



## 7. Meeting Changing Community Service and Infrastructure Needs

In many ways, community services and the utilities infrastructure are the support base for all facilities and all activities taking place within the community.

Human services such as recreational and cultural programming help address the leisure needs of citizens; arts facilities give our communities vitality and identity; and libraries help ensure equal access to information and knowledge for our citizens. Recognition of special user group needs help ensure that the benefits of these services are readily accessible to all within our community. Safety is another important service element valued by residents, provided through RCMP policing, fire protection, and emergency preparedness services. While not administered directly by the City, educational institutions, places of worship, daycare, and health care centres also provide for important community needs. The City can support the latter activities through partnerships and by ensuring a place exists for them within our community.

The utilities infrastructure represents a more physically based type of service that supports community needs, including stormwater management, sewage and solid waste disposal, drinking water supply, street design and construction, and flood protection. Other utilities of significance to Coquitlam residents, but not delivered by the City, include telephone, gas, electric, and fibre optic networks. Here again, the City's main role in assisting with the latter consists of ensuring appropriate physical locations for them through designated rights-of-way.

The CWOCP strives to continue relevant and effective provision of all forms of human and infrastructure services, while recognizing the issues and opportunities posed by fiscal sustainability, changing community needs, evolving technologies, and the devolution of some senior government responsibilities. In this context, partnerships will become an increasingly important delivery vehicle to ensure continued high quality of services that make Coquitlam a city where people choose to live, work and play.

## 7.1 Accessible Community Facilities and Programming

### ISSUES

#### MAINTAINING A BALANCE OVER TIME

Recreational and cultural services must continuously adapt to a range of age groups, ability levels, and interests. It is important to ensure services remain relevant, by assessing and responding to trends affecting service provision.

#### AN ADAPTIVE APPROACH TO FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Coquitlam's cultural and recreational facilities meet today's needs. Yet anticipated population changes and rising land costs will require the City to adapt its approach to ensuring appropriate facilities. This approach should consider locational relevance and areas of future growth, maintenance issues and fiscal sustainability.

#### LIBRARY SERVICES

Public libraries strive to meet the community's varied information needs. Future library needs could arise: in newly developing areas like the Northeast; from future growth elsewhere; and from changing expectations. While responding poses fiscal challenges, innovations could help address these needs.

#### JOINT USE AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The City already benefits from partnerships and other collaborative processes to help communities enhance facilities and services reach a wider audience. Opportunities exist to expand on these partnerships, and to encourage an appropriate level of community participation in decision-making.

#### MEETING SPECIALIZED NEEDS

While facilities and services should be accessible to all, at times efforts are required to target groups with needs that are specialized or currently inadequately met. These include different cultural groups, seniors, youth, people with disabilities, and ensuring gender equity. Coquitlam has already made efforts to address these needs, which could be monitored and fine-tuned over time.



*Selected partnerships include the Smart Choices initiative and the Town Centre joint use facility, comprised of Pinetree Secondary, Douglas College and Pinetree Community Centre.*

## RESPONSES

### OBJECTIVE 1

To provide services and programming which promote livability by enhancing resident and business participation in sports, arts, and cultural events and programs.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Maximize community benefit from leisure facilities.** Examine ways to increase use of services and facilities by under-represented groups.
- b) **Create opportunity for localized programs and services in neighbourhoods.** Encourage local outreach in decentralized locations such as places of worship, parks, and senior centres.
- c) **Encourage programming to promote a sense of place and neighbourhood uniqueness.** Continue enabling the community to promote selected special events and festivals throughout the City.

### OBJECTIVE 2

To provide, manage and maintain City-owned facilities in an adaptive manner that responds to changing needs and fiscal realities.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Continue to develop strategies for supplementing existing community level recreational and cultural facilities with premises in decentralized locations near local neighbourhood centres.**
- b) **Celebrate and enhance the role of Town Centre civic and recreational facilities as a community focal point.** Identify specific locations for additional facilities through the Town Centre Plan. Explore opportunities for enhancing the vitality of these facilities by adding retail and other street-animating activities such as cafes and restaurants, as appropriate.
- c) **As required, develop strategies to identify facility repair and/or replacement needs, particularly in the case of aging or strategically located facilities.**



### OBJECTIVE 3

To enhance service provision and facility use through collaboration, partnerships and volunteer work.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Continue to pursue and encourage opportunities for partnerships and volunteerism with community groups, schools and other public/private agencies.**
- b) **Maintain close relationships with existing facility partners such as Pinetree Community Centre/Douglas College/Pinetree Secondary School.**
- c) **Develop guidelines for public/private partnerships and a framework for developing joint facilities.**
- d) **Explore feasibility of expanding corporate sponsorship opportunities, while respecting the City official policy.**
- e) **Foster a sense of community ownership and pride in leisure facilities.**
- f) **Use the Smart Choices initiative to ensure efficient use of facilities.**  
This may include such things as booking space rentals on-line.

