



Burnaby  
Social  
Sustainability  
Strategy

**SOCIAL  
SUSTAINABILITY  
CONTEXT DOCUMENT**

**APRIL 2010**

Burnaby Planning & Building Department

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## **Executive Summary**

Burnaby City Council approved Terms of Reference for the development of a Social Sustainability Strategy in June 2008. A twenty-five person Steering Committee was appointed in March 2010, and the fifteen month strategy development process was launched. Building on Burnaby's positive attributes, and the existing goals and directions established by Council, the overarching purpose of the Strategy is to provide a contemporary frame of reference to guide the City's decisions and resource allocations related to social issues over the next ten or so years. The Strategy is meant to complement the Economic Development Strategy adopted in 2007, and the pending Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

The Burnaby Social Sustainability Context Document is intended as a background resource for Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee. It is meant to assist in assessing where Burnaby is now – both in terms of strengths and challenges – and to provide an overview of some of the main tools at the City's disposal for enhancing the social sustainability of the community.

Social sustainability is described as one sphere of overall sustainability, which also includes environment and economy. Of the three, social sustainability is the most difficult to define and measure, and there is no single agreed-upon definition. Metro Vancouver's definition is proffered as an interim tool for the initial stages of Burnaby's strategy development process, as follows:

- *ensuring that the basic needs of individuals are met;*
- *ensuring that individual or human capacity is maintained and enhanced; and*
- *ensuring that social or community capacity is maintained and enhanced.*

That definition, and the summaries of social plans and strategies from other Canadian municipalities also included in the Context Document are intended as catalysts for discussions about what a socially sustainable Burnaby would look like, and what the important elements of a strategy would be.

Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy will be constructed upon the solid foundation of Burnaby's many positive attributes, including:

- a diverse and engaged population;
- exceptional community services and facilities;
- outstanding educational institutions;
- a thriving arts, cultural, recreational and sports scene;
- a sound economic base;
- a wealth of natural assets;
- a varied housing stock; and
- other indicators of community well-being.

Another component of that solid foundation is a responsive municipal government which has a long list of achievements and activities in the social realm. Despite the fact that municipalities have limited resources and limited jurisdiction to act on matters of social welfare, the City of Burnaby has played a variety of roles over the years in nurturing the social well-being of the community. They include:

- social planning and planning e.g., a social planning function in the Official Community Plan; density bonusing for community benefits;
- social policies e.g., Child Care Policy, Group Home Policy;
- advocacy e.g., on services for high-risk youth, on a national and a provincial housing strategy;
- regulation e.g., bylaw on graffiti removal, requirements for barrier-free design;
- direct service delivery e.g., recreation, fire protection;
- infrastructure and facility ownership and leases e.g., Community Resource Centres, land leases for non-market housing;
- civic engagement and outreach e.g., Council's committee system, Kushiro Cup Citizen of the Year;
- establishment of partnerships e.g., with Burnaby Board of Education, with Burnaby Board of Trade; and
- community capacity-building and support e.g., Community Grants Program, Community Asset-Mapping Project.

Despite Burnaby's many positive attributes and its responsive municipal government, there are those in the community who face complex and multi-faceted social problems. Several social issues and trends, outlined below, can be expected to influence Burnaby's future social sustainability:

- increasing cultural diversity;
- high level of poverty;
- declining housing affordability and increasing visibility of homelessness;
- aging of the population;
- provision of quality early childhood experiences;
- challenges accessing affordable child care;
- high-risk behaviour among youth;
- family violence and child safety;
- quality of life for Aboriginal people;
- concerns about food security;
- gender inequality; and
- declining labour force participation and high rates of unemployment.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy**

The development of a Social Sustainability Strategy for Burnaby was launched in March 2010 with City Council's approval of a process and timeline for the initiative. Terms of Reference for the Strategy had been endorsed in June 2008, and a 25 member Steering Committee appointed in February 2010.

Building on Burnaby's positive attributes, and the existing goals and directions established by Council, the overarching purpose of the Strategy is to provide a contemporary frame of reference to guide the City's decisions and resource allocations related to Burnaby's social development over the next ten or so years. The development of the Strategy is timely. Given increasing constraints on senior government funding for social programs, the demand on City resources to nurture social development and address the increasingly complex range of social issues in the community is growing. Among other things, the Strategy will identify an appropriate role for the City in addressing social issues, and position it to work more effectively with potential partners such as senior levels of government, non-profit agencies, community organizations, and businesses. It will also set key directions for a socially sustainable Burnaby.

With significant opportunities for public involvement, the development process for the Social Sustainability Strategy will draw on the energy, creativity, and innovation of Burnaby citizens. It is intended that the Strategy also be:

- forward-looking;
- flexible and resilient in order facilitate adaptation and adjustment to changing community needs and opportunities; and
- pragmatic and cognizant of municipal jurisdiction and resources.

The Social Sustainability Strategy is intended to complement the Economic Development Strategy, adopted in 2007, and the pending Environmental Sustainability Strategy. All will serve as foundations for the future advancement and implementation of City plans, policies, and actions. With the three inter-related strategies, Burnaby will be able to move towards becoming a more liveable, vibrant, and sustainable community – a place which facilitates an engaged and active citizenry, a healthy economy, and a strong respect for and stewardship of the natural environment.

