



PLAN FOR THE SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF SURREY RESIDENTS

2011 ANNUAL REPORT





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INTRODUCTION

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011

The Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents (Social Plan) was adopted in 2005-2006 to provide strategic direction for the City's involvement in social issues. Responsibility for its implementation is shared by Mayor and Council and multiple City departments.

Past Social Plan Annual Reports have profiled the broad range of actions that have been undertaken in response to the Social Plan's recommendations. This year's Report focuses only on our achievements of the past year. It includes updates on:

- **Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy:**

The Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy was adopted in late 2010. The update in this Annual Report represents the first progress report on actions that the City has taken to implement the Strategy and support the healthy development of its youngest residents.

- **Learning for Life Strategy:** Council adopted the Learning for Life Strategy in 2008. The Surrey Public Library prepared a separate Annual Report on its implementation in 2009-2010. The Strategy's 2011 update has

been incorporated into the Social Plan Annual Report in recognition of the critical link between literacy and social well-being.

- **Community Development and Inclusion:**

The City of Surrey has continued to focus on supporting the inclusion and engagement of Surrey residents. Activities that were initiated in 2011 are highlighted in this year's Report.

- **Homelessness and Housing:** Addressing homelessness and housing affordability has been a priority over the past five years. A brief update on 2011 activities is provided in this Annual Report.

The 2011 Social Plan Annual Report demonstrates the City of Surrey's continued commitment to making Surrey a healthy, vibrant and inclusive community for everyone who lives and works here.

“AWARDS DEDICATED TO HONOURING SELFLESS ACTS OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT”

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 Surrey residents. The Committee is chaired by Councillor Villeneuve and includes nine appointed community members.

HEART IN THE CITY AWARD

In 2011, SPAC took the lead in developing and adjudicating the Heart in the City Award – awards dedicated to honouring selfless acts of community spirit. The Heart in the City Award was part of the new City of Surrey Awards Program.

The 2011 Heart in the City Award included two award categories. Jas Singh was the recipient in the ‘reducing poverty’ category. His God’s Little Acre project used a 3.5 acre plot of donated land to produce over 50,000 pounds of potatoes for the Food Bank. Marc and Sonja Poitras received the ‘strengthening community’ category award for Clothes on Wheels – a program that provides free clothing and footwear to vulnerable people through a ‘mobile store’.

The City Awards Program is biennial. The next Heart in the City Awards will be presented in 2013.



SPAC members at the Heart in the City Awards with the Mayor, Council members and award recipients

CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY CITY STRATEGY

The Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy was adopted in November 2010. It affirms the City's commitment to making Surrey a great place for children and youth to live, learn and play. The Strategy's recommended actions fall under three themes – child and youth engagement, physical environment and civic services.

CITY DEPARTMENTS ENGAGED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- Opportunities for youth to take ownership of recreation in their communities were provided through the Y Thursdays pilot initiative at the North Surrey Recreation Centre, and Youth Event Series organized in partnership with Guildford Mall. (Community Recreation Services)
- The number and scope of City-run youth groups and committees continues to grow, involving youth in advising City staff and organizing events. (multiple City departments)
- Bursaries were provided to youth for park and environmental-based projects and other education opportunities through the Lend a Hand Program. (Parks)
- A youth representative participates on the Surrey Public Library Board. (Surrey Public Library)
- Youth were consulted on the development of key planning projects, including the Quibble Creek Greenway pilot, Chuck Bailey Skate Park, Greenways Master Plan and Neighbourhood Concept Plans. (Parks, Engineering, Planning)
- Volunteer opportunities for children under 14 are provided through the Partner's in Parks program, Surrey Youth Stewardship Squad, and Friends of the Forest. Community Recreation Services is working toward also providing volunteer opportunities for middle years children. (Parks, Community Recreation Services)



Youth Planners with
Senior Planner, Bhargav Parghi

YOUTH PLANNER PROJECT

Can talking about zoning and land use be accessible to children and youth? In 2010-2011, four high school students were employed by the City's Planning Department to develop a toolkit of activities for consulting with children and youth on land-use planning; and to pilot a youth consultation strategy for the development of a Neighbourhood Concept Plan (NCP).

