



Child and Youth Friendly

CITY STRATEGY

November 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SURREY'S VISION OF A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY IS

- a community where children and youth are valued community members and actively contribute their time, ideas and perspectives to civic life;
- a community that promotes social connectedness, where children and youth feel safe, have freedom of movement, green space and opportunities for play and imagination; and
- a community where all children and youth are able to access enriching and engaging programs and services that promote their healthy development regardless of their family's income or background.



"What I like about my community is that everyone works together and helps each other out."

-10 year old girl

City of Surrey Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy

The future lives here in Surrey! Over 100,000 children and youth currently live in Surrey, and the numbers continue to grow. These young people come from richly diverse families and their energy and exuberance contributes to making Surrey a vibrant and socially sustainable community.

The City of Surrey cares about its youngest residents. “Creating a child and youth friendly city” was one of the priority issues identified in the Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents that was adopted by Council in 2006, and it was also a recommendation of the City’s Sustainability Charter, released in 2008. This Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy follows up on these recommendations and provides a strategic framework and specific actions that the City can take to nurture the healthy development of Surrey’s young people.

UNICEF promotes the concept of a child and youth friendly city as means of supporting children’s rights as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Cities across the globe have responded by developing child and youth friendly city policies, plans and strategies. While Surrey’s Strategy is based on the expertise and best thinking from these initiatives, this is a “made in Surrey” Strategy. It is intended to fit with the unique circumstances and needs of the City of Surrey.

Surrey’s Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy affirms the City’s commitment to making Surrey a great place for children and youth to live, learn and play. Children and youth are our most cherished asset – this Strategy will ensure that the City acts in their best interests.

GOALS

- 1 Increase opportunities for children and youth to meaningfully engage in civic issues and contribute to the community.
- 2 Create vibrant public spaces that promote social connections and play.
- 3 Increase young people’s interaction with and access to nature.
- 4 Encourage the development of neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, and that enable young people to safely navigate their community on their own.
- 5 Ensure that affordable and appropriate housing is available for families with children and vulnerable youth who are living independently.
- 6 Provide services and programs that promote the developmental needs of early years children, middle years children and youth.
- 7 Make City of Surrey programs and services inclusive and accessible to the diversity of children and youth in Surrey.
- 8 Increase access to affordable and quality child care.
- 9 Promote social cohesion by animating community spaces through events, arts and culture.
- 10 Work with other government agencies and community agencies to ensure that children and youth have access to the range of opportunities, services and programs that they need.

Key features of Surrey's Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy include:

- **Child and Youth Involvement** – Young people were actively involved in developing the Strategy. Over 1,000 children, youth and parents participated in consultations and contributed their ideas and suggestions about how to make Surrey more child and youth friendly.
- **Building on Surrey's Strengths** - The Strategy builds upon the City's current strengths and assets. There are already numerous innovative and effective programs underway that contribute to making Surrey child and youth friendly. This Strategy recommends the continuation of these efforts, along with some new practices, programs and approaches.
- **Promoting Young People's Healthy Development** – Surrey's Strategy is based on principles of healthy child and youth development. It recommends actions that will provide young people with access to the experiences and opportunities that they need in order to thrive. This includes youngsters from diverse backgrounds and with special needs where culturally-sensitive or targeted approaches may be required. The Strategy recognizes the developmental stages of life and identifies actions that are specific to supporting early years, middle years and youth.
- **Focus on Municipal Action** – Creating a child and youth friendly city is a corporate priority. Staff from multiple city departments have been involved in crafting the Strategy's recommendations and will share responsibility for its implementation. While other partners, including the school district, health authority, provincial ministries and community agencies, play a critical role in supporting the development of children and youth, this Strategy is intended to guide the City's decisions and actions. It focuses primarily on actions that the City can take within its areas of responsibility to make a positive difference in the lives of youngsters in Surrey.

FAST FACTS

- Over 107,000 Surrey residents are under 19 years, representing 27% of the City's population. ^[1]
- Surrey School District is the largest district in BC and one of the fastest growing education systems in Canada. ^[2]
- Almost one in four Surrey children under the age of 6 live in poverty. ^[1]
- 28% of kindergarten students in Surrey were assessed as being vulnerable on at least one scale of development. ^[3]
- About half of Government Assisted Refugees who arrived in Surrey between 2004 and 2008 were under the age of 19. ^[4]
- Over 44% of students attending Surrey schools are from households in which English is not a first language, and more than 15,000 students are provided with ESL services. [2]
- About 6,500 students with special needs attend Surrey schools. ^[2]
- Surrey School District has over 3,000 Aboriginal students, representing about 5% of all students. ^[2]
- Over 80% of Surrey students graduate within six years of beginning grade 8. Only 42% of Aboriginal students have this high school completion rate.
- An estimated 80% of volunteers in City of Surrey programs and events are under the age of 19.

^[1] 2006 Census Canada

^[2] Achievement Contract, School District 36, July 2010

^[3] Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC

^[4] Immigrant Services Society of BC, RAP Statistics

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY?

UNICEF defines a Child Friendly City as a “local system of good governance committed to fulfilling children’s rights ... it is a city where the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of public policy, programs and decisions. It is, as a result, a city that is fit for all”.

Canada is a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that was adopted in 1989. UNICEF promotes the concept of a child and youth friendly city as means of supporting the rights enshrined in the Convention. According to UNICEF, a child and youth friendly city guarantees the right of all young citizens to:

- Influence decisions about their city
- Express their opinion on the city they want
- Participate in family, community and social life
- Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability
- Receive basic services such as health care, education and shelter
- Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation
- Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse
- Walk safely in the streets on their own
- Meet friends and play
- Have green spaces for plants and animals
- Live in an unpolluted environment
- Participate in cultural and social events

UNICEF, 2004



“I love it here in Surrey because there is no war, there are lots of trees and the government gives us free healthcare.”

