Corporation of the City of NEW WESTMINSTER

Attachment *#1*

What We Heard Report

NEW WESTMINSTER

What We Heard: Civic Grants Program Engagement Summary Report

June 2024

Civic Grants Program
Engagement Summary Report

June 17, 2024

Introduction

For several years, the City of New Westminster has offered civic grants to community groups to support their efforts to bring liveliness to the community and services to local residents. Annually, the City gives out approximately $975,000 in grants, which includes both cash awards and in-kind awards of City services that have a cost attached to them, such as street closures, rental space in City facilities, permits, etc.

Each community group can submit only one application per grant intake, covering all their funding requests. Applications are submitted online and reviewed by one of three committees made up of community members. The City's Grants Policy details the process, and the Grants Criteria are updated annually to specify eligibility. Priority is usually given to New Westminster-based organizations, but impactful applications from outside the area are considered. Due to limited funding, not all requests are approved. For more information, visit the City's grants program [webpage here](#).

To continue adapting and responding to the community's needs in a post-pandemic world, the City is considering some refinements to the grants program. The criteria, process, and administration of the civic grant program are being reviewed to continue supporting the community while also aligning with the City's Strategic Priorities Plan.

Community members and grant applicants were asked to provide feedback to help shape the refinements planned. This report provides a summary and results from the community engagement.

The purpose of this summary report is to share with City Council, engagement participants, and the New Westminster community:

1. [What engagement activities were completed](#)
2. [A summary of what we heard](#)
3. [Demographic information about participants & representation analysis](#)
4. [Next steps](#)

Engagement Process

The Civic Grants Program Engagement process started in April 2024 with an online survey launched on [Be Heard New West](#), followed by a focus group conversation with representatives from community groups that have applied for and/or received grants from the City. City staff also connected one-on-one with other representatives from grant-receiving organizations.

Opportunities to Engage

- **Be Heard New West Project Webpage**
  - Launched April 15
  - 587 unique visitors as of May 31, 2024

- **Online Survey**
  - April 15 through May 6, 2024
  - 153 responses

- **Virtual Focus Group**
  - May 22, 2024
  - 6 participants (includes 2 one-on-one discussions)

The opportunities to engage were communicated through the following methods:
- Email outreach to all City grant applicants from last three years
- Email outreach to all City committee members
- Email notification to various City email databases:
  - Be Heard New West subscribers
  - Invest New West newsletter subscribers
  - Citypage newsletter subscribers
- Social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

Important Note: this summary of engagement input does not reflect a representative sample of the New Westminster community. The input captured here reflects the views of those who self-selected to participate, and may not be representative of the views of other community members and stakeholders. Please see section three – About Participants, starting on Page 40 – for some demographic information and representation analysis.

What We Heard

Focus Group

Focus Group Background & Format
City grant applicants and recipients were invited to participate in virtual focus groups to share their experiences with the grants program and discuss potential ideas for improvements. Two focus group sessions were initially scheduled, but one was cancelled due to low registration. A virtual session was held on May 22, 2024, with four participants. An additional two grant recipients spoke with staff one-on-one and answered the same questions posed in the focus group.

What We Heard: Key Themes
Focus group participants were asked three questions:

- What is working well with the City's grants program?
- What are the pain points with the current system of grants?
- What ideas and suggestions do you have to improve the process?

The following feedback was shared by participants in the focus group and one-on-one conversations:

- Idea to evaluate grant applications using a values-based matrix, rather than Council priorities, to remove any potential political component
- Desire for City grants staff to take more time to learn about grant applicants' projects / programs, and build relationships
- Build in flexibility to meet the unique needs of service partners, with different approach for festivals / events / one-off programs
- Preference for unrestricted funding: grant recipient should be able to direct funds where they are most needed rather than only certain items
- Preference for a single point of contact / City staff member to work with on grants
- Support for longer grant terms for partnerships (i.e. multi-year funding)
- Idea for community partners to manage a micro granting program on the City's behalf

Online Survey

A survey was available on Be Heard New West from April 15 – May 6, 2024. The survey included questions for New Westminster residents, as well as those who represent community groups that may be eligible to apply for City grants.

Questions for community members focused on how they think the City should prioritize grant requests, and the overall grants budget. Questions for those who represent a

community group covered topics related to the application process, grant criteria, and reporting requirements.

Details from each section of the survey are shared below along with a summary of the results from each question. Background information was provided throughout the survey and is also included below.

Section 1: Grant Prioritization
This section of the survey asked about how the City should prioritize grant applications, as the program receives requests for significantly more funds than are available.

Currently, the City distributes a total of about $975,000 in grants to community groups each year. The current process is that grant applications are accepted through an online portal for about a month in the fall, and are then considered by one of three grant committees. Each grant committee is composed of residents, at least one staff member, and individuals appointed because of their special focus area. The committees evaluate the applications and when they agree, they make recommendations to the Chief Administrative Officer who gives final approval.

One of the changes we are considering is having one committee review all applications and decide which will receive funding. Streamlining these committees into one committee rather than three would help committee members see the bigger picture of the applications as a whole, rather than only by portfolio, and would provide greater flexibility for applications that may fall into more than one category.

Mayor and Council do not have decision-making power on what organizations receive grant funding; however Council's Strategic Priorities Plan is used as a guide for the committees to evaluate grant applications. Applicants are asked to describe how their proposed project or event aligns with the Strategic Priorities. Applications that align more closely with the Strategic Priorities are given more weight in the committee's decision-making process.

Based on what you learned above about the grant awarding process, please indicate your level of agreement or support for the following statements.

Question 1:
Using Council's Strategic Priorities Plan is a fair way to ensure all grant applications are considered equally.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 150		
Agree	40%	60
Somewhat agree	28%	42

Neutral	20%	30
Somewhat Disagree	9%	14
Disagree	3%	4

Using Council's Strategic Priorities Plan is a fair way to ensure all grant applications are considered equally.

Somewhat disagree 9%

Disagree 3%

Neutral 20%

Agree 40%
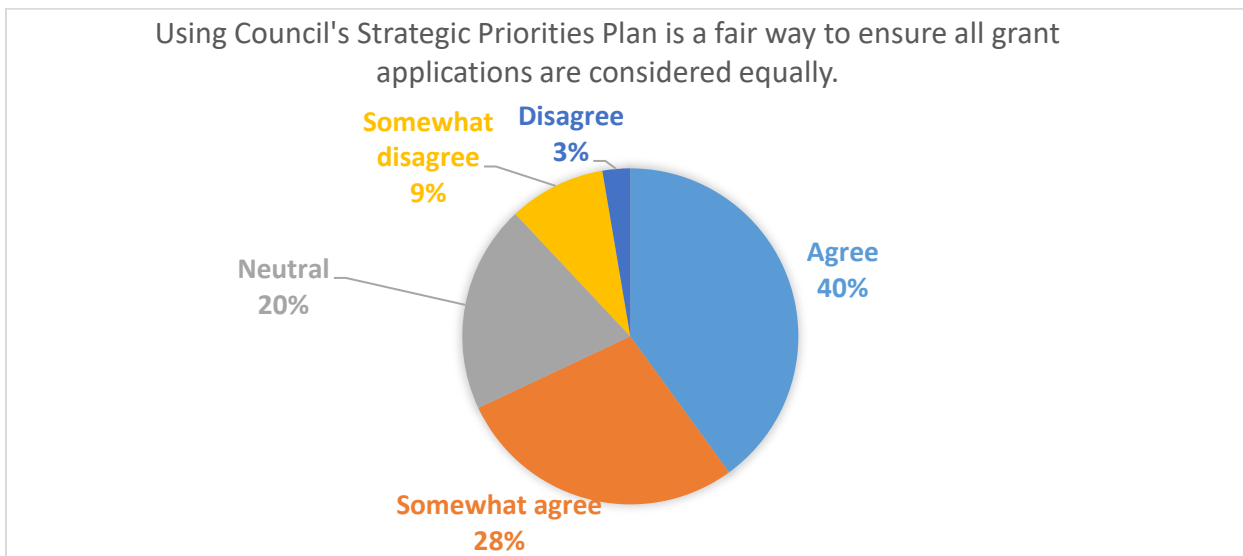
Somewhat agree 28%
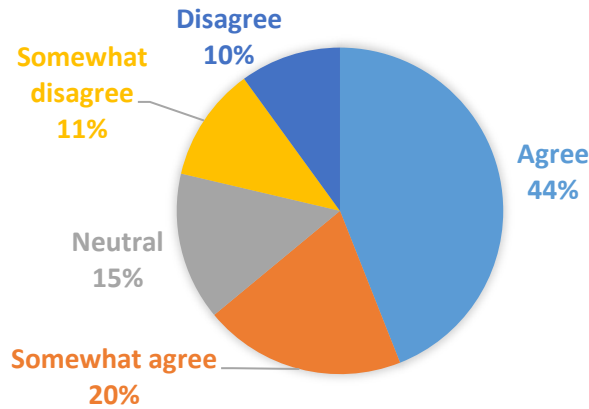
Question 2:
A single committee should adjudicate all applications rather than three separate committees.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 150		
Agree	44%	66
Somewhat agree	20%	30
Neutral	15%	22
Somewhat Disagree	11%	17
Disagree	10%	15

A single committee should adjudicate all applications rather than three separate committees.

Disagree
10%

Somewhat disagree
11%

Agree
44%

Neutral
15%

Somewhat agree
20%

Question 3:

I would support Council allocating more of the City's budget to grants every year, even if it might mean an increase in property taxes of up to 1% to pay for more grant funding.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 149		
Agree	31%	46
Somewhat agree	12%	18
Neutral	13%	20
Somewhat Disagree	17%	25
Disagree	27%	40

I would support Council allocating more of the City's budget to grants every year, even if it might mean an increase in property taxes of up to 1% to pay for more grant funding.

Disagree
27%

Agree
31%

Somewhat disagree
17%

Neutral
13%

Somewhat agree
12%
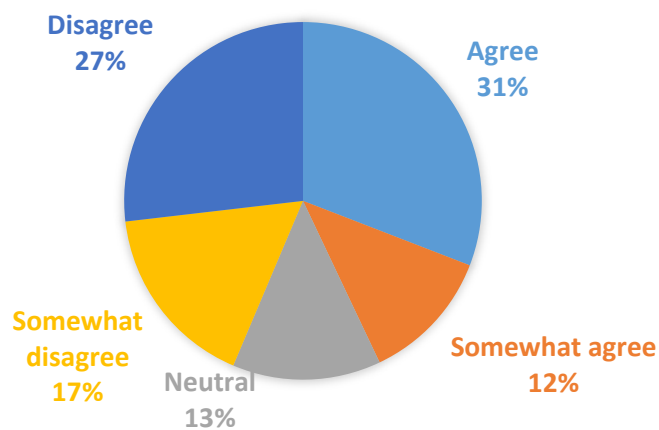
Question 4:
How should the grant committee prioritize applications?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 152		
Prioritize longstanding or established events or programs	9%	14
Prioritize new events and programs to help them get up and running	5%	8
Award grants to a mix of longstanding and new events or programs	67%	102
History of event or program should not be a part of the evaluation criteria	12%	18
Other (please specify)	7%	10
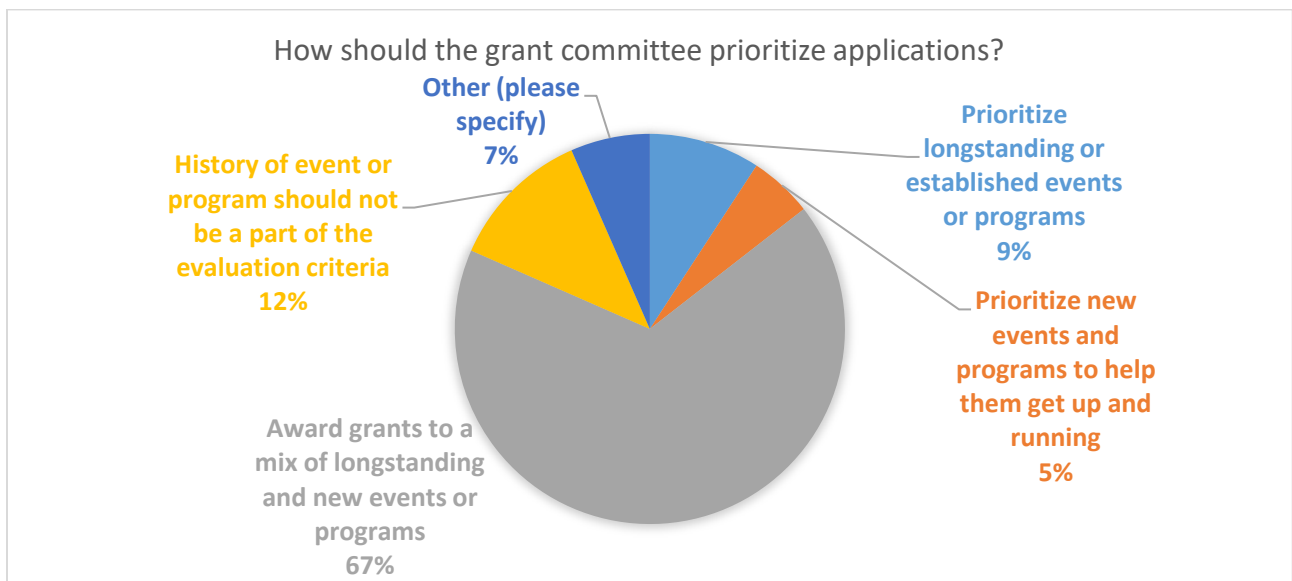
A total of 10 comments were provided by those who chose "other, please specify."
The comments included:

- "I can barely afford my property taxes and we are giving away free money. Basically property owners are finding all this while renters benefit from our hard work"
- "We are living in QUEENSBOROUGH who pays lot of property tax, but always got neglected. We are hoping to use some grant to make our community more beautiful, like put some flowers, more family activities, build a bigger library, etc…"
- "History of event or program shouldn't be high priority. More importantly would be the area of interest, need/value/benefit of the program to the community."
- "Impact"

- "Prioritize applications that will create the biggest impact to the community, i.e. put resources where they are needed most, such as the climate crisis"
- "Grant set aside for city small street garbage clean up education to not litter. What happened to supernatural b.c. ?"
- "Mix longstanding and new events or programs and consider stats of how many will benefit, and the benefit to the City of New Westminster plus tourism, visitation and public relations."
- "Annual assessments should be done on longstanding programs to evaluate if they are still doing well and should they continue to be supported? I agree that awarding grants to a mix of longstanding and new events is fair"
- "Prioritize longstanding event and community economic development initiatives"
- "Award grants to organizations/events that create opportunities for the City to realize its vision of the community it wants to be, not because an organization has "always received a grant". For example, funding should not be provided for "May Day" - it is a colonial anachronism that runs counter to the values of creating an inclusive community."

