

Action Plan

FOR THE SOCIAL WELL-BEING
OF SURREY RESIDENTS



2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT

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2008-2009 Annual Report

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Introduction

About this Report

The 2008-2009 Annual Report on the Action Plan for the Social Well-being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan) is the third annual report that has been prepared since the Social Plan was adopted in 2006. Overall, the report demonstrates that the City of Surrey has made considerable progress on the implementation of the Social Plan and remains committed to building a vibrant and socially sustainable city.

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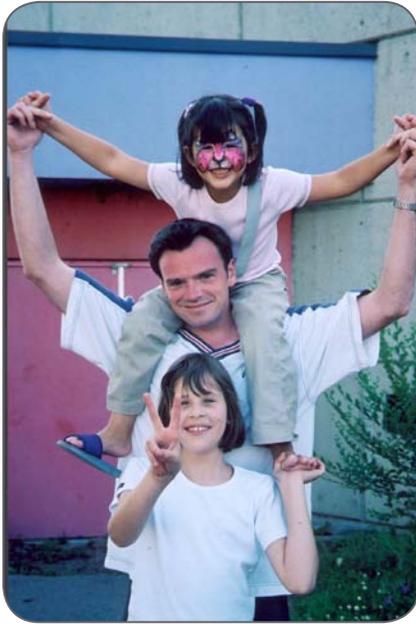
Surrey’s Social Plan was developed to provide strategic direction and recommendations for action on five priority social issues: children and youth, community development and diversity, housing and homelessness, crime and public safety, and substance abuse and addictions. The final recommendation in the Social Plan is that the City prepare an Annual Report to Council on its implementation in order to communicate what has been achieved and to seek Council endorsement or direction on specific future actions.

This Annual Report is organized in a format similar to the previous two annual reports and provides an overview of the activities undertaken by various City Departments from June 2008 to the end of 2009. Many of the activities were initiated in previous years, so this report provides an update on these, along with an overview of new projects and activities. The final section of the report identifies the priorities for the coming year.

As well as taking stock of where we are at in the implementation of the Social Plan, the preparation of this year's Annual Report provides an opportunity to reflect on social issues in Surrey in 2010. Are the Social Plan priorities that were identified in 2004 when the Social Plan began to be developed still relevant in 2010? Are there any new emerging issues that may signal areas for future focus and action in the years ahead? The sections below provide a commentary on highlights of the Social Plan's achievements along with some thoughts on emerging social issues in Surrey.

Highlights and Emerging Issues

A Child and Youth Friendly City



Promoting the healthy development of all young people growing up in Surrey has been a priority for the City since the Social Plan was first adopted.

Each year, a significant proportion of the annual Social Plan budget has been devoted to enhancing recreation and library services for children and youth, especially for youngsters who are more vulnerable than their peers. The City has created new opportunities for youth to meaningfully participate in civic issues, and hosts a number of festivals and celebrations specifically for children, youth and families.

Over the past year, the City has been developing a Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy to guide future actions to make Surrey a place where all children and youth thrive.

Solving Homelessness

Addressing issues of homelessness and housing affordability continues to be a priority for action.

The City established the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society in 2007 with a contribution of over \$9.5 million. Since then, the Society awarded a one-time \$1 million grant to the Maxxine Wright supportive housing project in 2008, and initiated its Annual Grants Program in 2009 with awards to six diverse and innovative projects addressing homelessness in Surrey.

The City of Surrey is engaged in productive partnerships with BC Housing, the Ministry of Housing and Social Development and Fraser Health Authority. Achievements include:

- 364 new supportive housing beds and/or units that have been opened or are under development in Surrey since 2006; and
- over 200 homeless people in Surrey have been housed since March 1, 2009 through the efforts of the Homelessness Integration Project.

In 2009, work began on the development of a Housing Action Plan to articulate a plan for municipal actions to work toward achieving an adequate supply of housing to meet the full range of incomes and needs in Surrey.

Crime Reduction

Crime and Public Safety is one of the Social Plan's five priorities. The City's clean-up and beautification programs, efforts to raise awareness about elder abuse, and partnerships with the School District and RCMP to prevent gang violence represent actions that respond to the Social Plan recommendations for addressing this issue.

Following the adoption of the Social Plan in 2006, the City developed a comprehensive Crime Reduction Strategy that was released in 2007. The Strategy seeks to implement new and innovative programs that will result in a reduction in crime, with a particular focus on addressing its root causes. The implementation of the Crime Reduction Strategy will continue to contribute to promoting the social-well being of all Surrey residents.

An Inclusive City

In this report, the Social Plan's theme of "Community Development and Diversity" has been renamed "Community Development and Inclusion". This change was made to reflect the City's efforts to be a city where everyone can participate in, and benefit from, the opportunities that Surrey offers, regardless of economic means, abilities, or ethnic or cultural background.

The City introduced the Leisure Access Pass program to enable low-income families to participate in recreational activities on a reduced or no fee basis. Social Plan funds have contributed to new programming aimed at making library and recreation services more accessible to people of various ethnic backgrounds.

The challenges faced by Government Assisted Refugees settling in Surrey is a particular concern, so in the past year the City undertook a study of their housing needs and actively advocated for the elimination of the federal government's transportation loan program which serves to further impoverish these vulnerable refugee families.



Another new initiative in the past year is the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities project. Under the leadership of the Surrey Foundation, this multi-year project is undertaking a number of activities to build Surrey's capacity in welcoming and including newcomers.

Literacy

While not specifically identified as a priority in the Social Plan, the City has taken a leadership role in promoting literacy in Surrey. In 2007, a Mayor's Task Force on Literacy and Early Childhood Development was established and its work culminated in the release of the Learning for Life Strategy in 2008. The Task Force also initiated the development of a Community Literacy and Skills Plan for Surrey and White Rock which was launched in 2009. These new plans address issues of literacy and learning throughout the life cycle. Further details are provided in this Annual Report.



Neighbourhoods Matter

Surrey is composed of six communities: Whalley, Guildford, Fleetwood, Newton, Cloverdale and South Surrey. Within these large communities are many diverse smaller-scale neighbourhoods.

The importance of neighbourhoods in building a sense of belonging and community within the City has emerged in a number of community processes over the past few years, including the consultations conducted with young people as part of the development of the Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy.

The Social Plan includes a recommendation to explore the potential for neighbourhood hubs, houses, or family resource centres. The Community-Schools Partnership (C-SP) responds to this recommendation. Launched in 2006, the C-SP expands the use of school facilities to create neighbourhood places. The C-SP currently involves 17 schools in four communities. These C-SP schools offer a range of new programs, services and recreational opportunities for the families living in the neighbourhood.

Another more recent initiative is the Community Enhancement Partnership Program. Launched in early 2010 as part of the City's beautification program, the goal of this new grants program is to generate neighbourhood-based projects, activities and celebrations.

An Age-friendly Community for Seniors

As Surrey's population of seniors continues to grow, ensuring that the City's policies, services and structures support the health and participation of older residents will become increasingly important. A new section on "Creating an Age-friendly City" has been added to this year's report to reflect this new direction.

For the past couple of years, the City has taken a leadership role on the issue of elder abuse by convening a series of community forums. In addition to on-going seniors' leisure services, the City hosts an annual Seniors Wellness Fair. In 2009, the City partnered with the Seniors Community Planning Tables on a study of the transportation needs of older residents.

Contributing to Sustainability

Surrey's Sustainability Charter is a commitment by the City to place the principles of social, environmental and economic sustainability as the foundation of all decisions that Surrey makes. The Charter was adopted in the fall of 2008. Since it was developed after the Social Plan, its socio-cultural goals and scope include the priorities and recommendations that were identified in the Social Plan. This means that the implementation of the Social Plan directly contributes to achieving the City's sustainability goals.

During the past year, the Sustainability Manager began a process with a community-based Task Force to identify indicators and targets to measure our social progress in future years. In addition, work was undertaken toward creating a Development Checklist that will be used to assess how proposed new developments further the City's sustainability goals, including socio-cultural goals.

Social Planning Advisory Committee

The Social Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) is a Committee of Council whose purpose is to provide advice to Council and undertake initiatives to enhance the social well-being of present and future residents of Surrey. The Committee is chaired by Councillor Villeneuve.