-8 year old boy

Supporting Healthy Child and Youth Development

Early Years

It is the quality of the environment that matters most for young children's development. Nurturing environments include those which:

- Encourage exploration
- Provide mentoring opportunities for basic skill development
- Guide and extend development of new skills
- Protect against inappropriate discipline
- Celebrate developmental advances
- Provide equity in treatment
- Provide a rich and responsive language environment

The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at UBC conducts research that measures the physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development of children entering kindergarten in British Columbia. It has found that there are large disparities in children's development across the Province and from one neighbourhood to another. According to HELP, parents, families, neighbourhoods, schools, communities, and all three levels of government can contribute to redressing these inequities by ensuring that all children have access to conditions that support healthy development.

Taken from "Creating Communities for Young Children" by the Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC

Research shows that the early years of a child's life (up to age 6) play a crucial role far beyond childhood. Children who are not given access to environments that nurture their development in the early years are more likely to face lifelong challenges in their health and well-being.



Middle Years

A UBC/ United Way of the Lower Mainland study examined the after-school lives of middle years children in the Lower Mainland. Its four key findings were:

- Children benefit significantly from participating in structured activities during the after school hours.
- Children who engage in excessive use of technology during the after school hours consistently report being less happy and competent than their peers.
- Children's connections to their parents are central to their development. Children entering adolescence still function best if they experience high parent connectedness.
- Relationships with peers and adults in the school and community are important in fostering children's social and emotional competence.
- The vast majority of children said that during the after-school hours they wanted to be engaged in activities that build their competence, physical health and connectedness.

Taken from "Middle Childhood Inside and Out" by UBC and the United Way of the Lower Mainland



During middle childhood (ages 6 to 12 years) youngsters are entering school, making new friends and beginning to engage with the community as an individual. Out of home environments have an increasing influence on their development during this stage of life.

Youth

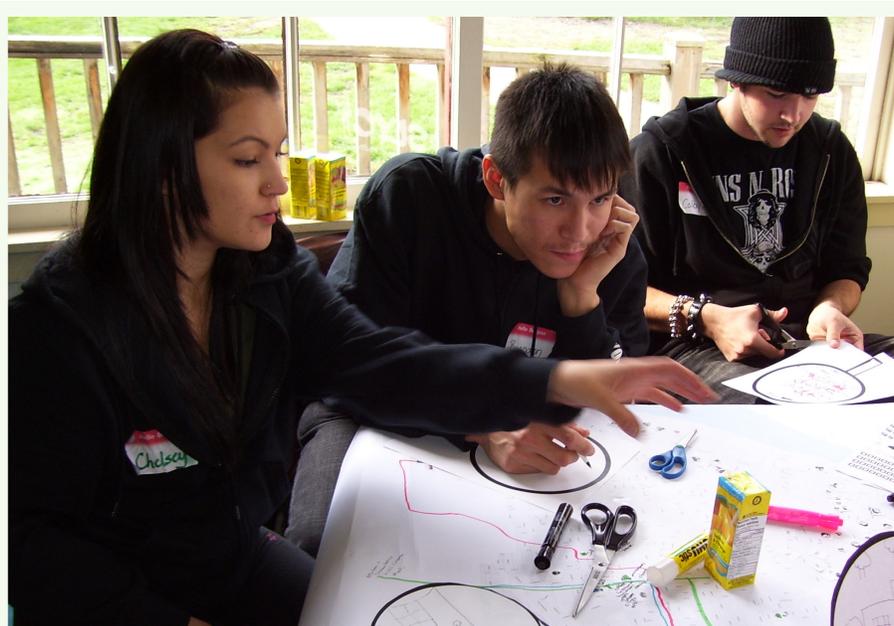
Historically, research has viewed adolescents in terms of deficits or what they lacked when compared to mature adults. This problem-focussed perspective coloured how not only researchers, but also how teachers, parents, youth workers, and public policy makers looked at this stage of human development.

Positive youth development identifies “Five C’s” or attributes that support a youth’s healthy transition to adulthood. These are:

- Competence: Positive view of one’s actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, health, and vocational
- Character: Respect for societal and cultural norms, integrity and a sense of right and wrong
- Connection: Positive bonds with people and institutions
- Confidence: Sense of overall positive self-worth and self efficacy
- Caring/Compassion: A sense of sympathy, empathy, and social justice

Studies show that the contexts in which young people live, learn and play each have resources to promote positive youth development.

Taken from “The Positive Development of Youth” by Lerner, Lerner and Phelps



In the early 1990s, a new perspective emerged, that of positive youth development. Positive youth development views youth not as problems to be solved, but rather as assets to be developed.



About this Strategy

This section describes how the Strategy document is organized.

Framework

Surrey's Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy is built on the following framework.

Three subject areas:

- Child and youth engagement
- Physical environment
- Civic services

Three age groups:

- Early years children (0-5 years)
- Middle years children (6-12 years)
- Youth (13+ years)

Themes

Under the three subject areas – child and youth engagement, physical environment, and civic services – the Strategy identifies a total of ten theme areas. For each of the theme areas, the following information is provided:

Goal

Each of the ten theme areas has a goal that articulates how the theme will aim to contribute to creating a child and youth friendly city.

Why It Matters?

A brief quotation or reference to the literature or consultation feedback is provided to illustrate why the theme area is an important component of a child and youth friendly city. Most of the quotes are taken from research studies which are referenced in Appendix B.

What did young people and adults in Surrey say?

A few highlights or key feedback received from the consultations with children, youth, parents, community stakeholders and City staff is noted.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

Examples of some current City of Surrey programs or initiatives that are contributing to making Surrey a child and youth friendly city are provided.