Section 2: Multi-Year Funding

Currently, grant applicants may request "multi-year funding" through a single grant application, which, if they are successful, secures them funding for up to three years at the same amount each year. This provides organizations with guaranteed funding for more than one year; however, it also means that they can't apply for additional grants when they are receiving this multi-year funding. Another benefit is that multi-year grant recipients receive their annual funding upfront, while one-time grant recipients must apply for reimbursement after their event or program.

The grant committees take requests for multi-year funding into consideration, and may award them if the rationale is agreed to by the committee, but the committee can decide that the applicant only be awarded a single year of funding. Awarding multi-year grants has impacts on the grant budget for the future, as it means those multi-year funds are pre-allocated for future years. This reduces the overall amount that other applicants can draw from in the following year.

Question 5:
Do you think the City should continue to consider awarding multi-year grants?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 153		
Yes	63%	97
No	20%	30
Unsure	13%	20
Other (please specify)	4%	6

Do you think the City should continue to consider awarding multi-year grants?

- Other (please specify) 4%
- Unsure 13%
- No 20%
- Yes 63%
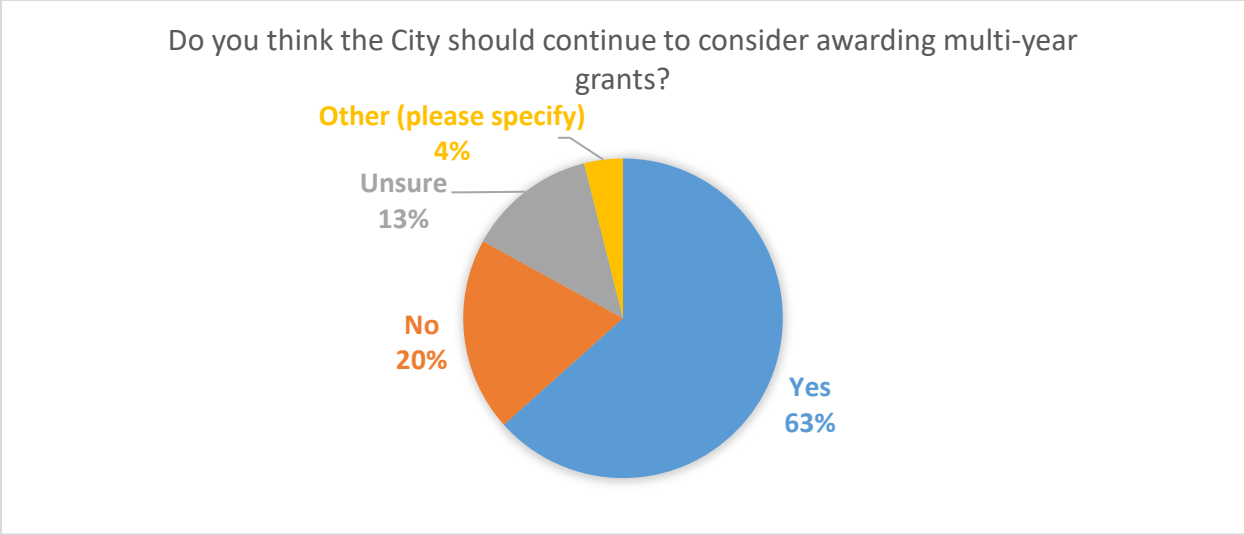
A total of 6 comments were provided by those who chose "other, please specify." The comments included:

- "I believe that there is likely many grey area situations that would require special judgement. I do not believe that this should be a yes or no process. Perhaps they need to meet some certain criteria for consideration?"
- "Yes , if beautification , cleaning up are the reason."
- "It seems there are long standing events that get funded consistently. The city might want to consider allocating funds directly from the budget without going through a grant award process which adds significant overhead for both parties. Report submission requirements would remain, and provide the opportunity for the city to evaluate whether this funding is justified YoY."
- "As above, yes I agree that the City should continue to consider some multi-year grants, but assess them after their term runs out - it gives some groups stability to know they have support for a few years but doesn't mean it should continue forever"
- "Yes because, to me, a multi-year event signifies a longer-term vision and good planning. BUT, I suggest that the award of subsequent funding be contingent on how well they executed their plan in their preceding year."
- "yes, but have a cap on the total available for multi-year grants"

Section 3: Limits to Number of Years in a Row
Currently, community organizations may apply every year for a grant and there are no limits to the number of years in a row that they may be awarded funding for the same program or event. We have heard suggestions that community groups should be limited in the number of years in a row they are able to receive a grant for the same event or program, to make it fairer to new programs or applicants.

Question 6:
Should the City allow community organizations to apply for the same event or program every year with no limits, or should there be limits? Please choose the option you most support.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 153		
Community organizations should not be limited in the number of years in a row they may apply for and receive funding for the same event or project	49%	75
Community organizations should be limited to a maximum of 5 years of funding in a row for the same event or program	24%	37
Community organizations should be limited to a maximum of 10 years of funding in a row for the same event or program	5%	8
Unsure	10%	15
Other (please specify)	12%	18

Should the City allow community organizations to apply for the same event or program every year with no limits, or should there be limits? Please choose the option you most support.

- Unsure 10%
- Other 12%
- Community organizations should be limited to a maximum of 10 years of funding in a row for the same event or program 5%
- Community organizations should be limited to a maximum of 5 years of funding in a row for the same event or program 24%
- Community organizations should not be limited in the number of years in a row they may apply for and receive funding for the same event or project 49%

A total of 18 comments were provided by those who chose "other, please specify."
Below is a summary of the key themes across the comments. In some cases, several themes have been applied to one individual response, based on the content; this means that a single response can be counted multiple times.

Theme	# of mentions	Example Comments

Limit to the number of years to receive funding	6	- "Community organizations should be limited to a maximum of 3 years of funding in a row for the same event or program." - "Programs that intend to be 'always' funded should be considered for incorporation into City programs, and if not valuable enought to be adopted, dropped via descending grant amounts, say, over 3-4 years." - "Max 2 years"
Accountable funding evaluation process	5	- "[...] there may need to be more robust reporting and accountability for multi-year recipients. Perhaps every five years a deeper 'audit' of organizations could be implemented to ensure best practices are being met, and to ensure transparency and accountability." - "Unlimited but dependent on performance reviews"
Unlimited # of years to apply	3	- "This a difficult decision to make because some events and organizations count on this money to continue their event or program yearly. It should be taken into consideration the event and program applying year after year." - "Community orgs should be able to apply for the same event as long as they wish. Its up to the Committee to decide if they should receive support."
Balance between new and long-lasting programs/events	3	- "[...] there should be material space for new recipients. Multi-year funding can be an important source of stability, especially in the early growth stage, but should not crowd out others." - "[...] perhaps there is some sort of scale that can be considered: program in their first five years could apply for up to 50% of their budget; programs running for 5-10 years can apply for up to 40% of their budget; programs that have been running 10 years or longer can apply for up to 30% of their budget (these numbers are totally pulled out of a hat - but hopefully, you get the idea)."

Question 7

Do you have any suggestions for improvements to the grants program not already captured in the above questions?

A total of 63 participants provided a response to this question. Below are the key themes and examples of responses provided. In some cases, one person's response may have included multiple themes. Themes with five or more mentions are listed below.

Theme	# of mentions	Examples
Enhance program fairness, inclusivity, and impact with clear adjudication criteria, beyond Council's strategic priorities	20	- "Would like to see a certain amount of grants guaranteed for events that support marginalized and underrepresented groups" - "Grants should be evaluated on the basis of programs that would be available to as many citizens possible across all demographics" - "Priority of funding should go to the initiatives at are generating the greatest impact." - "[A short list of values developed by the City] would help ensure that minority groups don't get left out of the process just because they aren't part of some future Council's strategic plan and make them less vulnerable to changing political agendas." - "Longstanding community events need to measure the social and economic impact."
Longer term funding for stability and evaluation of multi-year funding requests	15	- "Multi. year funding and long term sustainability is important for organizations and the community." - "It takes years to build trust amongst staff and newcomers/participants. In terms of the multi-year grant, three years just establishes a baseline to grow and expand from to meet the ongoing and ever-changing needs of the community [...]" - "A maximum number of years of funding in row could be waived for organizations that have verifiable benefits to the community that exceeds the amount of funding" - "Longstanding community events need to measure the social and economic impact." - "A strong community organization holding a successful event annually should not be cut off from grants IF they maintain a solid program."

|		
		- "I think the funding should be considered each year that the programming remains relevant and beneficial to the community, whether it is a new program or an existing one."
Balance support for established organizations/projects and emerging ones	12	- "Grant requests for established organizations and/or projects should not go head-to-head with new or newish organizations and projects." - "[...] split the grants into long running and newer program categories" - "I think the funding should be considered each year that the programming remains relevant and beneficial to the community, whether it is a new program or an existing one." - "Maybe funding smaller, newer programs or events would be less expensive and allow more groups to have access." - "Focus on all size of organization both big and small"
Simplify the application process	8	- "Applying for Grants is very onerous, please simplify the process." - "Make it easier to apply for those who are not good with writing a proposal" - "Streamline the application process as much as possible to reduce the burden on community organizations." - "More work should be put into structuring the grant program to allow for this and to make the entire process easier for applicants and staff."
Better communication and information sharing	6	- "We would like to receive the reporting forms/system to be sent out at the same time when it is anounced that someone received the grant" - "There needs to be more clarity between municipal investment in policing and waving city fees and the grant applications. There might need to also be considerations for creating a pause for applicants who mistreat or abuse city staff if their application is not accepted." - "All grants should be sent out or posted so tax payers know what is receiving a grant."
Concerns about a single committee	5	- "I am concerned with the potential impact that could have on the diversity of voices represented by the one committee."

		- "Streamlining to one committee to review all applications and decide which will receive funding may create a bottleneck in the decision process." - "[More established and new organizations] should be separate pools/steams and potentially committees."
Other	12	- "Service delivery partners should be enlisted to assist with capacity development of emerging community groups where they are aligned. Grants alone do not build capacity in the community." - "Build in a plan to become self sustaining" - "I support the creation (or at least re-introduction) of a small community grants program that allocates very small amounts of funding (like $200) to community members using a low-barrier application method." - "Give all/most of the funding upfront to known events, or at least offer reimbursement VERY quickly post-event to help with cash flow of smaller orgs." - "This survey would have been much more helpful if we were provided with the past years allocations."

Question 8:
The next section of the survey asks about the grant application process and reporting requirements for grant recipients. Do you represent a community group that has applied for a civic grant from the City of New Westminster, or is interested in applying for a grant in the future?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 153		
Yes, I represent a community organization	26%	40
No, I do not represent a community organization	74%	113

Do you represent a community group that has applied for a civic grant from the City of New Westminster, or is interested in applying for a grant in the future?

Yes, I represent a community organization
26%

No, I do not represent a community organization
74%
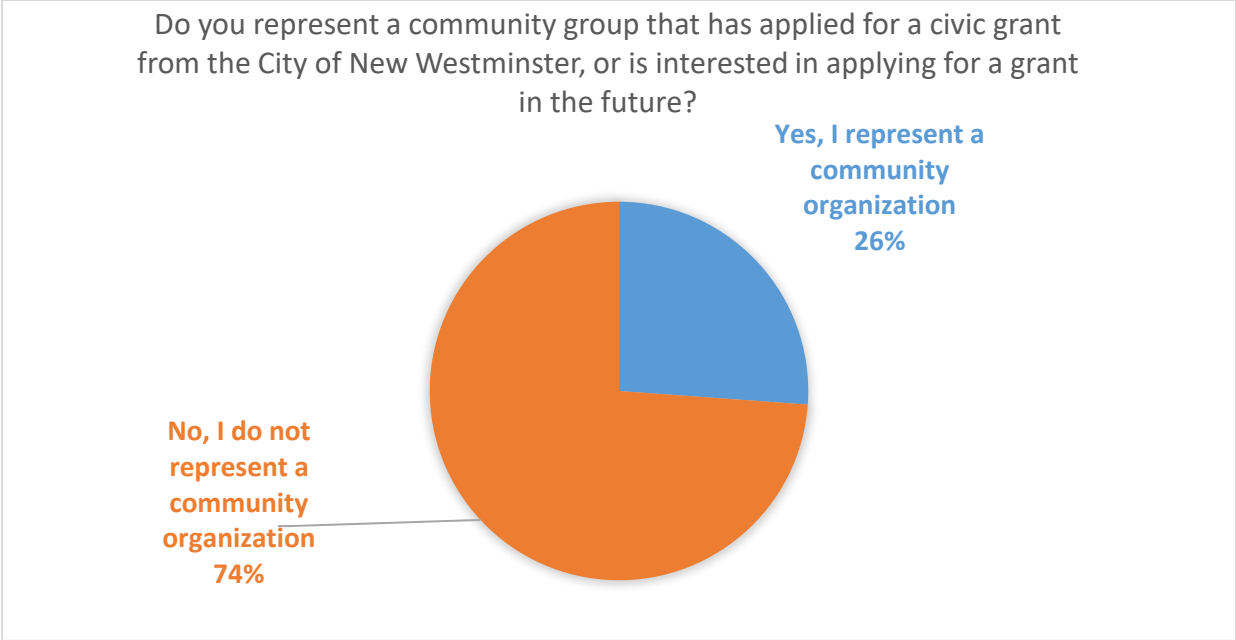
This was the end of the survey for those who answered "No, I do not represent a community organization" for the above question.

