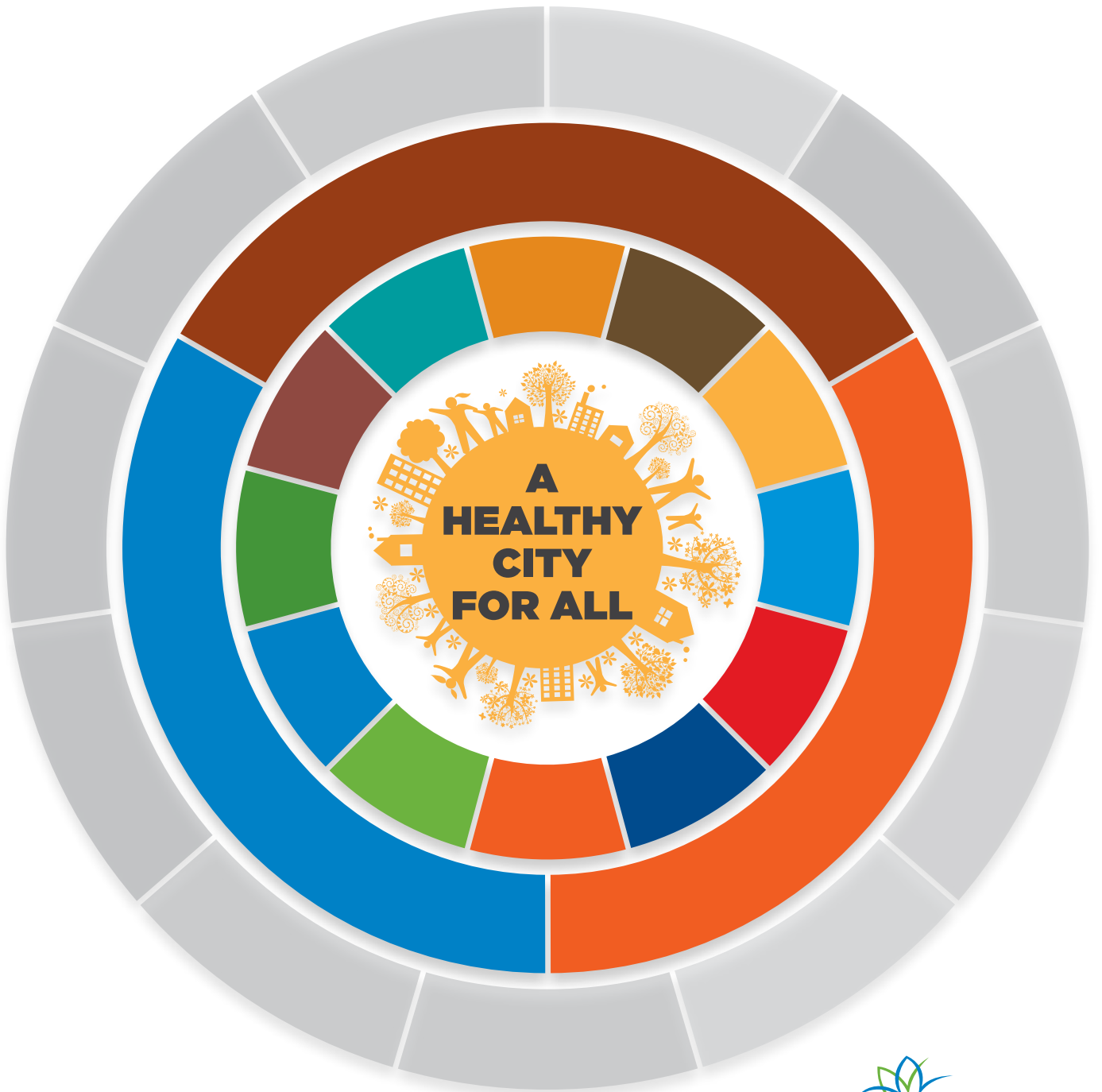


# A HEALTHY CITY FOR ALL

VANCOUVER'S HEALTHY CITY STRATEGY

2014-2025 | PHASE 1



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# Message from the Mayor



Vancouver is known around the world for its natural beauty, vibrant cityscape, creative people, and rich and diverse cultures. There is so much to admire and be proud of, and so many residents are active and thriving. But like other cities, Vancouver also grapples with three global and interconnected challenges: climate change, an increasing prevalence of chronic health conditions, and growing inequality.

*A Healthy City for All: Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy 2014-2025 Phase 1* is a long-term and integrated plan that helps us think, act and work together in new ways to change the conditions that impact the health and well-being of people, places and the planet.

The Healthy City Strategy represents the third pillar (social) in the City's long-term sustainability plan, which includes the Greenest City Action Plan (ecological) and the Vancouver Economic Action Strategy (economic).

The development of this first phase of the strategy involved many people. We reached more than 10,000 people through our *Talk Healthy City for All* public engagement, which employed a variety of formats, including an online platform, Twitter conversations, the City website, in-person workshops and Ideas Labs, and dialogues with various groups.

It also included reviews of international research and best practices; consultation with key stakeholders and experts in Vancouver and beyond; a Memorandum of Understanding with Vancouver Coastal Health; and two Healthy City Summits. This work was led by an interdepartmental staff team, and a 30-member Leadership Table comprised of a broad range of community leaders.

This first phase of the Healthy City Strategy sets out a vision, principles, long-term goals, targets and indicators to measure our progress. It lays the foundation for the second phase: an action plan that will build on the collective efforts of the City, public and private sectors, residents and community partners. It will require new ways of thinking, innovation and most of all, collaboration and partnership to reach our vision of a healthy city for all.

The Healthy City Strategy, once completed, will position Vancouver as a global leader in integrated decision-making, and create a city that has healthier children and families, increased health and well-being for vulnerable populations, and livable environments now and in the future. It will also enable the City to identify priorities, clarify our role and align tools to address complex issues; enhance partnerships and innovative approaches, and make decisions based on evidence.

The health and well-being of Vancouver is everybody's business. We need to forge this new path together, knowing that what we choose to do now will have a profound effect on current and future generations.

I want to thank the members of the Healthy City for All Leadership Table, the many residents and stakeholders who have offered their ideas, and our civic advisory committees. We look forward to our continued work together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregor Robertson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin blue horizontal line.

Mayor Gregor Robertson



*“Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well-being of all our children, rests with the kind of relationships we build today.”*

*Dr. Chief Robert Joseph, Ambassador, Reconciliation Canada and a Healthy City for All Leadership Table Member*



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# Overview

More people now live in cities than in rural areas. By 2030, more than 60 per cent of the world's population will live in an urban setting. That will rise to 70 per cent by 2050. In Canada, 80 per cent of the population lives in urban areas, and Vancouver is expected to grow by 23 per cent to an estimated population of 740,000 by 2040.

Decisions we make affect the air we breathe and the water we drink; our ability to move about the city; where and in what type of housing we live; what food we can easily access; what kinds of jobs are available; how much and what kind of green space we have; and how connected and included we feel in our neighbourhoods.

These 'determinants of health' are recognized as having as much influence on health and well-being as biology and genetic endowment. While the City is not mandated to deliver health or social services, as the World Health Organization (WHO) has pointed out, municipalities are well-placed to influence these determinants of health and inequalities. Municipalities also have a responsibility to support and advocate for the health and well-being of residents. Through their tools, ranging from policy and regulation to planning, research, and direct services, cities can have significant effects on the well-being of their residents.

The Healthy City Strategy builds on work that began in Canada almost 30 years ago. In 1986, the WHO convened the First International Conference on Health Promotion, which resulted in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. Since then, cities around the world, including Vancouver, have been working to create healthy cities for all. International examples of best practice include:

- healthy city or healthy community plans and strategies such as those of the 90 cities in the *WHO European Healthy Cities Network*;
- mandated municipal public health plans such as those of local governments in the state of Victoria in Australia;
- city health plans like *Take Care New York*, and *Healthy Chicago*

In addition, local initiatives including *Richmond's Social Planning Strategy*, *Surrey's Social Action Plan* and *Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy* helped to inform Vancouver's efforts.