Action Points

Some action points or recommendations relate to the continuation or enhancement of existing initiatives that are considered particularly effective or promising approaches. Other recommendations represent new projects or approaches. Some actions can be achieved in the next five years; others will require a longer-time frame.

Each action point identifies a “target age ” – either early childhood (E), middle childhood (M), youth (Y) or all ages (EMY).

The “implementation” column identifies departments that will likely play a key role in implementing the recommendation. A blank column indicates that the implementation is not department-specific.

In the implementation column City departments are referred to as:

Arts	Arts Division (Parks, Recreation and Culture Department)
CRS	Community & Recreation Services Division (Parks, Recreation and Culture Department)
CR	Crime Reduction
Eng	Engineering Department
HR	Human Resources
Parks	Parks Division (Parks, Recreation and Culture Department)
Plan	Planning and Development Department
SPL	Surrey Public Library

Notes:

- In this document, the term “young people” is used to refer to children and youth.
- Quotes from young people cited in this report are from children and youth who participated in the Strategy consultations.



“THE STATE OF
THE YOUNG IN
ANY CITY IS
THE LITMUS
TEST FOR THE
CITY’S LEVEL OF
SUSTAINABILITY
AND VIBRANCY.”

ANNA KAJUMULO TIBAIJUKA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UN HABITAT

ENGAGEMENT

SURREY'S VISION OF A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY IS

A community where children and youth are valued community members and actively contribute their time, ideas and perspectives to civic life.

IN THIS SECTION

1 Participation

- 1.1 Youth Committees and Engagement
- 1.2 Consultation
- 1.3 Contribution to Community
- 1.4 Building Citizens



"When kids are expected to be a part of their community, they take part. When expected to goof off, they will."

-Surrey Youth

1 | PARTICIPATION



TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO MEANINGFULLY ENGAGE IN CIVIC ISSUES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY

Why It Matters? -----

“Engagement in the community can be pivotal in a young person’s life. The community influences the development of young people, and in turn the actions of young people have an impact on their community.” *Lerner, Alberts, Jelacic, & Smith, 2006*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say? -----

Engagement

- Young people want the City to hear their opinions and ideas.
- Youth want to be aware of what is happening in their community.
- It is important to engage all young people including those who have been marginalized or excluded in the past.
- Youth need capacity building opportunities and skill training to develop their leadership potential.

Giving Back

- Youth and middle years aged children said that they want opportunities to contribute to their community in meaningful ways.
- Youth expressed a desire to work with their peers on projects that interest them.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The City supports a number of youth councils or groups in various City departments (Planning and Development, Parks, Recreation & Culture, Engineering, and Surrey Public Library). The roles of these groups include: acting as advisors, implementing projects, and organizing events.
- New staff positions have been created in Community Development Services, Social Planning, Engineering, Parks, and Surrey Public Library that are responsible for facilitating child and youth engagement.
- The City has had some experience with integrating youth perspectives into planning processes. Examples include youth engagement the City Centre Plan Update and the planning of a youth lounge in the North Surrey Recreation Centre.
- The City of Surrey provides a range of opportunities for young people to volunteer. Volunteer opportunities include: environmental stewardship, assisting at large City-run events and festivals, supporting recreation activities, in cultural programs, through library services, and membership on youth councils.
- Community Development Services has developed a leadership program for youth which combines training activities, mentorship by City staff and the opportunity for youth to lead recreation programs.

ACTION POINTS

1.1 Youth Committees and Engagement

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
1.1a	Increase coordination and collaboration among City of Surrey youth groups/committees. Link youth committees through projects, training opportunities and celebrations, and by sharing information about available opportunities. Also increase coordination and collaboration between the City's youth committees and community-based youth committees.	Y	*
1.1b	Provide youth leaders with opportunities to organize child and youth events and activities at both the City-wide and town centre level.	Y	*
1.1c	Develop resources and provide training on youth engagement for City staff involved in supporting the City's youth groups/committees.	MY	Plan CRS
1.1d	Explore creating a small grants program, or designating funds in an existing City grants program, specifically for youth groups and youth-run projects.	Y	* Finance
1.1e	Develop training workshops and resources for the City's youth groups/committees and implement a skill development program for these groups/committees.	Y	Plan CRS
1.1f	Include youth as members on adult-oriented City committees where there is interest, and provide the youth with appropriate support and guidance.	Y	
1.1g	Seek opportunities to employ young people to implement specific elements of the Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy.	Y	

**Departments, including the Library, that have youth groups/committees or are involved in youth engagement activities.*

1.2 Consultation

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
1.2a	Include a consultation process with children and youth in the Terms of Reference for planning processes where the plan or project will have an impact on children and youth.	MY	Plan Parks Eng
1.2b	Develop a "Toolkit of Consultation Activities" that can be used by youth and/or City staff for conducting consultations with young people.	MY	Plan CRS

1.3 Contribution to Community

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
1.3a	Develop volunteer opportunities that are appropriate for children under the age of 14.	M	CRS Parks Eng SPL
1.3b	Develop a program to support young people with disabilities to take part in volunteer opportunities offered by the City of Surrey.	Y	CRS
1.3c	Review the City's volunteer recruitment process for youth volunteers to reduce unnecessary barriers, especially for youth who may be excluded.	Y	CRS HR
1.3d	Amend the online application for jobs in the City of Surrey so that youth can indicate previous volunteer experience that they have had with the City of Surrey.	Y	HR
1.3e	Provide opportunities and support for youth with disabilities to work for the City of Surrey.	Y	HR
1.3f	Engage youth in the City of Surrey's crime reduction programs.	Y	CR

1.4 Building Citizens

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
1.4a	Build citizenship by organizing events or activities to educate youth about the City of Surrey.	Y	Plan CRS
1.4b	Create a "Community Development and City Planning Learning Resource Kit" to educate middle years children about City building.	M	SPL Plan

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

SURREY'S VISION OF A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY IS

A community that promotes social connectedness, where children and youth feel safe, have freedom of movement, green space and opportunities for play and imagination.