Question 9:
The next few questions are aimed at people who represent community organizations or non-profits that would be eligible to apply for a civic grant from the City of New Westminster. What best describes your situation?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 42		
I represent a community group that has applied for a grant in the past five years, either using a paper application or using Benevity, the online platform that the City currently uses to accept, review, and manage applications.	88%	37
I represent a community group that has not applied for a grant before, but may be interested in applying in the future.	12%	5
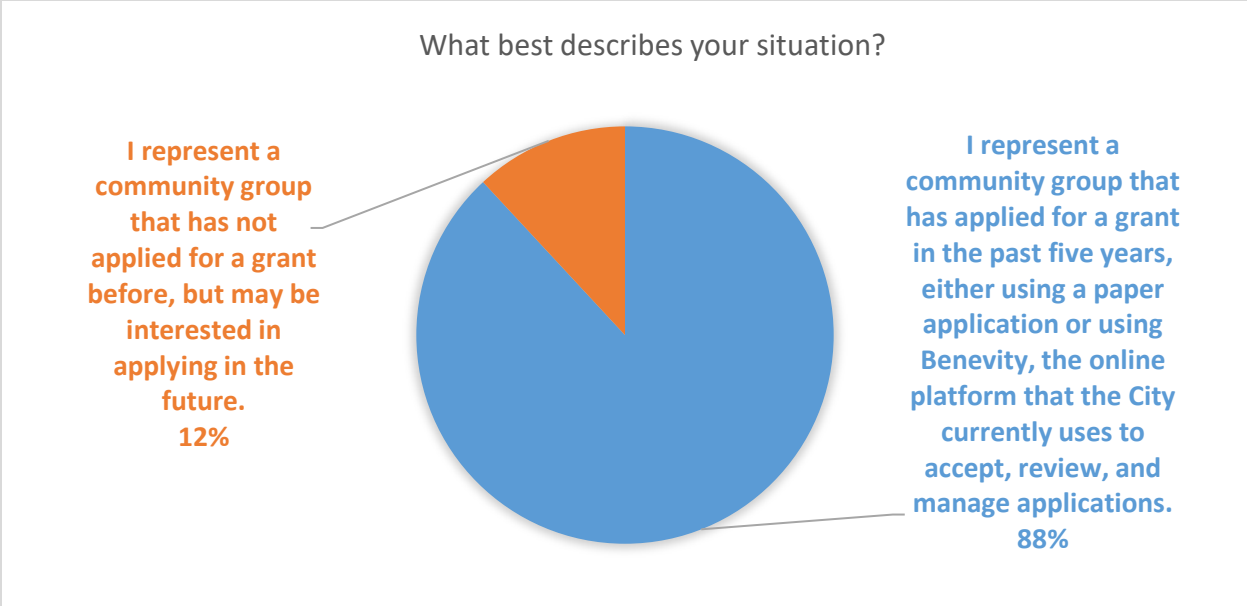
What best describes your situation?

I represent a community group that has not applied for a grant before, but may be interested in applying in the future.
12%

I represent a community group that has applied for a grant in the past five years, either using a paper application or using Benevity, the online platform that the City currently uses to accept, review, and manage applications.
88%

Those who answered "I represent a community group that has applied for a grant in the past five years [...]" moved onto the Pre-Application section. Those who answered "I represent a community group that has not applied for a grant before, but may be interested in applying in the future." moved onto the following question below.

Question 10:
Why has your organization not previously applied for a civic grant from the City of New Westminster? Select up to three that best apply.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 6		
Did not find out about the program until after the applications closed	17%	1
Our organization is too new	33%	2
Other (please specify)	50%	3

Why has your organization not previously applied for a civic grant from the City of New Westminster? Select up to three that best apply.

- Did not find out about the program until after the applications closed **17%**
- Our organization is too new **33%**
- Other (please specify) **50%**
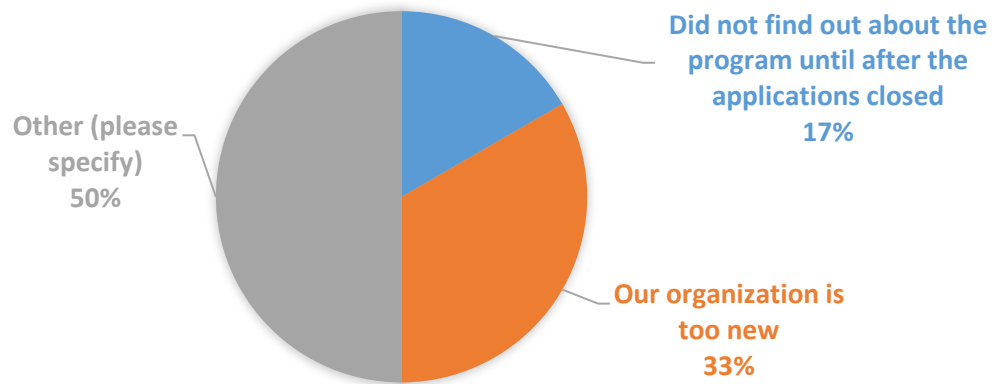
A total of 3 comments were provided by those who chose "other, please specify." The comments included:

- "Not sure if we qualify"
- "Did not know about these grants"
- "I never really thought about it before and will have to review the criteria in more detail. We made flower baskets with Claude many years ago and the City of New West just set up a good deal and we did a photo op with some of the City Councilors. I would have called it marketing."

This was the end of survey for those who answered the question above.

Section 4: Pre-Application
These next questions reference the City's Grants Policy and Grants Criteria. Click the links to access these documents if needed.

Think about your most recent civic grant application, and specifically the information and resources you accessed before starting to fill out the application. Please rank your level of agreement with the following elements of the civic grant application process, before starting the application.

Question 11:
I found enough information about the application process and criteria on the City's website before I applied.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 36		
Agree	28%	10

Somewhat agree	42%	15
Neutral	11%	4
Somewhat Disagree	11%	4
Disagree	5%	2
Not applicable	3%	1

I found enough information about the application process and criteria on the City's website before I applied

- Not applicable 3%
- Disagree 5%
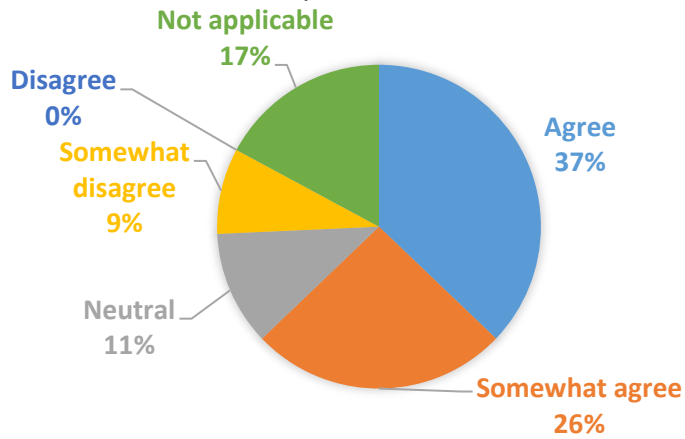- Somewhat disagree 11%
- Neutral 11%
- Agree 28%
- Somewhat agree 42%
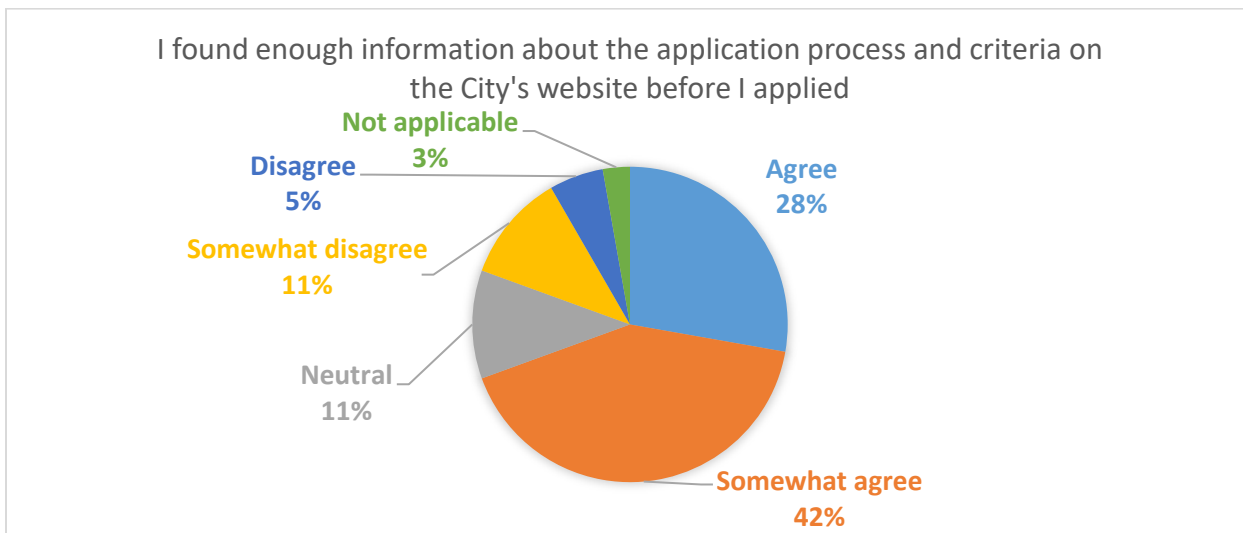
Question 12:
Staff were able to answer general questions in advance of my application via phone or email.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	37%	13
Somewhat agree	26%	9
Neutral	11%	4
Somewhat Disagree	9%	3
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	17%	6

Staff were able to answer general questions in advance of my application via phone or email

- Agree 37%
- Somewhat agree 26%
- Neutral 11%
- Somewhat disagree 9%
- Disagree 0%
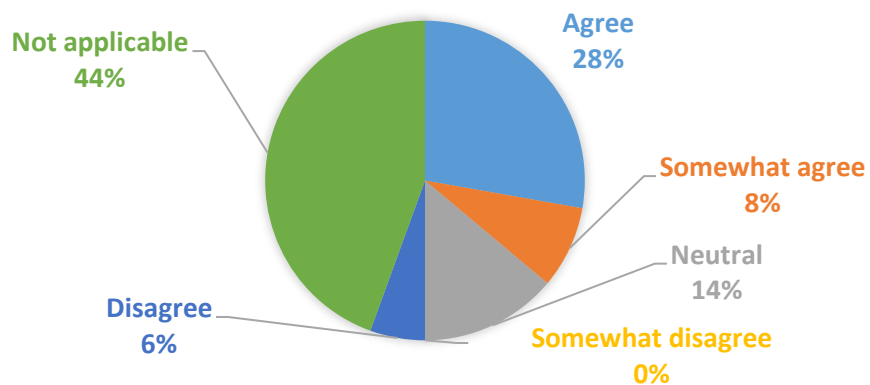- Not applicable 17%

Question 13:

I attended the information session offered by staff, and it allowed me to get information or answers to my questions.

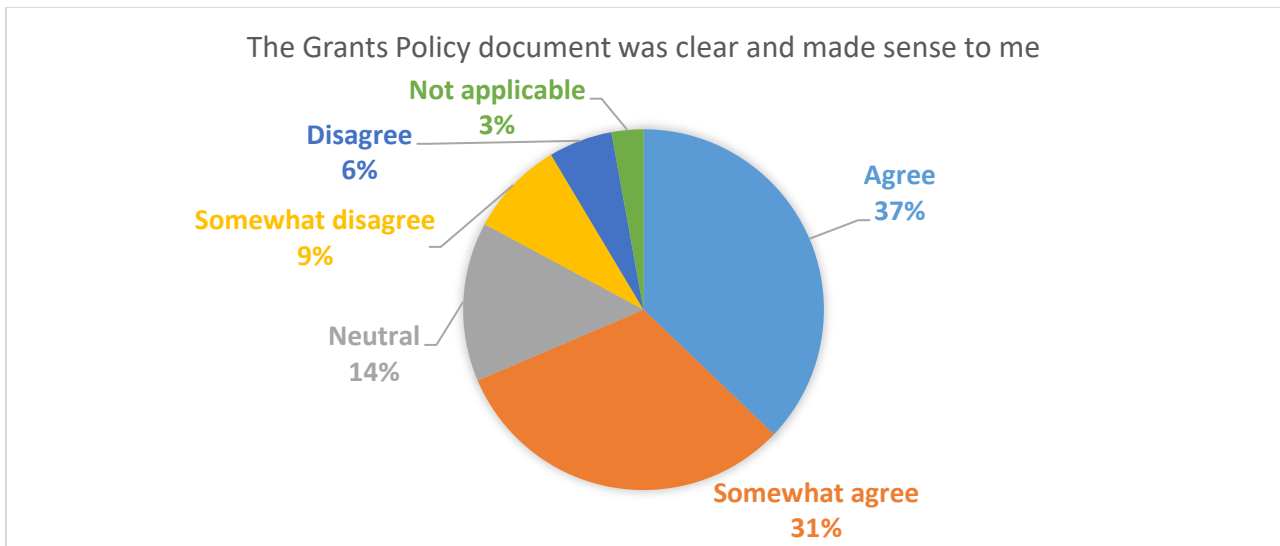| Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 36		
Agree	28%	10
Somewhat agree	8%	3
Neutral	14%	5
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	44%	16

I attended the information session offered by staff, and it allowed me to get information or answers to my questions

- Not applicable 44%
- Agree 28%
- Somewhat agree 8%
- Neutral 14%
- Somewhat disagree 0%
- Disagree 6%

Question 14:

The Grants Policy document was clear and made sense to me.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	37%	13
Somewhat agree	31%	11
Neutral	14%	5
Somewhat Disagree	9%	3
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	3%	1

The Grants Policy document was clear and made sense to me

Question 15:

The Grants Criteria document was clear and made sense to me

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	40%	14
Somewhat agree	34%	12
Neutral	14%	5
Somewhat Disagree	3%	1
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	3%	1

