

Attachment #1

**Strategic Priority 1**

**Community Belonging and Connecting**

**Year 1 Status Report**



## Strategy Priority: Community Belonging and Connecting Year 1 -Status Report

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

Objectives and Outcomes	Status	Comments/issues
<p><i>Because this strategic priority area is more conceptual than other areas, the information below is presented as a whole, with all objectives and outcomes noted.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Objective 1:</b> People feel belonging through a shared sense of connection and identification with others. They feel accepted, included, and supported, and feel a sense of responsibility and commitment to the well-being of the community as a whole.</li> <li>• <b>Objective 2:</b> People experience shared connection points, created through an environment where their ideas, impact, and contributions matter, and where new community members feel welcome and included.</li> <li>• <b>Objective 3:</b> The City is a place where individuals, groups, and organizations are interconnected, linked, and work towards common goals and interests through community-building initiatives, and through platforms that facilitate communication, collaboration, and understanding among community members.</li> <li>• <b>Objective 4:</b> Community connectivity creates a strong sense of belonging and social cohesion and enables individuals and groups to support each other.</li> </ul>		

### Strategic Outcomes:

- **Belonging and connectedness.**
- **Greater awareness and appreciation.**
- **New and growing connections.**
- **City Services alignment and support.**

Grant Program		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff worked to award approximately \$975,000 in grant funding to applicants in a fall intake, operationalized for the 2024 year.</li> <li>• Staff proposed a review of the grant process that included community consultation and consultation with the Community Advisory Assembly and that has begun.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the review and deliver recommendations for refinements to Council in July.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited or none, though staff capacity remains an issue as competing priorities can take the timeline off track. Currently it is on track.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The grant program is on track to have proposed refinements made in time for the fall 2024 intake of grants.</i></li> </ul>
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Community Partnerships function		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have worked to specify a Community Partnerships function incubating within the Economic Development division, now housed in the Community Services Department. This new function incorporates the grant portfolio, special events, filming, and volunteer coordination.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As this new function is just getting underway, some transitional activities may occur to get it up and running and identifying needs in the area. Some staff roles are being adjusted as a result.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited staff capacity is the largest factor in determining risk for this item. There is a definite need for more staff in order to meet both the community and Council’s expectations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This function is just getting up and running and expects a more fulsome report in a future update.</li> </ul>
Special Event Portfolio		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff both produce and facilitate special events in the community. In 2024, there are 49 events scheduled. 19 of them are civic events and 30 are community organization events that require staff to support and could be using City facilities, properties, and/or may be receiving grant funds. As of May 11, 14 events have occurred.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next Steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to provide service to community groups that are organizing their events, as well as produce quality events for the community to enjoy. In Q3, staff anticipate reviewing some policies and practices to acknowledge the new alignment within Economic Development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff capacity is a challenge, across all departments that support special events; the summer season is when many events occur and there are many competing demands.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special Events are an integral part of the community and staff are working to ensure expectations are met and exceeded.</li> </ul>
Community Advisory Assembly		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Community Advisory Assembly has launched, and looked at Community Belonging and Connecting (CB&amp;C) as an initial topic. On May 6, representatives from the Assembly presented 11 recommendations to Council for feasibility. The Assembly members are highly engaged and approaching their work diligently.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assembly continues to meet, next tackling the topic of road space reallocation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a risk that the Assembly may be working in some isolation of the knowledge of initiatives and priorities that are already underway through staff efforts that may not be yet available to the public. There does remain a risk that members may resign.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community Advisory Assembly is meeting regularly and is on track with a detailed work plan for the year.</li> </ul>
<p>Community Belonging and Connecting Public Education/Capacity Building</p>		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City hosted Jim Diers, an educator and public speaker specializing in community, to give a talk to the public as well as two workshops for staff. They were well attended and well received.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will continue to look for opportunities to increase community belonging and connecting through capacity building.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff capacity is limited and this is an easy tactic to get forgotten.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will capitalize on opportunities to host future capacity building events in the future.</li> </ul>
<p>Volunteer Program</p>		<p><b>Progress to date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a recruitment video and volunteer framework. More than 700 volunteers registered. Volunteering also shifted into the Community Partnership function.</li> <li>• The volunteer program has completed a volunteer framework to address city-wide volunteer needs. Additionally, Century House has received grant funding from United Way to help resource volunteer supports for 2024-2025.</li> <li>• Other departments are also requesting volunteer support and the program is growing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to establish relationships with volunteers and grow the database.</li> <li>• Analyze options to support community organizations' volunteer needs by leveraging the City's system. Additional resources will be required so analysis is needed before this can be promoted or formalized, though some informal sharing is occurring now with success.</li> </ul> <p><b>Risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success of the Volunteer Program is almost entirely reliant upon one full-time Coordinator, leaving the program vulnerable to unplanned personnel issues.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a limited budget for recruitment and retention of volunteers. Administratively, there is a great deal of work to onboard a new volunteer, so retention and appreciation is an important component of the program.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The volunteer program is growing and developing and bringing value to the City.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of Progress in Year 1</b>	<b>Anticipated progress in Q3 and Risks</b>	
<p>This is a new strategic priority area and is in the early stages of understanding what it means to the City and what falls under this area. Staff expect a more fulsome status update in future quarters now that the Community Partnerships function is set to launch.</p>	<p>Continued work in several areas to strengthen relationships between the City and community partners, and to identify the role that the City should take in order to increase the opportunities for residents to feel connected and that they belong, in whatever that looks like to them. Risks to this strategic priority area relate to a more difficult time in identifying the resources required, and in evaluating success. As a result, this strategic priority area can easily be put off track, and with limited staff working on the portfolios that are captured in some of the areas, it means that not as much progress may appear to be made.</p>	
<b>Financial Implications</b>		
<p>None at this time that are not already contemplated in the Draft 2024 Operating Budget, however staff anticipate enhancement requests for 2025.</p>		
<b>Interdepartmental Collaboration</b>		
<p>Throughout all projects, there is a high degree of interdivisional collaboration, and especially so for community belonging and connecting, as all staff have a part to play in supporting the objectives and outcomes in the strategic plan.</p>		
<b>Lenses and Foundations - Implications</b>		
<p>In development of work plans, staff take into consideration the contexts – lenses and foundations – of the City’s goals and objectives related to Reconciliation, Public Engagement, Climate Action and Environment, DEIAR, Measurement and Monitoring, and Organizational Effectiveness, to ensure these are considered and form a component of the work approach. While the highlighted projects may not directly relate to the contexts, staff continue to ensure these are considered in all work.</p>		