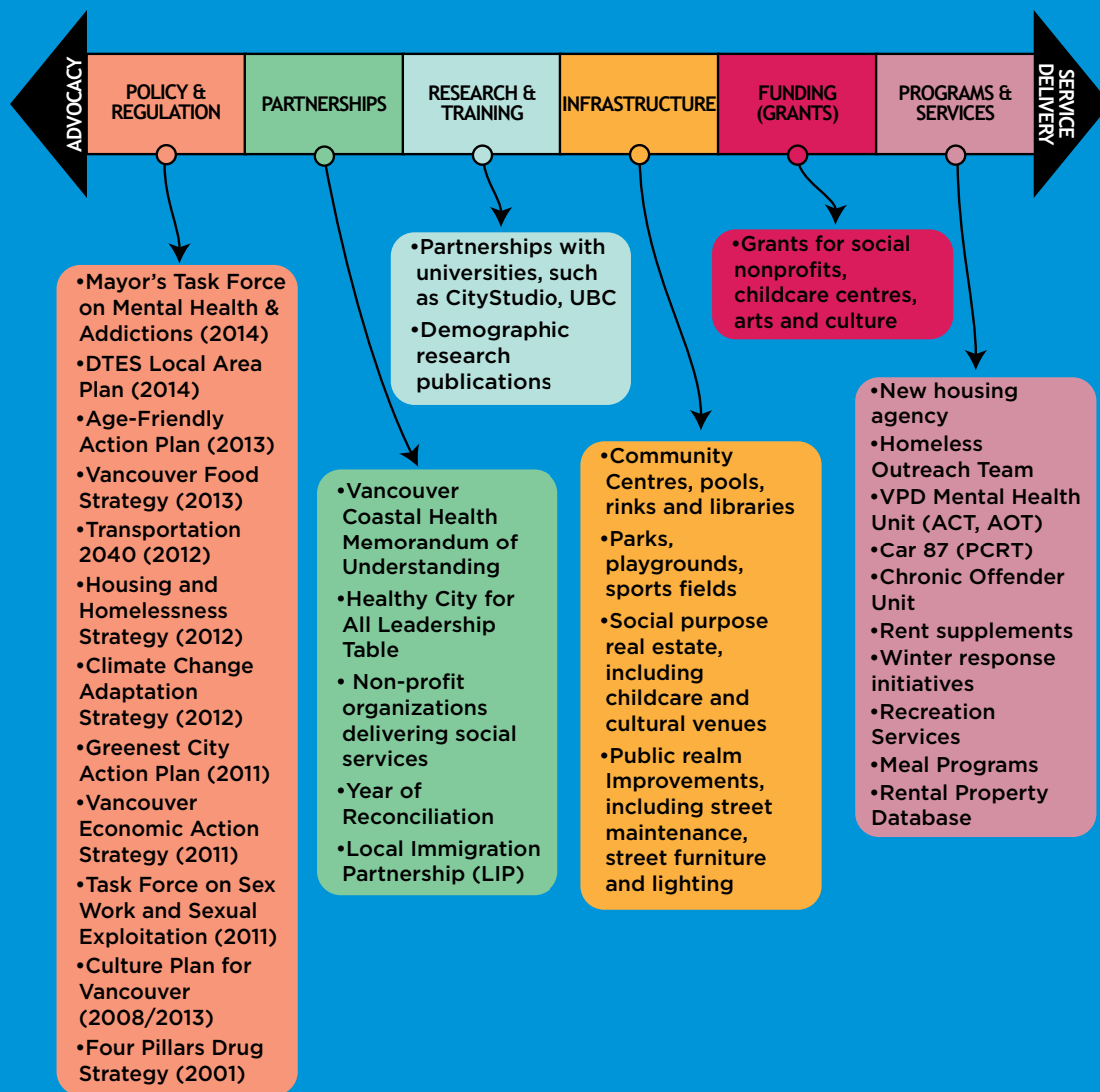


Figure 1: City tools for health and well-being, with examples

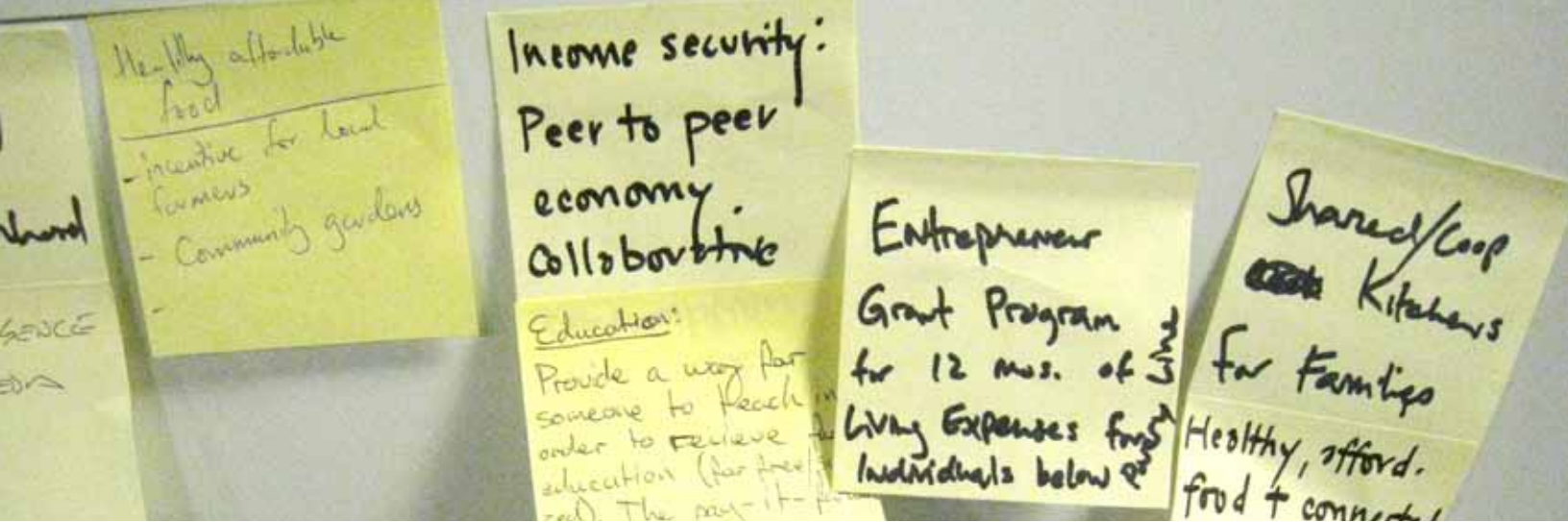
In a recent analysis of healthy city strategies worldwide, the WHO noted that effective action and successful implementation of a longer-term strategy for urban health and well-being requires four preconditions for change:

1. political commitment at the highest level where health, equity and sustainable development are core values in a city's policies and vision;
2. shared vision, understanding and commitment to a comprehensive and systematic approach for urban health;

3. organizational structures and processes to coordinate, manage and support change and to facilitate action and active citizen involvement;
4. opportunities for partnerships and networking with statutory and non-statutory bodies and community groups.

These conditions currently exist in Vancouver making this the right time for the Healthy City Strategy.





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# Healthy City For All:

## Developing the Framework: Vision, Principles, Goals and Targets

The first phase of developing the strategy was shaped by a review of local and international evidence and best practice, clarifying key principles and assumptions, and identifying three interconnected and overarching focus areas with 12 long-term goals and targets. The strategy also includes a rigorous set of indicators, which will keep us focused on progress and outcomes over time.

Phase 1 was guided by an important partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health, the advice and work of the Healthy City for All Leadership Table, and the ongoing support of an interdepartmental staff team.

The Healthy City for All Leadership Table brought 30 leaders with representatives from: all levels of government; health and service providers; researchers and academics; non-governmental organizations (NGO) and community alliances working in the health, social, arts and culture sectors; agencies involved in services for immigrants and refugees; Vancouver Board of Education; philanthropic foundations; and credit unions (members of the Leadership Table are listed in

Appendix A). They met with staff regularly over eight months to provide valuable and critical input into the vision, principles, goals, and targets which constitute the framework for action.

*Talk Healthy City for All*, an extensive public engagement process, and other initiatives were conducted in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and other stakeholders. Residents were asked for their best and boldest ideas for achieving a healthy city for all. The process reached more than 10,000 people which employed a variety of formats, including an online platform, Twitter conversations, the City website, in-person workshops and Ideas Labs, and dialogues with various groups.

The ideas shared, along with ideas generated through other recent City engagement processes, will also help inform priority actions which will be the focus of Phase 2. For more information on the public engagement process, see Appendix A.



Figure 3: Vision, Focus Areas, and Goal Areas of the Healthy City Strategy with examples of related city initiatives.

### Focus and Goal Areas

The framework contains a clear vision statement and three major areas of focus: **Healthy People - Taking Care of the Basics**; **Healthy Communities - Cultivating Connections**; and **Healthy Environments - Ensuring Livability now and into the Future**. It also includes 12 goals with associated targets and indicators to track progress and outcomes over ten years.





A number of guiding principles and assumptions shaped the development of the first phase of the Healthy City Strategy and will continue to guide the work as it moves forward. Below is a summary of these principles and assumptions that include:

1. **A broad and holistic understanding of health and well-being:** The building blocks of a *Healthy City for All* are the social determinants of health and well-being that are all interconnected.
2. **Fulfillment of fundamental rights and freedoms:** Fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, within the context of municipal jurisdictions and Vancouver's aspirations, will be supported and protected.
3. **Health and well-being for all:** A "for all" lens will help ensure that we pursue initiatives that are both universal for all citizens and focused on specific populations most vulnerable to health inequities.
4. **Prevention and upstream oriented:** Priority should go to prevention of poor health rather than crisis intervention.
5. **Health and well-being is everyone's business:** The health and well-being of Vancouver must involve the broader public, private and civil sectors, and all residents, including meaningful involvement of those most affected.
6. **Healthy ecological environments:** All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, with awareness of pollutants and contaminants that can cause harm.
7. **A need for innovation:** It will take social innovation and different ways of thinking and acting to significantly make progress on complex issues.
8. **Enabling collective impact:** Efforts need to be integrated across City departments and its entities, and with all partners.
9. **Focus investment and action based on evidence:** Priority will go to investments and actions that are grounded in evidence, realize value for our efforts, and move us toward meeting our targets.
10. **Monitor, evaluate and communicate:** We need to track metrics to assess our progress, make changes based on evaluation, and communicate the results.
11. **Lead and model:** The City will continue to show leadership in health and well-being, and model changes through our own operations.

A more detailed listing of these guiding principles and assumptions can be found in Appendix B.



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# Healthy City For All:

## Goals, Indicators and Targets

**For each goal area, targets were created indicating where we would like to be by 2025. The targets were chosen according to the following criteria:**

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*Aspirational* • Does it say something about the kind of city we want to be?