*Potential partners include other civic agencies such as libraries, RCMP and cultural centres, Tri-City agencies, as well non-profit, informal and neighbourhood associations.*

### OBJECTIVE 4

To provide accessible, useful library services, facilities and programs and capitalize on their potential as community focal points.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Reinforce Coquitlam Town Centre as a major library facility.** Ensure a strong central resource area that benefits from proximity to other City facilities such as City Hall, and specialized information resources such as a potential archives centre.
- b) **Respond to changing needs and technological opportunities.**
- c) **Anticipate longer-term needs for new library facilities.** This may be achieved by:
  - Considering secondary libraries in neighbourhood centres;
  - Reaffirming Northeast Coquitlam as a major new library destination; and
  - Investigating opportunities for private sector partnerships and developments to provide some of these facilities.

*Possible responses to changing needs could include:*

- *Using the Smart Choices initiative and other technologies to expand hours and range of services;*
- *Augmenting collections to respond to the varying language needs of citizens, as feasible; and*
- *Considering new library designs and layouts that respond to consumer preferences.*

## OBJECTIVE 5

To ensure that community facilities, services and procedures enhance accessibility for all, including different ages, genders, abilities and culture.

### POLICIES

#### A Range of Age Groups

- a) **Facilitate the continued support and operation of facilities and services targeting the needs of specific age groups, with particular reference to seniors and youth.**
- b) **Encourage citizens of all ages to feel welcome and self-sufficient in all community facilities.** This may be achieved by promoting senior-friendly design elements and implementing policies to remove barriers for people with disabilities
- c) **Explore opportunities for increasing a sense of belonging for youth.**
- d) **Investigate the possibility of intergenerational programming.** Bring youth, seniors and other age groups together to share common interests, resources, programs and services.

#### People with Disabilities

- a) **Encourage physical environments that do not inhibit the movement of people with disabilities.** Promote barrier-free design elements and construction materials in community facilities. Complement this design approach with a range of recreation and cultural programs to suit the needs, and encourage the participation of, people with disabilities.

#### Varied Cultural Needs

- a) **Ensure that people of all ethnicities benefit from, and feel welcome in, Coquitlam's community facilities and services.**
- b) **Continue to assist with and promote cultural events.**

*Selected cultural events in Coquitlam include:*  
- Chinese New Year  
- Eracism Walk  
- Festival du Bois



## 7.2 Community Safety

### ISSUES

*This section addresses fire safety, emergency preparedness, crime prevention and natural hazards. But the City also provides for safety through the building approvals process.*

#### **SUPPORTING AND FINE-TUNING EXISTING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PROGRAMS**

Safety and security through prevention is an effective way of meeting broader safety community and livability goals. Related programs in Coquitlam include fire prevention and inspections, crime prevention and emergency preparedness and response networks. These highly effective programs could benefit from ongoing support and refinement.

#### **PROMOTING EDUCATION AND ENSURING INFORMATION ACCESS**

Education is a key component of effective crime and fire prevention, and emergency preparedness. Several valuable safety related courses and services are available to citizens; but methods of promoting and delivering programs and information could always be improved.

#### **SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY**

Currently a number of community and volunteer organizations support Coquitlam's safety programs. These groups provide a range of necessary services, from block parenting to search and rescue, and are integral to the continued operation of the more formal programs.

## RESPONSES

### OBJECTIVE 1

To support the continued operation and refinement of fire/safety, crime prevention and emergency preparedness and response programs.