In the past year and a half, SPAC heard presentations and discussed a wide range of social issues including Aboriginal issues, early childhood development, food security, homelessness, literacy, neighbourhood renewal and refugee housing.

The Committee prepared a Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Resolution on the Termination of the Transportation Loan Program for Government Assisted Refugees that was adopted by Surrey City Council and then endorsed by all British Columbian municipalities at the annual UBCM conference in October 2009.

SPAC provided feedback on City initiatives including the: Sustainability Charter, Sustainability Indicators, Sustainable Development Checklist, Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy, Housing Action Plan and Official Community Plan Update.



SPAC members have played an important role in representing the Committee on various community committees including Measuring Up, Food Action Coalition and Welcoming and Inclusive Communities.

Children and Youth

The City's services play a significant role in promoting the healthy development of the approximately 100,000 children and youth who live in Surrey. In 2004, children and youth were identified as one of the five priority areas for the Social Plan to address. A number of recent studies confirm that there is a continued need for the City to focus efforts on its youngest residents.

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Early Childhood (0-5 years)

In late 2009, UBC's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) released new results on the status of children's development in kindergarten, using the Early Childhood Development Instrument (EDI).

Overall, the EDI results show that 28% of children in the Surrey school district are considered vulnerable when they start school, a proportion similar to the provincial average. But Surrey's EDI results show considerable geographic disparity, from a high of 57% of children in the Gateway neighbourhood being vulnerable to a low of 7% vulnerable in Ocean Park.

The 2009 EDI results represent the third wave of kindergarten assessments conducted over the past decade. Of note is the fluctuation in vulnerability rates in some Surrey neighbourhoods. Among the 48 neighbourhoods in the Surrey School District, early childhood development status improved in 19 Surrey neighbourhoods between wave two and three, while it declined in 16 neighbourhoods (5% or greater decrease or increase in vulnerability scores of children in the neighbourhood).

In November 2009, the Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care Surrey/White Rock released *A Demographic Profile of Children and Families in Surrey and White Rock*. It examines the broad range of socio demographic variables that are considered to be “predictors” of vulnerability in early childhood, along with the EDI results. The Office of Early Childhood, Learning and Care is following up with a pilot project to develop neighbourhood-level strategies to promote early childhood development in two to four Surrey neighbourhoods.

Middle Childhood (6-12 years)

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver and the United Way of the Lower Mainland released a report in 2009 on *School-Aged Child Care in the Lower Mainland: Identification of Neighbourhoods in Need of School-Aged Care Programs*. This report shows that there is a significant need for additional before and after school child care for middle years children in Surrey.



The report indicates that there are licensed child care spaces available for only 3% of school-aged children in Surrey, the lowest among the 12 communities examined. In addition, only 12% of Surrey schools have before or after school care in or beside the school, also the lowest of all communities in the study. The report concludes that “a [child care] community needs assessment is a much needed step in the municipality of Surrey.”

Youth

Crime prevention among youth remains a focus for both the City and the Surrey School District. Future prevention efforts will benefit from a large Surrey-based research project that got underway in the past year.

In May 2009, Kwantlen Polytechnic University was awarded a \$1 million federal research grant to examine gang-related youth violence in Surrey. Rather than focussing on risk factors or deficits in the community, this innovative research project will examine what it is that society does right for those youth who reject a gang-lifestyle. Kwantlen's research project will track 900 youth over a five-year period. The City of Surrey is one of 11 community partners involved in this project.

Parks, Recreation and Culture

Preschool Programs

- The number of licensed preschool programs offered by the City has grown to 49 programs, provided in recreation centres, elementary schools and community halls.
- The StrongStart program, which the City had initially helped to start at two elementary schools, has grown to 21 schools and is now operated solely by Surrey School District. The StrongStart program introduces families to the school setting and improves school readiness.
- There has been an increase in recreation programs for preschoolers through partnerships with the Community-Schools Partnership and Surrey Public Library.

After-School Programs

After-school programs funded from the Social Plan budget focused on active living and healthy eating.

- ***Newton Community Programming*** – Based on growing needs in Newton, programs provided in this community were enhanced.
 - » The City partnered with DIVERSEcity to offer an after-school program in three schools, which includes a homework club provided by DIVERSEcity and a sports/gym games component provided by the City.
 - » The City worked with the School District to create the Home Safe and Power Kids programs to give latchkey children needed skills and confidence.
 - » Working with school-based staff and outside agencies (BC Housing, Pathfinder), the City supports a drop-in, open gym program for vulnerable pre-teens that combines a youth worker with a gym supervisor.
 - » The City also supports Youth Drop-In Gym programs at a few schools.

- ***Healthy Kids Who Cook*** – Social Plan funding was used to provide staffing and supplies for this in-school program for high-risk students. The program provides health education and food preparation skills and increases participants' access to and awareness of physical activities in the community through guest speakers and connections to Parks, Recreation and Culture staff. The program is a partnership between North Surrey Leisure Services, Newton Leisure Services and the Surrey School District.

- ***Healthy Starts Program*** – This is a breakfast program that promotes healthy eating, literacy and physical activity in school aged children. It is offered to children with low school attendance and behavioural and social challenges. Social Plan funds are used to provide staffing hours and supplies.

Training for City Staff Working with Children

Social Plan funds were used to provide a range of training opportunities for City instructors working with children aged 0 to 12. These included in-service for summer and winter staff and training for ECE instructors. The ECE training included sessions such as “Cross Cultural Parenting” (offered in partnership with DIVERSEcity), and “Sharing Our Cultures: Aboriginal ECE Training” (offered in partnership with Kla-how-eya, Surrey School District and the Fraser Region Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Network).



Youth Programs

- **Recreation Programming for Youth** – Recreation programs for youth funded by the Social Plan in mid-2008 and 2009 included: the Tour de Surrey Skateboard Competition; the Youth Park Host Program which sends qualified youth staff to youth parks, where kids and families can enjoy BMX racing, skateboarding and rollerblading; the Spirit of BC Guildford Youth Basketball Tournament; the Coastal Jam Youth Skateboard Showcase; and the extension of operational hours at Fraser Heights Recreation Centre.
- **Mobile Youth Outreach (MoYO)** – MoYO has been in operation for five years. The program uses a bus to provide outreach youth services. In 2009, MoYO came in contact with over 6,000 youth, and visited over 151 different locations in Surrey. MoYO is a partnership with Surrey School District, the Community-Schools Partnership, Pacific Community Resources Society, Crescent Beach Community Services, OPTIONS, RCMP and Surrey Fire Department.

Special Events

- **Youth Week** – In May 2009, each Town Centre organized Youth Week events for free or low cost for youth in their area. City-wide level events were also held, including the City Jam music competition and the Youth Recognition Awards.
- **Youth Fest 2009** – Youth Fest in September 2009 was a one day event that promoted music, culture, arts, active living, and community spirit in a festival format. It was attended by over 1,000 young people.
- **Third Annual Kids Conference** – The Kids Conference provided over 300 children aged 6 to 12 years with sessions on community, nutrition, outdoor exploration and self-esteem.



Outreach Programs for Inclusion

- **Free Youth Access** – The City provides free memberships for youth to access any youth centre in Surrey. This youth membership also provides four free drop-in sessions for swimming, skating, or weight room use. A FREE Ride Pass program provides youth with four free visits to City recreation centres, a free bus pass and contact information for local youth resources. The wallet-sized card is given out by staff from the City, RCMP and Fire Department to engage youth in healthy activities.
- **Edge Snow Boarding Program** – Offered in partnership with Surrey School District and corporate sponsors, this program provides at-risk youth, ages 13 to 15, with an opportunity to learn life skills through snowboarding.