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*Meaningful* • Does it actually matter for health and well-being of people, place and planet?

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*Challenging* • Does it require innovation in order to be achieved?

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*Transformative* • Does it have the potential to drive change in policy and practice both at the City and in other stakeholders?

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*Collaborative* • Is collaboration required to reach the target and do potential partners also have this target, or do they support it?

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*Evidence-based* • Is it based on research and best practice?







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*Measurable* • Do we have baseline data and a way of measuring it over time?

Where we integrated a target from another key City strategy (e.g. the Greenest City Action Plan), we used the stated target date from that plan (e.g. 2020).






For each goal area, we chose three to five indicators that could be tracked to tell us something meaningful about the state of that goal area in Vancouver (change over time, comparison with other cities, and, where possible, variation between neighbourhoods to assist with addressing inequities).

## Summary table of goals, targets and indicators

	2025 TARGETS	INDICATORS
<b>A Good Start</b> 	<b>Vancouver's children have the best chance of enjoying a healthy childhood.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 85% of Vancouver's children are developmentally ready for school when they enter kindergarten</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School readiness (%)</li> <li>Child poverty (%)</li> <li>Access to licensed quality, affordable, and accessible childcare (%)</li> </ol>
<b>A Home for Everyone</b> 	<b>A range of affordable housing choices is available for all Vancouverites.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2015: End Street Homelessness</li> <li>By 2021 enable: 2,900 new supportive housing units; 5,000 additional new social housing units (including 1,000 units of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotel replacement); and 5,000 new units of secured purpose built rental housing [Housing and Homelessness Strategy]</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Households spending 30% or more of income on housing (%)</li> <li>Sheltered and unsheltered homeless (#)</li> <li>New supportive, social, secured rental and secondary rental housing units (#)</li> </ol>
<b>Feeding Ourselves Well</b> 	<b>Vancouver has a healthy, just, and sustainable food system.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2020: Increase city-wide and neighbourhood food assets by a minimum of 50% over 2010 levels [Greenest City Action Plan/Food Strategy/Park Board Local Food Action Plan]</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food assets (#)</li> <li>Neighbourhood Food Networks (NFNs) (#)</li> <li>Cost of Health Canada's National Nutritious Food Basket (NNFB) (\$)</li> </ol>
<b>Healthy Human Services</b> 	<b>Vancouverites have equitable access to high-quality social, community, and health services.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Vancouver residents are attached to a family doctor</li> <li>Increase the % of Vancouverites who report having access to services when they need them by 25% over 2014 levels</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attachment to a family doctor or primary health care provider (%)</li> <li>Proximity to "community hubs" (library, community centre, neighbourhood house) (%)</li> <li>Access to services when needed (%) Park Board Leisure Access Program usage (%)</li> </ol>
<b>Making Ends Meet and Working Well</b> 	<b>Our residents have adequate income to cover the costs of basic necessities, and have access to a broad range of healthy employment opportunities.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the city's poverty rate by 75%</li> <li>Increase median income by at least 3% every year</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-income individuals (%)</li> <li>Median income (\$)</li> <li>Income distribution (%)</li> <li>Working poor (%)</li> <li>Living Wage (\$)</li> <li>Job quality (%)</li> </ol>
<b>Being and Feeling Safe and Included</b> 	<b>Vancouver is a safe city in which residents feel secure.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase Vancouver residents' sense of belonging by 10%</li> <li>Increase Vancouver residents' sense of safety by 10%</li> <li>Make Vancouver the safest major city in Canada by reducing violent and property crime every year, including sexual assault and domestic violence</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sense of belonging (%)</li> <li>Sense of safety (%)</li> <li>Reported crime rates (#)</li> </ol>



## Summary table of goals, targets and indicators - cont.

	2025 TARGETS	INDICATORS
<b>Cultivating Connections</b> 	<b>Vancouverites are connected and engaged in the places and spaces that matter to us.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> All Vancouverites report that they have at least 4 people in their network they can rely on for support in times of need <input type="checkbox"/> Increase municipal voter turnout to at least 60%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social support network size (%)</li> <li>2. Sense of trust (%)</li> <li>3. Volunteerism (%)</li> <li>4. Municipal voter turnout (%)</li> <li>5. Aboriginal children in foster care (%)</li> </ol>
<b>Active Living and Getting Outside</b> 	<b>Vancouverites are engaged in active living and have incomparable access to nature.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> By 2020: All Vancouver residents live within a 5 minute walk of a park, greenway or other green space [Greenest City Action Plan] <input type="checkbox"/> By 2025: Increase the percentage of Vancouver residents aged 18 and over who meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines by 25% over 2014 levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Residents who meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines (%)</li> <li>2. Park Board OneCard usage (#)</li> <li>3. Residents living within a 5 minute walk (400m) of a park or other green space (%)</li> <li>4. Tree canopy cover (%)</li> </ol>
<b>Lifelong Learning</b> 	<b>Vancouverites have equitable access to lifelong learning and development opportunities.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase participation in lifelong learning by 25% over 2014 levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to the Internet (%)</li> <li>2. Reading for general pleasure or interest (%)</li> <li>3. Participation in a learning event or program (#)</li> <li>4. High-school graduation and post-secondary education rates for Aboriginal people (%)</li> </ol>
<b>Expressing Ourselves</b> 	<b>Vancouver has a diverse and thriving cultural ecology that enriches the lives of all residents and visitors.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase public participation and community engagement in arts and culture by 25% over 2014 levels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arts and culture participation (#)</li> <li>2. Artists and cultural workers (%)</li> <li>3. Creative places and spaces (#)</li> </ol>
<b>Getting Around</b> 	<b>Vancouverites enjoy safe, active, and accessible ways of getting around the city.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> By 2020: Make the majority (over 50%) of trips on foot, bike, and transit [Greenest City Action Plan/Transportation2040]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainable transportation mode share (%)</li> <li>2. Number of active transportation trips (#)</li> <li>3. Traffic-related fatalities</li> </ol>
<b>Environments to Thrive In</b> 	<b>Vancouverites have the right to a healthy environment and equitable access to livable environments in which they can thrive.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Add to the Greenest City Action Plan a biodiversity target and a target related to toxins prevention. <input type="checkbox"/> Every Vancouver neighbourhood has a Walk Score of at least 70 (indicating that most errands can be accomplished on foot)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neighbourhood Walk Scores (#)</li> </ol>
<b>Collaborative Leadership for A Healthy City for All</b> 	<b>Leaders from the public, private, and civil sectors in Vancouver work in integrated and collaborative ways towards the vision of a healthy Vancouver for all.</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 90% of “actions for all” to be developed in Phase 2 will be implemented.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participation in Healthy City for All Leadership Table meetings (#)</li> <li>2. “Actions for all” implemented (%)</li> <li>3. Wilder Collaboration Assessment</li> </ol>

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# Action Steps Toward Goals and Targets

**Phase 2 of the strategy will focus on an action plan for reaching these targets. This work will integrate input from three primary sources: the ongoing work of the Leadership Table, chaired by the City Manager and involving the active participation of members of the City's Corporate Management Team; the work of the inter-departmental Healthy City Strategy staff team; and the feedback received from the Talk Healthy City for All public engagement process, along with input from other recent engagement processes.**

**The actions formed in the second phase will require courage, risk-taking, innovation, boldness and imagination from everyone involved. In recognition of the importance of this, the Leadership Table developed a 13th goal:**

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Collaborative Leadership for A Healthy City for All: Leaders from the public, private, and civil sectors in Vancouver work in integrated and collaborative ways towards the vision of a healthy Vancouver for all.

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# 01

## A GOOD START



**Goal** Vancouver's children have the best chance of enjoying a healthy childhood.

*"Ensure that licensed quality childcare is available for all families that want it."*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Target

By 2025, at least 85 per cent of Vancouver's children are developmentally ready for school when they enter kindergarten.

### Key findings

- 35 per cent of kindergarten children are developmentally not school ready.
- The City has leveraged 1,190 new childcare spaces over the last six years but accessing quality and affordable childcare continues to be challenging for many families.
- Metro Vancouver has the second highest rate of children in low-income families among 15 most populous metro areas in Canada.
- In 2010, low-income rates for Vancouver Aboriginal children under six were almost twice that of the overall child population.

Children who have a good start in life do better at school, secure better paid jobs, and enjoy better physical and mental health as adolescents and adults. Children who do not experience a good start are at greater risk of doing poorly at school, enjoying fewer economic opportunities as adults, and are more likely to be involved in criminal activities and problematic substance use throughout their lives. All children benefit from quality care, family support, and opportunities for play, learning and connection.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, we heard that improving access to services that promote healthy childhood development, including quality childcare, will have the greatest impact for the largest number of children. Specifically, people spoke about the need for:

- affordable, accessible and quality childcare
- increasing welfare rates and providing a living wage for vulnerable families with young children
- support for parents and families
- outdoor play and physical activity
- connecting children with food and gardens
- connecting children and seniors.

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## The City's role and contribution

Many of the factors that give rise to vulnerability among children are beyond the direct control of the City. Achieving our target will require coordinated efforts between different levels of government and other partners. The City's strategic approaches include:

- advocating for healthy public policy, including access to early care and learning, and affordability supports for childcare
- continuing to enhance and focus our social grants program to address these issues
- continuing to facilitate the creation of childcare spaces, with a target of 1,000 additional spaces identified in the 2015-2018 Capital Plan
- strategically supporting and connecting community organizations that serve children and families
- continuing to act as a convener of public agencies to work together on child development.