The youth planners piloted their consultation activities with children and youth as part of the Grandview 4 NCP and West Clayton NCP planning processes. The Youth Planner Project has demonstrated that a parallel child and youth consultation can be an effective part of the land use planning process in Surrey.

The Youth Planner Toolkit is available online at: www.surrey.ca/youth

A CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC SPACE

- New facilities for families were provided in parks across Surrey, including a new picnic area at Green Timbers Urban Forest, and improvements to the lake shoreline that is used for fishing.
- Renovations to the Surrey Nature Centre building and site improvements, such as gardens and a patio, will provide families with a destination to learn about and explore nature.
- Canada's first covered skate park was built at Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre.
- A public gathering space was provided in the heart of City Centre through the construction of the City Centre Library.

ACCESS TO NATURE

- The Nature Centre's Pole Forest gives children an opportunity to build forts and other structures using natural materials, such as tree branches.

- A "Nature Exploration Zone" is being planned for Green Timbers Urban Forest which will provide a place for children and families to have hands-on interactions with nature.

WALKABLE AND ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

- Safer travel to and from schools was achieved by three schools being added to Engineering's School Travel Plan Program, traffic calming taking place at 33 schools, and improved road crossings at 16 schools.
- A plan for the expansion of walking as a safe and convenient transportation choice across Surrey is being promoted through the new Walking Plan.
- A vision for the expansion and connection of Surrey's greenway network was created by the Greenways Master Plan.

Kensington Prairie Community Centre



CIVIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

NEW PROGRAMS

- The Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Program involved youth in designing and delivering after-school workshops for children.
- Family opportunities for environmental stewardship were supported by the “Nature in my Backyard” programs.
- The 16th annual Youth Recognition Awards in 2011 included a new category celebrating the achievements of middle years aged children.
- Cirque Surrey trained youth in the art of circus performance. The trained performers made appearances at special events and festivals.
- Surrey’s annual Environmental Extravaganza included over 75 free nature and environmental events for families throughout Surrey.

CHILD CARE

- The City of Surrey was a partner on the Surrey Child Care Gap Assessment that was released by the Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care in October 2011.
- The YMCA was selected as the operator for the childcare centre in the new City Hall, scheduled to open in 2013.

BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Community picnics, Park Play Palooza, garden tours, open houses, and an upcoming Lantern Festival were organized by the Partners in Parks hosts.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Kensington Prairie, a hub for early childhood services, was opened in 2011. It includes a licensed childcare, afterschool care, pre-school, parent and tot programs, heritage programs, and family and special events.

FUTURE PROJECTS

- Work in partnership with the Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care on the development of a child care strategy.
- Review and revise planning policies and regulations related to child care facilities.
- Develop a program for youth to learn about civic issues and become more involved in municipal dialogue and discussion.

LEARNING FOR LIFE STRATEGY

The Mayor's Task Force on Literacy and Early Childhood Development was established in December 2006 to identify key concerns in respect to literacy and early childhood development and advise Council on how the City could assist in addressing these important issues. Council approved the Learning for Life Strategy that focused on literacy and learning in the following areas:

- Early learning
- Learning – middle years and teens
- Adult and workplace learning
- Social engagement: community and interpersonal learning
- Personal development and lifelong learning

THE LITERACY LANDSCAPE

Soon after the Learning for Life Strategy was released in 2008, literacy providers in BC were involved in developing 'community literacy plans'. The spring of 2009 saw the launch of the Community and Essential Skills Plan for Surrey and White Rock. Funds from Literacy Now and Legacies 2010 allowed the team to hire a Literacy Outreach Coordinator. A community based implementation team was formed and still continues to meet to discuss collaborative ideas for enhancing literacy in Surrey.

Funding from Literacy Now will expire in 2012, but a newly formed agency, Decoda Literacy Solutions, was formed as a result of combining the resources of Literacy Now and Legacies 2012. (decoda.ca). The new collaborative will work to "take literacy to the next level in BC." Decoda works with a new venture, LIFT Philanthropy Partners (www.liftpartners.ca), which was developed to attract investment from corporations, individuals, foundations and government. Both these agencies are being monitored for granting and other opportunities.