- ***Wicket Cricket Program*** – Offered in partnership with RBC and Surrey School District, this program responds to a sport in great demand in the South Asian community.
- ***Early Childhood Development for Newcomers*** – Because of the importance of promoting the development of South Asian, immigrant and refugee children, the Mother Goose and Parent and Tot programs were offered throughout the year. An ESL Preschool was also provided to assist in the transition into traditional preschool programs.
- ***Inclusive Recreation Programs for Young People with Disabilities*** – In partnership with the Surrey Association for Community Living (SACL), a range of recreation programs and events are offered, including:
 - » Adapted skating lessons, sledge hockey and sitting volleyball;
 - » S.T.A.R. program, which offers group activities such as arts and crafts, community outings, sports and other leisure activities;
 - » SPIRIT Leadership program, which placed 23 youth and contributed to a total of 1,725 volunteer hours;
 - » Clubhouse Without Walls Program, a new program designed to support the participation of youth and young adults with mental health problems in leisure programs (funded through a BC Healthy Communities grant and operated in partnership with Fraser Health);
 - » I'm Game!, an event that provides children with disabilities with the opportunity to try new sports and have fun (held in partnership with RBC, SportAbility, PUCKS and True Sport); and
 - » Panel discussion and screening of the film, The Boy Inside (with Punjabi subtitles) to promote understanding of autism and Asperger's syndrome.

Surrey Public Library

The Library's Strategic Plan for 2008-2010 included goals to increase access to library collections and services for families and childcare workers, as well as a focus on services for children aged 6 to 12 years and for teens. Social Plan funding assisted the Library in achieving these goals between mid-2008 and the end of 2009. Cutbacks to Provincial grants have made it necessary for the Library to seek alternate funding and re-examine staff resources to ensure that popular programs can continue. Highlights of activities include:

- The Library builds literacy skills in children through Summer Reading Club, storytimes and children's programs throughout Surrey. Over 100,000 kids participated in 2008 and 2009 early literacy programs; over 13,000 children read through the summer each year. New storytimes especially for male caregivers and young children are growing in popularity. Storytimes for parents and children whose first language is not English are also meeting a need and demand is increasing.
- Sunday is one of the busiest days and allows children and families to visit together to explore reading and other resources. The Library is now open on Sunday year-round at eight branches.
- The Library participated in numerous community events such as the Surrey Children's Festival, Surrey Reads and the Environmental Extravaganza.
- The Reading Buddies program is matching teen volunteers with kids who need reading practice, many of whom are learning to speak English. Funding from Coast Capital Savings has enabled this program to continue at five locations through 2010.
- The Teen Services Librarian has had great success in attracting more teens to the library, through the creation of a Teen Advisory Group, teen "ambassadors" in some of the high schools, and innovative and fun programs suggested by the TAG. Some programs are being done in partnership with Parks, Recreation

and Culture. A Teen Reading Club connects youth from across the country through the Internet and the Library began using social networking tools to communicate its programs in 2009.

- Library staff members are continuing to provide computer literacy skills training to students in Kla-how-eya's Culinary Arts Program, as well as early literacy programs to First Nations children at the centre.
- Reading Link Challenge is a new program that matches keen and reluctant readers in the "middle years" in a fun and fast-paced competition. Surrey has four teams competing with teams from Fraser Valley Regional Library.

Community-Schools Partnership

Community-Schools Partnership (C-SP) is a collaboration between the City of Surrey and the Surrey School District to use school facilities to create neighbourhood places. The C-SP has now been expanded to four community hubs (Newton, Cloverdale, Guildford and North Surrey), with new programs, services and recreational activities being delivered in 17 schools.

C-SP programs are based on the needs in the community and are provided by a variety of agencies. Examples of C-SP programs include English conversation programs, homework clubs, kindergarten readiness, organised sports, dance, drama, exercise, drop-in for all ages, open gym, cooking for kids, positive parenting and aboriginal afternoon programs. Participation has been overwhelming and most hubs have waitlists for the programs.

Youth Engagement

Providing young people with opportunities to contribute to the community, develop leadership skills and participate in decision making promotes positive youth development. It is also a critical component of a child and youth friendly city.

Youth Engagement and Education on the Environment

The Engineering Department has undertaken a number of activities to engage youth and educators in environmental issues including:

- Sponsoring **Climate Change Showdown** which will send staff into 23 classrooms in 2009 and 2010 to discuss solutions to sustainability issues and climate change in Surrey and British Columbia;
- Sponsoring **Dreamriders** Theatre to go into 33 schools in 2009, which has raised environmental awareness with over 10,000 students;
- Co-sponsoring the **Your U-turn** initiative, with the Environmental Education Actions Program Society, which looks to engaging youth on environmental projects within their community;
- Developing an **Environmental Education Resources Compendium** Teachers Guide for integrating environmental issues into the provincially mandated curriculum;
- Running Operation **Save H2O**, which involves youth in educating Surrey residents on water-wise practices;
- Running **SWAP for 5** Program which is a waste reduction education program for teachers and students; and
- Participating, along with Parks, Recreation and Culture, in the **Youth Wave Conference on the Environment** (Guildford), which is part of the Your U-turn initiative and was planned and facilitated by youth to engage peers in discussion about environmental sustainability.

Youth Engagement in Social and Community Planning

The Surrey Leadership Youth Council's (SLYC) mission is “young people helping youth speak up and have their voices heard”. In the past year, SLYC expanded to include members from outside its initial focus area of Whalley.

- In November 2008, SLYC organized and facilitated the second annual Youth Speak Up! Forum, which engaged approximately 60 Whalley youth in interactive workshops to explore their experiences and ideas about creating a youth-friendly Whalley.
- SLYC and the Youth Participation Coordinator were involved in gathering information for a new youth lounge located in the North Surrey Recreation Centre. SLYC members developed a questionnaire, interviewed students at three local high-schools, and compiled feedback which has helped to shape the provision of youth drop-in services in Whalley.
- SLYC organized a series of ongoing monthly “Surrey Say What?” nights at the youth lounge in the North Surrey Recreation Centre to give Whalley youth ongoing opportunities to network and express themselves through creative and “open mic” activities.
- A SLYC member represented youth interests on the Sustainability Indicators Task Force.



Youth Engagement in Community and Leisure Services

- **Surrey Youth Council (SYC)** – SYC provides opportunities for youth to contribute to their community in a variety of ways, such as in fundraising, adopting a family and putting on sports tournaments. Meetings are held every second Monday. Social Plan funding was used to provide a consistent staff person for meetings, a bus driver to pick up youth, supplies for various initiatives, and team-building activities for SYC members.
- **Youth Outreach and Volunteer Support** – The program provides opportunities for volunteering, leadership development and relevant training, with the aim of developing future leaders in Surrey. Youth are able to obtain volunteer hours that receive school credits and get valuable training for their resume (e.g. FOODSAFE, SuperHost and first aid). Volunteer opportunities are provided in various City departments, recreation facilities and in Community-Schools Partnership schools.



Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy

“Creating a Child and Youth Friendly City” is one of the priority issues identified in the Social Plan. A process is currently underway to develop a Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy for the City of Surrey. Activities completed in 2008 and 2009 include:

- A literature review on child and youth friendly cities. Its purpose was to understand the concept of a “child and youth friendly city” and to gather practical examples from other cities and academia on how municipalities can promote the healthy development of children and youth. This was compiled into a report, *Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy: What Does it Mean?* (available at www.surrey.ca/social-planning). Staff also reviewed current City of Surrey policies to identify Child and Youth Friendly elements that are already in place.
- Staff engaged approximately 1,050 children, youth and parents in a city-wide consultation process to seek input on what makes Surrey child and youth friendly and what could be improved. The results of the consultations were compiled into a report, *Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy: Results of Consultations with Children, Youth and Parents* (available at www.surrey.ca/social-planning), which was used as the basis for the subsequent consultations with City staff and community stakeholders.
- Other aspects of the consultation process were workshops and interviews with City staff, presentations at City Committee meetings, and a half-day workshop with community stakeholders.
- The Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy will be prepared for Council's consideration in 2010.