A number of other Canadian municipalities have developed social plans or strategies in recent years. Those plans focus on a wide range of themes from education and access to the basics of life to social infrastructure and substance abuse. An overview of social development plans and strategies created by select municipalities is provided in **Appendix 1, attached.**

## 1.2 About This Document

This Context Document is intended as a background resource for Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee. It is meant to assist in assessing "where Burnaby is now" - both in terms of strengths and challenges - and to provide an overview of some of the main tools at the City's disposal for moving towards Burnaby's future goals.

The document is structured in five main sections. Sections 1.0 and 2.0 discuss the concept of social sustainability and the need for a made-in-Burnaby strategy to ensure the ongoing vibrancy and health of the Burnaby community. Recognizing the importance of Burnaby's strengths, Section 3.0 provides an overview of the strong foundation upon which the Social Sustainability Strategy will be constructed - the many social assets, attributes and achievements that characterize the community of Burnaby. Section 4.0 presents an overview of the City's past and current contributions and investments in the social realm, as well as a discussion of the relative responsibilities of Federal, Provincial and municipal governments in social matters. Section 5.0 provides information on a range of social issues or challenges faced by some Burnaby residents, which need to be considered in any effort to enhance Burnaby's social sustainability. The document concludes with four appendices which provide more detailed supplemental information.

## 2.0 SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Social sustainability is one sphere of overall sustainability, which also includes environment and economy.<sup>1</sup> One of the most widely used definitions of sustainable development, incorporating the three spheres, derives from the 1987 Brundtland Report (Report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development):

*Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Of the three spheres of sustainability, social sustainability is the most difficult to define and measure. Social sustainability deals with issues which are challenging to talk about in terms of cause and effect, which are the product of multiple factors, and which are often difficult to monitor - but which have tremendous implications for the long-term health and sustainability of communities.

Due to the complex and multifaceted nature of the social realm, there is no single agreed-upon definition for social sustainability. Most definitions include some reference to the following concepts:

- the dynamic evolution of society in meeting individual needs, achieving common goals, and improving quality of life;
- the participation of community members in community life through a strong civil society and democracy; and

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<sup>1</sup> Culture has been suggested by some as a fourth component of sustainability. However, for Burnaby's initiative, culture has been included as an element of social sustainability.

- the increased capacity of current and future generations to build healthy and liveable communities.

An easily understood definition of social sustainability can be gained from Metro Vancouver’s framework for a socially sustainable community, as follows:

- *ensuring that the basic needs of individuals are met;*
- *ensuring that individual or human capacity is maintained and enhanced; and*
- *ensuring that social or community capacity is maintained and enhanced.*

Individual or human capacity refers to the attributes and resources that individuals can contribute to their own wellbeing and to the wellbeing of the community as a whole. Such resources include education, skills, health, values, and leadership. Social or community capacity refers to relationships, networks and norms that encourage collective action to improve upon quality of life.

The adoption of a “made in Burnaby” definition of social sustainability will be a critical first step in the development of Burnaby’s Social Sustainability Strategy, and will assist the Steering Committee in identifying critical components of the Strategy.

A number of sample definitions of social sustainability are presented in **Appendix 2, attached.**

### **3.0 A SOLID FOUNDATION: BURNABY’S POSITIVE ATTRIBUTES**

As noted above, Burnaby’s Social Sustainability Strategy will build on the existing foundation of Burnaby’s strengths and assets – its diverse and engaged population; its exceptional community services and facilities; its exemplary schools and post-secondary institutions; its thriving arts, cultural and recreational scene; its sound economic base; its stunning natural assets; its varied housing stock; and its overall community well-being.

#### **3.1 Diverse and Engaged Population**

Burnaby’s residents are its most valuable social asset. Burnaby had a population of more than 202,000 at the time of the 2006 Census, making it the third largest municipality in British Columbia. The population is ethnically and culturally diverse: 56.5% have a mother tongue other than English or French; 51% are immigrants; and 55% are visible minorities. According to the Census, 58 languages were spoken at home by Burnaby residents in 2006. Burnaby’s population is also well educated, with 69% of local residents aged 25 – 34 years having a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Further, the population consists of a range of income groups, with 18.4% of Burnaby households having incomes of less than \$20,000 in 2005 and 18.0% having incomes above \$100,000. This population diversity enriches and strengthens the community.

A more detailed demographic profile of Burnaby - with comparisons to Metro Vancouver - can be found in **Appendix 3, A Demographic Snapshot of Burnaby Based on 2006 Census Data, attached.** As well, two companion documents, *Demographic Tables for*

*Burnaby and Metro Vancouver, and Social and Demographic Trends in Burnaby and Neighbouring Communities, 1981 – 2006*, provide significant additional information about Burnaby’s population.

Burnaby is made up of distinct and diverse neighbourhoods, each with its own characteristics and identity. There are established neighbourhoods, such as Burnaby Heights, Lochdale, and the South Slope; neighbourhoods that are in a state of change, such as Royal Oak and Edmonds; and emerging neighbourhoods, such as UniverCity. Burnaby residents identify with and take pride in their neighbourhoods and their city. There is strong community participation in events such as Hats Off Days; the Santa Claus Parade; Discovery Days; the Great Salmon Sendoff; the Aadi Pooram, Ther Thiruvizcha (Chariot) Festival; and the Nagar Kirtan Parade. Burnaby residents are also involved in a wide variety of sports organizations, ratepayer groups, businesses, community associations, and other volunteer opportunities.