### POLICIES

- a) **Recognize the land use connection to fire safety.** Consider community safety needs and risk management factors in conjunction with any proposed changes to planning and development regulations.
- b) **Recognize the role of appropriate land use combinations in crime prevention.**
- c) **Ensure safe civic buildings and parks.** Consider safety and risk management factors in managing and operating these amenities.
- d) **Continue to implement, and modify as necessary, the emergency response and preparedness program administered by the City.**
- e) **Promote continued efficiencies in safety services, including possible opportunities for collaboration.**
- f) **Build upon and share successes and innovations in prevention and education programs.**
- g) **Acknowledge and respect existing policies and regulations administered by senior government agencies.** This includes, for example, provincial standards for Building Codes and fire regulations.



## OBJECTIVE 2

To foster safe neighbourhoods through greater awareness.

### POLICIES

- a) **Support initiatives to raise the awareness of all safety programs offered in the community.** Continue to encourage partnerships to this end, with particular emphasis on school programs.
- b) **Encourage greater safety awareness by providing a clear and balanced perception of safety issues and risks in Coquitlam.** Investigate options for providing information, such as area crime warnings or predator alerts, while still ensuring resident privacy.
- c) **Supplement existing programs with the Smart Choices Safety Net initiative.**

## OBJECTIVE 3

To enhance community involvement in fire/safety, crime prevention and emergency preparedness programs

### POLICIES

- a) **Recognize the importance of neighbourhood cohesion in complementing safety programs to promote neighbourhood safety.**
- b) **Seek business collaboration in fostering safety in commercial and industrial areas.** Continue to maintain cooperative programs such as the RCMP Business Liaison program, subject to resourcing.
- c) **Continue to promote and support community and volunteer programs.**

*The Smart Choices/Safety Net initiative could provide for web-based information to complement in-person services.*



## 7.3 Seamless Service Provision With Other Agencies and Groups

### ISSUES

#### **CHOICE AND PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION**

As Coquitlam grows and changes, school provisions must respond to meet population needs. Coquitlam should support the availability of these choices in a manner that also helps achieve other community goals. Further opportunities exist for partnerships between the City and educational institutions to maximize community access to services, facilities, and programs.

#### **COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE AND SERVICES**

Coquitlam's health services and facilities are operated under the mandate of the Simon Fraser Health Board, and with other public and private agencies. These agencies work with the City to provide several smaller programs, such as the community response network. Continued collaboration will assist in meeting community health needs.

#### **DAY CARE CENTRES**

Day care centers are an important amenity, provided by both private and non-profit groups, that must be accommodated. Care is required to ensure that these are appropriately located.

#### **PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Places of worship fulfill spiritual needs and may also provide additional space for other community activities and organizations. As many of these facilities are now being built to serve more regional needs, sizes have been increasing. Locational policies for new facilities will need to consider this trend.



*Health services and facilities include:*

- *Supported hiring*
- *Nursing homes*
- *All types of congregate care*
- *Help facilitate aging in place*

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## RESPONSES

### OBJECTIVE 1

To ensure that Coquitlam residents benefit from a wide range of compatible and high quality educational services and facilities.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Continue to work with School District 43 to ensure sufficient availability of public school facilities are available to Coquitlam residents.**
- b) **Accommodate a variety of other educational opportunities.** These may include private schools, the Montessori system, French Immersion, ESL institutions, and post-secondary schools.
- c) **Enable private facilities to locate in Coquitlam, which benefit the community and reinforce other community goals.** Create appropriate locational criteria for private institutions. Consider developing guidelines for amenities in private institutions to reasonably address student needs.
- d) **Continue to work with School District 43 and individual schools to support community schools as a place where school staff, students, parents, community members, local organizations/agencies and businesses work collaboratively to fulfill community needs.** As such, encourage opportunities for community use of school facilities after school hours and on the weekend. This will require creative scheduling in light of existing demand.

### OBJECTIVE 2

To ensure that sufficient and appropriate community-based external agency services are available to Coquitlam citizens.

#### POLICIES

- a) **Encourage the continued development of health services, social services, agencies and programs to better serve the needs of Coquitlam residents.**



*An example of site City and School District collaboration is the joint gymnasium provided at Pinetree Secondary School*



### **OBJECTIVE 3**

To promote community livability by ensuring that a sufficient number of daycare centres are provided in appropriate locations throughout the City.

#### **POLICIES**

- a) **Encourage co-location of daycare centres with other educational, community and business facilities.**
- b) **Accommodate daycare, child-minding facilities and kindergartens in residential areas, subject to appropriate fit with existing area homes.**
- c) **Facilitate community and business efforts to foster an appropriate number of licensed daycare spaces, and investigate the feasibility of supporting additional daycare provision through the development process.**

### **OBJECTIVE 4**

To ensure that opportunities for places of worship are available to Coquitlam residents in a manner compatible with existing residential neighbourhoods.