# 02

## A HOME FOR EVERYONE



**Goal** A range of affordable housing choices is available for all Vancouverites.

*“Affordable and accessible housing would make Vancouver the most livable city.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Targets

1. By 2015, end street homelessness.
2. By 2021, enable 2,900 new supportive housing units, 5,000 additional new social housing units (including 1,000 units of Single Room Occupancy Hotel replacement), and 5,000 new units of secured purpose-built rental housing (Housing and Homelessness Strategy).

### Key findings

- Vancouver has more apartments and more renters per capita than many other cities in Canada
- Since 2012, 1,846 units of supportive housing, 961 units of social housing, and 2,839 units of secured purpose-built rental housing have been committed, constructed or completed.
- There were 1,803 homeless people counted in March 2014 as part of the homeless count, of which 536 were street homeless. Since then, 345 individuals have been housed in supportive housing and scattered rental units. More

permanent supportive housing over 150 units of temporary housing and expanded shelter capacity are coming online to ensure everyone has housing or shelter.

- Aboriginal people are disproportionately homeless and unsheltered. They comprise two per cent of the city population but make up 46 per cent of the homeless population.
- Vancouverites are among the most likely in the country to be spending 30 per cent or more of their household income on housing.

The availability, affordability and quality of our housing are critical to our health and well-being. Our homes are much more than simply physical shelters. Having a place to call “home” provides us with a sense of security and identity, and can be our retreat from the world when times are tough. Children who grow up in inadequate housing are at greater risk of facing health problems and increased mortality as adults. Ensuring affordable and supportive housing is available across all our neighbourhoods creates mixed communities where families and individuals across the spectrum of socio-economic status can flourish, have access to green space and recreation opportunities, local schools, and cultural opportunities. Individuals living on our streets and in shelters usually have long-standing mental health and addictions issues. Our experience has shown that by enabling them to have access to supportive housing in their neighbourhood provides stability and safety, allows health issues to be addressed and provides a chance to develop a support network.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, we heard that ensuring affordable, appropriate, safe, well-maintained housing, and enabling the supply of new social, supportive and secure market rental housing is a key step to creating a healthier Vancouver for all. Specifically, people spoke about the need for:

- more affordable and social housing
- more supportive housing for the homeless
- family-friendly rental housing
- second-stage housing for youth leaving care
- alternative housing options (e.g. co-ops, co-housing, micro-houses, multi-generational housing).



Photograph by Steve Chou

# 02

## The City's role and contribution

Adequate and affordable housing is fundamental to a healthy city for all. It requires leadership and action from the City of Vancouver, other levels of government, non-profit agencies, developers and others.

The City's Housing and Homelessness Strategy lays out the City's role in this area. Actions are underway to ensure adequate shelter beds and improve conditions in Single Room Occupancy hotels; create new social and supportive housing; and create new opportunities for secured market rental housing and affordable home ownership.

The City's key strategic approaches are to utilize the new Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency to:

- increase the supply of affordable housing by optimizing the use of City and other partners' land, capital grants, waivers of development levies and strategic allocation of amenity contributions, other incentives and resources to leverage and support housing partnerships
- build key affordable housing goals into local community plans, refine and develop new zoning approaches, development tools and rental incentives across the city's neighbourhoods
- encourage a housing mix and innovative housing models across all neighbourhoods while protecting and renewing the existing rental stock and finding ways to enable supportive and social housing across the city
- provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability by demonstrating leadership in research and innovation to create improved housing options for our diverse population
- focus efforts with partners on preventing and eliminating homelessness.







# 03

## FEEDING OURSELVES WELL



**Goal** Vancouver has a healthy, just, and sustainable food system.

*“Let more people know and have community gardens. Have workshops to teach them how to plant vegetables well.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Target

By 2020, increase city-wide and neighbourhood food assets, including community gardens and orchards, farmers’ markets, urban farms, community kitchens and community food markets by a minimum of 50 per cent over 2010 levels (Vancouver Food Strategy).

### Key findings

- Food assets are increasing across the city. As of 2014, we have 4,432 community garden plots in Vancouver, an increase of about 1,200 plots. Farmers markets have increased from four to 11 and community orchards from three to 33 since 2010.
- In 2012, Neighbourhood Food Networks in Vancouver helped approximately 20,000 people access healthy, affordable and nutritious food.
- In 2007, the Vancouver Health Service Delivery Area, which includes the City of Vancouver, UBC Endowment Lands and Musqueam First Nation, exhibited higher rates of food insecurity than many other health areas, including BC and Canada overall.
- Income assistance recipients do not receive adequate income for a healthy food basket. Food and shelter costs consume more than 100 per cent of their incomes according to the Cost of Eating (2011).

Access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food is critical. It not only nourishes our bodies, it fuels our minds, and is often central to our social gatherings, family celebrations and cultural traditions. When we are adequately fed and nourished, we are better able to thrive and reach our full potential.

Right now, there are people in the city who have barriers to accessing the food they need. Whether the experience is temporary or long term, moderate or severe, not having enough nutritious food to eat can lead to chronic physical health conditions, poor mental health, including stress and depression, and poor performance at work or school.

A strong, local food system can strengthen community connections, boost local food production, and bolster our resilience in the face of climate change and continuing erosion of agricultural land.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, people talked about a variety of ways to create an equitable and sustainable food system, including:

- more community gardens
- food education, training, and workshops
- sharing excess produce and food
- community kitchens
- food markets and stands
- affordable food, and having enough to purchase nutritious food
- local food.

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## The City's role and contribution

Creating a just and sustainable food system can only be achieved through the collective efforts of many different groups, including local governments, community groups, institutions, agencies, businesses, government partners, and individuals.

The City supports a just and sustainable food system through the Vancouver Food Strategy which has five key goals: support food-friendly neighbourhoods; empower residents to connect around food; improve access to healthy, local, affordable, culturally diverse food; make food a centerpiece of Vancouver's green economy; and advocate for a just and sustainable food system with partners and at all levels of government.

Work toward reaching these goals is underway by leveraging City land, supporting flexible regulations, and enabling partnerships with the Vancouver Food Policy Council, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Coastal Health, Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society, Neighbourhood Food Networks and a wide range of other public and private enterprises.



*Photograph by Lloyd Lee*

# 04

## HEALTHY HUMAN SERVICES



**Goal** Vancouverites have equitable access to high-quality social, community and health services.

*“Use our community centres and neighbourhood houses as hubs for people to connect. Collaborate with organizations, service providers, local social entrepreneurs, other equitable groups to bring greater social connections to neighbourhoods.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Targets

1. By 2025, increase percentage of Vancouverites who report having access to services when they need them by 25 per cent over 2014 levels.
2. By 2025, all Vancouver residents are attached to a family doctor.

### Key findings

- Approximately 80 per cent of people aged 12 and older in the Vancouver Health Services Delivery Area reported having a regular doctor in 2012.
- The work of the Mayor’s Mental Health Task Force has leveraged enhanced services for individuals with severe mental health and addictions problems but more work needs to be done.
- Vancouver has strong results in the area of physical health compared to BC and Canada. Fewer of us are smokers, overweight, or suffer from chronic pain, but health inequities persist.
- Vancouver Foundation’s survey demonstrates that 70 per cent of Metro Vancouver residents say they feel a sense of belonging in their neighbourhood and that they feel welcome.
- From 2003 to 2006, mental health hospitalization rates were higher for people with lower socio-economic status, and were higher for all socio-economic groups in Metro Vancouver compared to Canada.
- In 2013, the 10 neighbourhood houses in Vancouver served a total of 88,000 residents and engaged 2,748 volunteers.

We turn to human services for support at different times in our lives: when we are sick or injured, when we lose our job and need help finding another one, when we seek training or education opportunities, or when we have a child.

High-quality, accessible and inclusive health, social and community services are an important part of a healthy city for all. Services ranging from health care and emergency services to employment programs and libraries all play a part in keeping us safe, healthy and connected. They are vital to living and thriving together.

Inequities in access to services can lead to poor physical and mental health, and higher hospitalization and death rates. Vulnerable populations—including those who are homeless, living in poverty, engaged in sex work, new to the city, Aboriginal and/or living with mental health and addiction challenges—can face multiple barriers to access.

A coordinated, integrated approach is essential to ensuring that all Vancouverites can access the services they need to thrive.

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## What we heard

It was clear during our public engagement that human services of various types are critical to the lives of Vancouverites. People spoke about the need for:

- more affordable and accessible services
- services that are culturally safe for Aboriginal residents, and that promote healing and wellness
- services available in languages other than English
- holistic and preventative approaches to care
- community-based health and well-being hubs.



Photograph by Peter Marriott



# 04

## The City's role and contribution

The City does not have a mandate in health care or health services. Achieving targets requires partnerships between the City of Vancouver, other levels of government, service providers and the private sector to address health inequities and shift our approach to health from crisis response to prevention.

The City works in numerous ways to increase access to healthy human services through the Housing and Homelessness Strategy, Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions, Age-Friendly Action Plan, Sex Work and Sexual Exploitation Action Plan, Local Immigration Partnership, and the Memorandum of Understanding with Vancouver Coastal Health, which works to improve access to services for vulnerable people.

The City also provides the high-quality and effective police, fire, emergency preparedness and regulatory services that make Vancouver safe for residents, businesses and visitors.