The Grants Criteria document was clear and made sense to me

Not applicable
3%
Disagree
6%
Somewhat disagree
3%
Neutral
14%
Agree
40%
Somewhat agree
34%
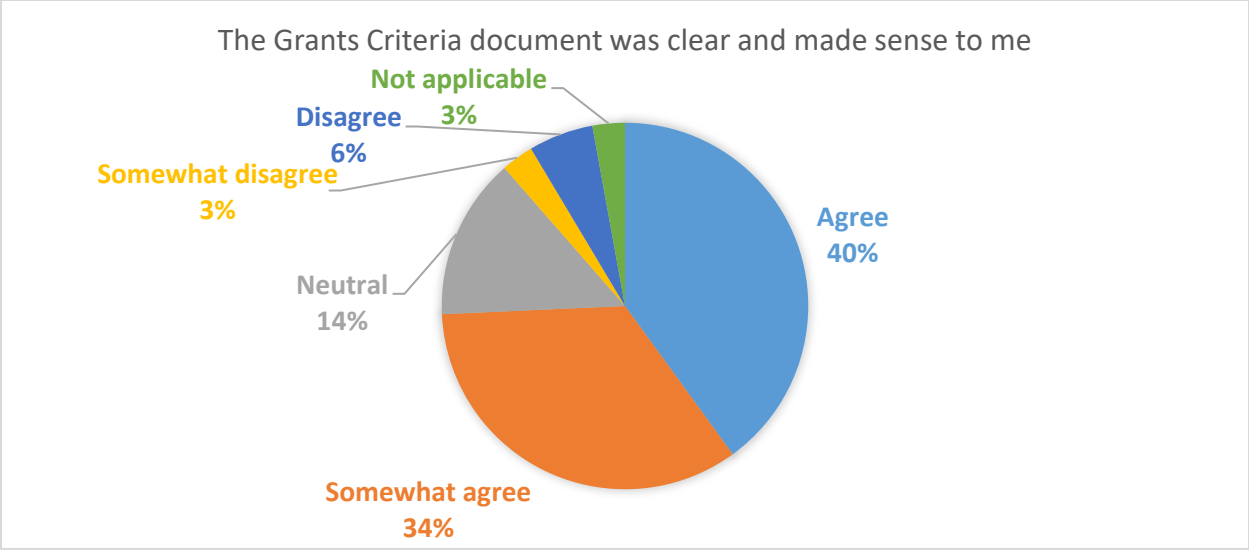
Question 16:

I understood why I was being asked to get a quote for City Services.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	46%	16
Somewhat agree	17%	6
Neutral	17%	6
Somewhat Disagree	6%	2
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	14%	5

I understood why I was being asked to get a quote for City Services

Not applicable
14%
Disagree
0%
Somewhat disagree
6%
Neutral
17%
Agree
46%
Somewhat agree
17%
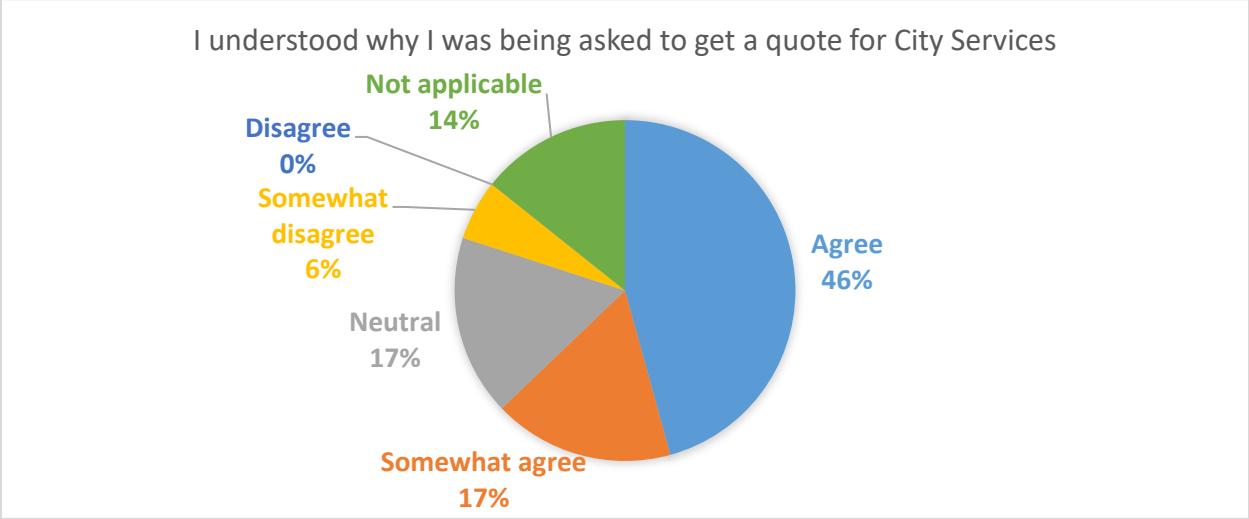
Question 17:

The timeline for the process to apply and receive the grant, if successful, was clear to me.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	66%	23
Somewhat agree	23%	8
Neutral	0%	0
Somewhat Disagree	9%	3
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	3%	1

The timeline for the process to apply and receive the grant, if successful, was clear to me

Not applicable 3%
Disagree 0%
Somewhat disagree 8%
Neutral 0%
Somewhat agree 23%
Agree 66%
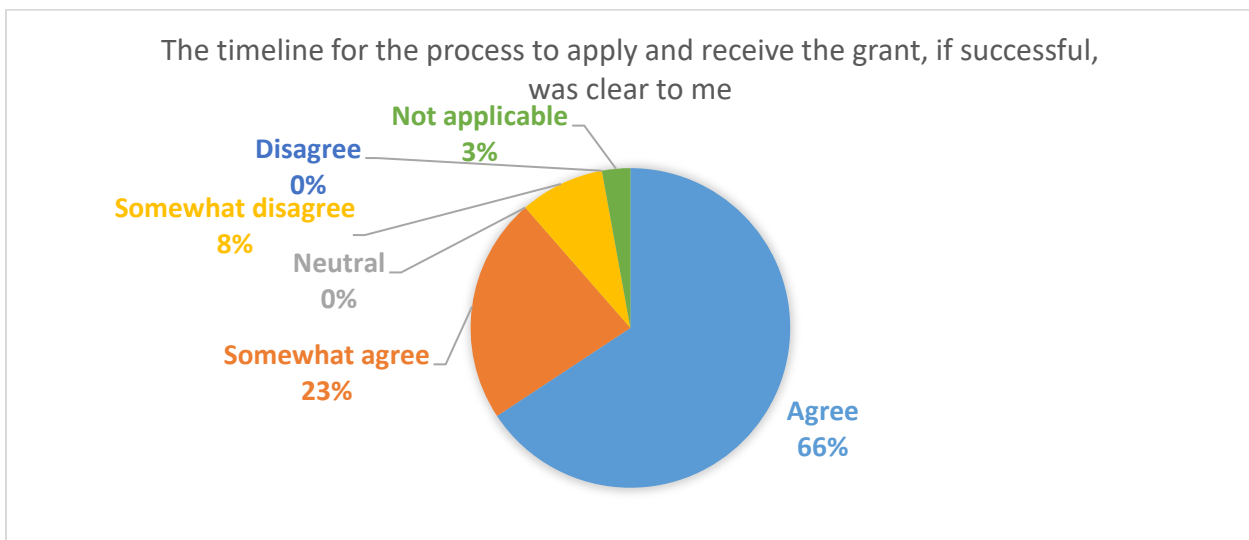
Section 5: Online Platform

Currently, the City uses Benevity, which is an online application platform that accepts, reviews, and manages grant applications. The City has only used Benevity for the past few years, and your organization may have previously applied for a grant using a paper application. When you answer the following questions, please think about your most recent application regardless of how it was submitted.

Think about your experience filling out the application, submitting it, and then the adjudication process. Please rank your level of agreement with the following elements of the civic grant process, during your application and adjudication.

Question 18:
I found the online platform, Benevity, was easy to use. (Select "not applicable" if you used a paper application for your most recent application.)

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	43%	15
Somewhat agree	20%	7
Neutral	14%	5
Somewhat Disagree	9%	3
Disagree	9%	3
Not applicable	6%	2

I found the online platform, Benevity, was easy to use. (Select "not applicable" if you used a paper application for your most recent application.)
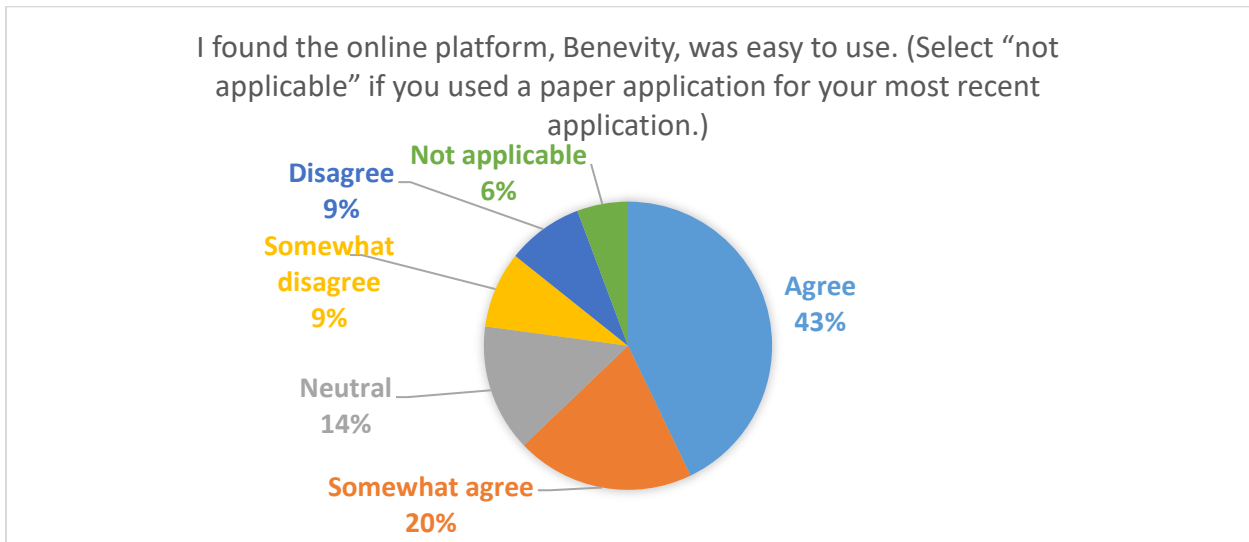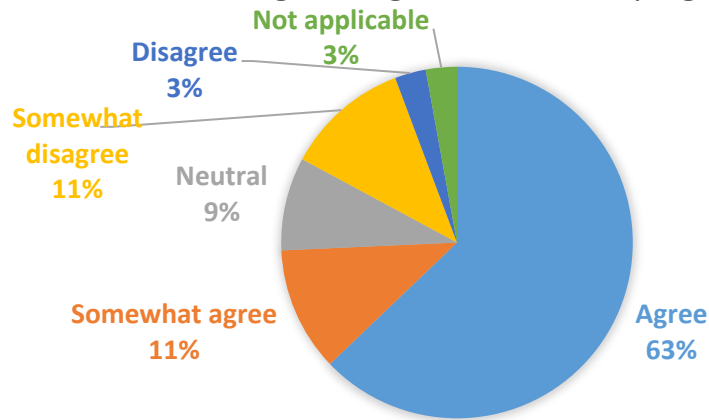
Question 19:
The documents I was asked to provide made sense to me, such as a budget document, or governing documents for my organization.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	63%	22
Somewhat agree	11%	4
Neutral	9%	3
Somewhat Disagree	11%	4
Disagree	3%	1
Not applicable	3%	1

The documents I was asked to provide made sense to me, such as a budget document, or governing documents for my organization.

- Not applicable 3%
- Disagree 3%
- Somewhat disagree 11%
- Neutral 9%
- Somewhat agree 11%
- Agree 63%

Question 20:

I was given enough time between when the application period opened and closed to gather the necessary information and complete my application.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	57%	20
Somewhat agree	20%	7
Neutral	6%	2
Somewhat Disagree	8%	3
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	3%	1


I was given enough time between when the application period opened and closed to gather the necessary information and complete my application.

- Not applicable 3%
- Disagree 6%
- Somewhat disagree 8%
- Neutral 6%
- Somewhat agree 20%
- Agree 57%
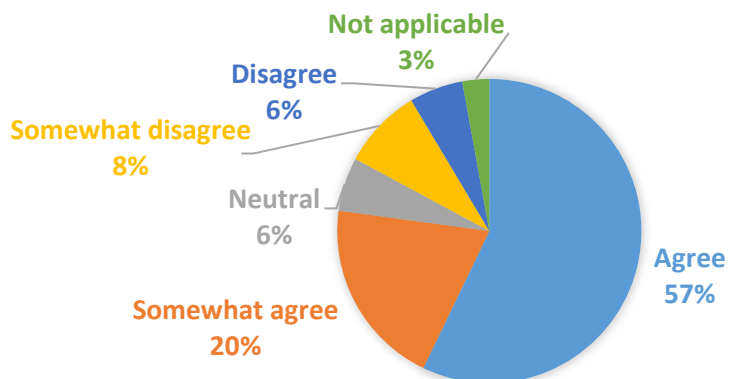
Question 21:

If I was called in for an interview to discuss the grant application, the timing of the interview was satisfactory. (Select not applicable if you were not asked to attend an interview – not all applicants are.)