Committees

- ***Surrey/White Rock Make Children First*** – Staff from Community and Leisure Services and the Surrey Public Library participate in the Make Children First coalition. Make Children First is a community partnership, involving over 50 different community and government agencies, focused on the health, well-being and learning of children up to age six.
- ***Middle Childhood Matters Committee*** – The Committee focuses on children ages 6 to 12 years. Over the past year, the Committee has been working on a Theory of Change for children 6 to 12, as well as on an inventory of before and after school programs and other services for this age group. Led by the Office of Early Childhood Development Learning and Care, other Committee partners include the City of Surrey, Surrey School District (C-SP), Fraser Health, DIVERSEcity, Centre for Child Development, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, OPTIONS, Umoja, Alexandra Neighbourhood House and the United Way.
- ***Community-Schools Partnership Steering Committee*** – The Committee is a group of community organisations that bring together experience, resources and knowledge related to the Community-Schools Partnership. The membership is comprised of the Surrey School District, City of Surrey, United Way, Fraser Health, Centre for Child Development, Ministry of Children and Family Development and the RCMP.
- ***Surrey Sports for Life Committee*** – The Surrey Sports for Life (SSL) committee was created in 2009. SSL is dedicated to the sustainable future of sports for youth with disabilities in the Lower Mainland. Partners include the City of Surrey, SportAbility, the Centre for Child Development, BC Power Soccer, Surrey Special Olympics, BC Blind Sports and Recreation Association, BC Wheelchair Basketball, BC Wheelchair Sports Association, Whalley Little League and the Surrey School District.

Age-Friendly Community for Seniors

According to the 2006 Census, approximately 45,000 people or 12% percent of Surrey residents are 65 years of age and over. In British Columbia as a whole, 14% of the population is 65 and older and it is estimated that seniors will comprise nearly 25% of BC's population by 2032.

In recent years, the concept of creating age-friendly communities for older residents has emerged as a priority at global, provincial and local levels. The World Health Organization provides the following definition of an age friendly community:

“An Age-friendly Community for Seniors” has been included in this year’s annual report to signal that the City is also committed to making Surrey inclusive of older residents.”

In an age-friendly city, policies, services, settings and structures support and enable people to age actively by:

- *recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older people;*
- *anticipating and responding flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences;*
- *respecting decisions and lifestyle choices;*
- *protecting those who are most vulnerable; and*
- *promoting their inclusion in and contribution to all areas of community life.*

In 2009, the BC Ministry of Health launched an Active Aging Plan with supporting age-friendly communities being a key initiative of this Plan. To assist local governments and communities to become age-friendly, the Province partnered with the UBCM and provided \$2.5 million to support the “Age-friendly Communities Initiative”. In the past year, the City of Surrey was a recipient of one of the UBCM’s Age Friendly Community Planning grants.



The United Way of the Lower Mainland has also identified “helping seniors” as one of their priorities for investment, the other being “helping children”. In terms of seniors, the United Way’s goal is to ensure that seniors have the opportunity to remain independent and contribute to the community. The United Way is providing three-year funding for two seniors community planning tables in Surrey: Surrey Seniors Community Planning Table and Semiahmoo Seniors Planning Table.

Surrey’s Seniors Planning Tables are committed to creating an age-friendly community. This new section on “An Age-friendly Community for Seniors” has been included in this year’s annual report to signal that the City is also committed to making Surrey inclusive of older residents.

Focus on Seniors Forums

The Focus on Seniors Committee is part of the Mayor's Task Force on Seniors and was convened to raise awareness about elder abuse. Preventing the abuse of seniors is an initiative of the Crime Reduction Strategy and a recommendation of the Social Plan.

In 2009, the Focus on Seniors Committee held three one-day forums for seniors at the South Surrey Recreation Centre, the Guru Nanak Temple in Newton and at the Cloverdale Seniors' Centre. Each event attracted over 100 participants.

Titled "Respect Not Neglect", the forums promoted awareness about abuse and neglect and provided access to resources and services that enhance the safety, security and well-being of seniors. The events featured experts and professionals, including the Public Guardian and Trustee, a lawyer specializing in wills and estates, Surrey Community Resource Society, RCMP, Surrey Parks, Recreation and Culture, and Surrey Public Library.

Seniors' Wellness Fair

The Seniors' Wellness Fair is a free, citywide special event that promotes and supports active aging for the well-being of seniors in Surrey. The 2009 annual event was held at the South Surrey Recreation Centre and featured over eighty community resource and commercial vendors that support health and well-being for seniors. Several hundred were in attendance at the keynote presentation of Dr. Doug Clement and Diane Clement, both former Olympians, best-selling authors and passionate advocates for healthy eating and active aging.

The Seniors Wellness Fair is planned and coordinated by Community and Leisure Services in response to the PRC Service Delivery Plan and the evolving scope of the Social Plan to promote age friendly strategies to support seniors in our community.

Seniors Transportation Study

Accessible and affordable transportation is a key factor in active ageing, enabling seniors to stay healthy, engaged and safe in their community. In 2009, the City obtained funding from the UBCM to enable Surrey's Seniors Planning Tables to engage seniors in a dialogue on transportation issues in Surrey. The project report, *Surrey Transportation and Accessibility Project*, was released in November 2009 and contains information on the transportation needs of seniors, along with recommendations for creating a more age-friendly Surrey in terms of transportation. (The project report is available at www.surrey.ca/social-planning)

Committees

Surrey Seniors Community Planning Table – The Surrey Seniors Community Planning Table is comprised of community seniors and interested organisations, who come together to coordinate and plan for age-friendly communities. Community and Leisure Services staff participate in the Planning Table.



Community Development and Inclusion

An inclusive city is one where everyone can participate in and benefit from the opportunities offered, regardless of economic means, abilities, or ethnic or cultural background. Actions taken by the City to promote the inclusion of diverse ethnic groups and refugees are highlighted in this section. The section also profiles the City's inclusive recreation programming, initiatives to make transportation more accessible and literacy plans.

“An inclusive city is one where everyone can participate in and benefit from the opportunities offered, regardless of economic means, abilities, or ethnic or cultural background.”

Inclusion of New Immigrants – the Provincial Context

During the past decade, responsibility for settlement services for new immigrants in British Columbia was transferred from the federal government to the provincial government, through the “Agreement for Canada-British Columbia Co-operation on Immigration”. The 2004 Agreement has resulted in an increase in the resources dedicated to settlement services in British Columbia, and a number of new programs. WelcomeBC is the name of the Province's broad strategic framework for settlement services.

In 2008, as part of WelcomeBC, the Province launched the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program (WICWP). This three-year initiative is intended to foster inclusive, welcoming and vibrant communities in BC. In 2008/2009, the Surrey Foundation was awarded WICWP grants to undertake a number of projects with the goal of making Surrey a more welcoming and inclusive community.

Inclusion of Diverse Ethnic and Cultural Groups



Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) is to enhance multicultural harmony, and strengthen and enhance cultural cooperation in the City of Surrey. Chaired by Councillor Rasode, MAC seeks broad representation from the City's various ethnic groups and cultures. Its members come from the various organizations and multicultural agencies and groups operating in Surrey.

Two priorities were identified by MAC as its focus over the last year: community outreach and creating a multicultural website. Some of the activities directed at greater outreach to the community included increasing the multicultural presence at celebrations organized by the community; increasing inclusiveness at City events (Cloverdale Rodeo, Canada Day, Vaisakhi and 2010 Winter Olympics); and developing a brochure on building inclusiveness for community organizers to use when developing and planning events.

MAC members reviewed external websites and the City's current website to identify key components of an effective multicultural website and identified potential partners who could participate with the City in a multicultural website.

Members of MAC also volunteer on the Fusion Festival Committee. The 2009 Fusion Festival was a tremendous success with over 65,000 people attending the two day event in July. The festival is a celebration of Surrey's culture. It brings together distinct heritages with three stages exhibiting more than 100 acts and 60 cultural pavilions showcasing music, food and dance.

Surrey Public Library

The Library invites new Canadians to make use of the many resources available to them free of charge, learn more about their new homeland and take part in Library programs. The Library's website (www.spl.surrey.bc.ca) includes a "New Canadians" section that continues to expand its links to Internet information on citizenship and driving tests, foreign credentials and translation, along with a variety of library resources from Surrey and beyond.

The Library participated in the Community-Schools Partnership and provided leadership to the Community Literacy Plan process during 2008 and to the implementation of the Plan's recommendations that began in mid-2009.

Computer literacy training, both in a classroom setting and through one-to-one training programs, continues to meet community need – over 150,000 people participate in training sessions each year. Demand for classes in languages other than English has increased and the Library responded as staff resources allowed (e.g. Punjabi, Mandarin, Polish and Farsi).

Outreach to new Canadian communities and to agencies that provide services to new Canadians continues to be a focus for Library staff. Response to informational programs in Mandarin done in partnership with SUCCESS has been very positive. A partnership with Parks, Recreation and Culture has enabled the Library to host conversation circles for adults wanting to improve their English skills.