Key areas where the City provides leadership include:

- direct services in the downtown core through the Carnegie, Evelyne Saller, and Gathering Place Community Centres
- the delivery of broad recreation services through the Park Board, accessible through the OneCard and other access programs including the leisure access subsidy program for low income residents in Vancouver
- providing core operating funding for neighbourhood houses
- supporting organizations that provide a range of services through grants and in-kind support
- advocating to senior governments for improved and expanded services
- supporting co-location and coordination of services.







# 05

## MAKING ENDS MEET AND WORKING WELL



**Goal** Our residents have adequate income to cover the costs of basic necessities, and have access to a broad range of healthy employment opportunities.

*“Many people in Vancouver struggle to find and maintain employment because they face multiple barriers to employment. Support businesses to effectively employ these people using best practices developed by social enterprises. And adopt more inclusive hiring and support practices for employees.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Targets

1. By 2025, reduce the City’s poverty rate by 75 per cent.
2. By 2025, increase median income by at least 3 per cent every year.

### Key findings

- Vancouver is a global leader in the innovation economy with key strengths in information and communications technology, digital entertainment, clean technology, and green building and health sciences. Of the approximately 85,000 innovation economy jobs in BC, a significant number – approximately 25- 30 per cent - are located in Vancouver.
- Vancouver is a world leader in blending enterprise and social values through a variety of business models, including for-profit social purpose businesses, non-profit social enterprises, and co-operatives, with over 400 social enterprises recognized by the Social Enterprise Council of Canada.
- However, as with other North American cities, the distribution of wealth and growing gap between rich and poor is a key challenge. Metro Vancouver has a higher concentration of wealth than BC or Canada overall. Within Metro Vancouver, the top 10 per cent of the population received 38 per cent of total income in 2010.
- Metro Vancouver had the second highest percentage (17 per cent) of people with low income status in 2010 among the 15 most populous metro areas in Canada. 40 per cent of Metro Vancouver’s low-income population were working, and a further seven per cent were in the labour force but unemployed.

The connection between income and health is well-established. Those with lower incomes are more likely to suffer chronic conditions, live with disabilities, require health services, suffer from mental distress and die earlier. More equitable income distribution, healthy work environments, and jobs that allow people to meet their needs are a crucial part of a healthy city for all. Income influences our housing choices, food security, access to education, recreation activities and early childhood development.

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## What we heard

It was clear during our public engagement that making ends meet is a significant challenge for some Vancouverites. People highlighted the need for:

- more affordable housing options
- opportunities for sharing goods and services
- affordable goods and services
- increases in social assistance rates and wages
- a living wage
- a poverty reduction strategy
- social and local procurement policies
- supports for social enterprise, more low-barrier employment opportunities, including low-barrier artist production space
- more job and training opportunities, particularly for youth and newcomers.

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## The City's role and contribution

Addressing issues such as poverty, income inequality, job conditions and related issues are complex challenges. Reducing the City's poverty rate by 75 per cent by 2025 and increasing median incomes is not something the City of Vancouver can achieve alone. However, there are key areas where the City shows leadership. They include:

- the work of the City and Vancouver Economic Commission in continuing to attract investment and new jobs through the implementation of the City's first Vancouver Economic Action Strategy
- enabling affordable housing and childcare to reduce costs for individuals and families.
- facilitating equitable and inclusive job growth through community planning and land-use regulations; enabling supported employment initiatives such as funding for social enterprises
- ensuring equitable access to City programs and services in recreation, literacy and culture through initiatives such as the Leisure Access card, the Inspiration Pass and the many universal programs of the Vancouver Public Library
- building community capacity through grants and other community supports
- demonstrating municipal leadership through City employment and contracting practices.





# 06

## BEING AND FEELING SAFE AND INCLUDED



**Goal** Vancouver is a safe city in which residents feel secure.

*“There needs to be increased involvement for Aboriginal women in shaping discussions on what safety means.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Targets

1. By 2025, increase Vancouver residents’ sense of belonging by 10 per cent.
2. By 2025, increase Vancouver residents’ sense of safety by 10 per cent.
3. By 2025, make Vancouver the safest major city in Canada by reducing violent and property crime every year, including sexual assault and domestic violence.

### Key findings

- In Metro Vancouver, 87 per cent of people are satisfied with their sense of safety (a lower percentage than in Montreal or Toronto).
- As with other urban areas, Vancouver faces challenges with violent and property crime. As with other urban areas, Vancouver faces challenges with violent and property crime. Strategic initiatives by the Vancouver Police Department to reduce crime have resulted in a 20 per cent decrease in violent crime rate and a 20 per cent decrease in property crime rate over the last five years.
- The tragedy of the missing and murdered women in the Downtown Eastside resulted in the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry that made 63 recommendations to address the safety, stigma and vulnerability of both Aboriginal women and women engaged in sex work.
- In Metro Vancouver, 52 per cent of people sampled said that most people in their neighbourhood trust each other.

Feeling that we belong, are included, and are safe in our communities is vital to our well-being. A strong sense of belonging is associated with better physical and mental health. On the other end of the spectrum, social exclusion means that individuals or groups are denied the opportunity for full participation in society.

How safe we feel in particular spaces and places depends on factors including our past experiences, known risk, and whether we belong to a group that regularly experiences targeted violence such as gender-based violence or hate crimes. Feeling safe, welcome and included is essential for our full economic, social, cultural and political participation in society.

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## What we heard

Participants in our public engagement spoke about the need to ensure that all residents feel safe in their communities, and that they are all able to participate in civic and community life. They talked about the need for:

- cross-cultural training and awareness-building
- inclusive community spaces
- inclusion for all, particularly newcomers and Aboriginal people
- use of a gender lens for women's safety, particularly for Aboriginal and immigrant women
- improved built environment and street lighting
- strengthened relationships between residents and police
- consideration for Vancouver to be a 'sanctuary city'.



Photograph by Tanya Fink

# 06

## The City's role and contribution

The City addresses safety and inclusion through city-wide and community initiatives, as well as direct services. For example, in 2013, the City provided over \$8 million in funding to approximately 200 non-profit organizations.

The Vancouver Police Department continues to address safety and inclusion through prevention, investigation, communications and improved relationships, through program such as the SisterWatch in the Downtown Eastside, and the work of staff and volunteers in the City's Community Policing Centres.

It will take cooperation and partnership between the City of Vancouver, law enforcement, the justice system, and other levels of government, service providers and the private sector to increase the sense of safety and inclusion of all residents. The key areas where the City shows leadership include:

- enhancing and supporting Vancouver as a City of Reconciliation, facilitating connections between Aboriginal and First Nations residents and other communities
- responding to the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, and the City Task Force on Sex Work and Sexual Exploitation recommendations
- supporting the successful integration of newcomers to Vancouver through various initiatives, including the Local Immigration Partnership
- developing policy guidelines that require built environment design to increase a sense of safety
- continuing to reduce violent and property crime through preventative measures, effective investigation, communicating when appropriate with the public, and working to improve the Vancouver Police Department's relationship with the public
- employing a safety and inclusion lens in City planning and development
- developing training, leadership, engagement and education programs that increase inclusion
- providing grants to organizations that support marginalized groups and focus on inclusion.





*Photograph by Paul Krueger*



# 07

## CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS



**Goal** Vancouverites are connected and engaged in the places and spaces that matter to us.

*“It’s easier to meet strangers when there’s reason and invitation to do so. Create a civic holiday around “Neighbourhood Day,” or start campaigns urging people to get to know neighbours. I suspect that many of us just need a nudge, or excuse, to overcome our timidity/ social risk around reaching out.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Targets

1. By 2025, all Vancouverites report that they have at least four people in their network that they can rely on for support in times of need.
2. By 2025, increase municipal voter turnout to at least 60 per cent.

### Key findings

- Approximately half of Metro Vancouverites volunteer in their community.
- The number of people who say they never chat with their neighbours in Metro Vancouver is twice as high in apartments as in ground-oriented buildings, and nearly twice as high in rented dwellings compared to owned dwellings.
- In Vancouver, turnout in the most recent elections was 57 per cent in the 2011 federal election, 53 per cent in the 2013 provincial election, and 35 per cent in the 2011 civic election.
- Through the Festival Expediting Staff Team (FEST), the City enables over 1,000 community events in public spaces every year.
- However for some Vancouverites, community connections are tenuous, and people can feel lonely or isolated.

Social connections are important for us as individuals and as communities. People who are connected to their social networks and engaged in civic and community life report better health and are more likely to care about and contribute to a healthy city for all. However, for some Vancouverites, the city can be a lonely and isolating place. Social exclusion and isolation are linked to poorer health outcomes, including an increased risk of heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, and depression.

Communities with high levels of neighbourliness and more connections to civic institutions are more resilient. People in connected communities are better at withstanding, adapting to and recovering from change, stress and loss. In emergency situations, including earthquakes or heat waves, the most important sources of help are friends, family and neighbours.

In addition to our personal relationships and social networks, being engaged in civic life allows us to shape decisions that affect us all. This is how we exercise our rights and obligations as citizens.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, people spoke about an overwhelming desire to connect more, share more and celebrate more together. They emphasized the importance of:

- reducing barriers to holding small-scale community events
- public spaces that promote social interaction
- the value of neighbourhood houses, community centres and libraries
- cultural celebrations and other fun campaigns to encourage people to connect
- using collective impact as a tool to address barriers to building connections.

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## The City's role and contribution

Increasing community engagement, volunteering and civic participation are important goals for the City. But as with the other goals, it requires collaboration from all stakeholders.