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	23%	8
Somewhat agree	3%	1
Neutral	6%	2
Somewhat Disagree	8%	3
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	54%	19

If I was called in for an interview to discuss the grant application, the timing of the interview was satisfactory. (Select not applicable if you were not asked to attend an interview – not all applicants are.)
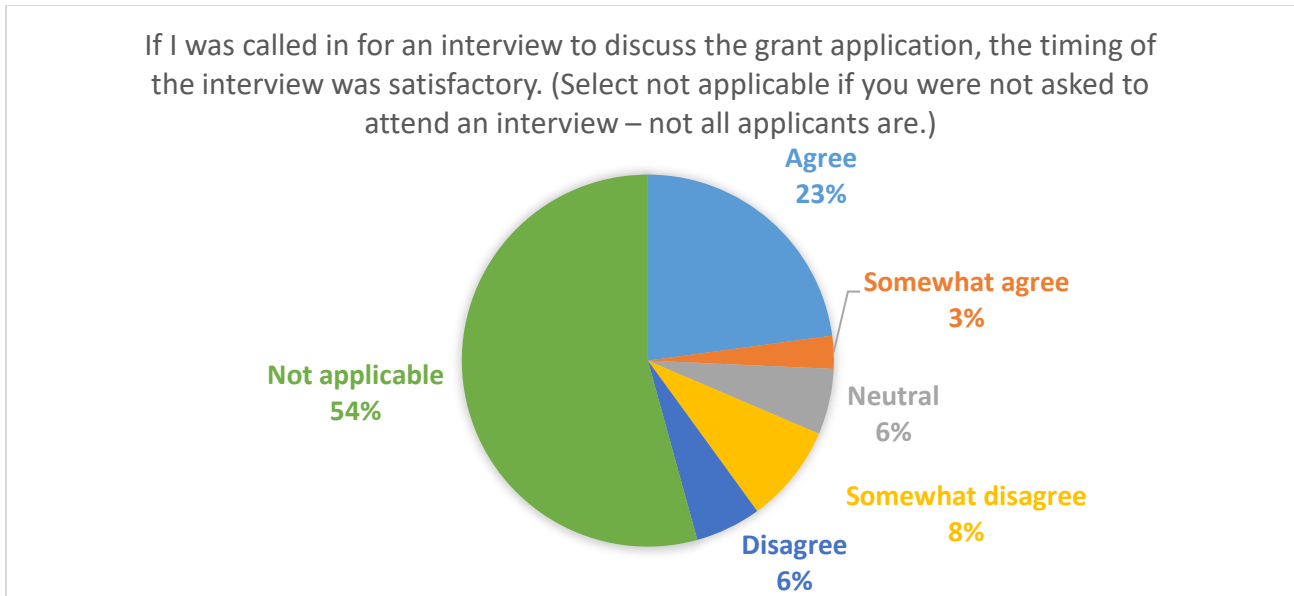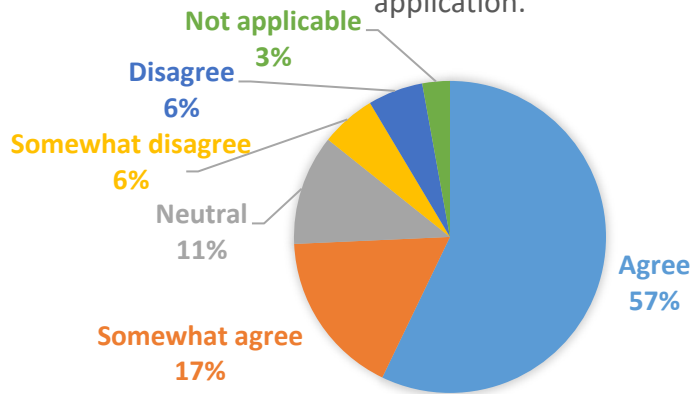
Question 22:

The process and/or next steps were clear to me after I submitted my application.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	57%	20
Somewhat agree	17%	6
Neutral	11%	4
Somewhat Disagree	6%	2
Disagree	6%	2
Not applicable	3%	1

The process and/or next steps were clear to me after I submitted my application.

Not applicable 3%
Disagree 6%
Somewhat disagree 6%
Neutral 11%
Somewhat agree 17%
Agree 57%

Question 23:
The communication I received about my application was clear.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	60%	21
Somewhat agree	14%	5
Neutral	6%	2
Somewhat Disagree	14%	5
Disagree	3%	1
Not applicable	3%	1

The communication I received about my application was clear.

Not applicable 3%
Disagree 3%
Somewhat disagree 14%
Neutral 6%
Somewhat agree 14%
Agree 60%
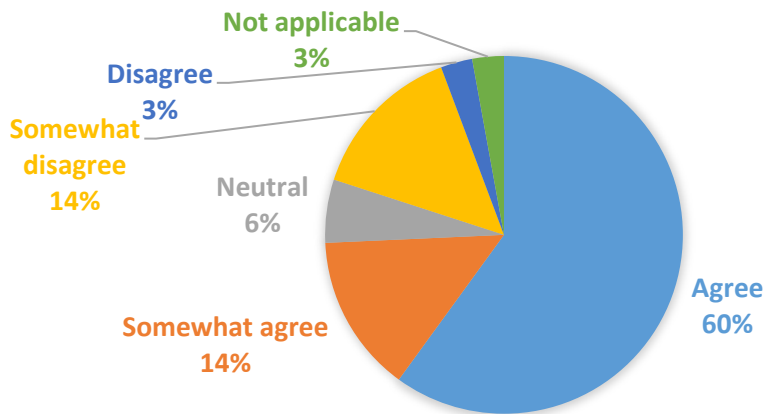
Question 24:

I found that the time between applying and finding out the status of my application was reasonable.

| Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 35		
Agree	49%	17
Somewhat agree	26%	9
Neutral	11%	4
Somewhat Disagree	11%	4
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	3%	1
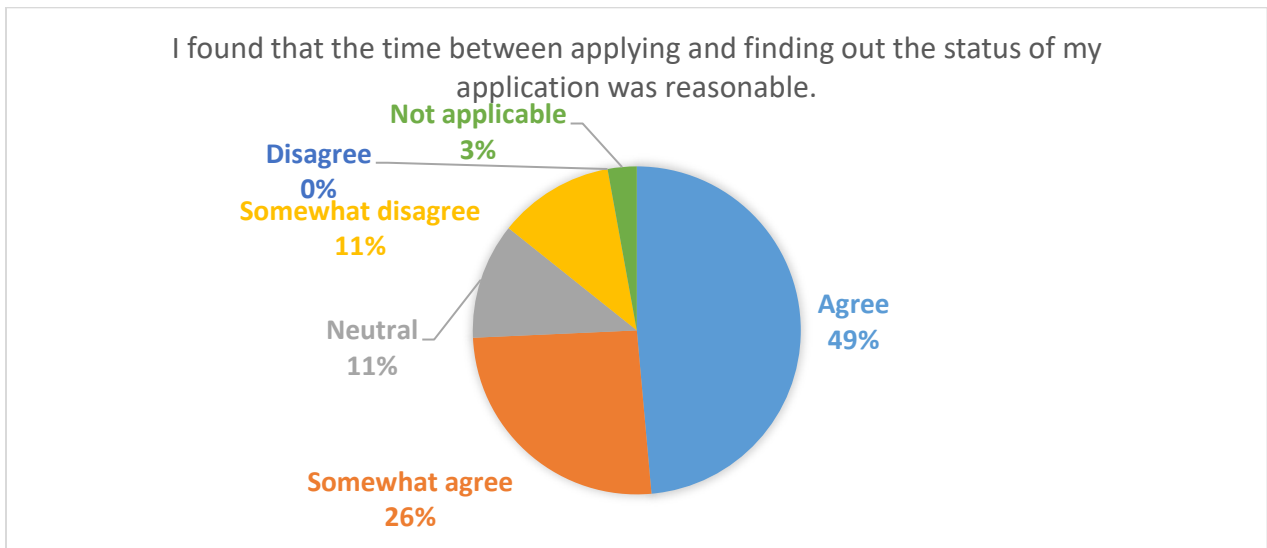
Question 25:

Was at least one of your grant applications successful (i.e. has your organization received a grant from the City of New Westminster sometime in the last five years)?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 36		
Yes, I/we received a grant in the last 5 years	92%	33
No, I/we did not receive a grant in the last 5 years	8%	3
I'm not sure	0%	0

Was at least one of your grant applications successful (i.e. has your organization received a grant from the City of New Westminster sometime in the last five years)?

No, I/we did not receive a grant in the last 5 years
8%

Yes, I/we received a grant in the last 5 years
92%
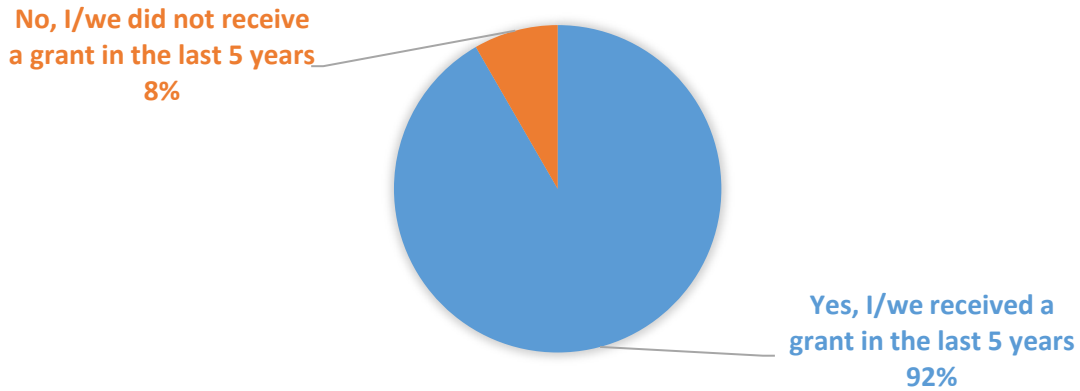
Those who answered "Yes, I/we received a grant in the last 5 years" moved onto the Successful Applicants section starting on Pg. 31. Those who answered "No, I/we did not receive a grant in the last 5 years" moved onto the next section below, Unsuccessful Applicants.

Section 6: Unsuccessful applicants
Think about your most recent grant application where your organization was not awarded the grant, and specifically the period of time after you submitted the grant application. Depending on what year you last applied, you may have received an email or a phone call from the City to let you know the decision.

Please rank your level of agreement with the following elements of the civic grant process, after your application.

Question 26:
The time between applying and finding out the status of my application was as I expected based on information provided by City staff.
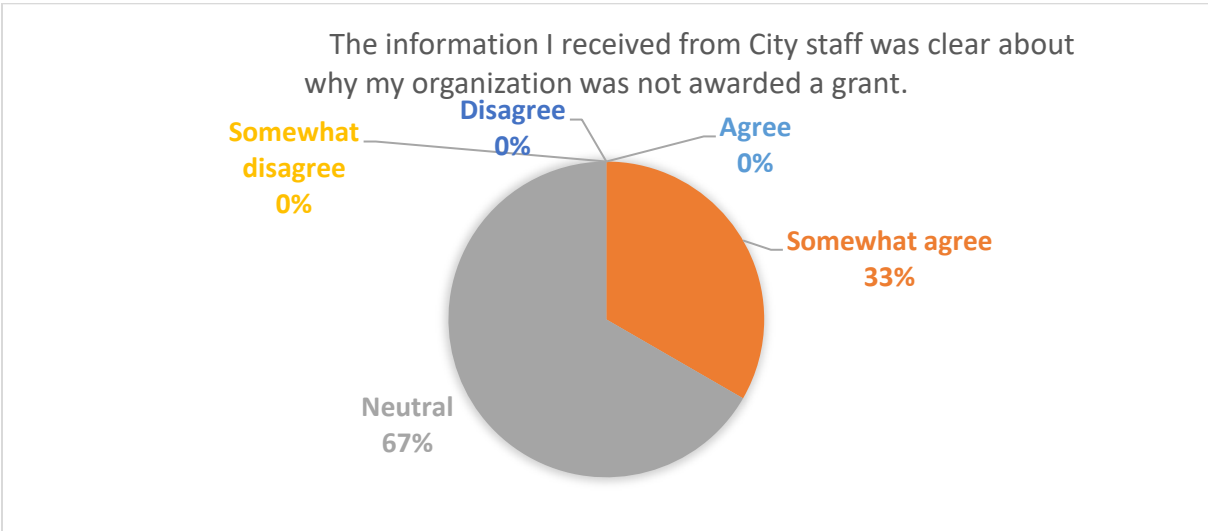
Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 3		
Agree	0%	0
Somewhat agree	33%	1
Neutral	67%	2
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	0%	0

The time between applying and finding out the status of my application was as I expected based on information provided by City staff.

Disagree 0%
Somewhat disagree 0%
Agree 0%
Somewhat agree 33%
Neutral 67%
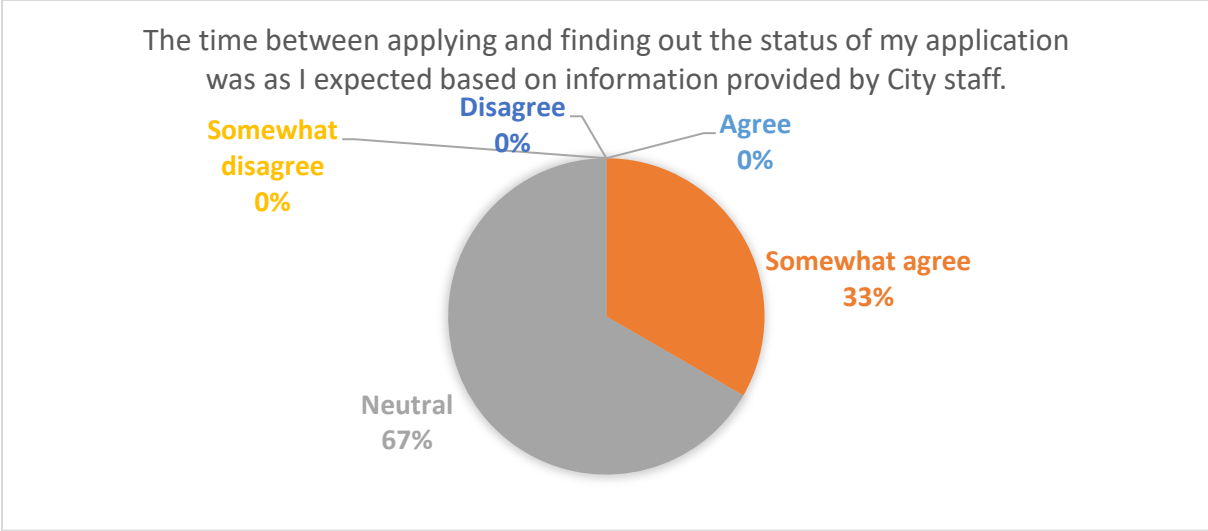
Question 27:

The information I received from City staff was clear about why my organization was not awarded a grant.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 3		
Agree	0%	0
Somewhat agree	33%	1
Neutral	67%	2
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	0%	0

The information I received from City staff was clear about why my organization was not awarded a grant.