Collections in languages other than English continued to grow and allowed people to retain their home languages, to learn new languages and to share their heritage with their children. Press Display, an online magazine and newspaper database, was used over 10,000 times in 2009, enabling people to stay in touch with their countries of origin.

Downloadable audiobook and e-book collections are meeting the needs of people with print disabilities as well as providing access to reading for commuters and others who are plugged into a variety of mobile communication devices.

Parks, Recreation and Culture

Recreational and child development initiatives intended to create a more inclusive community for people of various ethnicities and cultures are being supported by Social Plan funds. These include:

- The hiring of a multilingual facility attendant who has provided positive role modelling and resulted in a dramatic increase in weight room usage by the South Asian community;
- Female weight room attendants who are contributing toward a cultural shift amongst male weight room users;



- Development of a strategy to engage the Muslim community;
- The offering of a multicultural fitness class at the Newton Seniors Centre in partnership with Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS); and
- The hiring of an ESL preschool assistant to work with families registered in the City's preschool programs where children may have undiagnosed learning disabilities. The ESL preschool assistant offers suggestions, advice and support to families.

The Intercultural Diversity section within Community Development Services continued to build partnerships with immigrant and refugee service agencies and to strengthen its diversity programs. These include:

- **Facility Tours** – Over 30 facility tours and orientations were presented to new residents to Surrey and Canada in 2009. The majority of the tours were for Adult ESL classes in Surrey and for immigrant and refugee service agencies in the community.
- **Welcome Fair** – In partnership with the Surrey-Delta Intercultural Committee (SDIC), the City was involved in the first annual Welcome Fair held in April 2009 at Queen Elizabeth Secondary School. The Welcome Fair was an event to bring Canadian or Surrey newcomers together to gain resources and learn about important aspects of the settlement process and community. Roughly 1,000 Surrey and Delta residents came to the event. Interpretation and translation was available throughout this event.
- **City Hall Cultural Celebrations** – Ten Cultural Celebrations were organized and held at City Hall in 2009. For each event, the City worked with partners to create displays, provide culturally significant food and entertainment, and connect with relevant speakers. The events are intended to educate City staff about the diverse community in which they work. Where possible, City staff from different cultures speak at these events to create a personal connection for all staff in attendance.

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Project

The Surrey Foundation, in partnership with the City of Surrey, is leading a Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) initiative in Surrey. WIC is being funded by multi-year grants from the Province's Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program. Project components include:

- **Community Partnership Development** – In March 2009, a community forum was held to create a vision and action plan for WIC. Over 40 community partners participated in the forum.
- **Knowledge Development** – Existing statistics, research and best practices are being compiled. A research project will be undertaken to fill in the gaps in available knowledge.
- **Public Education** – A website designed for newcomers to Surrey is being developed. A documentary will also be made that shares stories of new immigrants and refugees' experiences settling in Surrey.
- **Engaging Youth and Middle Years Children** – An after-school program and Kids Diversity Forum will be conducted to involve children and youth in efforts to make Surrey more welcoming and inclusive.
- **Demonstration Projects** – Demonstration projects will be conducted in four "life" areas - family, community, education and economics.

The City is participating in advisory committees for the various program components and Community and Leisure Services is responsible for the conduct of the "engaging youth and middle years children" project. It is anticipated that the WIC project will produce a number of resources, including a website, that will support the City's continuing efforts to make Surrey a welcoming and inclusive city for all.

Supporting Refugees

Surrey has emerged as the primary destination for Government-Assisted Refugees (GARS) in Metro Vancouver. With funding from BC Housing, in 2008-2009 the City of Surrey partnered with Immigrant Services Society of BC to conduct a study on the housing experiences of refugees in Surrey. The report, *At Home In Surrey?: The Housing Experiences of Refugees in Surrey, B.C.*, found that while rising housing prices in Metro Vancouver have made Surrey an attractive destination for GARS, the majority of GARS in Surrey live in housing that is both unaffordable and overcrowded.

The study found that the current requirement for GARS to repay federal government loans to cover their pre-entry medical examination and transportation costs to resettle to Canada represents a significant burden to low income refugee families. The City of Surrey is following up by actively advocating for the Government of Canada to cancel all outstanding refugee transportation and pre-entry medical loan debts and to cease seeking repayment of these costs for newly arriving GARS.

“Surrey has emerged as the primary destination for Government-Assisted Refugees (GARS) in Metro Vancouver. ”

Public Transportation and Access

The Engineering Department has been engaged in a number of programs and initiatives over the past year to improve access to public transit services and the pedestrian and cycling environment in Surrey. These include:

- **Accessibility initiatives** – A review is being undertaken of pedestrian crossings to identify those which require retrofitted curb letdowns, accessible pedestrian-activated traffic control switches and safe pedestrian waiting areas.
- **Active transportation initiatives** – Engineering is developing a Walkable Neighbourhood Plan, Bicycle Friendly Community Plan and traffic calming initiatives to ensure safe streets.
- **Cycling education** – The City continues to partner with Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition on cycling education through Bike to School Week, Bike to Work Week, Streetwise Cycling Program and other general programs.
- **Mobility Matters** – The City supports and has been assisting Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST) in implementing this project in Surrey, which addresses travel planning and car exchange/recycling services.
- **Safe and Active Schools Program** – Three schools are involved in a pilot project for school travel planning and student/parent education. The Engineering Department is also reviewing pedestrian and cycling safety around all public elementary and secondary schools and making improvements that include implementing traffic calming, signage, pick-up and drop-off zones, sidewalks and crosswalks.
- **Transit-Related Road Infrastructure Program (TRRIP)** – This is a partnership with Translink which aims to make bus stops more accessible to the public.
- **Build Canada Funding 2009/2010** – This is a cost-share program with the provincial and federal governments to implement more than \$10 million worth of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure (i.e. multi-use pathways and overpasses).

Literacy

The work of the Mayor's Task Force on Literacy and Early Childhood Development culminated in the "Learning for Life Strategy" which was approved by City Council in October 2008. The 43 recommendations cover early learning, middle years and teens, adult and workplace learning, community and interpersonal learning, and personal development/lifelong learning. Staff members from the Library, Parks, Recreation and Culture, Economic Development, Human Resources, and Social Planning have begun to address the recommendations. Several of the recommendations are being addressed in partnership with the Surrey School District. Baseline measures have been developed and are also informing the work of the Sustainability Indicators Task Force. Many of the programs that meet the objectives of the Social Plan also help to meet the challenges identified in the Strategy. The first report will go to Council early in 2011.

"A Community Literacy and Essential Skills Plan for Surrey and White Rock" resulted from the work of the Community Literacy Planning process (which was initiated by the Mayor's Task Force and funded by Literacy Now). The Plan was launched in the spring of 2009 and includes a vision for literacy and essential skills from the perspective of both the learners and the agencies in Surrey and White Rock, the challenges facing learners and literacy providers, the extensive links among the providers, and an action plan that addresses early, K-12, adult, aboriginal and multicultural learners. A community-based Implementation Team was formed in early 2009, funds were obtained from Literacy Now and from the Ministry of Education (part of the District Literacy Plan initiative mandated for all school districts in the province), a Literacy Outreach Coordinator was hired, and work is well underway on the action plan. Staff members from the Library and Parks, Recreation and Culture and Planning are involved in the work. A second year of funding is anticipated to be available to enable further literacy programming and initiatives to take place at the community level during 2010/2011.

Committees

- ***Surrey Delta Intercultural Council (SDIC)*** – Community and Leisure Services staff participate on the SDIC, a collaborative committee of community agencies working together to improve the accessibility of services for immigrants, refugees and members of cultural communities. The Committee also promotes anti-racism activities.
- ***Inter-Municipal Diversity Committee (IMDC)*** – A committee made up of Lower Mainland municipal/provincial public service providers who share ideas relating to the challenges and opportunities of growth.
- ***Diversity Action Team (DAT)*** – An internal Parks, Recreation and Culture departmental committee that collaborates on issues regarding diversity. It is comprised of representatives from Administration/Marketing, Arts Services, Community Development Services, Community and Leisure Services, Heritage Services and Parks.***Metro Vancouver Social Issues Subcommittee*** – Social Planning staff represent the City on the Social Issues Subcommittee.
- ***Vibrant Surrey*** – Vibrant Surrey's mission is to encourage and facilitate collaborative efforts to reduce poverty and issues related to poverty. The City of Surrey is a member of Vibrant Surrey.
- ***Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy (MVUAS)*** – The MVUAS was established in response to the serious social and economic conditions facing urban Aboriginal people in Metro Vancouver. The City of Surrey is represented on the MVUAS Steering Committee by a Planning staff member.
- ***Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Inter-Governmental Steering Committee*** – This Committee includes staff from the provincial and federal governments and selected Metro Vancouver municipalities. Its purpose is: to initiate relevant forums for learning and discussion; and to identify and guide the implementation of research of issues related to multiculturalism and increased diversity of the province resulting from higher levels of immigration.