Much work is already underway in Vancouver to help people build social connections and civic engagement. The City develops, owns and supports community centres, parks, arts facilities, neighbourhood houses and libraries – all hubs of community life. Through our youth programs, young people across our city are engaged in mentorship programs, building leaders of tomorrow. For the broad community, the Viva Vancouver program has implemented a comprehensive strategy for activating city streets and other public spaces year round.

The City's commitment to engagement and civic participation is embedded in the many task forces, working groups, advisory committees and civic committees which advise the City and which the City supports. The recent work of the Mayor's Engaged City Task Force (2012-14) provided a roadmap for the City on how to increase neighbourhood engagement, and improve the ways the City connects with Vancouver residents. Many of those recommendations are currently being implemented, including initiatives such as Pop-Up City Hall and Doors Open Vancouver, innovative use of social media for connecting with community, improving voter outreach, and establishing an online community engagement panel called Talk Vancouver.

*Photograph by Paul Krueger*



# 08

## ACTIVE LIVING AND GETTING OUTSIDE



**Goal** Vancouverites are engaged in active living and have incomparable access to nature.

*“Create green spaces that are open and encourage social interaction as well as physical activity.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Targets

1. By 2020, all Vancouver residents live within a five-minute walk of a park, greenway or other green space (Greenest City Action Plan).
2. By 2025, increase the percentage of Vancouver residents aged 18 and older who meet the Canadian Physical Fitness Guidelines by 25 per cent over 2014 levels.

### Key findings

- Vancouver has more than 220 parks, beaches and gardens maintained by the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. Most Vancouver residents have close access to a park or green space, though some gaps remain.
- Vancouver’s waterfront remains a focus for public recreation. As of 2011, 63 per cent of Vancouver’s 67 km waterfront was accessible to the public.
- Vancouverites are generally active, compared to residents of other cities, but there are inequities in how different residents are able to take part in physical activity.
- Surveys between 2006 and 2011 found that about 70 per cent of Vancouver residents were physically active more than half an hour per day, three or more times a week but about a third of adults in Vancouver self-report being overweight or obese.
- In 2014, approximately nine per cent of low-income Vancouverites used the Park Board’s Leisure Access Program.



Being physically active throughout our lives is good for our bodies and minds. It reduces the risk of numerous chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, some cancers and depression. It enhances mental health, and improves the ability to manage stress and anxiety.

Natural environments have therapeutic benefits whether we are engaging in physical activity outdoors or relaxing in a park. Contact with nature restores us, improves our mental health, and reduces mental fatigue. Spending time outdoors also contributes to healthy personal development, resilience to stress, and a love for and commitment to the environment.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, many people spoke about the need for:

- more parks, green space, trees and off-leash dog parks
- outdoor gyms, recreation, fitness equipment
- free or affordable programs and activities
- bike accessibility.

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## The City's role and contribution

The City has a long history of taking action in this area. Some of the key strategies aimed at promoting physical activity among residents include the Vancouver Sport Strategy (2008), the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan (2012) and Transportation 2040 (2013). Strategies that improve access to and the quality of the natural environment include the Greenest City Action Plan (2011), the Urban Forest Strategy (2014), and Rewilding Vancouver, An Environmental Education and Stewardship Action Plan (2014). Upcoming strategies include the Biodiversity Strategy (2015) and the Vancouver Bird Strategy (2015).

Key areas where the City shows leadership include:

- implementing and integrating existing strategies and plans that support active living and getting outside
- continuing to build on the land-use planning which enhances walkability in the city
- promoting physical activity in everyday life, facilitating a mix of opportunities, including sports, active play, and active transportation
- partnering with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the Vancouver Board of Education, among others, to increase access to recreation, particularly for children and youth
- providing parks and recreation facilities and services that are inclusive and universally accessible
- healthy and equitable land-use and transportation planning and initiatives.



# 09

## LIFELONG LEARNING



**Goal** Vancouverites have equitable access to lifelong learning and development opportunities.

*“We need more education opportunities for newcomer adults at community centres. Many newcomers are professionals in their home country and can’t work in Canada in their field of expertise.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Target

By 2025, increase participation in lifelong learning by 25 per cent over 2014 levels.

### Key findings

- Vancouver aspires to be a learning city, committed to promoting and enabling lifelong learning among its residents.
- As of 2012, approximately 84 per cent of Vancouverites had access to the internet at home.
- 43,381 used the internet at a Vancouver Public Library location in 2013. A further 20,383 used free, public Wi-Fi offered by the library.
- Compared to other cities, Vancouverites make good use of its public library system, with over 427,000 active users.

Learning is important throughout our lives. Early learning contributes to school readiness, and adult learning helps us maintain employability and increases our self-confidence and resilience. People engaged in lifelong learning are better prepared to participate in civic life and to work collaboratively to address common challenges. Learning can foster a better understanding of our differences and help build communities that are healthier, safer and more inclusive. Learning is a key building block in promoting personal, social and societal well-being and creating a healthy city for all.

Lifelong learning takes place in many ways. It can be formal learning within institutions, informal learning through a public library or community organization, or learning from daily activity related to work, family or leisure. Policy makers have focused on creating an environment for lifelong learning because they know that knowledge and information are central to economic development.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, people spoke about their need for opportunities to learn throughout their lives. They said they wanted:

- greater access to free or affordable learning opportunities
- a wide range of topic and skill areas
- training and mentorship programs for newcomers and youth
- learning opportunities that bridge cultures and generations
- English language training and programs.

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## The City's role and contribution

Many individuals and organizations have a role to play in promoting lifelong learning for all Vancouver residents. Vancouver Public Library, City cultural agencies and partners such as Civic Theatres, Museum of Vancouver, Vancouver Art Gallery and others, City departments and boards, educational institutions, non-profit agencies, community organizations, grass-roots community collaboratives, individuals and commercial enterprises all contribute to the learning landscape of Vancouver and provide a range of opportunities for residents. The City's Digital Strategy will also play a role in enhancing opportunities for lifelong learning.



# 10

## EXPRESSING OURSELVES



**Goal** Vancouver has a diverse and thriving cultural ecology that enriches the lives of residents and visitors.

*“We need more public art and public poetry that represents the diverse groups in a neighbourhood.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Target

By 2025, increase public participation and community engagement in arts and culture by 25 per cent over 2014 levels.

### Key findings

- Vancouver has a rich and diverse cultural sector that is engaging a growing number of people.
- Participation in arts and culture enhances health and well-being. From 2007 to 2011, the number of people participating in arts programs at Vancouver community centres increased by more than 50 per cent.
- As of 2006, Vancouver was home to 8,200 people working primarily as artists.
- A total of 21,500 people, including artists, worked in the broader cultural sector as of 2006, making up 7.2 per cent of Vancouver's labour force.
- Many artists have low incomes. In 2005, median earnings for artists in Vancouver were 36 per cent lower than the general workforce.
- In 2012, Vancouver ranked second among five large Canadian cities in municipal culture investment; in 2009, Vancouver invested \$47 per person in the cultural sector.

Participation in artistic and cultural events is crucial to building a vibrant, healthy and livable city for all. Arts and cultural events range from large scale performances such as rock concerts and operas, to art galleries and exhibits that allow us to observe and engage with art, to street festivals and small-scale community art projects. Each type of activity plays a different but important role in improving our individual and collective well-being.

Art and cultural activities often bring people together and can be an important antidote to social isolation. For many people, participation as a creator or performer provides an important creative outlet as well as an opportunity to meet people and make new friends. At the community level, arts and cultural events foster the development of social capital and build bonds between different cultures and generations.

Participation in arts and culture has been shown to have a strong connection with better health, increased self-confidence, more volunteering and greater satisfaction with life.

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## What we heard

Participants in our public engagement emphasized outdoor events, festivals and performances as important ways they experience art and culture in Vancouver. They said they want more:

- outdoor events and festivals
- free and accessible art spaces and programs
- street and public art and murals
- greater access to affordable art spaces and performance venues
- opportunities to express and celebrate the city's rich multicultural diversity.





## The City's role and contribution

The City of Vancouver supports arts and culture in many ways, including:

- providing grants to over 220 Vancouver-based non-profits
- the Mayor's Arts Awards
- enhancing opportunities to commission public art
- supporting cultural facilities, including owning and operating the Civic Theatres (Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver Playhouse, Orpheum and Annex) and owning 52 other spaces throughout the city, operated by non-profits
- Park Board arts programming
- facilitating films and outdoor events through the City's Film and Special Events office
- the VIVA Vancouver program which transforms roads into vibrant pedestrian spaces.

The City's key strategic approaches are to:

- continue to support and work with partners to build leadership, sustainability and infrastructure in the non-profit sector, which creates many of the arts and cultural events in Vancouver
- enhance the tools that allow the City to analyze trends, develop benchmarks, and report back to the community on the value of participation in the arts
- partner with First Nations and urban Aboriginal communities for public art commissions and other arts and cultural events
- engage in dialogue with citizens, neighbourhoods and cultural communities around arts and culture initiatives.



*Photograph by Steve Chou*



# 11

## GETTING AROUND

**Goal** Vancouverites enjoy safe, active, and accessible ways of getting around the city.



*“Think of streets as if cars didn’t control them.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

### Target

By 2020, make the majority (over 50 per cent) of trips on foot, bike and transit. (Greenest City Action Plan/Transportation 2040)

### Key findings

- In 2011, 44 per cent of all trips in Vancouver were made by walking, cycling or transit, the highest percentage in the region.
- From 2008 to 2011, a total of 127,000 daily trips were added to the transportation system, and most of this was in sustainable modes.
- National surveys show that Vancouver commuters are more likely to walk, cycle or use transit to get to work than in many other Canadian cities.
- From 2008 to 2011, walking trips increased by 19 per cent, and cycling trips increased by 41 per cent.