Disagree 0%
Somewhat disagree 0%
Agree 0%
Somewhat agree 33%
Neutral 67%

Question 28:
When I requested more information, I received a response. (Please skip if not applicable)

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 3		
Agree	0%	0
Somewhat agree	33%	1
Neutral	67%	2
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	0%	0

When I requested more information, I received a response.
(Please skip if not applicable)

- Disagree 0%
- Somewhat disagree 0%
- Agree 0%
- Somewhat agree 33%
- Neutral 67%
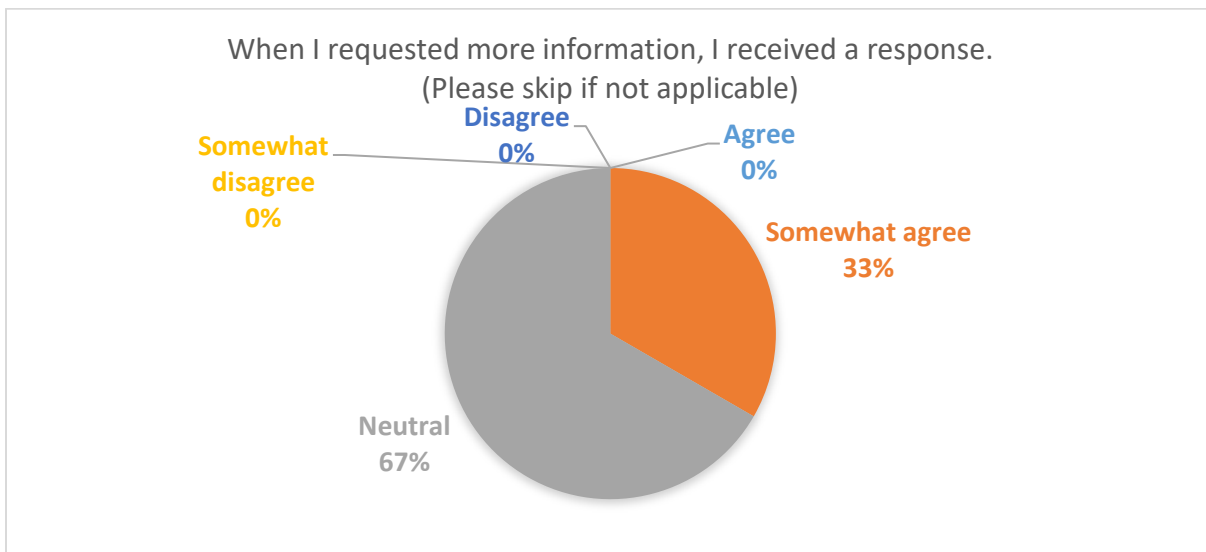
This was the end of survey for Unsuccessful Applicants.

Section 7: Successful applicants

Please share your level of agreement with the following elements of the grant awarding process, specifically receiving information that your organization's application was successful, receiving the money, and reporting requirements. Depending on what year you last applied, you would have received an automated email, a personalized email, or a phone call from City staff. If a situation is not applicable, you can leave the question blank or select "Not applicable".

Question 29:
I received notification of the award of my grant within the timeframe that was outlined in the City's grant program information.
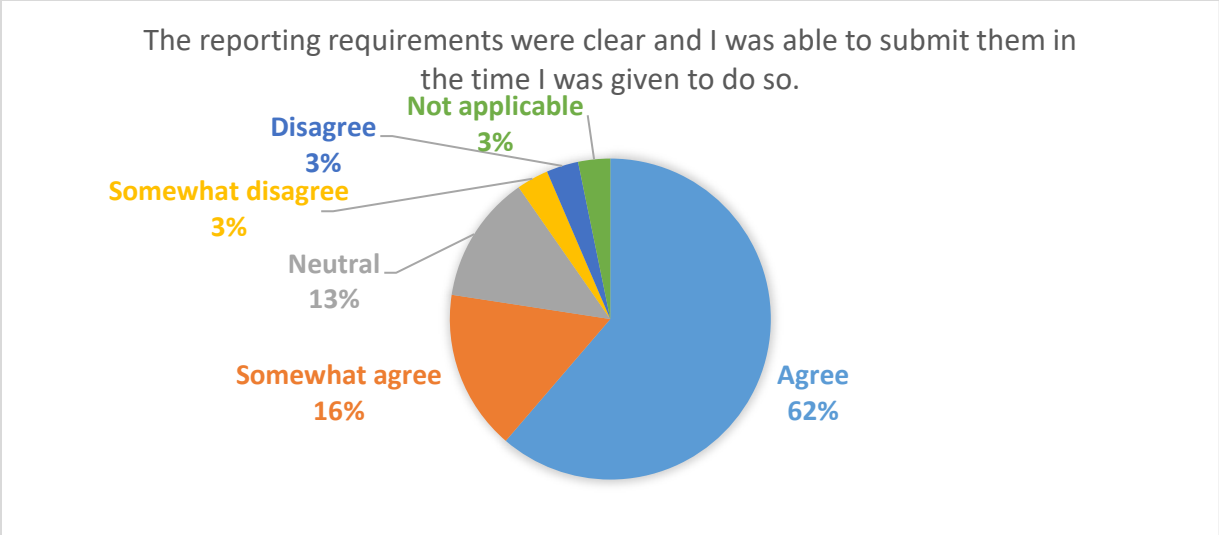
Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Agree	71%	22
Somewhat agree	13%	4
Neutral	10%	3
Somewhat Disagree	3%	1
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	3%	1

I received notification of the award of my grant within the timeframe that was outlined in the City's grant program information.
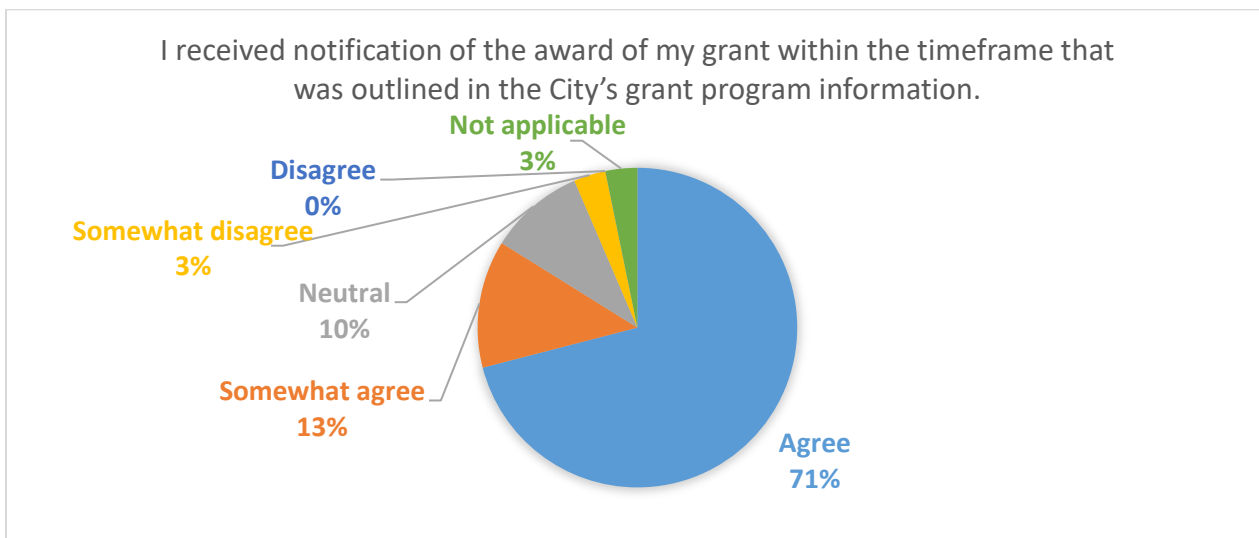
Question 30:
The reporting requirements were clear and I was able to submit them in the time I was given to do so.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Agree	62%	19
Somewhat agree	16%	5
Neutral	13%	4
Somewhat Disagree	3%	1
Disagree	3%	1
Not applicable	3%	1

The reporting requirements were clear and I was able to submit them in the time I was given to do so.

Question 31:

I received the funds in the timeline that was outlined after submitting my expense receipts.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Agree	62%	19
Somewhat agree	16%	5
Neutral	3%	1
Somewhat Disagree	3%	1
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	16%	5

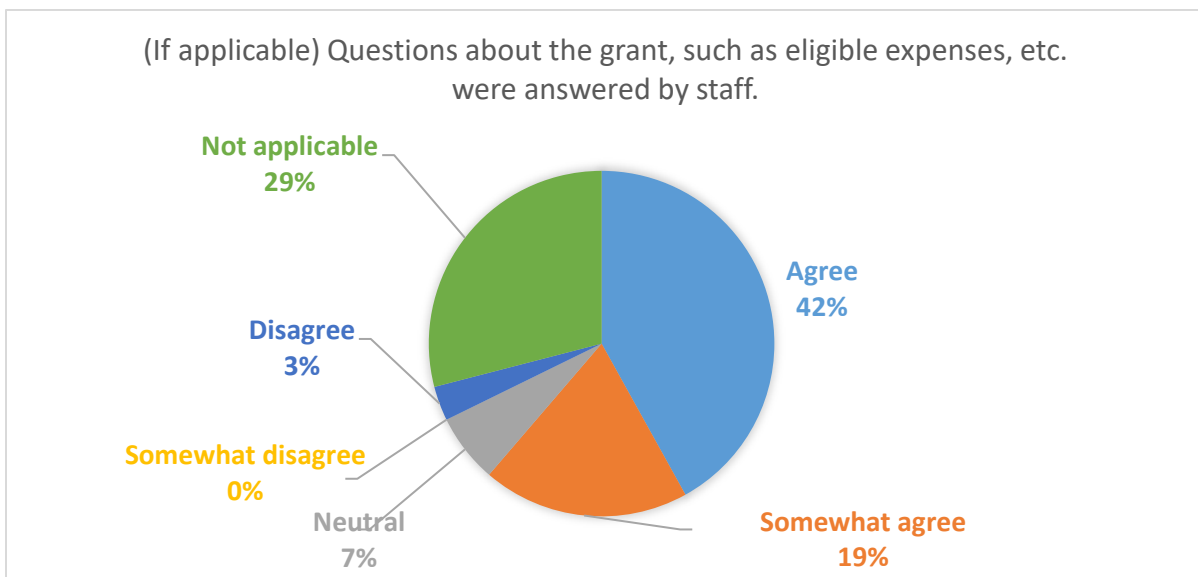I received the funds in the timeline that was outlined after submitting my expense receipts.
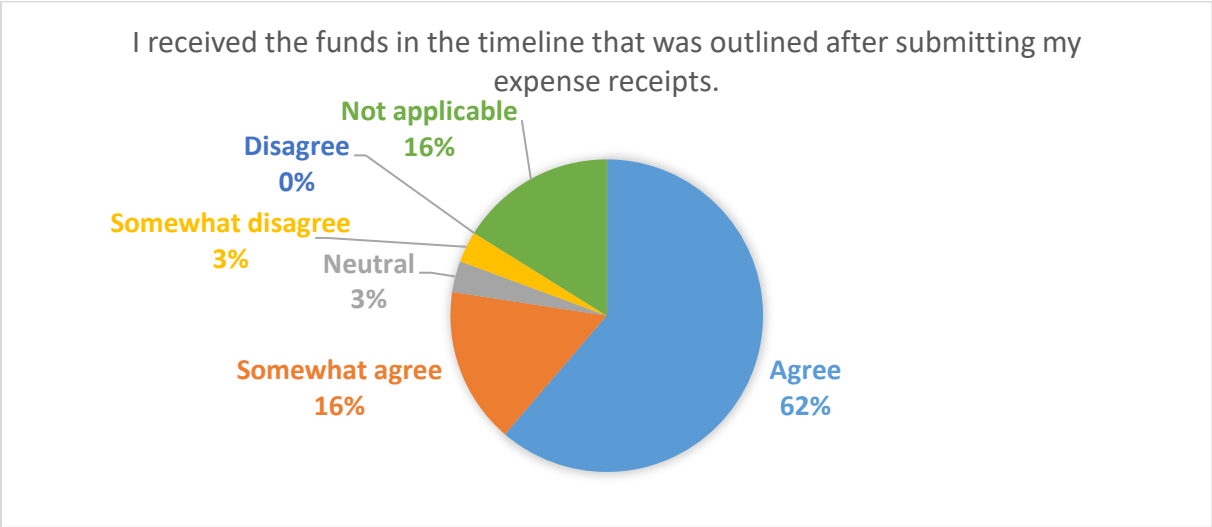
Question 32:

(If applicable) Questions about the grant, such as eligible expenses, etc. were answered by staff.

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Agree	42%	13
Somewhat agree	19%	6
Neutral	7%	2
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	3%	1
Not applicable	29%	9

(If applicable) Questions about the grant, such as eligible expenses, etc. were answered by staff.

Not applicable 29%
Disagree 3%
Somewhat disagree 0%
Neutral 7%
Agree 42%
Somewhat agree 19%

Question 33:

(If applicable) For multi-year grant recipients, we received the funding within the timeline that was outlined after receiving the award notification.