IN THIS SECTION

2 Public Space

- 2.1 Gathering Places
- 2.2 Play Opportunities

3 Access to Nature

- 3.1 Experiencing Nature

4 Walkable and Accessible Neighbourhoods

- 4.1 Neighbourhood Design
- 4.2 Walking and Cycling
- 4.3 Public Transit

5 Housing

- 5.1 Family-Friendly and Youth Housing



"Surrey has lots of trees and places to explore"

-12 year old girl

2 | PUBLIC SPACE

GOAL

TO CREATE VIBRANT PUBLIC SPACES THAT PROMOTE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND PLAY.

Why it Matters?

“Children’s social and emotional development is enhanced in cities that provide a meaningful physical environment that addresses them, that stimulates their imagination and fantasy, and that provides a legible environment for them to explore and make their own.” *Lennard and Crowhurst Lennard, 2000*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Parks

- Surrey’s parks are highly valued and contribute to making Surrey a good place for children and youth.
- Features such as covered areas and washrooms, make parks more accessible to families.

Safety

- Young people feel safe in public spaces that are well-maintained, clean, and free of dangerous traffic.
- The presence of people in public spaces contributes to young peoples’ feelings of safety and their sense of connectedness to their neighbourhoods.

Gathering Places

- Making areas frequented by people more welcoming should be the priority.
- Communities need more non-programmed public spaces and open places to play, sit and gather.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The City has a large number of parks and natural areas and has made investments in play infrastructure such as playgrounds and bike parks.
- The City of Surrey recently redesigned Holland Park as an urban park to facilitate hosting City-wide festivals and events.
- The City has introduced a Beautification Program to enhance neighbourhood aesthetics and build more vibrant communities.
- The Public Art Program contributes to creating vibrant public spaces.
- Neighbourhood Concept Plans incorporate “place-making’ principles into the design of new neighbourhoods.

ACTION POINTS

2.1 Gathering Places

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
2.1a	Support the development of mini-parks and mini-plazas as outdoor gathering spaces in urban neighbourhoods.	EMY	Plan Parks
2.1b	Provide features in parks that will promote use by families with children.	EM	Parks
2.1c	In and around civic facilities, include publicly accessible seating and gathering areas.	EMY	Plan Parks
2.1d	Include design guidelines in NCPs and in Development Permit Area Guidelines for public gathering places that include Child and Youth Friendly design elements.	EMY	Plan

2.2 Play Opportunities

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
2.2a	In and around civic facilities, incorporate interactive and engaging features for children and youth.	EM	Plan Parks
2.2b	In public spaces, incorporate street furniture and other design elements that facilitate unstructured play (eg. coloured sidewalk, benches etc.).	EM	Plan Eng
2.2c	Expand the public art program to include art that anticipates young audiences and promotes interaction and play.	EM	Arts
2.2d	In designated City play areas, provide for a variety of forms of structured and unstructured play.	EM	Parks

3 | ACCESS TO NATURE

GOAL

TO INCREASE YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTERACTION WITH AND ACCESS TO NATURE.

Why it Matters?

"Children should be able to experience the pleasures of finding bugs, picking leaves, smelling flowers, collecting things and so on...Through such contact with nature they may develop, among other things, an understanding of basic ecological principles." *Cooper and Sarkissian, 1986*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

The environment

- The natural environment and environmental sustainability are important to young people.
- The variety of natural spaces in Surrey contribute to making it child and youth friendly.
- Nature provides play opportunities that young people can't find in conventional play areas.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The City has many natural features, including forests, streams, rivers and beaches, and a wide variety of natural parks, trails and greenway systems.
- The City provides a range of programs that enable children and youth to experience and learn about nature, as well as take part in environmental stewardship activities such as Nature Matters.

ACTION POINTS

3.1 Experiencing Nature

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
3.1a	Develop policies that will provide additional natural or unstructured play areas in neighbourhood and destination parks by retaining natural elements in new parks and by "roughing up" or "naturalizing" portions of existing parks.	EM	Parks
3.1b	Where appropriate, enable the construction of paths adjacent to the riparian area setback.	EMY	Parks Plan
3.1c	Identify some natural areas in which children and youth can play and explore (eg. play in streams, build forts etc.).	EMY	Parks

4 | WALKABLE AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

GOAL

TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEIGHBOURHOODS THAT ARE COMPACT AND WALKABLE, AND THAT ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE TO SAFELY NAVIGATE THEIR COMMUNITY ON THEIR OWN.

Why it Matters?

"The freedom to explore local neighbourhoods is probably the key ingredient in children developing a feeling that they belong to a neighbourhood, a place. It not only gives them an opportunity to develop relationships with people of all ages who live in their neighbourhood, it gives them an opportunity to develop a relationship with the placeness of their physical environment." *Engwicht, 1992*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Neighbourhoods

- Young peoples' mobility and independence is affected by their perceptions, and their parents' perceptions, of neighbourhood safety.
- Both parents and youth prefer living in areas where they have places to go in their neighbourhood or can access amenities within their neighbourhood.

Walking and Cycling

- Young people feel unsafe cycling on roads and identified a need for more bike lanes and bike routes that are physically separated from traffic.
- Young people are worried about their bicycles being stolen.
- Getting to school in the morning and crossing busy roads were perceived as dangerous.

