

**ON TABLE**  
City Council Meeting  
May 6, 2024  
re: Item 3.3.a

# New Westminster Community Advisory Assembly

**Recommendations for  
Council on Belonging and  
Connecting**

May 2024



# Decision before Council

The following recommendations are presented for Council's consideration

1. That Council receive the recommendations from the Community Advisory Assembly for information
2. That Council direct staff to respond to each recommendation – including information on any related plans or strategies, and providing a high-level feasibility review – and report back to Council and the Assembly

# About the Community Advisory Assembly

- 36 members, selected by lottery
- Membership mirrors the broad demographics of New Westminster
- Monthly meetings, externally facilitated
- Engage in dialogue and deliberation to develop recommendations for City staff and Council
- Quorum is 2/3, decisions made by consensus



# First Mandate: Belonging and Connecting



**One of Five Council Strategic Priorities:**

**New Westminster is a community where everyone belongs and has the opportunity to connect and contribute.**

The Assembly will...

- a) Help explore what community belonging and connecting means to the group
- b) Recommend actions that could increase community belonging and connecting in New Westminster



# Deliberation Process

**February:** Place-based story sharing to surface experiences of belonging/not belonging

**March:** Small-group deliberations to develop draft recommendations

**April:** Refinement of recommendations and consensus process





# Reaching Consensus

- Group deliberation to refine language of recommendation
- Vote on each recommendation
- Support of 75% of members in attendance constitutes consensus
- Percentage of support recorded



# Belonging and Connecting Themes

The Assembly's dialogue surfaced four broad areas of intervention within which the Assembly's recommendations are organized:

1. Animating the Public Realm,
2. Expanding Facilities and Civic Spaces,
3. Protecting Renter Communities, and
4. Strengthening Outreach and Communications





## Theme 1: Animating the Public Realm



# Assembly Recommendations: *Animating the Public Realm*

- 1) Increase opportunities for interactive music and visual arts to make the public realm inviting, interesting and engaging.

Examples could include: creation of a community mural program, installation of public pianos available for anyone to play, creation of an instrument library, expansion of accessible arts education, expansion of spaces on the streets, parklets or parks where performances can be staged, and low-barrier opportunities for everyone - not just professional artists and performers - to participate. (93% support).

# Assembly Recommendations: *Animating the Public Realm*

- 2) Transform physical infrastructure through thoughtful, people-oriented, inclusive design.

Examples include: reviewing and updating loitering bylaws to facilitate access to public spaces, converting street furniture to be welcoming including for those sleeping outside, creating covered areas for refuge from the rain, increasing lighting by benches and walkways, building public washrooms, reconsidering parking minimum bylaws to allow for more effectively used public spaces where people can connect and transit friendly infrastructure. (79% support)



# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Animating the Public Realm*

### 3) Revitalize year-round festivals incorporating layers of culture and history.

This could be achieved by: retaining or bringing back annual traditions important to the community and adapting them to include elements of Indigenous and newcomer cultures, and creating new festivals (e.g. Buskers Festival, Jazz Festival, Mural Festival) through increase in grant funding and adjustments to how grant applications are assessed.

(100% support)

# Assembly Recommendations: *Animating the Public Realm*

- 4) Expand sports and recreation amenities in Queensborough.

Examples could include an all-weather sports field, hockey rink or swimming pool. (100% support)





## Theme 2: Expanding Facilities and Civic Spaces

# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Expanding Facilities and Civic Spaces*

- 1) Focus on offering and facilitating more access to free or low-cost indoor spaces and activities, including:
  - a) offering more and actively promoting grants to support organizations that are delivering events and programming that support belonging and connecting, and
  - b) offering free/low-cost space use in City facilities for these activities, and improving the booking policies and processes to prioritize access for New Westminster community groups to access City-owned spaces.  
(100% support)



# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Expanding Facilities and Civic Spaces*

- 2) Encourage developers to prioritize spaces for community gathering in amenity contributions for new developments, either in the immediate neighbourhood or in other neighbourhoods of New Westminster where there is greater need. (100% support)



## Theme 3: Protecting Renter Communities

# Assembly Recommendations: *Protecting Renter Communities*

- 1) Prioritize the creation and enforcement of tenant protection policies that require developers to provide protection for tenants impacted by redevelopment.

Consider others' tenant protection policies, with the City of Burnaby's Tenant Assistance Policy as a starting point. Potential policies could include: Covering the costs for moving, ensuring relocation within New Westminster, providing rent top-ups to bridge the gap between previous and new rent, and ensuring access to comparable units in the redeveloped building, at equivalent rents to their previous rent.

(76% support)



# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Protecting Renter Communities*

- 2) Prioritize diverse housing types in zoning, including co-op housing, independent living facilities and other alternative housing forms. (97% support)



## Theme 4: Strengthening Outreach and Communications

# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Strengthening Outreach and Communications*

- 1) Develop a community ambassador program, recruiting residents.

This could involve: identifying diverse members of the community with strong social links, running workshops and training sessions to build their skill, knowledge and capacity, and developing the ambassadors as informed touchpoints of the City in the community - to let residents know what is going on, and to let the City know what residents feel or need. (100% support)



# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Strengthening Outreach and Communications*

- 2) Send welcome letters/packages to new residents to introduce City events, opportunities and available resources and where to find further information. (83% support)

# Assembly Recommendations:

## *Strengthening Outreach and Communications*

- 3) Maintain a mix of print and online City information, recognizing that not everyone depends on or prefers digital media and online resources for information.

This may involve: installation of bulletin boards across facilities and civic spaces, as well as in less formal gathering places, and making use of electricity bills (which go to every household) to include essential information. (100% support)



Questions