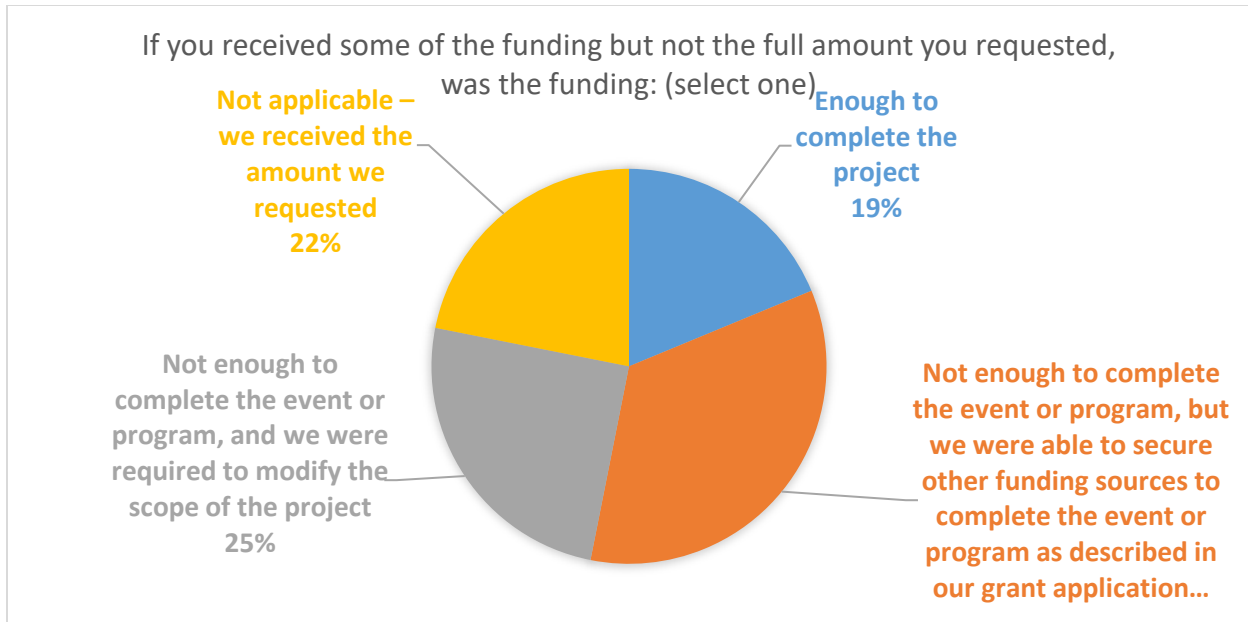| Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Agree	48%	15
Somewhat agree	7%	2
Neutral	6%	2
Somewhat Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	0%	0
Not applicable	39%	12

(If applicable) For multi-year grant recipients, we received the funding within the timeline that was outlined after receiving the award notification.

Not applicable 39%

Agree 48%

Disagree 0%

Somewhat disagree 0%

Neutral 6%

Somewhat agree...
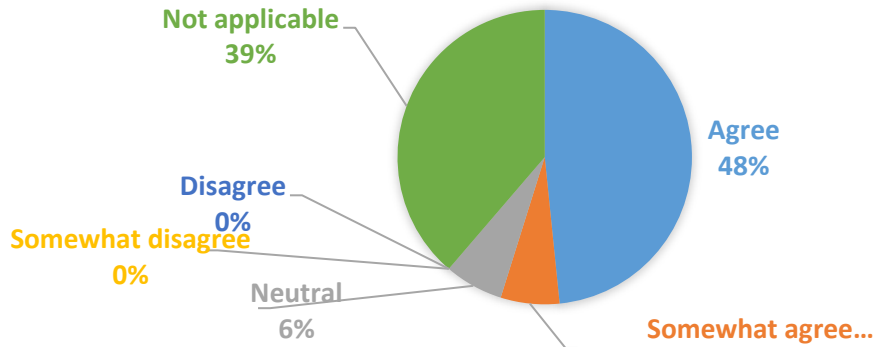
Question 34:

If you received some of the funding but not the full amount you requested, was the funding: (select one)

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 32		
Enough to complete the project	19%	6
Not enough to complete the event or program, but we were able to secure other funding sources to complete the event or program as described in our grant application	34%	11
Not enough to complete the event or program, and we were required to modify the scope of the project	25%	8
Not applicable – we received the amount we requested	22%	7

If you received some of the funding but not the full amount you requested, was the funding: (select one)

- Not applicable – we received the amount we requested: 22%
- Enough to complete the project: 19%
- Not enough to complete the event or program, but we were able to secure other funding sources to complete the event or program as described in our grant application...
- Not enough to complete the event or program, and we were required to modify the scope of the project: 25%

Section 8: Reporting

This section asked about the grantees' experience reporting back to the City.

The City currently asks both multi-year and single year grant recipients to provide a variety of reports to share the outcomes of their project. The required reports are described below. These reports must be submitted on or before December 1 of the year the grant was awarded. Not providing the required reports means that an organization will not be considered for a future grant.

- All grant recipients fill out the Snapshot of Success, which is used to report back to Mayor and Council on the achievements that the civic grant program helped fund.
- Grant recipients that received money for an event fill out the Post Event Evaluation Form. This is also the form that they need to submit to be reimbursed for their expenses.
- Grant recipients that received money for a project fill out the Post Project Evaluation Form. This is also the form that they need to submit to be reimbursed for their expenses.
- Multi-year grant recipients affirm their commitment to use the funds as outlined in their application by filling out the Statement of Accountability, which includes budget details and reporting on the evaluation of the event or program.

The City has heard feedback that the reporting requirements are confusing and too extensive. Changes to the reporting will be required if there are any changes made to the criteria or administrative process. Regardless, the City wants to simplify the reporting to focus on outcomes and strategic priority alignment, and to ensure that community groups are only required to fill out one report regardless of whether they received cash or in-kind services.
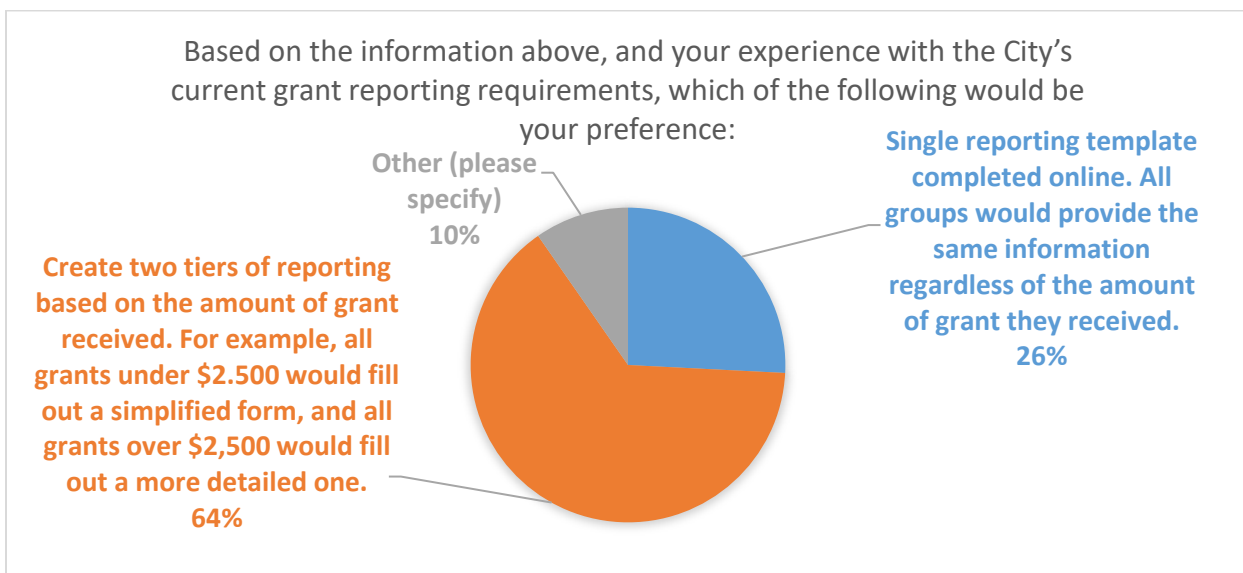
One option may be to move to a single reporting template that is completed online. The benefit is that it would be easier for many community groups to fulfill their requirements, but the drawback is that the City may get less specific information about the impacts of individual grants if the questions are the same for all types of grant recipients.

Another option may be to have two tiers of reports, where grants over a certain dollar value are required to fill out a more detailed report and those under the amount may fill out a simpler version.

Question 35:
Based on the information above, and your experience with the City's current grant reporting requirements, which of the following would be your preference:

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 31		
Single reporting template completed online. All groups would provide the same information regardless of the amount of grant they received.	26%	8
Create two tiers of reporting based on the amount of grant received. For example, all grants under $2.500 would fill out a simplified form, and all grants over $2,500 would fill out a more detailed one.	64%	20
Other (please specify)	10%	3

Based on the information above, and your experience with the City's current grant reporting requirements, which of the following would be your preference:

- Other (please specify) 10%
- Create two tiers of reporting based on the amount of grant received. For example, all grants under $2.500 would fill out a simplified form, and all grants over $2,500 would fill out a more detailed one. 64%
- Single reporting template completed online. All groups would provide the same information regardless of the amount of grant they received. 26%

A total of 3 comments were provided by those who chose "other, please specify." The comments included:

- "- 2 tiers but the line should be much higher. approximately $15,000. - no snapshot of success. Staff / politicians should be encouraged to attend events to witness

much of the info which would be in the snapshot. That can also be contained within the report and not be an additional request."

- "Only those receiving quite large grants should be required to fill out detailed reports. Or those cases where the city funds a large percentage of the project."
- "The staff supporting the event or project should report or help with the report."

Question 36:

The City has received suggestions that alternate forms of reporting, such as videos or created art, would be more accessible. Would you support allowing community groups to report in this way instead of completing a form?

Choice	Percentage	Count
Total Responses: 32		
Yes	56%	18
No	22%	7
Unsure	22%	7

The City has received suggestions that alternate forms of reporting, such as videos or created art, would be more accessible. Would you support allowing community groups to report in this way instead of completing a form?
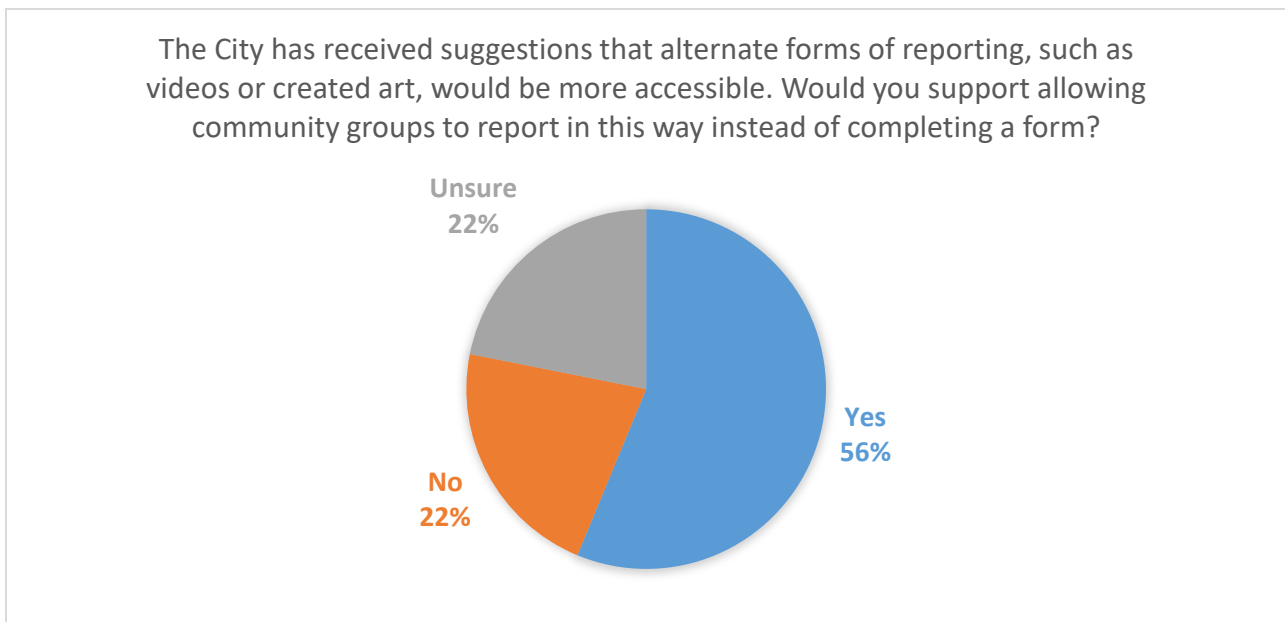
Question 37:

Please share any further feedback you may have on the grant reporting requirements, and suggestions for adjustments to reporting.

A total of 13 participants opted to answer this question. Below are the responses they provided.

- "Online or fillable pdf forms that work correctly would be appreciated. Scrutinize better the policing needs and corresponding costs - the cost of police services at events is exorbitant. Could security be hired for some policing roles instead of

staffing all with police? Large events are not given a choice with no discussion about alternatives to very large police presence."

- "Outwardly, a program may seem successful - however, it may not represent the overall health of the organization that ran it. For multi-year grants, I think it's really important that the strength of an organization be weighed, alongside the benefits their programs may bring to the community."

- "After all the effort planning an event or project, the report back should be less prescriptive, receipts and proof the event or project took place should be sufficient."

- "Advise the grant recipient that there must be a final reporting and provide the final reporting form to them when you give them their money. Offer support if they feel they need it. If a group cannot fill out a simple reporting form, it is highly unlikely they can handle the grant money effectively. Perhaps recruit some 'mentors' - local folks who would help an inexperienced group navigate the whole process."

- "I think having a variety of reporting options could be a possibility. We have many newcomer participants that do not want to be photographed or video-graphed due to confidentiality."

- "Making grants more accessible makes sense. Moving to trust based grants allows charities to focus on their work in the community. "

- "We have received a small event grant and the report we had to submit with our receipts was 60+ pages but not when we submit for our much larger partnership grant - it makes us not apply for the smaller, more nimble grants that we should apply for when small opportunities come up. I would also LOVE to see a strategy for sharing about things that are coming up that are grant awards AND seeing the reports in whatever cool format they come in... scrapbooks! Quilts! Music videos!"

- "I would suggest a portal where we could upload receipts and track grant spending for our organization"

- "Our organization has received the grant before but I am new employee so this year will be the first time I will do the reporting, I have asked more detailed guideance by emai but have not recived answer to my questions."

- "Alternative forms of reporting must still provide specifics required by the current form of reporting."

- "1) No printing/reporting capability in Benevity while the application is being worked on. This leaves the applicant to copy text fields into a word document.
2) Benevity Application Form uses 1 line long text fields for some paragraphs.
3) The grant application and budget that is submitted is never updated to reflect the

end result of the budget review. This causes problems when someone new takes over the next year."

- "I agree the reporting process is a little confusing. Creating an online platform to clearly layout the timelines, deadlines and reports to be completed would be super helpful! Again, the budget template for single-year grants is a little like fitting a spare peg in a round hole for larger scale events."

- "I would like to be included in the upcoming focus group which has been mentioned."