Transit

- Transit service is not frequent enough to make it convenient.
- There is a need for rapid transit that moves in the east to west direction across the City.
- Transit waiting areas should be cleaner and safer.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The majority of families in Surrey have a school and a park within walking distance of their home that offer the potential to be developed into “neighbourhood places” and social gathering areas.
- Surrey’s Town Centres and City Centre are becoming increasingly compact and walkable.
- The Engineering Department is currently completing the development of a Walking Plan and Cycling Plan.
- The Engineering Department has conducted a traffic and operations review around all elementary and secondary school in Surrey as part of the Safe & Active Schools Programme. A series of short, intermediate and long term recommendations were made for each school and many have already started to be implemented.
- Also as part of the Safe & Active Schools Programme, the Engineering Department has started to develop School Travel Plans. Three schools were piloted in 2009/2010, and the goal is to expand the program every year. The School Travel Plan involves a series of counts, surveys and meetings with stakeholders to promote walking and cycling through school programs and engineering improvements.
- Surrey has been retrofitting transit stops. 70% of transit stops in Surrey are now accessible to strollers and wheelchairs.



“I think that more public gardens and pathways to walk would definitely help our community and let people walk to more destinations in a safer manner.”

-Youth

ACTION POINTS

4.1 Neighbourhood Design

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
4.1a	Improve connectivity and walkability of neighbourhoods through the provision of a more fine-grain street network with shorter blocks.	EMY	Plan Eng
4.1b	Design neighbourhoods so schools and neighbourhood parks are safely accessible by foot and bicycle, and can be central gathering places in the community.	EMY	Plan Eng Parks
4.1c	Encourage the development of more compact and mixed-use neighbourhoods to improve access to services.	EMY	Plan
4.1d	Include way-finding features to encourage safe and easy travel for children and youth (e.g., signage, public art, lighting).	MY	Eng
4.1e	Ensure safety of neighbourhoods at all times of the day and night through the application of CPTED principles.	EMY	Plan

4.2 Walking and Cycling

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
4.2a	Require the provision of more bike racks for locking bikes in public places.	MY	Eng Plan
4.2b	Follow-up on the Safe and Active Schools Initiative's review of streets and sidewalks around schools by making recommended improvements.	EMY	Eng
4.2c	Continue to expand Surrey's cycling network by providing more bike lanes.	EMY	Eng
4.2d	Continue to expand Surrey's pedestrian network by providing sidewalks.	EMY	Eng
4.2e	Continue to develop Surrey's greenway system.	EMY	Parks Eng

4.3 Public Transit

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
4.3a	Continue to advocate to TransLink for increased public-transit service.	EMY	Plan Eng
4.3b	Ensure transit hubs are attractive, safe and accessible.	EMY	Eng Parks
4.3c	Continue to provide transit stops that are accessible to strollers and wheelchairs.	EMY	Eng
4.3d	Encourage TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus Company to include child and youth consultations in future transportation planning processes in Surrey.	EMY	Eng

5 | HOUSING

GOAL

AFFORDABLE AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING IS AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE YOUTH WHO ARE LIVING INDEPENDENTLY.

Why it Matters?

“Children’s needs are in many ways similar to those other groups such as seniors, mothers with strollers and the physically challenged. Building housing units that are child-friendly in terms of accessible elevators and washrooms, wider interior doorways and corridors, extra storage, etc, makes them more accessible for all groups” *Yates, 1995*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Housing

- Parents identified the availability of affordable and family-friendly housing as one of Surrey’s strengths.
- There are concerns about housing becoming unaffordable for families with children.
- Having housing that is close to amenities and services is important to parents.
- The lack of “family-friendly” housing (eg. 2 and 3 bedroom units) in new high rise towers in the City Centre was identified as a potential impediment to creating a diverse downtown community.
- There is a lack of housing for vulnerable youth, especially for those transitioning out of government care.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- Over the past decade, areas in Surrey have been developed that include a mix of housing types, not just single family houses.
- The City has recently contributed land and waived all municipal fees and charges for three supportive social housing projects, one of which is the YWCA’s Alder Gardens for low income single mothers with children.
- The Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society awarded \$1million toward the development of Maxxine Wright – a project that includes short and longer-term transitional housing, along with health and child care services, for high-risk pregnant women and women with babies.

ACTION POINTS

5.1 Family-Friendly and Youth Housing

	ACTIONS	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
5.1a	Adopt a Housing Action Plan that will identify municipal actions to achieve an adequate supply of housing to meet the full range of incomes and needs in Surrey, including families with children.	EMY	Plan
5.1b	In Surrey City Centre and Town Centres, promote family friendly housing through the development of policies that will support a mix of unit sizes (eg. 2 and 3 bedroom units) in multi-family housing projects.	EMY	Plan
5.1c	Include “a mix of unit sizes” on the Sustainable Development Checklist for new housing projects so that projects that have the potential to house families with children are identified as contributing to the City’s social sustainability goals.	EMY	Plan
5.1d	Incorporate development and design guidelines for family friendly housing into the OCP and planning documents.	EMY	Plan
5.1e	Develop design guidelines for outdoor play areas in multi-family developments.	EM	Plan
5.1f	Consider the housing needs of vulnerable youth, especially those transitioning from government care, in future City actions related to the provision of supportive housing.	Y	Plan



I think that this is a good community because my neighbourhood is clean and I feel safe, also the library is really close by."

-Youth

CIVIC SERVICES

SURREY'S VISION OF A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY IS

All children and youth are able to access enriching and engaging programs and services that promote their healthy development regardless of their family's income or background.

