitlam, 23% visit and travel through Coquitlam to get to other destinations, 17% have someone in their household who attends school in Coquitlam, 8% own or run a business in Coquitlam, 7% identified themselves as a community advocate or worker serving the Coquitlam community, and 6% have their childcare in Coquitlam.

Of Coquitlam residents, 25% also have a member of their household working in Coquitlam, 18% have someone in their household attending school in Coquitlam, and 8% own or run businesses in Coquitlam.

Gender Identity There was representation from women (52%) and men (41%). A small percentage of participants (1%) indicated they are non-binary. *6% of participants preferred not to share their age category or did not respond to the question.*

Age Group: All age groups were represented though the majority largely reported being older, with the largest single group being 65 to 74 year olds (22%) and the smallest being those under 18 (0.4%). Overall, participants were generally older, 69% reported being 45+ and half the participants (50%) reported being 55+. *3% of participants preferred not to share their age category.*

Gross Household Income (GHI): While we did not ask each participant their GHI, 9% reported GHIs under $50,000 and 19% of participants reported living in a single income household. *4% of participants preferred not to share income related details about their household.*

Additional Identities and Lived Experience: Survey participants included those from a variety of identities, backgrounds and experiences including households with:

- Long-time resident(s) of Coquitlam (10 or more years) (70%)
- Children / youth (18 and under) living in them (22%)
- Single income (19%)
- Person(s) of colour / from a racialized community (17%)
- Annual gross household incomes under $50k (9%)
- Primary languages spoken at home being other than one of Canada's official languages (English or French) (9%)
- Someone with a disability (8%)
- Experience of addiction, homelessness, and/or accessing mental health services (8%)
- Member(s) of the LGBTQ2S+ community (5%)
- New resident(s) of Coquitlam (under two years) (4%)
- Lone parent / caregiver of children or youth living in household (3%)
- Someone who is Indigenous (e.g., First Nations, Métis, Inuit) (2%)
- Newcomer(s) to Canada (less than five years) (1%)
- Other (1%)

** 7% reported no additional barriers or lived experiences in their household.*
** 4% of participants preferred not to share any additional details about their household.*

Of the 1% who reported other identities / experiences, they include (in alphabetical order): a blended family with children in schools across all Tri-Cities municipalities, members of a religious community / who ascribe to a personal faith, a multi-generational home, a multi-lingual family, those fearing / about to be priced out of the Tri-Cities due to rising costs, those financially supporting their parents, and those new to Canada and Coquitlam (more than 5 years but less than 10).

3. What We Heard

The following section summarizes what we heard through the public survey.

3.1. Top Issues

When survey participants were asked to select up to their **three most important issues**, the top five most frequent responses were:

1. Balanced growth and livability (48% of total participants)
2. Housing and development (34%)
3. Community and neighbourhood planning (34%)
4. Environmental sustainability (29%)
5. Transportation (26%)

When asked which of their selected most important issues ranked as their **top priority issue**, the top five most frequent answers were:

1. Balanced growth and livability (25% of total participants)
2. Housing and development (17%)
3. Environmental sustainability (11%)
4. Community and neighbourhood planning (9%)
5. Public safety (9%)

While the two results generally aligned, not all issues deemed important were reflected in what they ultimately chose as their top priority issue. Notable values selected as important that did not make it to the priority issue selections:

- Parks and trails (25% of most important, 5% of top priority),
- Healthy living and recreation (23% of most important, 4% of top priority), and
- Economic development (14% of most important, 3% of top priority).

Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the issues selected by survey participants as their top priority issue, as well as issues among their most important three – presented in descending top priority issue order. The largest issue that emerged in open-ended feedback outside of the issues ranked in Figure 1 was affordability / cost of living / inflation (19% of the open-ended feedback). See section 3.3 for more information on the top issues and themes that emerged in the open-ended responses.