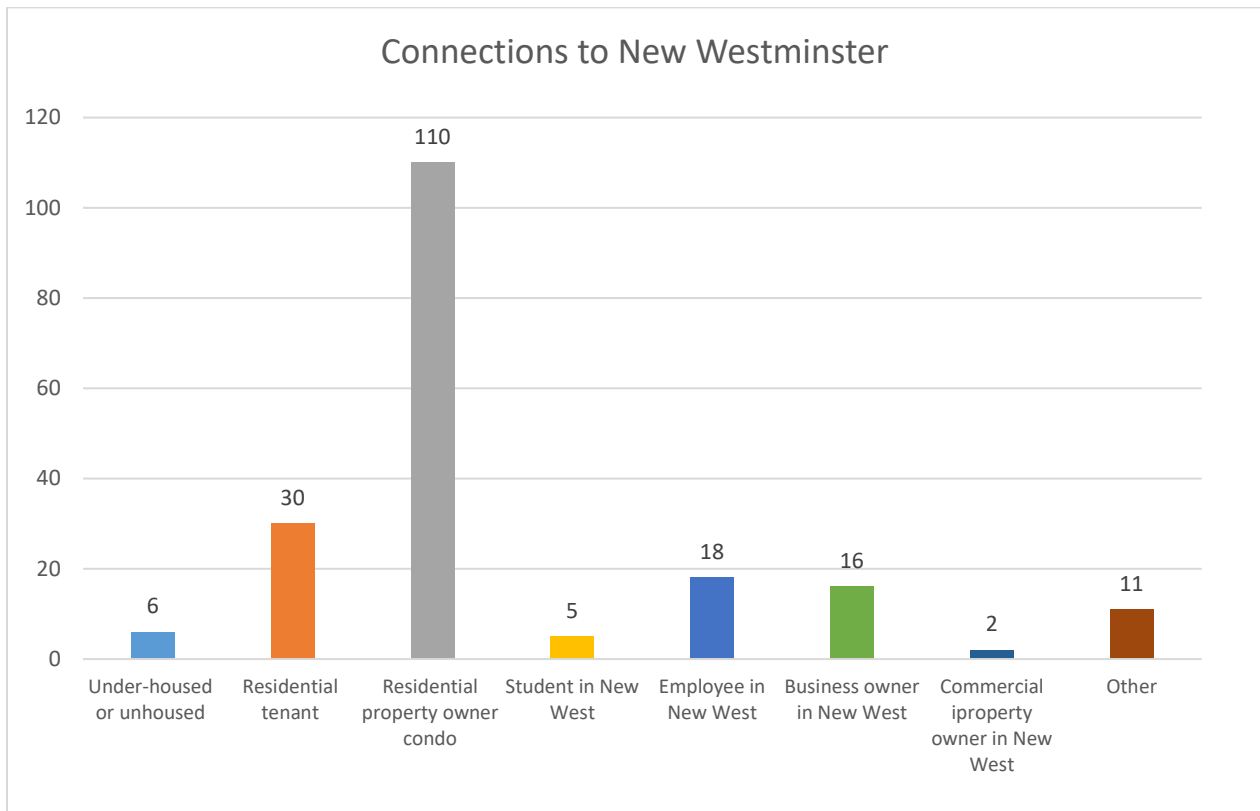# About Participants

Neighbourhood Representation

A total of 153 participants completed the online survey. Out of those 153, 151 were from participants in the following areas and neighbourhoods across New Westminster. The remaining 2 online contributions were made by users located in other cities across the Lower Mainland.
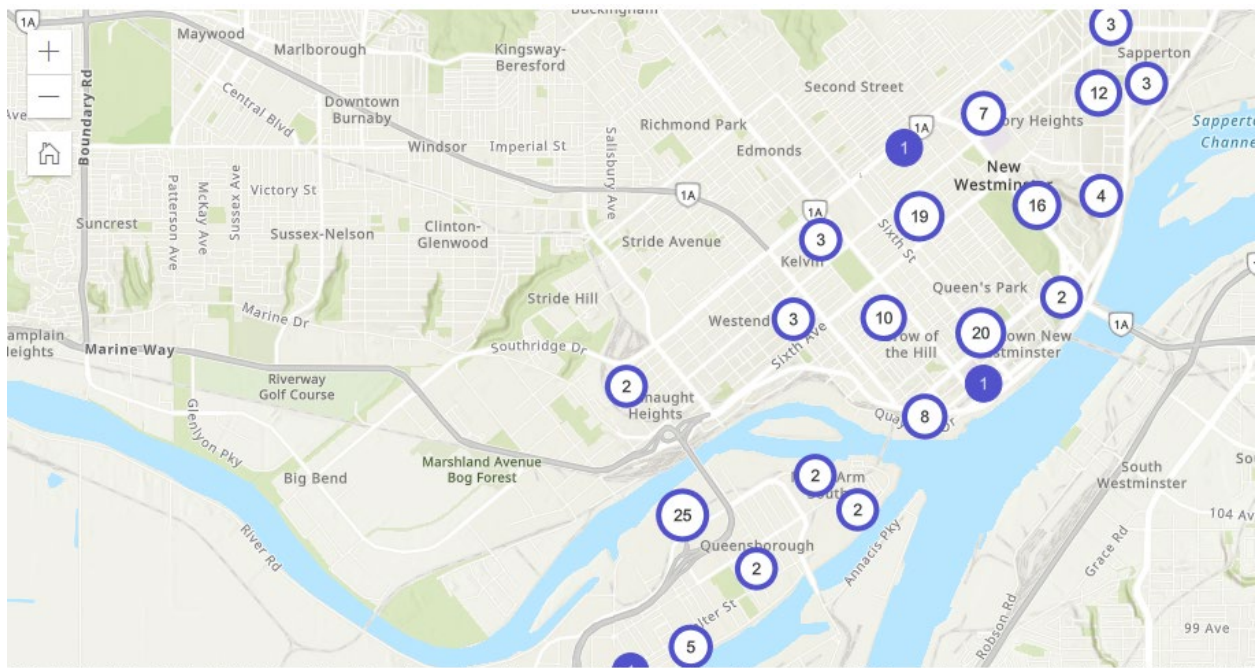
Connections to the City (select all that apply)
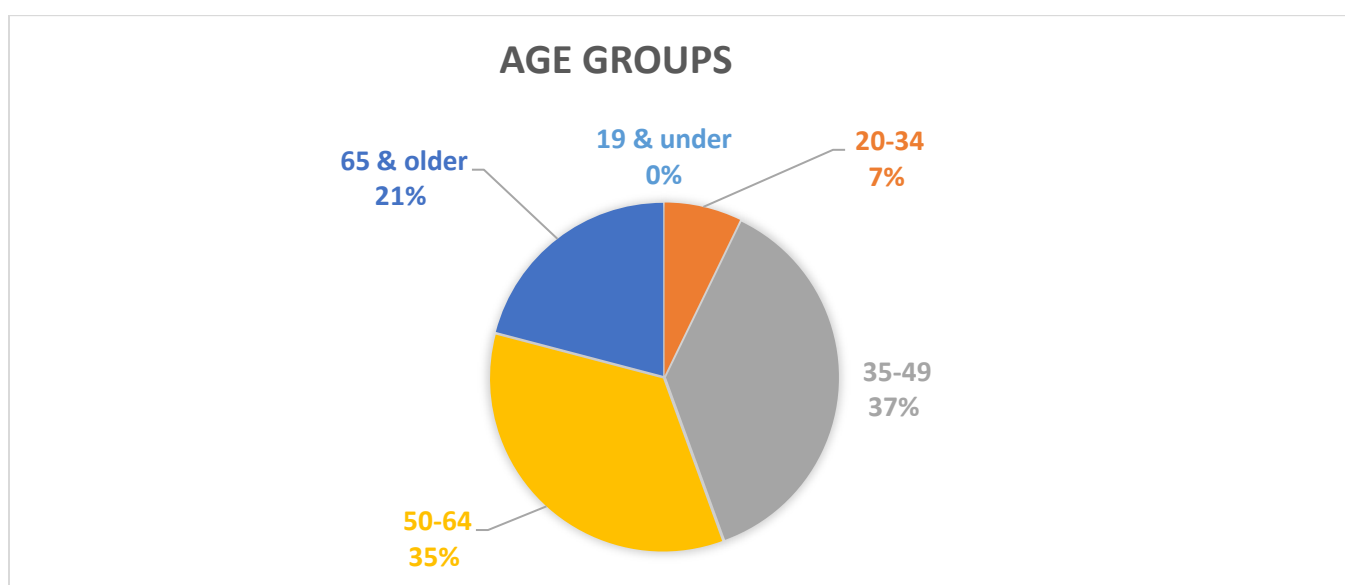
Be Heard Participants: (153 responses)

Choice	Percentage	Count
Under-housed or unhoused	4%	6
Residential tenant	20%	30
Residential property owner condo	72%	110
Student in New West	3%	5
Employee in New West	12%	18
Business owner in New West	10%	16
Commercial property owner in New West	1%	2
Other	7%	11

Age Groups

Be Heard Participants: (153 responses)

Age Group	Percentage	Count
19 & under	0%	0
20-34	7%	11
35-49	37%	57
50-64	35%	53
65 & older	21%	32

AGE GROUPS

19 & under 0%
20-34 7%
35-49 37%
50-64 35%
65 & older 21%

Additional Demographic Information
(select any / all that apply)

Be Heard Participants: (144 responses)

Choice	Percentage	Count
I identify as Indigenous	3%	4
I identify as a person of colour and or part of a racialized group	14%	20
I identify as LGBTQ2S	10%	14
I was born outside of Canada	17%	25
I moved to Canada within the last 5 years	4%	5

English is not my first language	8%	11
I am a member of a low-income household	6%	9
I or someone in my household has a disability	14%	20
There are children under age 18 in my household	27%	39
There are seniors in my household	21%	30
None of the above	17%	25
Prefer not to say	12%	17
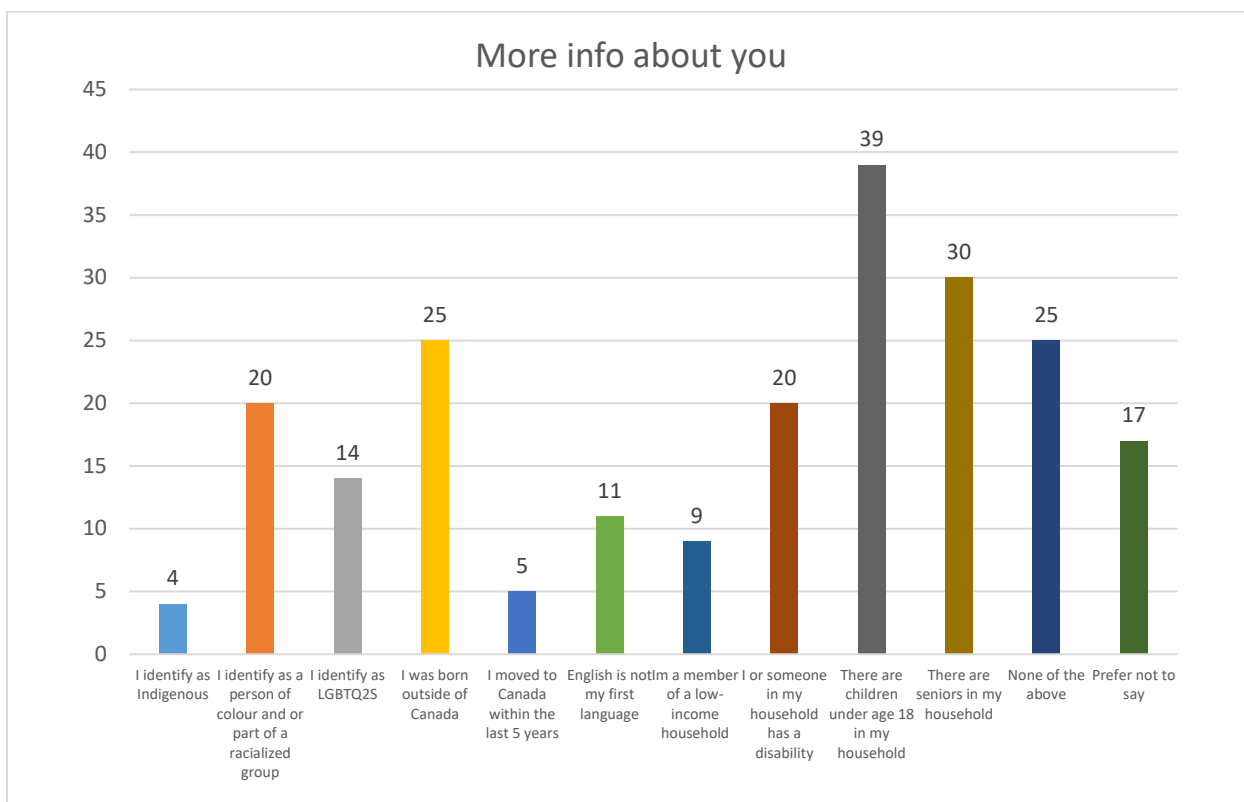
Demographic Analysis

Demographic analysis has been completed for 153 unique participants who shared input online on Be Heard New West. The characteristics of this group of users were compared to the most recent demographic profile of New Westminster residents from the 2021 Census.

As we see in most City of New Westminster engagements, among online participants, residential property owners were highly over-represented (72% of online participants; 55% of residents according to Census), and tenants were highly under-represented (20% of participants; 45% of residents according to Census). An additional 4% of participants identified as being under-housed or unhoused members of the New West community.

For age ranges of online participants, there were only no online responses from residents age 19 or younger, so this age group was highly under-represented. Ages 20-34 were also highly under-represented compared with 2021 Census data. Conversely, the 35-49 year old, 50-64 year old, and the 65+ age group were overrepresented.

In terms of other demographic information provided by online participants, we can compare with Census data on Indigenous, immigrant, new immigrant (arrived within past five years) and visible minority proportions of the New Westminster community. Based on this comparison, immigrants, visible minorities and newcomers were all highly under-represented amongst Be Heard participants. Indigenous people and parents of children under 18 were similar to 2021 Census representation.

Next Steps

This engagement summary report will be provided to Council, and shared on the Be Heard New West project page.

City staff are also conducting a municipal scan to gather best practices from other communities. Once these activities are complete, staff will make recommendations to Council for changes to the City's grants program.