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2011

- Opening of the new 77,000 square foot Library in City Centre, which improves access to literacy services and programs in North Surrey, a low income neighbourhood. The new Library also houses the Continuing Education Department of SFU and a satellite office for DIVERSEcity, an innovative collaboration that increases educational opportunities.
- The opening of the Kensington Prairie Community Centre, that includes a ‘book nook’ – an informal book lending program, and a series of museum extension programs that focus on traditional children’s literature. These initiatives offer expanded programming for young children and their families in this high growth neighbourhood.
- Continued participation in the Early Childhood Partnership and Middle Childhood Steering Committee planning tables, along with the Surrey School District, Fraser Health, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the United Way. These collaborative planning tables develop programs for children aged 0 – 12.
- Amongst other accomplishments, the Early Childhood Partners co-sponsored a “Business & Families” dialogue with the Surrey Board of Trade and launched an inaugural “Child & Family Friendly Workplace Award”
- Participation in the Community Literacy Implementation Team and the development of READ Surrey / White Rock has resulted in a volunteer driven adult tutoring program that assists adults in developing basic skills to better succeed. The Volunteer Tutor Program provides orientation and training to volunteers to enable them to offer one on one tutoring to adults in reading, writing, and math.
- Continued outreach with the First Steps ECD Refugee Initiative; children were given books as part of a Christmas celebration.
- The first joint Surrey Library Board and School Board meeting was held in the fall to discuss joint programming and strategies for increased partnerships.
- Continued computer literacy classes at the Surrey Libraries and through Parks, Recreation and Culture increase opportunities for improving workplace skills.



City Center Library

FUTURE PROJECTS

- Continued focus on the Volunteer Tutoring Program and planning for the expansion of the program.
- Expansion of the Reading Link Challenge project from Fleetwood to other areas of the City, a partnership between Surrey Libraries and School District 36.
- The Community Literacy Planning table has confirmed funding from Decoda to a run a short term project related to health literacy and new Canadians.
- Increased focus at the Early Childhood partners table issues relevant to the First Nations community in Surrey and White Rock, the South Asian Early Childhood Development Task Force and refugee families with young children.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUSION

An inclusive city is one where everyone can participate in and benefit from the opportunities offered. Building a strong community that is welcoming and inclusive of everyone who lives and works here is a priority for the City of Surrey. This section highlights a few of the projects that were initiated in 2011.

A GLOBAL PARTNER IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVE CITIES

The inclusion of vulnerable population groups is one of the key challenges facing cities around the world. In 2010-2011, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), an international agency that promotes democratic local governments in Commonwealth cities, launched the Inclusive Cities Network (ICN). The ICN is intended to facilitate the sharing of good practice among Commonwealth cities on issues of inclusivity. The City of Surrey is

one of twelve international cities involved in the initial stages of developing this global network.

In December 2011, the City of Surrey hosted the annual ICN meeting with participants from: Durban and Johannesburg, South Africa; Birmingham, UK; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Port of Spain, Trinidad Tobago; and Brisbane, Australia. The theme of the three-day meeting was local economic development.



ICN delegates at the Phoenix Centre with Michael Wilson and City Staff

“WE BELIEVE THAT BY WORKING TOGETHER ON COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS, USING ACCURATE AND CREDIBLE FACTS AND BROAD DISCUSSION, WE WILL FIND WAYS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF POVERTY IN SURREY.”

THIS: A POVERTY REDUCTION PROJECT

Eighteen percent of Surrey residents live in poverty. While this is lower than the Metro Vancouver average of 21% - it represents too many families! Over the past year the City of Surrey has been participating in THIS, a collaborative project to reduce poverty in Surrey.

Under the leadership of Vibrant Surrey, THIS is focusing its research, dialogue and community-based action in four key areas – transportation, housing, income and support. Project activities include the development of a series of fact sheets on poverty in Surrey, a community forum, and the development of an action plan that will be released in the summer of 2012.

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Surrey has the second largest Urban Aboriginal population in Metro Vancouver, and the Surrey School District has the most Aboriginal students of any district in the region. The City of Surrey and Surrey Public Library are taking action to support and strengthen the Aboriginal community in Surrey.

The City of Surrey is a member of the Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategy (MVUAS). A partnership between the City of Surrey, City of Vancouver, and ACCESS, an Aboriginal

employment agency, was cultivated by the MVUAS.