Housing and Homelessness

The Social Plan identified housing and homelessness as a priority issue and noted that there were significant gaps between the supply and need for emergency shelter beds, transition and supportive housing and low-income housing in Surrey. The Social Plan also identified the need for homeless outreach services, employment programs and addictions treatment services.

Housing and Homelessness – the Federal and Provincial Context

Canada is the only G8 country without a national housing strategy. As a result, funding for social housing tends to be through ad-hoc or time-limited programs and for almost two decades there have been no funding programs for developing additional social housing for low income households. BC Housing's Provincial Homelessness Initiative has been the primary source of funding for new supportive housing developments in Surrey. The federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy has also contributed some funding towards housing and services that address homelessness in Surrey.

“Canada is the only G8 country without a national housing strategy.”

New initiatives that have been introduced in Surrey since the Social Plan was adopted include:

- BC Housing's Homeless Outreach Program was introduced in Surrey in the fall of 2006. Surrey now has six Outreach Workers who work out of three community-based agencies linking homeless people to housing and other support services.
- BC Housing's Extreme Weather Response Program was introduced in 2006 in communities where the number of homeless people exceeds the shelter beds available. The Program funds time-limited temporary shelter spaces on mats in churches and community agencies during periods when the temperature or weather conditions threaten the health and safety of homeless people. Surrey has its own Extreme Weather Coordinator who develops an Extreme Weather Plan and coordinates its implementation.
- In 2009, South Fraser Community Services Society's Gateway Shelter moved to BC Housing's new enhanced emergency shelter model that includes: open 24-7 year-round, provision of daily meals, and access to support services. Previously, the Gateway Shelter had been a "cold wet weather shelter" that was only open from November to March.
- Under the leadership of the Ministry of Housing and Social Development (MHSD), the Province initiated the Homeless Integration Project in March 2009 in five BC communities, including Surrey. Its purpose is to focus on the chronically homeless population and integrate resources across community agencies and government. A team has been set up in Surrey that includes representatives from MHSD, BC Housing, Fraser Health, agencies with homeless outreach workers, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force, RCMP and the City. In the past year, over 200 homeless people have been moved off the street or from shelters and into more permanent housing as a result of this new initiative.

Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund



The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund was established in 2007 with the allocation of over \$9.5 million in funding from the City of Surrey. The Fund is managed by the Vancity Community Foundation on behalf of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society.

An inaugural, one-time grant of \$1 million was awarded in October 2008 to Atira Women's Resource Society toward the development of Maxxine Wright Place in Surrey. Maxxine Wright Place addresses homelessness among at-risk women who are pregnant and/or parenting new babies.

In 2009, the Society initiated its Annual Grants Program with grants totalling \$245,000 for the following projects that address homelessness in Surrey:

- Kla-how-eya – Youth Transition Worker Project
- Newton Advocacy Group Society – Surrey Rent Bank
- Pacific Community Resources Society – Supported Transition Roommate Program for Youth
- Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force – Surrey Connect Day
- YWCA – Alder Gardens Supportive Housing Project for Single Mothers

Partnerships with BC Housing

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the City of Surrey and BC Housing in March 2008 to develop two supportive housing projects, was strengthened in October 2008 with the addition of a third site that is part of the Olympic Legacy Affordable Housing initiative. Under the terms of the MOU, the City has committed to long-term lease of City property at a nominal rate and to waive municipal development cost charges and fees.

- ***Creekside Health and Housing Centre*** – Creekside will accommodate a mental health and addictions clinic, a 25-mat sobering assessment centre, 32 Stabilization and Transitional Living Residence (STLR) beds and 44 supportive housing units for men and women recovering from addictions. This facility in the Surrey Memorial Hospital precinct has completed the rezoning, subdivision and issuance of building permit process.
- ***Timber Grove*** – Timber Grove is a partnership between the Province, VANOC and the City of Surrey to relocate 52 modular housing units from the Olympic Village at Whistler to a City-owned site for conversion to permanent supportive housing. Coast Mental Health will operate the housing. The apartments will provide supportive housing for seniors who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness or people with disabilities. The development application process was completed in January 2010 and construction is anticipated to begin in March.
- ***Alder Gardens*** – This YWCA project in Newton will provide 36 supportive housing units for single women with dependent children who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness.

New Social Housing in Surrey Since 2006

The table below shows the social housing projects that have either been opened or came under development in Surrey since the Social Plan was adopted in 2006.

Project	Status	Description
Phoenix Centre	Opened in 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for men recovering from addictions • 36 transition housing units and 28 Stabilization and Transitional Living Residence (STLR) beds • Employment and education programs offered on-site • Operated by Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society
All Nations Youth Safe House	Opened in 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe house for homeless youth aged 16-18 years • 6 beds • Operated by Kla-how-eya Aboriginal Centre of SACS
Cwenengitel Support House	Duplex purchased by BC Housing in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for Aboriginal men recovering from addictions • 12 beds • Operated by Cwenengitel Aboriginal Society
Ellendale Program	Care facility purchased in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for women recovering from addictions 10 Stabilization and Transitional Living Residence (STLR) beds • Operated by The Elizabeth Fry Society of Greater Vancouver
Cloverdale Shelter	Opened December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional housing for the homeless on a property leased from the City at a nominal rate • Accommodates 10 men and women • Operated by OPTIONS: Services to Communities Society

Project	Status	Description
Surrey Annex	Surrey Annex began in 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported rental housing for youth • Surrey Annex is a rented house providing accommodation for 5-6 females and a caretaker • Operated by Pacific Community Resources Society
Peterson Place	Motel purchased by BC Housing in 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for men and women with mental health and addictions issues and affordable housing for men and women who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness 18 supportive housing units for mental health clients and 38 low cost rental units for people at risk of homelessness • Operated by Fraserside Community Services Society
Maxxine Wright Centre	Under construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for at-risk women who are pregnant or parenting new babies • 12 shorter-term transitional housing sleeping units with shared cooking facilities and 24 longer-term transitional housing units • Health services and child care offered on-site • Operated by Atira Women's Resource Society
Timber Grove Apartments	Added to MOU with BC Housing in October 2008; construction to start in March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive housing for seniors who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness or people with disabilities • 52 permanent units converted from modular housing at the Olympic and Paralympic Village at Whistler and relocated to a City-owned site • Will be operated by Coast Mental Health
Creekside Health and Housing Centre	MOU between City of Surrey and BC Housing in March 2008; development application process completed December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services and housing for men and women recovering from addictions • Facility includes a 25-bed sobering assessment centre, 32 Stabilization and Transitional Living Residence (STLR) beds and 44 supportive housing units • Housing component will be operated by Phoenix Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Society
Alder Gardens	MOU between City of Surrey and BC Housing in March 2008; under development application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and supports for single women with dependent children who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness • Project with 36 apartment units will be developed on City-owned land • Operated by the YWCA Vancouver
Welcome Home	Under development application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive housing for drug and alcohol recovery based on a therapeutic community model • Proposed Phase 1 of the project would provide 36 housing units for men • Operated by the Welcome Home Society and privately funded by John Volken Foundation

Housing Action Plan

Council authorized staff to proceed with the development of a Housing Action Plan in March 2009. The initial phases of developing the Housing Action Plan have been completed. These include research and analysis of demographic and housing stock data and consultations with community stakeholders on housing needs and issues in Surrey, as well as suggested remedying actions. The background research and results of the consultation process to date are available on the City's website: www.surrey.ca/social-planning.