**Instructions and Legend:**

<b>Strategic Outcome: People-Centered Economy</b>
<p><b>Belonging and Connectedness:</b> Contribute to individuals, groups and organizations in New Westminister feeling a sense of belonging and connectedness individually and collectively.</p>
<p><b>Greater Awareness and Appreciation:</b> Celebrate the diversity across our city and share an understanding of community and culture.</p>

**New and Growing Connections:** Empower and support groups and organizations to more fully reflect the evolving diversity of the community and feel welcome to establish, grow, and evolve.

**City Services Alignment and Support:** Equip City staff, services, and processes to reflect a range of diverse community needs to support community belonging and connecting aspirations.

Status	Project performance indicators Rating Summary
Green	On Track - The project aligns with all four performance indicators
Yellow	Concerns to address - The project does not align with one or more of the performance indicator which is resulting in or could result in a delay or material impact
Red	Project Impacted - The project does not align with one or more performance indicator which could result in a major delay or inability to complete

Performance Indicator	Description	Rating Status
Budget Variance	Operating and capital budget variances that are linked to action	Green: On or Under budget Yellow: Slightly over budget: - Less than 10% Red: Significantly over budget: - More than 10%
Schedule Variance	The variance between the actual project progress and the planned schedule	Green: On or ahead of schedule Yellow: Slightly behind schedule: - less than 3 Months Red: Significantly behind schedule: - more than 3 months
Scope Compliance	The frequency and impact of changes to the project scope	Green: Fully compliant Yellow: Partial compliance Red: Significant scope deviations
Staffing Adequacy	The extent to which the action has the correct amount of staff with the required skills and resources to effectively drive the project forward	Green: Adequate staff Yellow: Some staffing issues Red: Insufficient staffing