Working with the the City of Surrey and City of Vancouver, ACCESS is developing a 9-week Essential Skills enhancement program for Aboriginal people interested in pursuing a career in clerical/administrative positions in municipal departments or public libraries. The first training program will be provided in the Spring of 2012.



HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING

The 2011 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count found 400 homeless people in Surrey, representing 15% of the region's 2,650 homeless. The homeless population was virtually unchanged since the last count was conducted in 2008 – a positive trend given the high overall population growth in Surrey during this time.

Since 2006, addressing homelessness has been a priority for the City of Surrey. Previous Social Plan Annual Reports have documented the establishment of the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society and the partnerships with BC Housing that have created close to 500 housing units and beds. This section provides a brief update on activities in 2011.



SURREY HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOCIETY

Since its formation in 2007, the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society has been supporting 'made in Surrey' solutions to homelessness. In 2011, the Society's Annual Grants Program distributed approximately \$200,000 to nine projects that best demonstrated the potential to reduce homelessness.

The Society's goals are to Grow, Grant and Lead. In 2011, the Board continued to focus on growing the fund by attracting additional donations. Among the generous donations received were proceeds from a high-school play and a contribution from the Surrey Board of Trade. These funding efforts will continue in the year ahead.

MASTER PLAN FOR HOUSING THE HOMELESS IN SURREY

In 2011, the City of Surrey initiated work on the development of a Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey. It is being developed in partnership with BC Housing.

The Master Plan will provide strategic direction for ensuring that actions to address homelessness in Surrey respond to local

needs, fit the Surrey context, and are taken in a coordinated manner. It will also assist the City and community agencies in responding to future partnership opportunities with the Province and other funders.

UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

The City of Surrey signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing in 2008 toward the development of supportive housing projects for people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. To date, the City has contributed the land and waived all development fees and charges on three MOU projects.

TIMBER GROVE

Timber Grove welcomed its first residents in October 2011! To create a spirit of welcome, Surrey Urban Mission solicited donations from the community, including City staff, so that all 52 studio apartment units were outfitted with new household goods and basic furniture.

Timber Grove is a modular housing project that converted units from the Olympic Athletes Village in Whistler into permanent housing. It is located in the City Centre area, adjacent to the Quibble Creek Greenway. The facility is operated by Coast Mental Health Foundation, with Fraser Health providing on-site mental health services to residents.

Timber Grove's official opening was held in March 2012.

ALDER GARDENS

Alder Gardens is a 36-unit housing project for single women with children. It is operated by the YWCA. The facility is located in Newton, adjacent to the library, recreation centre and wave pool – a great location for young families! Alder Gardens will offer support services to assist residents in breaking out of the cycle of poverty and transitioning to economic independence.

Families began moving into Alder Gardens in late February 2012.

QUIBBLE CREEK

The Quibble Creek Health and Phoenix Transition Housing Centre is located across the street from Surrey Memorial Hospital. The 'state of the art' addictions centre will include a 25-space Surrey Social Detox Centre, Surrey Substance Use Services and outpatient counselling, and 68 transitional housing units. The housing component will be operated by the Phoenix Society, while Fraser Health will be responsible for the sobering assessment centre and clinic.

The official ground-breaking event for Quibble Creek took place in June 2011. The facility will be completed later in 2012.

FUTURE PROJECTS

- Completion of the Master Plan for Housing the Homeless in Surrey
- Completion of a Housing Action Plan

RELATED PLANS AND STRATEGIES

- Crime Reduction Strategy (2007)
- Sustainability Charter (2008)
- Learning for Life Strategy (2008)
- Transportation Strategic Plan (2008)
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Ten-Year Strategy (2008)
- Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy (2010)
- Walking Plan (2011)

SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER: MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

The City of Surrey has identified a set of 87 indicators to measure progress toward the vision and goals of Surrey's Sustainability Charter; 48 of these indicators relate to socio-cultural sustainability. A "Dashboard" (website) is being developed that will enable community members to explore maps, trends, and actions that Surrey is taking to move toward its vision of a sustainable city.

The Sustainability Dashboard will be available late April 2012 at: www.surrey.ca/dashboard



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SOCIAL PLANNING
PLEASE VISIT WWW.SURREY.CA/SOCIAL-PLANNING