Committees

- **Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH)** – Planning staff represent the City of Surrey on the RSCH. The RSCH is a coalition of community and government organisations that coordinates regional research and approaches to addressing homelessness and recommends projects for federal homelessness funding.
- **Metro Vancouver TAC Housing Subcommittee** – Social Planning staff represent the City on the Housing Subcommittee.
- **Surrey Homelessness and Housing Task Force (SHHTF)** – The SHHTF works to unite the local community in order to reduce and prevent homelessness. Social Planning staff participate in the SHHTF.
- **Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society** – The Society's Board of Directors includes community members from various sectors of the community, as well as two members of City Council. Senior staff from the City Manager's Office, Legal Services, Finance and Social Planning serve as advisors to the Board.

Crime and Public Safety

The City of Surrey Crime Reduction Strategy continues to operate effectively by firstly, reducing crime and criminality through a focus on tackling the causes of crime, and secondly, delivering social well-being through crime reduction projects that enhance the quality of life.

Communities that enjoy a higher quality of life are more resistant to crime and nuisance behaviour and are less likely to be breeding grounds for offending behaviours. In a high-quality-of-life community, a spiral of confidence is generated, which opens lines of communication between neighbours and binds people to their communities.

If this sense of community is nurtured and grows, it sends a progressively stronger deterrent signal to offenders that the risk of getting caught is significant if you chose to offend in this community. The effects of community cohesion and strength in numbers are paradoxically not unlike the feeling of belonging and perception of protection that make gang membership attractive. However, the “positive control signals” that are visible in a cohesive community include block watch signs, law abiding community activity, and high levels of care and maintenance of individual residences and the wider neighbourhood.

Social well-being reduces crime and criminality. A community that enjoys and wants to maintain a high quality of life sets this as the norm or benchmark local standard, and consequently is more disposed to delivering protective factors and eradicating risk factors. This means that the support mechanisms and conditions to neutralise peer pressure, assist compliance, set rules and alert conscience and remove excuses are all present in the community. It also means that the tools that divert people from offending behaviours are employed to good effect.

Performance Indicators for Social Well-being

Social well-being in the broader community can be viewed in terms of social capital indicators. Broadly defined, social capital is the resources embedded in active connections between people. These resources may include trust, shared values, norms of behaviour and so forth, which enable people to coordinate action to achieve desired goals. Social capital can have benefits that include safety and security in the community and a sense of civic identity.

Consequently, the City has engaged in a threefold approach to strengthening protective factors and removing risk factors in crime prevention. Not only are there support programs for vulnerable and at-risk populations and City clean-up and beautification initiatives, but there are also efforts to foster community connections and engagement in enhancing neighbourhoods and public spaces. Some of the social well-being highlights from mid-2008 and 2009 are noted in the following.

“The City has engaged in a threefold approach to strengthening protective factors and removing risk factors in crime prevention.”

Support Programs to Deter Crime

The City makes efforts to socially support its citizens through their life stages, from the very young through to seniors. Self-esteem, self-sufficiency and self-determination are all aspects of individual social well-being. Many efforts to support Surrey residents have been described in earlier sections: young people under the Children and Youth section; seniors under the Age-Friendly City section; and people with addictions under the Housing section related to Creekside Health and Housing Centre.

This section highlights City partnerships in programs to prevent youth involvement in gang-related activities.

- ***WrapAround Surrey Project*** – WrapAround is a youth support project for students at risk of joining gangs or engaged in gang activity. The project was launched in January 2009 by the Surrey School District and run in partnership with the City, Surrey RCMP, the Integrated Gang Task Force and several community service organisations. Youth are referred by schools to the Wrap Team, who assess the student and prepare an individual support plan. The Wrap Team then works to ensure all elements of the plan, including support from the student’s family, school and community are implemented and maintained. 76 students are currently enrolled in the program, even though the program was designed for a capacity of 60. Twenty-two cases have been closed and there is a waitlist of 26. The Wrap Team works with partners to create recreational and pro-social opportunities for at-risk youth. These partnership programs include the Leisure Access Program with the City and the Youth Leadership Program with Surrey YMCA, both of which allow at-risk youths and families the opportunity to access recreational programming with minimal to zero financial barriers.
- ***Community Action Assessment Network (CAAN)*** – CAAN Committee members, who include the City, Surrey School District, the RCMP and the Ministry of Children and Family Development, collaborated with the WrapAround Surrey Project to develop the Surrey Risk Assessment Tool which captures non-traditional risk factors. The Surrey Risk Assessment Tool has been integrated into new Providence software used to track at-risk youth in the WrapAround program.
- ***iR3/Stay Real*** – Surrey School District’s iR3 (“Intervention, Rethink, Refocus, Reintegrate”) partnership program continued to be successful in preventing recidivism in students who have been suspended from school (note that a Stay Real Coordinator has been integrated to provide substance abuse support). There are currently over 400 students enrolled in iR3. The City has strengthened its partnership with the iR3 program, in particular with a new program location at Newton Youth Centre. City staff co-facilitated the annual Holiday Celebration in December 2009 and have worked in partnership to provide low-cost recreational opportunities for participants.

City Clean-up Programs and Civic Pride Initiatives

City efforts to elevate the appearance of neighbourhoods can be influential in engineering civic pride and identity. Providing an attractive public realm and showing that the City cares through graffiti clean-up, attractive landscaping of streets and medians, street banner programs and the like, can be the spur for improvements by local residents in the private domain.

Civic Beautification Program

- The Civic Beautification Program was developed to enhance neighbourhood aesthetics and build stronger more vibrant communities through the promotion of community spirit and civic engagement. Throughout the year City beautification initiatives engage residents with open spaces and streetscapes. Over the coming year, additional initiatives will be added to the Program as staff work towards formalizing a Civic Beautification Strategy.
- The Civic Beautification Award is intended to acknowledge outstanding contributions by Surrey residents, groups or businesses to the beautification of the Surrey. The first Civic Beautification Award was presented by Mayor and Council in October, 2009 to staff and students at Sullivan Heights Secondary School for their contribution of visual graphics. The images provided by Sullivan Heights were used in the City's Utility Cabinet Wrap initiative.

Engineering Programs

The Engineering Department's ongoing programs include:

- **Recycling and garbage pick-up programs** – The City's "Surrey Reuses" website enables residents to sell, trade or give away used or surplus items, and the Large Item Pick-up Program allows curbside pick-up and disposal of large items from single-family homes. Both programs promote responsible recycling and disposal, while maintaining clean streets.
- **Clean Sweep Week** – This annual initiative uses engineering summer students, City resources and volunteers from schools, service clubs and the broader community to remove litter and other items from streets and parks.
- **Adopt-a-Street Program** – Engineering provides recognition street signage and resources for litter collection to volunteer groups that "adopt" a specific site or section of road and pledge to keep it free of trash and debris.
- **Median beautification** – Landscaped medians are being installed as part of aerial road widening projects and in replacement sections of older hard surface medians.



Community Engagement in Neighbourhood and Public Space Enhancement

Social capital and the willingness of Surrey residents to engage in collective community enhancement activities can lead to a greater sense of ownership and more control being exercised by residents over public spaces and thus, become a disincentive for criminal behaviour. Both the Parks, Recreation and Culture and Engineering Departments have programs to enhance public spaces with resident participation.

- Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CBPP) – The CEPP is a new initiative to encourage neighbourhood-based projects and activities focused on enhancing neighbourhood aesthetics and building stronger more vibrant communities. Through the program, neighbourhood resident organizations and associations can apply for a matching grant to plan, organize and implement small neighbourhood-based projects, activities and celebrations.
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Department has on-going programs related to parks and the environment:
 - » **Releaf** – Hundreds of neighbours and community groups planted trees and shrubs in a wide variety of parks throughout Surrey.
 - » **Surrey Youth Stewardship Squad** – More than students conducted monthly natural area stewardship projects including planting, invasive species removal and park clean-ups.
 - » **Friends of the Forest** – Approximately 400 individual volunteers are enlisted are help undertake stewardship activities in park natural areas.
 - » **Ecorangers** – 30 residents volunteer to patrol parks and educate park patrons from May through to September.