### **3.2 Exceptional Community Services and Facilities**

Each quadrant of Burnaby is host to a range of high quality City-owned facilities: libraries, recreation centres, sports fields, fire halls, seniors centres, youth centres, and community policing offices. Burnaby residents are also served by senior government programs (e.g., child protection, employment/skills training) and an array of excellent non-profit agencies that address the needs of all sectors of the community – children and youth, seniors, families, immigrants, volunteers, people with disabilities, and others. Non-profit and senior government program offerings ensure a continuum of services focusing on a range of topics from food, legal aid, and addictions treatment to mental health treatment, counselling and crisis intervention. As well, Burnaby’s business community offers a wealth of services which contribute to the overall wellbeing of the community.

In addition, Burnaby accommodates 56 places of worship, representing 21 denominations. Befitting of the city’s multicultural and inclusive character, Burnaby is home to the first Ismaili Centre and Jamatkhana in Canada. In terms of health, Burnaby’s key asset is the 309 bed Burnaby Hospital. The hospital, which serves Burnaby and East Vancouver, employs approximately 200 doctors and 650 nurses. It is a well equipped, bustling facility that handled roughly 57,000 emergency room visits in 2007.

### **3.3 Outstanding Educational Institutions**

Burnaby has an outstanding array of educational assets including a strong public school system, two major post-secondary educational institutions, and a variety of private institutions offering career, language and other programs.

Burnaby School District 41 is the fourth largest in the province, and operates forty elementary and eight secondary public schools. The School District employs approximately 2,000 staff, enrolls 23,978 full-time equivalent students, and provides programs and services to more than 15,000 adult learners. The District offers a range of educational programs from French Immersion and hockey and soccer academies to

alternative and technology-based education. In 2008, Burnaby had the third highest high school completion rate – 82% - in the Fraser Health Authority catchment area.<sup>2</sup>

Burnaby is particularly fortunate that seven of its elementary schools have been designated as community schools. These schools, which are cost-shared between the School District and the City, serve as focal points for the neighbourhood, build community, and link local residents with programs and resources. Community schools play a particularly important role in neighbourhoods with high transiency and a large proportion of newcomers or people with lower incomes.

In addition to its public school system, Burnaby boasts two outstanding post-secondary institutions: SFU and BCIT. The award winning and innovative Burnaby Mountain campus of SFU, designed by Arthur Erickson & Geoffrey Massey, was the first university in Canada to have a trimester system. Growing from an enrolment of 2,500 students when it opened in 1965, the university now serves over 25,000 students on three campuses. SFU is consistently ranked as one of Canada's top universities in Maclean's Magazine's annual survey of university rankings – in fact, it ranked highest in the “comprehensive” university<sup>3</sup> category in both 2008 and 2009. Burnaby's other major post secondary institution, BCIT, serves approximately 16,000 full time students and 32,000 part time students per year. Like SFU, BCIT is widely regarded for its innovations and commitment to excellence. Examples of the institute's innovative programs and offerings include an automated manufacturing robotics lab, the only prosthetics and orthotics training program in western Canada, a technology centre dedicated to applied high tech research and development, and the Centre for the Advancement of Green Roof Technology.

Burnaby is also home to Knowledge Network, which delivers quality educational programming across the province via television and the internet, and to some of British Columbia's largest and most progressive private secondary and post-secondary institutions, including Art Institute of Vancouver-Burnaby, and the University of Phoenix.

### **3.4 Thriving Arts, Cultural and Recreational Scene**

On the arts and cultural front, Burnaby offers a wealth of opportunities. The City's showpiece is Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, a multi-purpose community arts facility situated in picturesque Deer Lake Park. The Centre offers a year round schedule of art classes, performances, festivals, exhibitions, and special events: during the 2007/08 season, the Centre co-produced 25 shows. Also at Deer Lake Park, residents can take in an exhibit at Burnaby Art Gallery, experience a taste of the city's past at the Burnaby Village Museum, or enjoy a live concert. Burnaby is home to a number of regional outdoor cultural festivals including the Burnaby Blues and Roots Festival, Symphony in the Park, Night of Lights Lantern Festival, Discovery Days, and the Rhododendron Festival. Thousands turn out annually for much-anticipated events such as the Giro di

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<sup>2</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009, Burnaby Local Health Area*, February 2009, pg. 13.

<sup>3</sup> “Comprehensive” universities are those with a significant degree of research activity as well as a wide range of graduate and undergraduate programs, including professional degrees.

Burnaby bike race through Burnaby Heights, Canada Day celebrations at Burnaby Village Museum and Richmond Park, and Burnaby's salute to its war veterans.

Burnaby has an outstanding public library system, with a branch in each of Burnaby's four quadrants. In 2008, more than 3.6 million items were borrowed from and more than 1.8 million in-person visits were made to Burnaby's libraries. Over 6,000 children participated in the library's 2008 summer reading program.

Given changes in Burnaby's demographics, new technology, and other factors, the library system has shifted its services dramatically in recent years. A key focus has been to respond to the needs of the newcomer population, ensuring that libraries play a critical role in making Burnaby a welcoming and inclusive community for all our residents.

On the recreational side, a range of high quality facilities exist throughout Burnaby – community centres, seniors' centres, youth centres, swimming pools, arenas, and various outdoor venues (e.g., Swangard Stadium, sports fields, and skate parks). Through its Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, the City offers an array of interesting, accessible, and affordable programs targeted to all age groups within the community. In 2008, nearly one million swims took place in Burnaby pools, 36,000 people participated in drop-in playground programs, and almost 24,000 seniors took part in fitness programs.