#### **POLICIES**

- a) **Recognize the value of existing places of worship in the community.**
- b) **Encourage new places of worship to choose locations that:**
  - Have convenient access to a collector or arterial street to minimize traffic on local residential roads; and
  - Form a buffer between residential and non-residential areas and major roads.
- c) **Recognize the neighbourhood implications of new, larger-scale facilities.** Consider re-examining church location and development criteria as needed.



## 7.4 Sustainable Utilities

### ISSUES

#### **BALANCING THE NEEDS OF THE EXISTING AND FUTURE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS**

To fulfill LRSP commitments, infrastructure services must closely link with the City's growth management goals. A strong commitment to planning is needed to set priorities among competing resource demands.

#### **RESPONSIBLE DELIVERY AND MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE**

Utilities are the City's largest investment, and require adequate maintenance to prevent higher overall costs in future. Much of the City's infrastructure is at an age where it needs assessment and monitoring to effectively plan for rehabilitation or replacement. Such plans must be coordinated with the longer term needs of redevelopment areas. They should also consider new technologies, practices and standards arising from consumer preferences and prevailing environmental, health and safety requirements of senior agencies.

#### **RESPONDING TO CHANGING APPROACHES, PRACTICES AND STANDARDS**

New approaches pose both challenges and opportunities. New stormwater management approaches under consideration emphasize on-site storage and infiltration, as recently proposed for the Como Lake Watershed and Northeast Coquitlam. Because such approaches have not yet been widely implemented, and still pose effectiveness and cost uncertainties, they need careful assessment prior to being enacted. New standards also need to be considered for the street design, enabling bicycle and pedestrian use of road rights-of-way and promoting the design of more compact, complete communities. These standards and new technologies, like broad-based fibre optic and wireless networks and remote sensing devices could improve customer service. They should also be assessed carefully for costs, need for land, phasing and appropriate integration within City policies and regulations.

#### **THE FUNDING CHALLENGE**

Infrastructure provision is a major part of the City's annual spending, affected by both City needs and by obligations from broader regional and provincial commitments. As Coquitlam continues to face future infrastructure servicing, further refinements to its financing approach will be needed that are consistent with community values and regional commitments.

*Growth-related infrastructure costs are addressed by development cost charges or direct developer involvement in infrastructure construction. Non-growth related infrastructure is financed through user fees and various taxes.*

## EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS IN UTILITY PROVISION

Many organizations and agencies work with the City in utility provision. Partnerships with other governments entail specific responsibilities with implications for City costs, staffing, and project timing. Given the growing impact of senior agencies on service provision, City efforts to increase communications with a broad range of agencies and partners should continue. Collaboration with private utilities is also important and rapid changes in related technologies create opportunities for the innovative partnerships to expand the scope and quality of locally available services, potentially reducing impacts on rights-of-way and other City assets.

*Private utilities provide services such as telecommunications, power and gas*

## RESPONSES

### OBJECTIVE 1

To expand and develop the City's infrastructure services to support broader growth management objectives and policies in a manner which balances existing community infrastructure needs.

### POLICIES

- a) **Promote a community-wide infrastructure and capital planning process which integrates maintenance, rehabilitation and upgrading of existing infrastructure with the need to expand and extend infrastructure services to accommodate the needs of future growth.**
- b) **Expand, extend and stage infrastructure services to accommodate future growth consistent with the City's overall growth management strategy that provides for a more compact, complete community.** Achieve this by:
  - Recognizing Northeast Coquitlam as a major urban development area consistent with regional goals; and
  - Accommodating future change in the rest of the City by directing growth to existing community and neighbourhood focal points, consistent with area and neighbourhood plans.
- c) **Prepare and implement a comprehensive long-term servicing strategy for green field development and redevelopments.** This strategy should address and integrate land use, infrastructure and the financing of servicing. Ensure that programs for addressing interim servicing issues such as failing on-site systems in the Northeast support longer term strategies, by working towards full cost recovery.