Figure 1: Most important / top priority issues according to survey participants

3.2. Top Values / What the City should be

When survey participants were asked to select up to the **three most important values** of what the City should be, the top five most frequent responses were:

1. Safe (53% of total participants)
2. Financially well-managed (50%)
3. Green / environmentally sustainable (42%)
4. Open, fair and accountable (30%)
5. Clean (29%)

When asked which of their most important selected values ranked as their **top value**, the top five answers were:

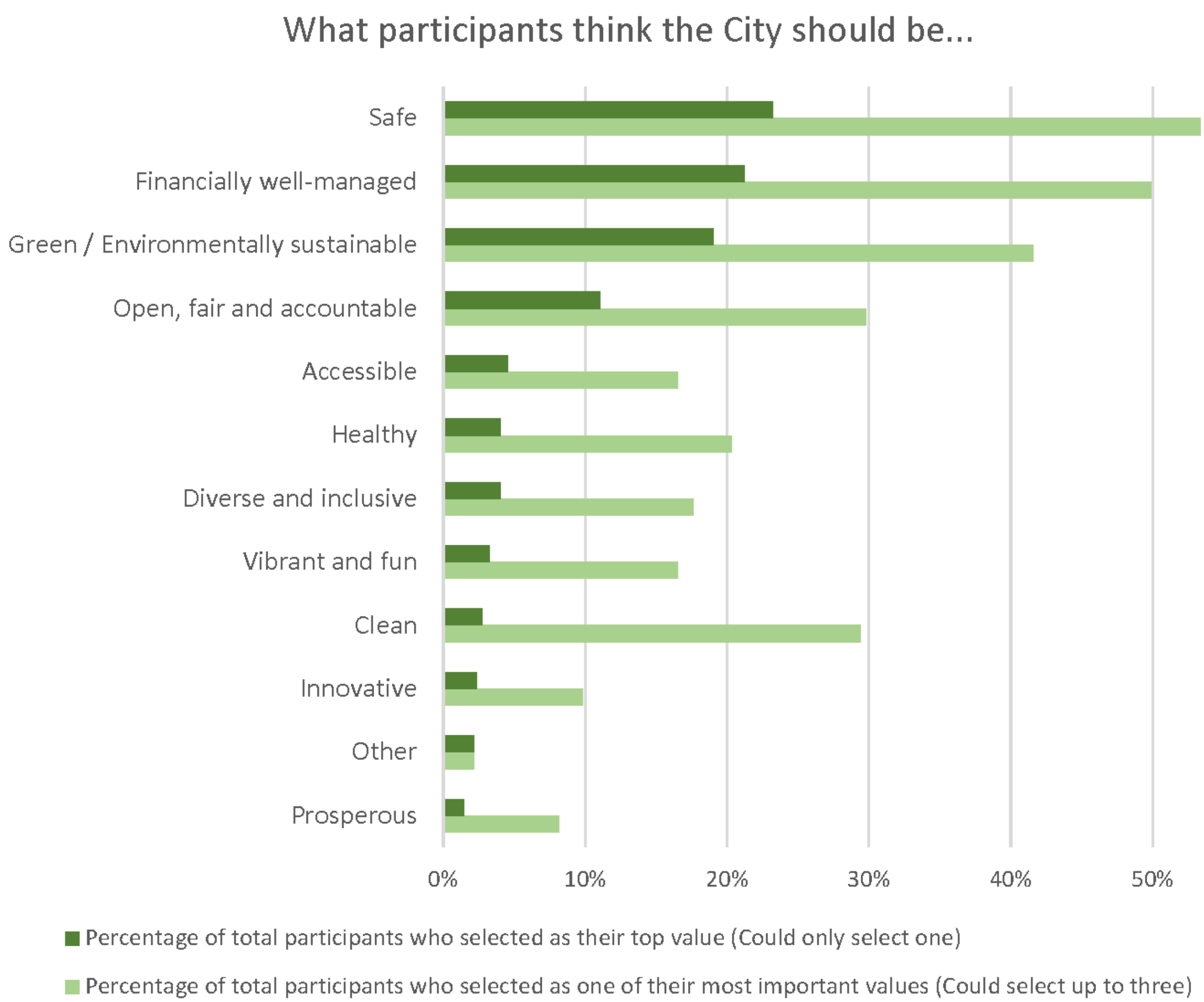
1. Safe (23% of total participants)
2. Financially well-managed (21%)
3. Green / environmentally sustainable (19%)
4. Open, fair and accountable (11%)
5. Accessible (5%)

While the two results generally aligned, not all values deemed important were reflected in what they ultimately chose as their top value. Notable are the values selected as important that did not make it to top value selections:

- Clean (29% of most important, 3% of top value),
- Healthy (20% of most important, 4% of top value),
- Diverse and inclusive (18% of most important, 4% of top value), and
- Vibrant and fun (17% of most important, 3% of top value).

Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the values selected by survey participants as their top value, as well as values among their most important three – presented in descending top value order. The largest value that emerged in open-ended feedback outside of the values ranked in Figure 2 was affordable (19% of the open-ended feedback). See section 3.3 for more information on values and themes that emerged in the open-ended responses.

Figure 2: What survey participants think the City should be



3.3. Open-Ended Survey Feedback

Survey participants were asked to expand as to why they selected their top issues and values. The majority of participants (95%) provided open-ended feedback providing over 1,250 additional responses.

The feedback and themes received was layered and interconnected. The average open-ended response touched on three different values, issues, and/or themes, with some responses including as many as 16 categories of values, issues and/or themes. The interconnectedness of the feedback speaks to the complexity of planning and development, public works and infrastructure, public safety, and managing a City with a diverse and growing population.

High-level summary of the responses of the top issues of focus in the open-ended feedback:

- **Housing and Development (38% of feedback):** Calls for more affordable housing across the spectrum (including accessible, supportive, transitional housing), more non-profit, public and co-op housing, and to address housing crisis / soaring housing costs and homelessness. Support for those attempting to purchase for the first time. Requests for more low- and mid-rise builds as well as duplex / triplex / funplexes, and to expand ability to rezone, add secondary suites, coach/laneway houses and cottages to properties so seniors can age in place and adult children / young families can afford to stay. Concerns around being priced out / displaced (or comments that they already have). Calls to stop / slow down development, especially "luxury builds" and high-rise towers, and for infrastructure, amenities, and services (including childcare, school, recreation, healthcare, police) to keep pace with growth and support to ensure current residents are not negatively impacted (priced out, livability). Requests for more necessities in residential areas (e.g., mixed use, small corner stores, access to grocery stores). Some calls for more density, some calls for less.
- **Transportation (22%):** Calls for transportation infrastructure and services to keep pace with growth and address congestion, traffic, and parking issues as a result of growth. Requests for more active transportation, public transit, school buses, carpooling, e-mobility, and/or green technology, and to prioritize accessibility and safety (e.g., better lit, more crosswalks with lights, surveillance, address crime, protected bike lanes). Calls for more tree canopy / shade on paths. Calls to address speeding, unsafe driving, and vehicle theft / break-ins. Calls for more necessitates in residential areas / within 15 minutes to minimize commute times and need for single-occupancy vehicles. Calls for more road maintenance, better snow and ice

clearing from roads / sidewalks, and construction to happen during non-peak hours.

- **Balanced Growth and Livability (20%):** Calls that the level of development and growth taking place is too much, too fast. Need for infrastructure, amenities and services to keep up (to be planned into the mix not to be addressed after the fact). Calls for fewer high rise towers and more public access to nature / the outdoors.

High-level summary of the responses of the top values of focus in the open-ended feedback:

- **Safe (18%**): Concerns around crime (especially violent assaults, shootings, gangs, home invasions, theft), drug use, mental health, homelessness, lack of opportunities for youth, population growth / change, and the need to ensure women, racialized populations, LGBTQ2S+, and seniors are and feel safe. Calls for more lighting, surveillance, to increase policing, for community watch programs / foot patrols, and more training for police around mental health and trauma.
- **Green / environmentally sustainable (17%):** Concerns around climate change / extreme weather and its impacts (including on wildlife and forests). Calls to maintain and add trees, especially for tree canopies to help with heat (adding shade and cooling) and smoke. Responses also focused on solutions, the need to travel less for essentials ('15 minute city'), promoting and supporting active transportation and alternative energy.
- **Healthy (8%):** Calls to work with province to provide better healthcare, build a hospital, attract more family doctors, improve mental health and substance use support, more green space, recreation, and working to support isolated residents (especially seniors). Concerns around impacts / increased stress due to rising costs and climate change.
- **Financially well-managed (8%):** Given the rising costs, emphasis on the need for the City to be / remain financially well-managed and make good financial decisions. Emphasis was to focus on affordable housing, improving infrastructure and amenities, and make the community safer.