IN THIS SECTION

6 Program Design

- 6.1 All-Ages Programming
- 6.2 Early Years Programming (0-5)
- 6.3 Middle Years Programming (6-12)
- 6.4 Youth Programming (13+)

7 Program Delivery

- 7.1 Affordable Services
- 7.2 Inclusive Services for Diverse Populations
- 7.3 Services in Neighbourhoods
- 7.4 Marketing and Communication
- 7.5 Interdepartmental Collaboration

8 Child Care

- 8.1 Affordable and Quality Child Care and After School Care

9 Building Social Connections

- 9.1 Activities to Build Social Connections

10 Community Partnerships

- 10.1 Collaboration on Projects and Services
- 10.2 Responding to Special Needs
- 10.3 Recognition of Community Contributions that Create a Child and Youth Friendly City



6 | PROGRAM DESIGN

GOAL

TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF EARLY YEARS CHILDREN, MIDDLE YEARS CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

Why it Matters?

"It is the quality of the environment that matters most for young children's development". *Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC, 2009*

"(Middle years) Kids crave to be active, connected and competent". *UBC and the United Way of the Lower Mainland, 2007*

"The "Big Three" features of effective youth-serving programs are: Positive and sustained relationships between youth and adults, activities that build important life skills, and opportunities for children to use these life skills as both participants and as leaders in valued community activities." *Lerner, Lerner and Phelps, 2008*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Early years programs

- There are a wide variety of programs for early years children offered through the City of Surrey, many of which are affordable.
- Parents appreciate the skills of the City's early childhood program instructors.
- Parents like programs that involve both them and their early years children.
- Parents want opportunities to try out new programs or activities without making a large commitment of time or money.

Middle years programs

- Middle years children want to take part in a variety of activities. Having opportunities to make friends is important to this age group.
- Positive role models and connections with supportive adults are important for middle years children.

Youth programs

- There are many opportunities for youth to participate in sports and other physical activities.
- Youth would like a greater variety or range of activities, especially artistic and creative activities.
- Youth want safe places to gather and socialize.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

Early years children:

- The Library offers early literacy programs to thousands of children, ranging from babytimes to pre-school storytimes, as well as early literacy training for parents and childcare providers.
- Programs for early years children are delivered by instructors trained in early childhood education.
- In partnership with community agencies, the City is developing the former Kensington Prairie Elementary School as an early years services hub.
- Surrey provides city-wide events for children such as Surrey Children's Festival and the Early Years Festival.

Middle years children:

- Recreation staff that provide programs for middle years children receive "High Five" training to promote excellence in children's recreation programming.
- The City hosts an annual Kids Conference for middle years aged children as an opportunity for children to take part in a variety of new experiences.
- Surrey Public Library's Summer Reading Club and Reading Link Challenge are two very popular programs for middle years aged children.
- Family Day at the Surrey Art Gallery provides an opportunity for children and families to take part in art activities together.

Youth:

- Community & Recreation Services offers youth a variety of programs and drop-in opportunities in every town centre.
- Increased programming at the Library includes RockBand gaming tournaments and the Teen Video contest (creating movie trailers for books).
- The City hosts a number of special youth events such as the annual Youth Fest and Youth Week.
- The community contributions and achievements of youth are celebrated through the Youth Recognition Awards.

ACTION POINTS

6.1 All-Ages Programming

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
6.1a	Explore shared staff training opportunities between City departments that provide services to children and youth.	EMY	*
6.1b	Create new exhibition opportunities to display art pieces that are created by children and youth.	EMY	Arts CRS Parks
6.1c	Create a toolkit that helps to monitor and assess how recreation programs promote healthy child and youth development.	EMY	CRS
6.1d	Support inter-generational activities.	EMY	*
6.1e	Promote safe transportation to and from school by expanding the School Travel Planning Initiative to more schools.	MY	Eng
6.1f	Implement programs and initiatives that encourage walking, cycling and transit use by children and youth.	EMY	CRS Eng

**Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth*

6.2 Early Years Programming (0-5 years)

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
6.2a	Develop an Early Years Strategy to guide the provision of Community & Recreation Services for this age group.	E	SPL CRS

6.3 Middle Years Programming (6-12 years)

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
6.3a	Develop a Middle Years Strategy to guide the provision of Community & Recreation Services for this age group.	M	SPL CRS
6.3b	Create a Kids Recognition Award similar to the Youth Recognition Awards.	M	CRS

6.4 Youth Programming (13+ years)

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
6.4a	Undertake a mapping exercise of existing positive community activities available for youth to identify gaps.	Y	SPL CRS
6.4b	Develop a Youth Strategy to guide the provision of positive community activities for youth.	Y	CRS SPL
6.4c	Increase opportunities for youth to participate in arts and culture activities by implementing the Youth Arts Strategy.	Y	Arts CRS SPL
6.4d	Pilot opportunities for youth to develop and run their own projects and events at City facilities with staff support.	Y	CRS
6.4e	Review the current use of existing youth program space, and develop recommendations to increase participation of youth and use of the space.	Y	CRS
6.4f	Provide intergenerational public gathering places in recreation centres and libraries to provide safe places for young people to socialize.	Y	CRS SPL
6.4g	Add an award for contribution to the arts community to the Youth Recognition Awards.	Y	CRS



"I want more people exercising and making new friends."

-Middle years aged girl

7 | PROGRAM DELIVERY



TO MAKE CITY OF SURREY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO THE DIVERSITY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN SURREY.

Why It Matters? -----

"Social inclusion might also be seen as the process through which the skills, talents, and capacities of children are developed and enhanced so that all are given the opportunity to realize their full potential, and to fully participate in the social and economic mainstream." *Peter Donnelly, 2002*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say? -----

Location

- Parents, children and youth all spoke of the importance of programs being located in close proximity to where they live.

Affordability

- Some parents of early years children noted that children's programs provided by the City were reasonable in price, while others felt that further subsidies were needed.
- Youth said that cost plays a significant role in determining whether they are able to take part in activities.