*As of 2001, the City of Coquitlam owns and manages infrastructure assets exceeding \$1 billion in value. These assets do not last forever and require continued investment. Without adequate maintenance and rehabilitation, the quality of the City's infrastructure will deteriorate and failures will increase in both frequency and magnitude.*



## **OBJECTIVE 2**

To enhance the City's investment in existing infrastructure through adequate maintenance rehabilitation and replacement as appropriate.

### **POLICIES**

- a) **Continue efforts to proactively assess infrastructure conditions.**
- b) **Continue to prepare business plans, consistent with overall City infrastructure and capital plans, which set out definitive strategies for the maintenance, rehabilitation and operation of the City's infrastructure services, in a manner supportive of development and redevelopment objectives.**
- c) **Investigate the appropriateness of a lifecycle cost approach to the identification of infrastructure maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement investment requirements.**
- d) **Increase the use of new technology in the management of existing and new infrastructure services which may include increased use of remote sensing, supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems, geographic information systems (GIS) and maintenance planning tools.**

## **OBJECTIVE 3**

To carefully assess new approaches, practices and standards related to infrastructure provision prior to implementation, in order to ensure effectiveness and reduce risk.

### **POLICIES**

- a) **Continue to implement proven approaches, practices and standards to the provision of infrastructure services.**
- b) **Monitor and assess new approaches and standards for the provision of infrastructure services.** Incorporate those approaches and standards which enable delivery of utility services in a more effective and efficient manner, taking into account consumer needs, the protection of the environment and fiscal realities.
- c) **Initiate pilot projects to assess the viability of new approaches in partnership with key stakeholders such as the GVRD, landowners, community groups and federal and provincial agencies in stormwater management.**

#### **OBJECTIVE 4**

To ensure sustainable, equitable and effective funding strategies to enable the City to provide a high quality and appropriate level of infrastructure services to its residents. The management of demand for services must form an integral part of the overall management of the City's infrastructure services.

#### **POLICIES**

- a) **Establish functional level funding and cost recovery strategies for both greenfield and redevelopment areas within the City as an integral part of sector or neighbourhood plans.**
- b) **Explore the range of financing and cost recovery tools used for funding growth-related infrastructure to ensure flexibility, effectiveness and equity.**
- c) **Monitor existing approaches to the recovery of infrastructure costs to ensure an attractive climate for investment.**
- d) **Promote a more predictable and sustainable source of funding for the maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of the storm drainage system.** Investigate the feasibility of establishing a self-liquidating stormwater utility. As part of any such utility, consider a funding approach that emphasizes user fees over general taxes.
- e) **Implement a water conservation program and investigate the implementation of universal water metering and a revised rate structure for the City.**
- f) **Continue to upgrade and replace infrastructure in older neighbourhoods of the City based on needs.** Where existing neighbourhoods are designated or under study for redevelopment, coordinate the needs of future growth with the need for rehabilitation and replacement of existing infrastructure.
- g) **Explore innovative approaches to infrastructure funding.** These may include partnerships with other public agencies as well as the private sector, provided that the interests of the City and its residents, businesses and industries are maintained.



## **OBJECTIVE 5**

To maintain effective partnerships with other agencies in the provision of infrastructure services and, within the context of those relationships, to represent the interests of the City of Coquitlam.

### **POLICIES**

- a) **Continue working with the GVRD to fully implement the Liquid Waste Management Plan (if approved by the Province).** Place particular emphasis on the preparation of watershed plans as well as addressing the issue of infiltration and inflow in its wastewater collection system.
- b) **Maintain and expand the curbside recycling program and continue efforts to reduce the volume of solid waste generated, consistent with the objectives and strategies of the Solid Waste Management Plan, thereby reducing land use and transportation impacts elsewhere in the City.**
- c) **Encourage the GVRD to accelerate establishing a water filtration plant for Coquitlam reservoir.**
- d) **Continue to expand communication with key provincial and federal agencies.** When necessary, establish formal agreements to clarify objectives, roles and responsibilities, as well as to define procedures for working effectively with one another.
- e) **Continue to advocate the interests of the community with individual Provincial and Federal agencies whose mandates affect infrastructure planning and investment.**
- f) **Explore opportunities to enter into partnerships with private utility providers to achieve economies of scale and other efficiencies in carrying out common utility functions.**
- g) **Investigate the feasibility of becoming involved in a partnership with private utility providers to upgrade the capacity of high-speed fibre-optic cable, or other modern technologies serving the City, its residents and businesses.**