- » **Surrey Natural Area Partnership (SNAP)** – Working in partnership with several local environmental stewardship groups, students are engaged in outreach programs to contact park neighbours to provide information on the values of natural area parks with the goal to engage them in positive behaviours that will reduce negative impacts to natural areas.
 - » **Evergreen** – A partnership between the City and Evergreen, a national greening organization, to engage residents in stewardship activities for the Serpentine Greenway.
 - » **Tree Stewards** – Each year, two students engage hundreds of homeowners in the maintenance of City boulevard trees throughout Surrey.
- In addition to City clean-up programs which involve Surrey residents, the following Engineering Department programs also have significant community engagement components:
 - » **Salmon Habitat Restoration Program (SHaRP)** – Since 1996, this program has engaged local youth in riparian and in-stream works on Surrey's 1,400 km of waterways. The students mitigate urban impacts on fish habitat through restoration and enhancement works, community and industrial outreach, agricultural stewardship initiatives and partnerships with local stewardship groups.
 - » **Salmon Tracks Program** – This program involves students in implementing storm drain marking in Surrey neighbourhoods in an effort to reduce pollution entering creek systems.

Looking Ahead: Priorities for 2010

Parks, Recreation and Culture

Planning began for the Kensington Prairie Community Centre in late 2009 and will continue through to the end of 2010. The renovation of Kensington Prairie School into a community centre for the growing population of the Grandview Heights community will be the first early childhood development hub for Surrey. The Kensington Prairie Committee is a collaboration of public organisations that will contribute to services with a focus on families with children 0 to 5 years. This is a unique partnership and governance model for the City of Surrey and supports the vision of the Social Well Being Plan for inclusiveness by providing and delivering services and programs for all of Surrey's residents. The Kensington Prairie Community Centre will be open in January 2011 offering a diverse range of programs and services to support families and children.

The Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre opened in the Spring of 2010 providing a full gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms, and preschool. It offers programs for people of all ages, including seniors, in the North Surrey Community. The plans for a new covered Youth Park – the first ever in Surrey – are in development and the park will be opened in Summer of 2010.

Plans and construction are in motion for the new Cloverdale Recreation Centre located at 176th and 62nd avenue. The 60,000 square foot facility will include gymnasiums, and spaces for fitness, preschool and child minding programs, seniors space, and family and youth and children space and programming. The centre will open in January of 2011.

The renovated Bear Creek Park Pavilion opened in the winter of 2010, expanding its space to accommodate more seniors in the North Surrey and Newton Communities. The renovated Newton Recreation Centre will be completed in the spring of 2010 and includes upgrades to the preschool, outdoor play area, bathrooms, and multipurpose hall. The new gymnasium and mat room will also be complete in Spring of 2010.

In response to the research on middle childhood and early years, a child care needs assessment and strategy will proceed with a planning stage in 2010. The assessment and strategy will be developed in collaboration with Social Planning and Community and Leisure Services and will align with Surrey's Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy.

The City of Surrey and Surrey School District's joint use agreement report will be completed in spring of 2010 and recommendations will be reviewed and prioritized in summer and fall of 2010.



Surrey Public Library



Planning began in 2009 for the City Centre Library and will continue through early 2010 for Surrey's largest library thanks to the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund that is funded by the three levels of government. The Library will feature a variety of comfortable spaces for people of all ages to learn and connect, along with resources in print, audiovisual and electronic formats. It will feature services and collections for new Canadians, for businesses, for all ages and interests, and will include a more integrated service for people with print disabilities.

Wireless access to the Internet was offered as a pilot at the Newton Library during 2009 and will be phased in at all Library locations except the Port Kells Library during 2010 to meet customer demand.

A second Library Grove is being planned in conjunction with the Fleetwood Community Association to give back to the environment, recognize the importance of trees to libraries, and beautify the Fleetwood community.

The Library will use the results of the latest report on school readiness (Early Development Instrument results) to focus its early literacy services in 2010 on the neighbourhoods with the highest levels of vulnerability related to language and cognitive development skills (which includes literacy skills).

The Library will host a Festival of Aboriginal Artists, in partnership with Fraser Valley Regional Library in early March. There will be cedar craft, storytelling for all ages, and dancers and artists sharing their heritage at local libraries. These activities are being made possible with funding from the Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy.

The Library's website will be enhanced with additional online learning and more opportunities for people to connect around books and reading, and resources for homeschoolers and teens.

Planning and Development

Social Planning's efforts in the coming year will focus on:

- ***Child and Youth Friendly City*** – It is anticipated that the Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy will be completed and adopted by Council in the spring 2010. Implementation of the Strategy will begin with the identification of actions that are considered priorities or recommendations for immediate action. One of these is likely to be a review of the City's planning policies and regulations related to the provision of child care.
- ***Homelessness and Housing*** – The Housing Action will be completed in 2010. Actions will be identified for immediate action, such as a review of the secondary suite issue in Surrey. Also in 2010, amendments to the Zoning By-law will be undertaken to respond to the issue of unlicensed recovery houses.
- ***Age-Friendly Surrey for Seniors*** – Representatives of the Surrey Seniors Community Planning Table appeared as a delegation at the January 25, 2010 Council meeting to request that the City declare Surrey an Age-Friendly City. In the coming year, Social Planning will work with other City departments to determine actions that the City can take to move towards being more age-friendly for seniors.

Appendix: Overview of the Social Plan

Development of the Action Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents

The Social Plan was developed in April 2004 through February 2006. It focused on five themes or social issue areas that were identified as priorities by the City of Surrey:

- » Children and Youth;
- » Community Development and Diversity;
- » Crime and Public Safety;
- » Housing and Homelessness; and
- » Substance Abuse and Addictions.

Through an extensive community consultation process, 30 priority issue elements relating to the five themes were identified. The Social Plan divides the 30 issue elements into two categories:

- Stage 1 Action Plan – five issues for which the City has primary responsibility; and
- Stage 2 Action Plan – 25 issues for which the City has limited, secondary or no responsibility.



For the issue elements for which the City has limited, secondary or no responsibility, the Social Plan identifies three primary roles that the City can play in facilitating solutions:

- » **Understanding** – the issues by acquiring and maintaining knowledge;
- » **Advocating** – to seek resolution to issues in the City of Surrey by sharing information, discussing needs, assisting in developing solutions and establishing priorities with other orders of government, funders and community stakeholders; and
- » **Supporting** – the implementation of solutions to social service issues through actions that are within the City’s mandated responsibilities. Such actions may include developing locational guidelines for social service facilities; establishing suitable zoning to accommodate needed facilities and programs; or providing seed money/resources for projects that address a social service gap.

The Social Plan was intended to be action oriented. The Social Plan includes a total of approximately 65 recommended actions to address the priority issue elements in both the short and long-term.

Priority Social Issues in the Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents

Social Issue Areas	Priority Issue Elements – City has primary responsibility	Priority Issue Elements – City has limited, secondary or no responsibility
Children and Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Child and Youth-Friendly City • Programs and Recreation for Children and Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally Appropriate Early Childhood Education/Development Programs • Affordable, Accessible Quality Licensed Childcare, Preschool Programs and Family Resource Programming • Child Poverty Alleviation • Counselling and Support Services for Families and Children with Behavioural and Mental Health and Attachment Issues
Community Development and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to Encourage Citizen Engagement with Social Issues and Social Planning Activity • Ethno and Culturally Appropriate Services, Opportunities and Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transportation and Access • Life Skills and Educational Training • Community Economic Development Initiatives • Nutrition and Food Programs
Crime and Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clean-Up Programs and Civic Pride Initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives to deal with Seniors Abuse • Initiatives to deal with Family Violence • Peer Support Programs to Deter Crime • Initiatives Targeting Gangs, Gang-Violence and Related Criminal Activity
Housing and Homelessness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Shelter Services for Youth • Emergency Shelter Services for Adults (year round); also for Aboriginal Adults • Transitional Housing Services • Supported Housing Programs • Low Income Housing for the Homeless, Families and Singles • Services Coordination Responsibilities • Outreach Programs to the Homeless, Youth Outreach and Drop-In Centre • Employment Programs as a Means to Prevent Homelessness
Substance Abuse and Addictions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Addiction Treatment for Youths • Recovery Treatment Services • Outreach and Support Programs for At-Risk and Substance Users • Alcohol and Drug Treatment for Youths • Prenatal Education and Support Programs re: Drug Use