Communication

- Advertising and communication about City programming to the public should be improved.
- Youth hear about opportunities mainly through the internet and word of mouth. A website dedicated specifically to opportunities for young people and families would be useful.
- Inter-departmental collaboration on child and youth issues needs to be strengthened.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The “Social Well Being Plan” budget has created new programs for young people to experience quality recreation opportunities.
- The Leisure Access Program (LAP) and free youth memberships enable low income families to access recreation opportunities.
- The Community Schools Partnership is using school facilities to provide programs at the neighbourhood level which makes them more accessible to young people and families.
- The Greenbrook Kids Clubhouse is an example of a unique partnership that provides recreation programs to children in a social housing complex.
- The City recently underwent a process of licensing preschool programs in City facilities, schools and other facilities, which has made them eligible for parents to apply for provincial subsidies.

ACTION POINTS

7.1 Affordable Services

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
7.1a	Continue to make available and to promote the Leisure Access Pass to enable low-income children, youth and families to participate in recreation programs.	EMY	CRS
7.1b	Develop a process to enable youth to apply for the Leisure Access Pass for themselves.	Y	CRS

7.2 Inclusive Services for Diverse Populations

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
7.2a	Develop activities and programs that will ensure that civic facilities and services are welcoming and inclusive of diverse children, youth and families.	EMY	*
7.2b	Develop programs and services that are targeted to young people from diverse backgrounds or special population groups.	EMY	*

**Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth*

7.3 Services in Neighbourhoods

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
7.3a	Continue to develop and expand the Community-Schools Partnership so that the schools become neighbourhood hubs.	EMY	CRS
7.3b	Explore opportunities for delivering services in other places within neighbourhoods where City physical infrastructure is not present.	EMY	CRS SPL
7.3c	Develop strategies and resources to enable more outreach and delivery of services to schools.	EMY	*

*Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth

7.4 Marketing and Communication

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
7.4a	Develop a webpage on the City website that includes relevant City of Surrey information for families with children.	EM	*
7.4b	Develop a webpage on the City website that includes relevant youth information from a variety of departments.	Y	*
7.4c	Develop staff guidelines and how-to guides for effective use of the internet and social media for marketing to youth.	Y	*

*Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth

7.5 Interdepartmental Collaboration

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
7.5a	Increase inter-departmental communication with respect to programs and opportunities for young people.	EMY	*
7.5b	Explore opportunities for interdepartmental collaboration in programming to increase learning and positive outcomes for participants.	EMY	*

*Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth

“I would like you to be more accepting of us, people with disabilities and to ask us what we think! We have voices too. We have the right of speech as well. I would feel a lot safer if I was treated with a lot more respect and kindness.”

-Youth

8 | CHILD CARE

GOAL

TO INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND QUALITY CHILD CARE.

Why it Matters?

“High-quality early childhood education produces long-term positive outcomes and cost-savings that include improved school performance, reduced special education placement, lower school dropout rates, and increased lifelong learning potential. Not only does high-quality early childhood education make a difference for children, it matters to their employed parents. Employers increasingly find that the availability of good early childhood programs is critical to the recruitment and retention of parent employees.” *Business Roundtable/Corporate Voices for Working Families Joint Statement, 2003*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Child Care in Surrey

- The lack of affordable and quality child care is a concern for parents.
- The number of before and after school programs in Surrey is insufficient for the demand.
- The hours of child care don't always meet the scheduling needs of parents.

ACTION POINTS

8.1 Affordable and Quality Child Care and After School Care

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
8.1a	Review and update planning policies and regulations related to child care facilities to ensure that municipal regulation does not create unnecessary barriers.	EM	Plan
8.1b	Work in partnership with the Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care to undertake a Child Care Needs Assessment and develop a Child Care Strategy that includes child care for early years and after school care for middle years children.	EM	CRS Plan
8.1c	Expand licensed before and after school programs offered by the City to enable eligible parents to apply for provincial subsidies.	M	CRS
8.1d	Advocate to other levels of government for increased financial support for affordable and quality child care.	EM	*

*City of Surrey

9 | BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



TO PROMOTE SOCIAL COHESION BY ANIMATING COMMUNITY SPACES THROUGH EVENTS, ARTS AND CULTURE.

Why it Matters?

"Having more people out makes it safer. Have more social activities that get everyone involved. To make Surrey a better place, make it friendlier and make places safer." *Youth Participant - Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy consultations*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Community Activity

- Public events are important to help bring people and communities together.
- The presence of people in public spaces and having connections to their neighbourhood makes young people feel safe.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The City of Surrey has a track record for hosting excellent family-friendly events that draw in families from Surrey and neighbouring municipalities.
- Space has been provided in Holland Park for the Friends of Holland Park that can be used to run activities and animate the space .
- The City's Beautification Program has introduced a new grants program to support neighbourhood groups in undertaking local beautification projects and celebrations.

ACTION POINTS

9.1 Activities to Build Social Connections

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
9.1a	Continue to host community-wide festivals that include activities or programming for children and youth. Build Surrey's reputation for hosting family-friendly events.	EMY	Parks
9.1b	Develop and implement community block party kits.	EMY	CRS Parks
9.1c	Develop training and opportunities for youth skilled in performance and celebration arts to perform in public venues or at community events.	Y	Arts CRS
9.1d	Provide opportunities in civic facilities and parks for community groups to animate and program community spaces.	EMY	Parks CRS
9.1e	Pilot "play days" that transform public spaces into temporary play areas for children.	EM	CRS Parks



"Everywhere we go there are lots of children. It's a family-oriented city. Children are welcomed everywhere."

-Parent of a 2 year old

10 | COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL

TO WORK WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN AND YOUTH HAVE ACCESS TO THE RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS THAT THEY NEED.

Why it Matters?

“Partnerships between municipalities and other community organizations are important because the lives of children and youth do not fit perfectly into any one stakeholder’s sphere of influence. Young people’s interests cross departmental, academic, professional, public, private and agency boundaries.” *Claire Freeman, in Creating Child Friendly Cities, 2006*

What did Young People and Adults in Surrey Say?