Cost need not be a barrier for participation in City of Burnaby recreation programs. Local residents in financial need are able to apply for assistance through the Recreation Credit Program. The credits can be used for any Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services facility for programs and admissions. More than 11,000 people received the credit in 2008.

In addition, Burnaby has made a name for itself in the sports world. The city is home to the world class 8 Rinks facility, the Junior "A" hockey club, the Burnaby Express, and the Whitecaps professional soccer team. As well, Burnaby Lake Sports Complex West offers five artificial turf fields, and a 10,000 square foot clubhouse with changing rooms, meeting rooms, and food services. The 2009 World Police and Fire Games, sponsored by the City of Burnaby, the Province of British Columbia, and Western Economic Diversification Canada, were recently named the Sport Event of the Year at the Prestige Awards held as part of the Canadian Sport Tourism 2010 Congress. The 2009 Games attracted over 10,000 athletes from 56 countries, making them the best-attended Games in the event's twenty-six year history. It is estimated that they also had an economic impact on the region of over \$84 million.

### **3.5 Sound Economic Base**

Burnaby has a sound economic base: employment growth within Burnaby has increased at an average of about 1.4% per year since 1971 and has remained at about 11% of total regional jobs throughout this period. There is a positive balance between the working age population and employment opportunities: Statistics Canada data indicate that the city has roughly 116,000 jobs and 110,000 people in the labour force. Regionally, Burnaby has a competitive advantage in utilities, information technology, construction, wholesale

trade, education services, manufacturing and retail trade. It is also worth noting that, ranking by number of employees, Burnaby is home to:

- 10 of the top 25 telecommunications companies;
- 5 of the top 25 biotechnology companies; and
- 29 of the top 100 High Tech companies in B.C.

Burnaby is also home to the world's largest motion capture studio and over half of film studio space in the region.

Guided by the City's Economic Development Strategy, Burnaby's economy is well positioned to continue to strengthen and diversify in the future.

At the municipal level, Burnaby is one of the few debt-free municipalities in British Columbia.

### **3.6 Wealth of Natural Assets**

Burnaby is blessed with a wealth of natural assets. Roughly 25% of Burnaby's land area is devoted to parks and open space. The city also boasts forested and mountain areas, watercourses, freshwater lakes, remnant bog areas, wetlands, and coastal and estuarine areas. A key principle from the 1993 State of the Environment Report is that the City take leadership on the environment through partnership with the community. To this end, the City works with ten active streamkeeper groups, which focus on the health of waterways throughout Burnaby (Beecher, Byrne, Eagle, Jerry Rogers, Kaymar, Still Creek, Guichon, Upper Guichon, Stoney Creek and several creeks south of Burnaby Lake). The City also works with other levels of government, the Burnaby School District, the development community, and other groups and agencies in efforts to protect and enhance Burnaby's varied natural ecosystems.

### **3.7 A Varied Housing Stock**

There were over 78,000 occupied private dwellings in Burnaby at the time of the 2006 Census. Burnaby's housing stock is varied, comprised of single-family dwellings (27%), two-family dwellings (27%), apartment units in buildings of less than five storeys (27%), and apartment units in buildings of more than five storeys (19%).

In terms of affordable housing, Burnaby has the second largest share of non-market housing units among Metro Vancouver municipalities, with 5,819 units operated by B.C. Housing, Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation, non-profit housing providers, and co-operatives. Burnaby also has 232 assisted living units, and 508 supportive housing units for seniors, and persons with physical and mental disabilities. Burnaby has one transition house for women and children fleeing domestic violence, as well as nine units of second stage housing for the same target population. As well, Burnaby has a short-stay housing facility for persons with mental illness, as well as several houses providing support in a group living situation for high-risk youth, and for adults with mental illness or drug and alcohol addictions. The Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addiction offers integrated, residential long-term treatment for British Columbians with combined mental health, physical health, and addictions issues.

### 3.8 Other Indicators of Community Well-Being

All of the aforementioned assets contribute to a high level of community well-being in Burnaby. Other indications that Burnaby is a healthy, caring and involved community (and for which data is available) include:

- life expectancy in Burnaby in 2006 was 82.1 years, the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the Fraser Health Authority (FHA) catchment area, and higher than the provincial average of 81.1 years;<sup>4</sup>
- in 2006, Burnaby's mortality rate was the lowest in FHA's catchment area, and lower than the provincial average;<sup>5</sup>
- in 2006, Burnaby residents were less likely to die young than other Fraser Health and British Columbia residents;<sup>6</sup>
- in 2008, 4,416 persons received gifts through the Burnaby Christmas Bureau;<sup>7</sup>
- in 2008, Volunteer Burnaby's website, offering information and connections to volunteer opportunities, received more than 1,000 hits;<sup>8</sup>
- according to a 2009 province-wide study on volunteering, in which Volunteer Burnaby participated, 47% of British Columbians volunteer in a formal way through organizations. This compares to a national average of 46%;<sup>9</sup>
- the Burnaby Board of Trade promotes Corporate Social Responsibility, a concept which encourages entrepreneurs to develop profitable, sustainable enterprises which balance social change and environmental and profitability goals in pursuit of a better community;
- in 2002, the City of Burnaby was awarded (jointly with Quesnel) the Fraser Basin Council Sustainability Award in the category of overall sustainability for initiatives which combine qualities of understanding sustainability, caring for ecosystems, strengthening community, and improving decision-making; and
- in July 2009, Burnaby was ranked as the best-run city in Canada in Maclean's Magazine's first annual survey of municipal governments. The ranking was based on extensive criteria which tracked performance in areas as diverse as socio-economic stats, crime, fire services, transportation, road and sewer conditions, economic development, recreation spending and such indicators of civic engagement as voter turnout and library use.