The ways we move around the city impacts our health as individuals, as well as that of our communities and our environment. When getting around is safe and easy, we can spend more time engaging in the activities that are important to us. An array of accessible, sustainable transportation options allows people to save time and money while improving health and well-being.

Many health benefits are associated with sustainable transportation, including reduced rates of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancers, and less respiratory and cardiovascular disease.

Active transportation such as walking, wheeling, cycling, or boarding allows people to make exercise part of their daily routine. Using public transit also has health benefits as nearly every transit trip starts and ends with walking or cycling. By making these modes safe and convenient, we can directly affect the health of citizens of all ages, benefit our natural environment, and contribute to the vitality of our public spaces.

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, people spoke about how much they value active and sustainable ways of getting around the city. Participants said they would like to have:

- more routes, increased frequency and reliability of transit service
- more affordable transit
- more bike lanes and infrastructure to make cycling more accessible to all residents
- an improved pedestrian experience, particularly through sidewalk design that would improve accessibility for those using scooters, wheelchairs, or other mobility aids.

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## The City's role and contribution

The City faces challenges to its sustainable transportation goals since many key decisions are made by other agencies and levels of government. Partnerships are critical to success in this area, particularly in a region with 23 local elected government, regional transportation and planning agencies, and many overlapping jurisdictions and interests.

However, the City has a number of ways to influence transportation, including prioritizing road space, improving the pedestrian realm, proving wayfinding information, building a complete and attractive cycling network, and creating vibrant public spaces.

The City is working internally and through partnership to achieve safe, active and accessible sustainable transportation. Key strategies include:

- land-use planning to support shorter trips and sustainable transportation choices
- advocating and partnering with other municipalities for enhancements to public transit on the Broadway Corridor
- making walking and cycling safe, convenient, comfortable, and delightful for people of all ages and abilities
- providing leadership, both locally and around the world, to accelerate the shift to low-carbon vehicles, encourage sustainable transportation choices, and educate all road users to promote safe and respectful behaviour.

*Photograph by Dylan Passmore*





# 12

## ENVIRONMENTS TO THRIVE IN



**Goal** Vancouverites have the right to a healthy environment and equitable access to livable environments in which they can thrive.

*“Built environments, natural environments, economic environments and social environments are all interconnected and need to be considered in policy and decision making.”*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Targets

1. Add to the Greenest City Action Plan, a biodiversity target and a target related to toxins prevention.
2. By 2025, every Vancouver neighbourhood has a “walk score” of at least 70, meaning most errands can be done on foot.

### Key findings

- The City of Vancouver has the highest “walk score” of large Canadian cities measured to date. The score is 78 or “very walkable.”
- However, not all of Vancouver’s neighbourhoods are equally walkable. Some neighbourhoods are less walkable than others.
- Canadians’ right to live in a healthy environment is not expressed in the Charter, although this fundamental human right enjoys constitutional status in more than 110 countries around the world.



*Photograph by Peter Marriott*

All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, which includes the right to clean air and water, safe food, access to nature and preservation of native biodiversity. Citizens also have the right to know about and to say no to pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment that can cause harm, and the right to participate in decision-making that will affect the environment.

The environments we live in have a profound impact on our health and well-being. A livable environment is easy to get around in by foot, bike, wheelchair and public transit. It has vibrant streetscapes, strong neighbourhoods, and green spaces. There is a mix of residential and commercial uses. People participate in civic life, and neighbours, friends and families come together for leisure and community-building. Local businesses, new investment and global trade attract and retain workers.

Vancouver is renowned for its parks and natural spaces, urban planning and goal to be the greenest city in the world. However, access to healthy and livable environments is not equitable. Land use and building types, quality amenities and transportation networks all vary across the city.

Integrating the built, natural, economic and social environments is tremendously challenging. To resolve this challenge, we must start by deciding what sort of city we want to live in and then decide how we can move from conflicts between social, economic and environmental goals to opportunities for collaboration and integration.

# 12

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## What we heard

During our public engagement, we heard a great deal about what livable environments mean to Vancouverites. People said they want:

- livelier public spaces with more opportunities for social interaction
- access to green space, shops and services within walking distance of home
- reduced noise pollution and quiet spaces throughout the city
- less waste and improved air quality
- car-free spaces.

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## The City's role and contribution

The City of Vancouver is not going to single-handedly create environments in which to thrive. But there are opportunities to lead, collaborate and connect different aspects of public policy to articulate a vision for our city's future. Key areas in which the City can show leadership include:

- pursuing land use, transportation and infrastructure planning with a social equity lens, to ensure that all Vancouverites have equitable access to livable environments in which they can thrive. This can take place at both community and city-wide levels
- continuing to work to become the greenest city in the world, to demonstrate the role that local governments can play in responding to climate change, energy depletion and changing ecosystems
- creating economic development plans that incorporate sustainability and equity as key components of economic growth and prosperity
- ensuring social sustainability by developing more opportunities for people in Vancouver to meet their basic needs, contribute to their city and participate in networks, organizations, communities and institutions that empower and engage them.







# 13

## COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

## FOR A HEALTHY CITY FOR ALL



**Goal** Leaders from the public, private and civil sectors in Vancouver work in integrated and collaborative ways towards the vision of a healthy Vancouver for all.

*For me when I think of a healthy city for All  
I think of my friends, family and neighbours  
having a balanced life*

*Talk Healthy City for All participant*

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### Target

By 2025, 90 per cent of 'Actions for All' to be developed in Phase 2 of the Healthy City Strategy will be implemented.

This final goal grew from the recognition at the Leadership Table that health and well-being are everyone's business, and working collaboratively to find solutions that benefit everyone is the best way to create a healthy city for all.

The City will support this goal by:

- fulfilling the convening and secretariat function for the Healthy City Leadership Table
- continuing to integrate the work of City staff towards reaching the vision of a healthy city for all.

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## CONCLUSION

*A Healthy City for All: Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy 2014-2025 - Phase 1* is a bold and ambitious long-term strategy to create a Vancouver in which everyone can thrive.

During the development of this first phase of the strategy we heard the same themes over and over again from participants: innovation, transformation, integration, sharing, caring, connecting, engaging, enabling, shifting culture, and reconciliation. We heard that change needs to happen at all levels (individual, cultural and systemic), and that efforts need to be integrated and interconnected.

Phase 1 reflects those themes and creates the framework for the second phase: a four-year action plan. Many actions are already taking place through a number of City initiatives which align with the Health City Strategy. But the realization of the vision of a healthy city for all will take new ways of thinking, innovative and integrated approaches, and most of all, commitment and close collaboration among all levels of government, business, non-profits, educational institutions, community-based organizations and others. And it will take the efforts of every single one of us as residents.

We are all in this together.

# Appendix A

## Healthy City Strategy Development & Engagement

### Developing the Healthy City Strategy

Key stakeholders and City staff took a number of steps over the course of two years to develop the Healthy City Strategy. Initial literature research and consultation with stakeholders and experts led to the formation of a guiding vision, principles and assumptions, goals, targets and indicators. A guiding framework — illustrating the 20 building blocks of a Healthy City for All — was produced to graphically show the interconnected and interdependent elements involved in creating such a vision.



Figure 1: The 20 building blocks of a Healthy City for All

What follows below is a description of the actions taken and the activities conducted to date, to engage others in achieving a Healthy City for All.

### **Establishing Leadership**

Two bodies are providing leadership and guidance. The Healthy City for All Leadership Table and the Healthy City Strategy Technical Team.

#### **Healthy City for All Leadership Table**

The City assembled a table of 30 distinguished and experienced leaders from the private, public and voluntary sectors. Members of the City's Corporate Management Team also participated.

1. **Dr. Penny Ballem**, City Manager, City of Vancouver (Chair)
2. **Michael Anhorn**, Executive Director, CMHA, Vancouver and Burnaby
3. **Janet Austin**, CEO, YWCA
4. **David R Boyd**, Co-chair, Greenest City Action Team
5. **Steve Butz**, CEO, YMCA
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29. **Michael Spowart**, Regional Director, Western Region, Public Health Agency of Canada
30. **Rob Turnbull**, CEO, Street to Home Foundation

#### **Healthy City Strategy Staff Team**

The staff team included representation from all City departments as well as from the Vancouver Public Library, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Economic Commission. The team's mandate was to participate in public engagement processes, respond to ideas and identify opportunities for policy and practice integration. The team will also provide advice on priority actions for Council's consideration in the second phase.



## Healthy City Summits

In June of 2012, the City of Vancouver partnered with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH) to host the first of two Healthy City Summits. The event, *Healthy People, Healthy City 2012*, brought together more than 300 people to launch the development of the Healthy City Strategy and the 20 building blocks of a healthy city for all framework. The summit featured presentations on ground-breaking areas of urban health and well-being. Together with leaders in health and social sustainability, they discussed ideas for creating a healthier Vancouver for all.

In June of 2014, the City again partnered with VCH to host a second Summit, called *Healthy People, Healthy Places, 2014*. This event brought together 175 people from across the Lower Mainland for presentations and dialogue, with the purpose of sharing knowledge and experience about planning and designing communities for greater health and well-being. City and VCH staff focused on three key opportunities: active transportation and walkability, community and neighbourhood planning, and the Broadway corridor. Outcomes included a commitment to develop a joint COV-VCH Healthy Built Environment Action Plan (2015-2018).