In addition to the original survey categories, a number of other themes emerged in the open-ended survey feedback (details provided on the top five):

- **Affordability and cost of living (19%):** Concerns around being priced out, the rising cost of food and food security, increasing taxes and fees (especially for seniors and young families), lack of affordable, suitable housing options across the housing spectrum, lack of well-paid jobs to keep up with costs, concerns around the city prioritizing developers and new residents over existing who would like to be able to afford to stay, and concerns over the younger generation.

- **Population growth (16%)** with concerns about the rapid population growth and its impact on current residents, their quality of life (specifically their commutes / the congestion and affordability) and ability to stay in Coquitlam. Calls for infrastructure to keep pace with growth and/or to be upgraded in advance.
- **Calls to slow or halt density / growth (14%)** in particular high rise tower and 'luxury' developments: Specifying unaffordability, crime and congestion as a result, and the need to ensure infrastructure & amenities (e.g., roads, schools, childcare, healthcare access, recreation, public works, police, and transportation networks) are improved in a timely manner to keep up.
- **Infrastructure, public works, amenities, & services to keep pace with growth (13%)** with an emphasis on roads and transportation, sewer and drainage, community facilities and recreation, parks, police, fire and rescue, and other public services and supports.
- **Concerns about younger and future generations (12%)**, especially related to affordability, housing, health, climate change, and crime.

Other themes that emerged:

- Congestion / traffic / crowding (8%)
- Climate change and extreme weather (7%)
- Trees and tree canopies (6%)
- City spending / taxes (6%)
- Healthcare needs / shortages (5%)
- Crime (5%)
- Childcare and schools (4%)
- Seniors (4%)
- Jobs and employment opportunities (2%)
- Addiction and drugs (1%)
- Homelessness (1%)
- Food, especially access and security (1%)

3.4. Feedback from Group Discussions and Pop-Up Engagement

Outside of the survey, the small group discussions / interviews and in-person pop-up engagement sessions provided an additional 484 responses through a sticky note and brainstorming exercises about the five strategic goals.

Additional Engagement Activities	Total responses	SG1: Safe & Complete Neighbourhoods	SG2: Local Economy and Local Jobs	SG3: Healthy Community and Active Citizens	SG4: Sustainable Services, Environment, & Infrastructure	SG5: Excellence in City Governance
Universal Access Ability (June 6)	**49**	12	11	14	8	4
Sports & Recreation (June 14)	**43**	13	6	13	4	7
Multiculturalism (June 21)	**31**	4	8	8	5	6
TCLIP (June 22)	**49**	14	8	7	7	12
Economic Development (June 28)	**47**	9	16	11	4	7
Community Safety (June 29)	**17**	6	3	4	3	1
Pop-up at Canada Day (July 1)	**156**	44	29	35	32	16
Sustainability & Environmental (July 25)	**51**	8	10	9	14	10
Cultural Services (October 12)	**41**	7	10	14	6	4
Total responses	**484**	**117**	**101**	**115**	**83**	**67**
		25%	21%	23%	17%	14%

The purpose of these sessions was to raise awareness and connect with a broad range of community members, including those who may not otherwise be engaged with the City's channels or engagement activities. Participants were provided with background information about the project, and encouraged to take the public survey. The feedback provided through these small group and pop-up sessions largely aligned with the survey responses.

4. Key Insights

Based on the feedback received across all engagement activities, the following insights and considerations will help inform the draft Strategic Plan 2024-2027.

Overall, respondents told us they value a safe, financially well-managed and environmentally sustainable City. Respondents prioritize balanced growth and livability, safety, affordability and environmental sustainability.

However, the feedback and themes were layered and interconnected. The average feedback response touched on three different values, issues, and/or themes, with some responses including as many as 16 categories of values, issues, and/or themes. The interconnectedness of the feedback speaks to complexity of planning, development, infrastructure, public safety, and managing a City with a diverse and growing population.