With regard Burnaby's overall health and well-being, the summary statement in FHA's Community Profile 2009 for Burnaby states the following:

*“Overall, the residents of Burnaby enjoy good health. When compared to the Local Health Areas (LHAs) within Fraser Health and B.C., Burnaby ranks at or below average in indicators such as*

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<sup>4</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pg. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pg. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Burnaby Community Connections, *2008 Annual Report*.

<sup>8</sup> Volunteer Burnaby, *2008 Annual Report*.

<sup>9</sup> Volunteer B.C., *2008 B.C. State of Volunteering Report*. June 2009.

*teen abortions, low birth weight, selected infectious diseases.... and breast cancer screenings. It ranks well in teen pregnancy, infant mortality, life expectancy and death rates from most leading causes.”<sup>10</sup>*

#### **4.0 A RESPONSIVE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: BURNABY INITIATIVES IN THE SOCIAL REALM**

The City of Burnaby has a long history of involvement in the social sphere, despite the fact that municipalities have limited resources and limited jurisdiction to act on matters of social welfare.

As set out in the Canadian constitution, governmental powers and responsibilities are divided between the Federal and Provincial governments. Municipalities, as creatures of the Province, derive their powers through Provincial enabling legislation.

The three levels of government share responsibilities for the social realm, although – as noted above - municipalities have very limited jurisdiction. The Federal government, which is charged with ensuring “peace, order and good government” oversees a number of areas which impact the social development of a community including citizenship and immigration, criminal law, employment insurance, First Nations people, and marriage and divorce. The Provincial government, which is charged with “matters of a purely local or private nature”, oversees the administration of justice, civil rights and property, education, health, municipal government and welfare. The administration of some of these responsibilities has been devolved by the Province to more local bodies such as Boards of Education and Regional Health Authorities. Through the Provincial Local Government Act, British Columbia municipalities have been allocated a number of land use (e.g., zoning, building regulation), regulatory (e.g., property maintenance including graffiti control), and infrastructure (e.g., recreation and cultural facilities, fire and police protection) responsibilities which influence the community’s social development.

In addition to jurisdictional limitations, municipalities experience resource constraints. Municipal revenues derive primarily from fees (e.g., permits, licences), development cost charges<sup>11</sup>, and property taxes, the latter of which represents only \$.08 of every Canadian tax dollar.

Despite the jurisdictional and resource constraints, it must be acknowledged that municipal governments are intimately connected with their local communities and have the most direct communication with citizens who experience the impact of social issues on a daily basis. Local government is, therefore, well positioned to take a leading role in designing solutions to local social issues that reflect local resources, capacity, and jurisdictional limitations, and which prompt senior levels of government to exercise their constitutional responsibilities.

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<sup>10</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Generally, development cost charges are monies collected from land developers to offset the cost of providing parks, infrastructure, and community amenities for a new development.

The following overview provides a sampling of the City of Burnaby's social achievements and activities over the past thirty or so years. A more comprehensive inventory of the City's social achievements and activities can be found in the companion document, *City of Burnaby: An Inventory of Key Social Achievements, Activities and Contributions*.

#### **4.1 Social Planning and Planning**

Social planning, which is identified as a municipal function or role in the Provincial Local Government Act, has been practised in Burnaby since the 1970s. A fundamental premise of Burnaby's current Official Community Plan (OCP), adopted in 1998, is that planning is a comprehensive and integrated process which links physical, economic, environmental, and social factors. While acknowledging that planning needs to occur in a comprehensive, integrated manner, it is important that the social component be explicitly articulated and understood. To this end, the OCP outlines the following goal for social planning in Burnaby:

*To facilitate the development and ongoing sustainability of a community which enhances the physical, social, psychological and cultural well-being of Burnaby residents.*

As outlined in the OCP, social planning activities in Burnaby fall into four broad areas:

- **Social Policy and Advocacy** - developing policies, and making recommendations to senior governments to address identified social needs in Burnaby (e.g., child care, human service needs);
- **Physical Environment** - ensuring that social needs are recognized and, as appropriate, addressed in the planning of the built environment (e.g., requiring inclusion of affordable housing or community meeting space in major new developments);
- **Special Needs Housing** - facilitating development of housing for Burnaby residents who, for varying reasons, have special needs (e.g., physical disabilities, health care requirements, violent home situations); and
- **Human Services Planning** - facilitating establishment of appropriate human services to meet the needs of a growing and changing population.

In terms of land use planning, since 1997 Burnaby has used a tool provided by Provincial legislation which allows municipalities to increase the allowable density on a site provided that specific conditions are met. The City's Community Benefit Bonus Program permits additional density in Burnaby's town centres in exchange for affordable or special needs housing units, a cash contribution to the relevant town centre fund, or a community amenity. A community amenity is defined as something which enhances the desirability or liveability of a property or the local community, and includes – among other things - public facilities (e.g., community police offices, libraries), office and programming space for non-profit organizations serving the community, child care centres, environmental enhancements, and public art. Through the program to date, the City has negotiated community benefits and cash contributions valued at \$43.7 million.