Collaboration with agencies

- The City of Surrey and service agencies play different roles in contributing to young people’s development so collaboration is important.
- The City has a good history of partnership and a culture of collaboration.
- There are coalitions of community stakeholders with an interest in early childhood and middle childhood development (Make Children First and Middle Childhood Matters) which provide a venue for community stakeholders to come together on children’s issues. There is no similar table that brings together stakeholders with an interest in positive youth development.

City of Surrey Strengths and Assets

- The City is one of the Early Childhood Partners, along with the School District, Ministry of Children and Family Development- Fraser Region, United Way and Fraser Health. The Partners support the Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care Surrey/White Rock which offers research, planning, public awareness, capacity building, project coordination, external relationships and accountability.
- The City and School District co-lead the Community Schools Partnership. Other community and government agencies are involved in the Partnership.
- City staff participate in coalitions such as Make Children First (early years) and Middle Childhood Matters.
- The City has collaborated with community agencies on specific programs such as the Mobile Youth Outreach project and adaptive recreation programs for young people with disabilities.

ACTION POINTS

10.1 Collaboration on Projects and Services

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
10.1a	Share professional development and training opportunities with community agencies.	EMY	*
10.1b	Review and provide recommendations on fees and charges for space rental in civic facilities by community agencies/groups.	EMY	CRS
10.1c	Explore opportunities for the City to advocate and/or help to leverage funding from provincial and federal agencies and other funders for community agencies' child and youth services and projects.	EMY	CRS
10.1d	Provide City of Surrey representation on multiagency committees concerned with child and youth issues.	EMY	CRS SPL Plan

**Departments, including the Library, that provide services to children and youth*

10.2 Responding to Special Needs

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
10.2a	Advocate to the provincial and federal governments for the alleviation of child poverty.	EMY	*
10.2b	Support efforts of community agencies, and where appropriate partner with them, to address the needs of special groups of children and youth including Aboriginal young people, immigrant and refugee young people, and young people with disabilities.	EMY	*

**City of Surrey*

10.3 Recognition of Community Contributions that Create a Child and Youth Friendly City

	ACTION	TARGET AGE	IMPLEMENTATION
10.3a	Develop opportunities to recognize businesses, agencies, groups and individuals that are making a notable contribution to children and youth in Surrey.	EMY	*

**City of Surrey*

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Report on an annual basis to Mayor and Council on the implementation of the Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy. This can be done as part of the Social Plan Annual Report. Convene community stakeholders on an annual basis to reflect on the implementation of the Strategy and to identify any emerging issues or priorities.

2

Prepare a Profile of Children and Youth in Surrey that includes demographic and other relevant information that will provide an evidence-base for policy and program development.

3

Assign the Child and Youth Engagement Coordinator, which is a joint position of Community Development Services and Social Planning, to coordinate the implementation of the Strategy.

4

Treat the Strategy as a “living document” and introduce new actions in response to new opportunities and emerging community issues identified by children, youth, parents, community stakeholders and the City.



APPENDIX A

City of Surrey Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy: Development Process

Development of the City of Surrey Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy included the following activities.

Research

Child-friendly policies and practices from other cities around the world, as well as academic literature on child friendly cities, were reviewed to ensure that Surrey's Strategy incorporates the best thinking and promising practices from other jurisdictions. The results of this review were compiled into a highlights report entitled *Creating a Child and Youth Friendly City: What Does it Mean?*.

Child and Youth Consultations

In "walking the talk" of child and youth friendly cities, the consultation process began by consulting with young people. Children and youth from neighbourhoods across the city, and from diverse backgrounds, were involved. Age-appropriate methods were developed to gather feedback from early years aged children and their parents, middle years aged children and youth.

In the spring and summer of 2009, approximately 1,050 children, youth and parents participated in consultations. They were asked: what makes Surrey child and youth friendly?; and, what would make Surrey more child and youth friendly? Results were compiled into a report entitled *Child and Youth Friendly City: Results of Consultations with Children, Youth and Families*.

Staff and Community Stakeholders Consultations

Staff from multiple City departments contributed to the development of the Strategy. The staff consultations focused on gathering information on current City of Surrey policies and programs that promote a child and youth friendly city, as well as eliciting staffs' ideas on additional actions that the City could take.

Representatives from community and government agencies concerned with children and youth in Surrey were invited to participate in consultation workshops. The community stakeholders that contributed to the Strategy are listed in the Acknowledgements in Appendix C.

The Social Planning Advisory Committee and the Parks and Community Services Committee provided input on the Strategy.

Reports related to the development of the City of Surrey Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy are available for download on the City of Surrey's website (www.surrey.ca).

APPENDIX B

References

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APPENDIX C

Related City Plans and Strategies

Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (2006)

Sustainability Charter (2008)

Crime Reduction Strategy (2007)

Transportation Strategic Plan (2008)

Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan (2008)

Learning for Life Strategy (2008)

Official Community Plan

All of these plans are available on the City of Surrey's website at www.surrey.ca

APPENDIX D

Contributors

We thank all those who contributed their time and ideas to the development of Surrey's Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy.

Community Members

Students at Kwantlen Park, Lord Tweedsmuir, Panorama Ridge, Earl Marriot, Guildford Park, and Fraser Heights.

Young people at Kla How Eya, the Youth Recreation Awards, and City Jam.

Middle-years participants at Move for Health Day 2009, children enrolled in City of Surrey summer camp programs, and Craig Smith and the afterschool program at Forsyth Road Elementary.

Early years children and parents through Options Services to Community Society, Semiahmoo Family Place, and those who participated at the Early Years Festival and Kids and Pets Expo.

Community Agency Stakeholders

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