It is important to acknowledge issues that do not typically fall into the municipal mandate but are having an impact on residents including affordability and inflation, the housing crisis, and climate change. While these issues and concerns are impacting all residents, they are particularly felt by more vulnerable individuals including low-income, and younger / future generations.

Feedback suggested the plan will also need to balance the needs of current residents and new residents, as well as balance the needs of Coquitlam individually as well as within the broader Metro Vancouver region.

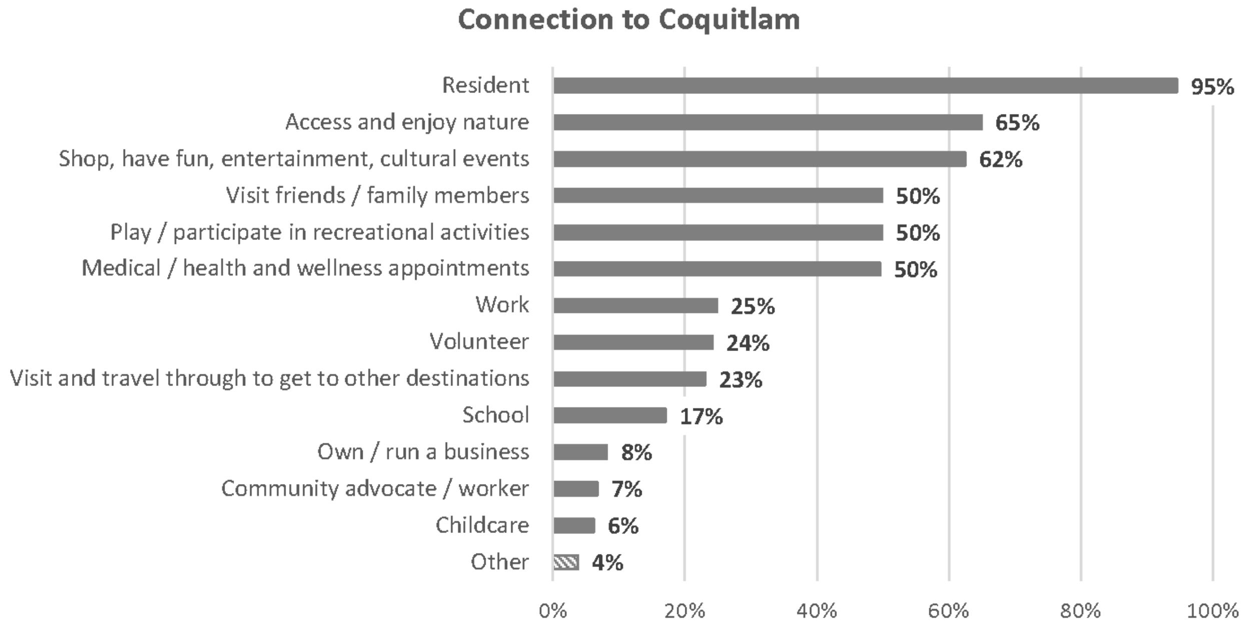
5. Next Steps

All information in this report will be analyzed along with a variety of other factors and information, for example, the statistically valid data from the Community Satisfaction Survey and planning best practices to create a document to guide us to 2027. A draft plan is anticipated to be shared in early 2024.

Visit LetsTalkCoquitlam.ca/StrategicPlan to learn more about the project and stay up-to-date on future engagement opportunities.