## **4.2 Social Policies**

The City of Burnaby has developed a strong policy base that addresses a range of social issues. For example, Burnaby's Child Care Policy, adopted in 1993, sets out objectives for ensuring a wide range of affordable child care options exist in Burnaby. The City's Group Home Policy, also adopted in 1993, aims to ensure that individuals requiring extra care and support are housed in a planned and co-ordinated manner with adequate support systems. Burnaby's *Healthy Community Policy*, adopted in 1991, aims to ensure that City bylaws, policies, programs and services appropriately consider gender equity concerns and the needs of children, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, persons of diverse ethnic or cultural backgrounds, persons who are functionally illiterate, persons of low socioeconomic status and others whose voices are often not heard.

## **4.3 Advocacy**

Burnaby has a long history of advocacy to senior levels of government – and other relevant bodies – for action to address social issues within those bodies' jurisdiction. Council has requested Federal and Provincial action – both directly and through organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities – on many social needs including:

- universal national and provincial child care systems;
- raising of the age of consent for sexual activity from fourteen to sixteen years;
- regulations pertaining to video game violence; and
- more services for high-risk youth.

## **4.4 Regulation: Bylaws, Licensing and Guidelines**

The Burnaby Zoning Bylaw regulates the development and use of land and buildings in order, among other things, to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the public. To supplement the Zoning Bylaw, the City has guidelines for the specific location and/or operation of sensitive or controversial uses such as pool halls, amusement arcades, karaoke bars, and gaming establishments. The City has also adopted bylaws to govern a wide range of topics such as graffiti removal, unsightly premises, and pawn and second-hand shops. Liquor licenses, although Provincially conferred, must be approved by Council. Through its regulatory role, the City is also able to influence urban design to ensure buildings and neighbourhoods are designed in accordance with crime prevention principles, and to ensure barrier-free design for people with disabilities and mobility impairments. With regard the latter, new City infrastructure is developed with accessible features (e.g., curb cuts, audible traffic signals, automatic doors), while up to \$50,000 is available annually through the City's budget to improve accessibility standards in existing City facilities and infrastructure.

## **4.5 Direct Service Delivery**

While limited in number, there are socially-oriented services a municipality is directly responsible for providing. These include the recreational and library services described above, as well as fire, police, and other emergency services. Burnaby is served by the Burnaby Fire Department which operates out of seven fire stations, and offers a number

of public education programs. The Juvenile Firesetter Program targets children who exhibit fire-setting behaviour, and provides education and/or referral to appropriate counselling. The Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Program offers potentially life-saving training to the general public and high school students. The Pre-School Program assists Burnaby child care providers to teach fire safety at child care facilities. In addition to these programs, the Fire Department's webpage provides seasonal fire prevention tips, and fire safety tips targeted specifically to seniors. The Burnaby RCMP detachment is the second largest in the province and serves the community through four community police offices and the main Burnaby RCMP detachment. The police operate on a community policing model, which is described in more detail in section 4.8, below. Burnaby's Emergency Program co-ordinates systems and processes for mitigating against, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from community emergencies and disasters.

#### **4.6 Infrastructure and Facility Ownership and Leases**

The operation of fire, police, recreational and library services assumes the provision of facilities from which to deliver those services, such as those noted in Sections 3.2 and 4.5, above. The City also owns two Community Resource Centres, and several other properties, including the Alan Emmott Centre, which provide affordable office and programming space for non-profit groups serving the local community. In addition, the City owns five licensed group child care centres, which provide a total of 208 spaces for children 5 years of age and younger, and 20 before and after school spaces for children aged 6 to 12 years. These centres are operated by non-profit societies on the City's behalf. As well, the City has struck a number of agreements with non-profit housing societies for the use of City land or houses for non-market housing units and group homes.

#### **4.7 Civic Engagement and Outreach**

The City of Burnaby has adopted a number of policies and programs aimed at increasing the civic engagement of Burnaby residents. As an example, the City Employee Language Bank provides interpretation for non-English-speaking citizens seeking to access City services. As set out in its Equity Policy (adopted in 1994), the City is committed to equitable access to City services, the participation of Burnaby citizens in the planning, development, and delivery of services directly provided, purchased or contracted by the City, and equity in employment. The City's Youth Strategy (adopted in 1996) aims to engage youth in community decision-making. The City's Multicultural Policy (adopted in 1986) is intended to ensure that people from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds are able to fully and comfortably participate in civic affairs.

All of the City's community planning processes are open to public involvement through a variety of means including Open Council meetings and Public Hearings.

City Council's committee system provides an opportunity for citizens to serve in an advisory capacity to Council on a range of topics from social issues and heritage conservation to traffic safety and the environment. From time to time, special task forces are established by Council to develop strategies targeted at specific issues (e.g., Mayor's

Task Force on Graffiti, Social Sustainability Strategy Steering Committee, Business Property Crime Reduction Working Group.)

Each year, Burnaby awards the Kushiro Cup Citizen of the Year to one Burnaby resident for outstanding life long achievement in volunteering and community activity. Annual Local Hero Awards recognize other outstanding volunteers who have made a noteworthy contribution to the Burnaby community.

#### **4.8 The Establishment of Partnerships**

Partnerships allow action to be taken in areas where one player alone lacks the capacity to act. The City has entered into a number of formal and informal partnerships, some of the most notable of the former being those with the Burnaby Board of Education on community schools, with Simon Fraser University on projects of mutual benefit, with Tourism Burnaby and others on the Burnaby Blues and Roots Festival, and with the Burnaby Board of Trade on the Burnaby Business Awards, overseas trade delegations, and the promotion of policies and programs which support Burnaby's business community.