### Public Engagement: TALK Healthy City for All

From April 24 to July 15, 2014, the City conducted an engagement process called, Talk Healthy City for All. Citizens had an opportunity to share ideas with the City and each other on ways to achieve the Healthy City Strategy goals and targets. The engagement sought to do the following:

- Build understanding of and support for the Healthy City Strategy.
- Gather innovative ideas to achieve goals and targets.
- Encourage Vancouver residents and organizations to take action.

## Participation

To create learning opportunities and to exchange information, the Talk Healthy City for All process used a variety of formats, including an online ideas platform called “Soapbox”, Twitter conversations, the City of Vancouver website, in-person workshops and Ideas Labs. Methods of engagement employed by the City followed a well-established public participation framework created by the International Association of Public Participation. More than 10,000 people were reached in the process and more than 1,300 individuals participated in person:

- 380 people submitted ideas to Soapbox. The posted ideas attracted 340 comments and almost 5,400 votes. The Soapbox platform, also linked to the *Healthy City* webpage, received almost 6,000 visits.
- The Twitter hashtag *#HealthyCity4All* tracked the exchange ideas in 500 original tweets and over 1,700 retweets between residents and Leadership Table members.
- A YouTube video, explaining the aims of the Healthy City Strategy, drew more than 2,000 viewers.
- 6,800 followers saw 22 photos posted on *Instagram*, the online mobile photo-sharing platform. The story-telling photos, taken by Donovan Mahoney, explored the theme of “we are all in this together.”
- More than 800 people visited Healthy City Strategy information tables at a number of events held across Vancouver. There, people could also submit ideas. At 40 Ideas Labs and community events across the City, people shared ideas and collaborated to develop great ideas for attaining the Healthy City Strategy’s 2025 targets. Almost 180 people attended in-person workshops and more than 390 others participated through programs for youth, seniors, multi-cultural groups, immigrants and Aboriginal people at community centres, neighbourhood houses, and non-profits. All participants were encouraged to provide feedback through evaluation forms offered at events.

Participants in engagement activities were encouraged to develop ideas with others and put those ideas into action, if possible.

### **Evaluation and Feedback**

The overall reception from individuals who participated in events was very positive. As one participant stated, it was a *“great way for people to think about the various aspects of a healthy city and what is involved in reaching specific goals. A difficult process that is largely underestimated!”*

### **Idea Review**

All ideas collected during the engagement process were categorized and analyzed by theme. These ideas and themes, along with ideas generated through related engagement processes, will help to inform and shape priority actions in Phase 2.

# Appendix B

## Guiding Vision, Principles, and Assumptions

GUIDING VISION: A Healthy City for All: a city where together we are creating and continually improving the conditions that enable all of us to enjoy the highest level of health and well-being possible.

### Guiding principles and assumptions

<b>A broad and holistic understanding of health and well-being</b>	The building blocks of a healthy city for all (the social determinants of health and well-being) need to be: recognized as having as much influence as biology and genetic endowment; understood as interconnected; and addressed holistically, rather than in isolation
<b>Fulfillment of fundamental rights and freedoms</b>	Fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, within the context of municipal jurisdictions and Vancouver's aspirations, will be supported and protected.
<b>Health and well-being are everybody's business</b>	The health and well-being of Vancouver is everybody's business – across the public, private and civil sectors and including all of our residents. We will endeavour to broaden discussion of, engagement in, and ownership of, the issue of a healthy city for all, including meaningfully involving those most affected.
<b>The need for social innovation</b>	Over the last three decades, many efforts to significantly move the dial on complex social issues have not been as successful as hoped. We need to try different things and to do things differently to transform the systems that gave rise to our existing social, economic and environmental challenges.
<b>Enabling collective impact</b>	We need to continue to integrate and align our efforts across City departments and bodies, and across all partners in order to: realize greater value for efforts and investments; leverage existing assets of the City and others; and have a greater impact on the complex social problems we are trying to solve.
<b>For all, not just for some</b>	Vancouver is an incredibly diverse city. A “for all” lens will help ensure that we pursue initiatives that are both universal for all citizens and focused on specific populations most vulnerable to health inequities. Further, we will resist the push to view these vulnerable populations in a monolithic way, by recognizing the complexity of the lived realities of individuals who experience marginalization on multiple and intersecting grounds**.
<b>Prevention and upstream-oriented</b>	Priority will be given to addressing the determinants of health and well-being early, and not waiting for problems to emerge.
<b>Healthy ecological environments</b>	All people have the right to live in a healthy environment, including the right to clean air and water, safe food, access to nature and preservation of native biodiversity. Citizens have the right to know about and to say no to pollutants and contaminants released into the local environment that can cause harm, and the right to participate in decision-making that will affect the environment.
<b>Focus investment and action on what matters, based on evidence</b>	Priority will be given to those investments and actions which, grounded in evidence, will realize value for our efforts and move us towards reaching our targets.
<b>Monitor, evaluate and communicate</b>	We will track metrics to assess our progress, make changes based on evaluation, and communicate the results as often as makes sense.
<b>Lead and model</b>	The City will continue to demonstrate leadership in health and well-being and model changes through our own operations.

\*\* The lived experience of being, for example, a female Aboriginal elder, is not ever one of being *only* female, or *only* Aboriginal, or *only* an elder – we experience our lives in intersecting ways. Rather than apply a single category lens (such as a “women’s lens” or an “Aboriginal lens”, or an “LGBTQ lens” or “a disability lens” or a “senior’s lens”) or a “people of colour lens”, we are using an intersectional “for all” lens with the aim of reflecting and addressing this complexity.

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# Appendix C

## Acknowledgements

The following is a list of people, groups and organizations who contributed to the development of Phase 1 of the Healthy City Strategy.

*To Vancouver residents:*

*A special appreciation goes out to all residents who participated in the Talk Healthy City for All public engagement process by sharing their ideas on Soapbox, participating in Labs and other workshops, Twitter conversations, and visiting our Healthy City Strategy information tables at many events across the city. We look forward to continuing to work together.*

### Healthy City for All Leadership Table

1. **Dr. Penny Ballem**, City Manager, City of Vancouver (Chair)
2. **Michael Anhorn**, Executive Director, CMHA, Vancouver and Burnaby
3. **Janet Austin**, CEO, YWCA
4. **David R Boyd**, Co-chair, Greenest City Action Team
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29. **Michael Spowart**, Regional Director, Western Region, Public Health Agency of Canada
30. **Rob Turnbull**, CEO, Street to Home Foundation



### ***City of Vancouver Advisory Committees and Task Forces***

Arts and Culture Policy Council  
Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee  
Joint Childcare Council  
LGBTQ Advisory Committee  
Multicultural Advisory Committee  
Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee  
Public Art Committee  
Seniors' Advisory Committee  
Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee  
Urban Design Panel  
Vancouver City Planning Commission  
Vancouver Civic Theatres Board  
Vancouver Food Policy Council  
Vancouver Public Library Board  
Women's Advisory Committee  
Mayor's Engaged City Task Force  
Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions

### ***Vancouver Coastal Health***

**Dr. John Carsley**, Medical Health Officer

**Jat Sandhu**, Regional Director,  
Public Health Surveillance Unit

**Claire Gram**, Policy Consultant  
and Healthy Built Environment Lead,  
Population Health, Health Protection

### ***BC Ministry of Health***

**Dr. Evan Adams**, Deputy Provincial Health Officer,  
BC Ministry of Health

### ***Healthy City Strategy Staff Advisory***

Led by Social Policy staff, the Healthy City Strategy staff "technical" team included representation from the following City departments, boards and related entities:

- City Clerk's
- Corporate Communications
- Engineering
- Community Services: Housing Policy, Cultural Services
- Human Resources
- Planning and Development Services
- Sustainability Group
- Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
- Vancouver Economic Commission
- Vancouver Police Department
- Vancouver Public Library

### ***Community Centres***

Britannia Community Centre  
Champlain Heights Community Centre  
Coal Harbour Community Centre  
Douglas Park Community Centre  
Dunbar Community Centre  
False Creek Community Centre  
Hillcrest Community Centre  
Killarney Community Centre  
Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre  
Mount Pleasant Community Centre  
Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre  
Renfrew Park Community Centre  
Sunset Community Centre  
Thunderbird Community Centre  
Trout Lake Community Centre  
West End Community Centre  
West Point Grey Community Centre

### ***Neighbourhood Houses***

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House  
Kiwassa Neighbourhood House  
Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

### ***Organizations and Individuals***

ALIVE  
BC Healthy Communities  
Centre for Hip Health and Mobility  
CityStudio  
Community Policing Centers  
Covenant House  
Engaged Immigrant Youth Program, Vancouver Board of Education  
Envisioning Labs  
Dr. Trevor Hancock, School of Public Health and Social Policy, University of Victoria  
Learning City Group  
Gary Leung  
Living Wage for Families Campaign  
Low Income Caucus, Carnegie Community Centre  
Donovan Mahoney  
PACE Society  
Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network  
REACH Community Health Centre  
Robert and Lily Lee Family Community Health Centre  
Social Innovation Exchange (SIX)  
The Future of Urbanity, the Environment and our Lifestyle (FUEL)  
UBC Human Early Learning Partnership  
Under One Umbrella Society  
Vancouver Board of Trade  
Vancouver Division of Family Practice  
Watari

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# Appendix D

## Resources

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