Appendix 1 – Survey Demographic Data

Connection to Coquitlam:

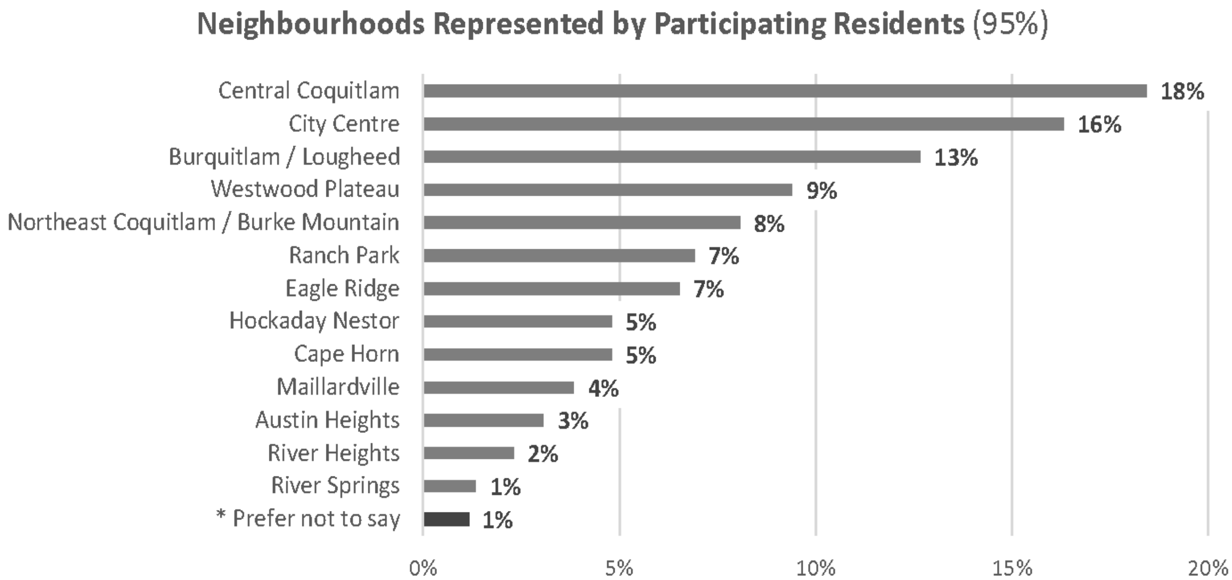


The 'Other' category includes (in alphabetical order):

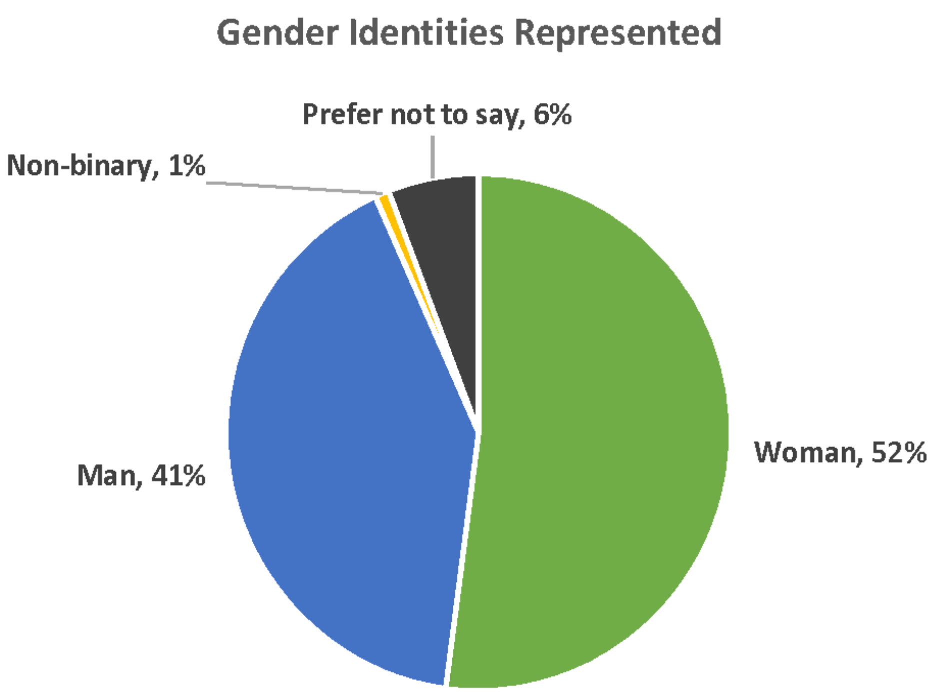
- Active residents who regularly engage and communicate with Council and staff
- Chose to live in Coquitlam because of tree canopy and forested parks
- Current residents of neighbouring municipality in the process of moving to Coquitlam
- Family members are business owners in Coquitlam
- Lives in neighbouring municipality near a Coquitlam neighbourhood (e.g., Burke Mountain, Burquitlam)
- Long-time teachers and coach in Coquitlam (SD43)
- Members or organizers of community recreation / sports in Coquitlam
- Multi-generational Coquitlam property owners
- Own property but do not reside in Coquitlam
- Partner lives in Coquitlam
- Raise / raised their families in Coquitlam
- Raised in Coquitlam (or whose partners/spouses were),
- Regularly donate to organizations in Coquitlam
- Religious community / place of worship is in Coquitlam
- Shop for groceries and essentials (not for entertainment or pleasure)
- Watch live-streams of Coquitlam City Council meetings regularly,