The City's Community Policing model was introduced in 1995 as a vehicle for creating a crime prevention partnership of the RCMP, the City and the community of Burnaby. The City's Community Policing Committee, which includes ten citizen representatives, was established in the same year to serve in an advisory capacity to Council on issues related to community policing and crime prevention. Subsequently, citizen-based Community Policing Advisory Councils (CPACs) were established in each of the City's four Community Policing Districts.

The City has been promoting, for several years, an as-yet unrealized partnership with the Federal and Provincial governments for a multi-service hub facility on City property at the southeast corner of Edmonds Street and Canada Way. The proposed facility, meant to complement the existing Edmonds Community Resource Centre and Edmonds Community School, is intended to provide a resource for residents to meet, socialize, participate in programs, and obtain services, as a means of strengthening, empowering, and integrating the community in the southeast quadrant of the city.

#### **4.9 Community Capacity-Building and Support**

The City supports or sponsors a wide range of other initiatives which strengthen the social fabric of the community. The City's Citizen Support Services Program provides opportunities for more than 350 volunteers to provide services to children and seniors in the community who need a helping hand. Through its Community Grants Program, Council awards grants to non-profit, cultural, athletic and volunteer assistance groups which provide a service or promote activities that are beneficial to Burnaby. Additional initiatives include the Citizens' Plaza (personalized, commemorative pavers in a courtyard at City Hall), a farmers market, and the City's interactive Community Asset Mapping project which provides online access to information on social services and social assets. As well, non-profit organizations leasing space in the City's Community Resource Centres are eligible for City grants to offset their lease costs. The City also supports collective action in the community through City staff participation in a broad

range of collaborative initiatives such as the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, Voices of Burnaby Seniors, Burnaby Inter-Agency Council, the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness, and the Burnaby Early Childhood Development Community Table.

## **5.0 AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL CHALLENGES IN BURNABY**

While Burnaby is an established, vibrant, and well-endowed community with many valuable social attributes and a municipal government that has long taken an interest in the social wellbeing of its citizens, it must be recognized that, as in other municipalities, some of those in the community face complex and multi-faceted social problems (e.g., poverty, mental illness, substance abuse, inadequate housing.) As is often said, a community is only as strong as its weakest elements; therefore, these social issues can be expected to affect Burnaby's future social sustainability.

The discussion below provides both current and historical (where it is available) information on several social issues/trends, as well as current community responses, and any suggested responses identified in recent studies or needs assessments of social issues in Burnaby. A bibliography of the studies/needs assessments reviewed is *attached* as **Appendix 4**.

### **5.1 Issue/Trend #1: Increasing Cultural Diversity**

#### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Over the past twenty-five years, Burnaby's population has become much more culturally diverse, a situation which has both enriched and strengthened the social fabric of the community, and presented challenges in terms of language, settlement, and integration of immigrants and refugees. As noted above, in 2006, immigrants<sup>12</sup> comprised over half (51%) of the City's population, up from 28% in 1981, and over half (55%) of Burnaby residents identified themselves as visible minorities. This represents an increase from 39% in 1996. Dominant groups are people of Chinese, South Asian, and Filipino origins.

In 2006, Burnaby residents with English as mother tongue represented less than half (43.5%) of the population, down from 77% in 1981. The 37% of Burnaby residents who spoke a language other than English or French at home in 2006 represents an increase from 11% in 1981.

Many of the newcomers who have settled in Burnaby in recent years are refugees. In 2009, Burnaby received the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of government assisted refugees who settled in British Columbia (144 people). Top refugee source countries were Iraq, Myanmar, Afghanistan, and Sudan.

Trends suggest that new immigrants and visible minorities with a range of cultural backgrounds will continue to be attracted to Burnaby.

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<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada defines an immigrant as a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities.

Past studies reveal that immigrants and refugees – especially those fleeing war and other traumatic circumstances - face a host of challenges in their new communities, including – but not limited to - lack of English language skills, illiteracy in their home language, poverty, unemployment<sup>13</sup>, and social isolation. These challenges are rendered more complex because of their intertwined relationships (e.g., language, for those who do not speak English, continues to be a significant barrier to finding employment; lack of employment is a significant barrier to accessing housing and other life basics).

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Past studies reviewed suggest a number of responses and strategies for assisting immigrant and refugee Canadians, as follows:

- access to affordable language training;
- assistance with finding employment, childcare and affordable housing;
- assistance with accessing information on available services and programs;
- delivery of programs and services designed to build understanding and links between Canadian culture and other cultures in the community;
- encouragement of parents in cultural minority communities to act as translators and peer supports;
- distribution of information via alternative vehicles (e.g. “Aunties” in the community); and
- design of recreational programming to reflect cultural sensitivities.

The Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table (BIPT), the community coalition of service agencies and citizens referenced in Section 4.9 above, is actively working to implement a host of initiatives to address issues faced by new immigrants in Burnaby. It has sponsored projects to help break down workplace barriers for immigrants, and to connect immigrant women with other women in the community. BIPT also helped to establish a store-front drop-in resource for immigrant and refugee families with children below the age of six years.