- Previous residents before moving in the last two years but still connected to community, including those who were priced out and had to move further out

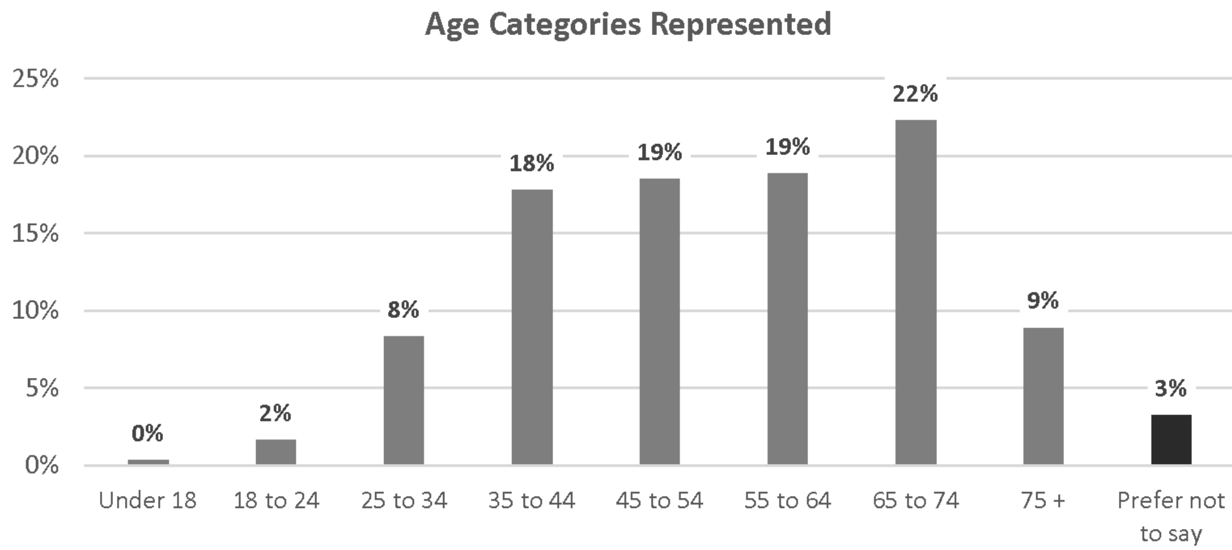
Coquitlam Neighbourhoods:



Gender Identity:



Age:



Additional Identities and Lived Experience

In order of frequency / representation (% of total respondents in brackets):

1. Long-time resident of Coquitlam (10 or more years) (70%)
2. Children / youth (18 and under) living in household (22%)
3. Single income household (19%)
4. Person of colour / from a racialized community (17%)
5. Annual gross income under $50k (9%)
6. Primary language spoken at home is not an official language (English / French) (9%)
7. Lives with a disability (8%)
8. Lived experience of addiction, homelessness, and/or accessing mental health services (8%)
9. None of these apply to be (7%)
10. Member of the LGBTQ2S+ community (5%)
11. New resident of Coquitlam (under 2 years) (4%)
12. Prefer not to say (4%)
13. Lone parent / caregiver of children or youth living in household (3%)
14. First Nations, Métis, Inuit, or otherwise identify as Indigenous (2%)
15. Newcomer to Canada (less than five years) (1%)
16. Other (1%)