## **5.2 Issue/Trend #2: High Level of Poverty**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Poverty is a serious issue confronting some residents of Burnaby, many of whom are increasingly challenged in accessing basic life necessities. The average annual incomes for Burnaby individuals aged 15+ years, for Burnaby households, and for Burnaby families were lower than the Metro Vancouver averages in 2006. In fact, according to a summary table prepared by Metro Vancouver, Burnaby’s median annual household income of \$50,205 ranks Burnaby 17<sup>th</sup> among twenty-two municipalities/entities comprising Metro Vancouver.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Immigrants/refugees may have difficulty finding employment for a number of reasons including lack of English language skills, lack of Canadian work experience, lack of recognition of foreign credentials, and lack of permanent resident status.

<sup>14</sup> Metro Vancouver, 2006 *Census Bulletin #12, Income and Shelter Costs Metro Vancouver*.

Almost 20% of Burnaby households had incomes below \$20,000 in 2005 - which is higher than the Metro Vancouver average of 16%, while the percentage of Burnaby households with incomes above \$100,000 ((18%) was lower than the Metro Vancouver average of 22%. Trends suggest that the gap between the lowest income families and the highest is widening.

2006 Census data also indicate that the prevalence of low-income<sup>15</sup> for individuals in private households in Burnaby is higher than in Metro Vancouver, as follows:

- all individuals: 25.5%, compared to Metro Vancouver's rate of 20.8%;
- 0 – 5 year olds: 26.8%, compared to Metro Vancouver's rate of 21.5%; and
- those aged 65+ years: 24.1%, compared to Metro Vancouver's rate of 20.8%.

As the summary statement in the Fraser Health Authority's 2009 community profile for Burnaby notes:

*Current status in some of the most powerful factors that make and keep people healthy, such as income and the incidence of low income, are a cause for concern.*<sup>16</sup>

As with any community, poverty in Burnaby tends to be concentrated in specific areas. While neighbourhoods with high prevalence rates for low-income can be found in all four of Burnaby's quadrants, a recent report<sup>17</sup> notes that four of the five Census Tracts comprising Metrotown are included in the twenty-two most deprived Census Tracts in Metro Vancouver. Three Census Tracts in the Edmonds area are also included on that list. The concept of deprivation is based on poverty, unemployment, lack of high school graduation, presence of single-parent families, recent immigration, and high percentage of income spent on housing.

Poverty is not a new issue in Burnaby. The following facts, taken mostly from *The Burnaby Poverty Profile*<sup>18</sup>, illustrate the longevity and the breadth of the problem:

- in 1996, Burnaby:
  - had an overall poverty rate of 27.8%;
  - had the second highest child and youth poverty rates in the Lower Mainland at 32.5% and 37.8% respectively;

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<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada defines "low-income" as an income level at which one must spend 20% more than the average of before tax income on food, shelter and clothing. Statistics Canada uses the established "low-income cut-offs" or LICOs to calculate the number and percentage of persons with low income. The LICO identifies those that are substantially worse off than average. Low-income calculations are based on before-tax income of people in private households.

<sup>16</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 28.

<sup>17</sup> Prepared by the "Globalization and Health of Canadians" project, funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

<sup>18</sup> Laidley, Jennefer. *Beyond Statistics: the Burnaby Poverty Profile; Statistics and Stories of Poverty in Burnaby*. Prepared for the Burnaby Poverty Initiative Steering Council and the Burnaby Interagency Council, Rev. ed. October 2002.

- had the highest poverty rate for couples with children in the Lower Mainland at 26.6%;
- had a poverty rate among single-parent families of 53.9%; and
- in 2001, Burnaby had the highest incidence of families living in poverty in the Fraser Region at 22.6%.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Responding to the Issue***

According to the studies reviewed, the primary concerns regarding service provision in low income neighbourhoods are affordable child care, proximity to services/programs, cost of services/programs, and transportation costs.

In terms of Burnaby residents accessing the basics of life, Section 3.7, above, outlines the availability of affordable, non-market housing in Burnaby, and Section 5.11, below, outlines community-based food provision programs. A listing of low-cost goods and services can be found in the *Community Resource Guide* published by Burnaby Community Connections.

The local community coalition dedicated to addressing poverty is Vibrant Burnaby. It is comprised of community service agencies and Burnaby citizens. Since its inception in 2000, Vibrant Burnaby has focused on raising awareness of poverty issues, on promoting community economic development, on examining policy issues related to poverty (e.g., the need for a “living wage”), and on supporting a national campaign to eliminate poverty – *Dignity for All: The Campaign for a Poverty-Free Canada*.

## **5.3 Issue/Trend #3: Declining Housing Affordability and Increasing Visibility of Homelessness**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Although Burnaby has a significant stock of non-market housing units (5,819 units in early 2006)<sup>20</sup>, there remains a shortfall of affordable housing. In 2006, one third (25,790) of Burnaby’s 78,030 households spent 30% or more of their income on shelter.<sup>21</sup> Of these households, renters were much more likely than owners to spend a substantial portion of their income on shelter. Since 1986, the percentage of Burnaby renters paying 30% or more of their monthly income on rent has increased from 40% to 43%. For owners, the percentage increased significantly from 14% in 1986 to 27% in the same time period.

A 2007 survey of Burnaby residents aged 55 years and older<sup>22</sup> identified housing as a prime concern for seniors. While 72% of survey respondents own their own homes, almost three-quarters of the 38% who rent are considered to be in core housing need -

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<sup>19</sup> Cleathero, Jenny, *Child Profile: Fraser Region Demographics*. Draft. Fraser Region Early Childhood Development Strategic Framework Project, November 2005.

<sup>20</sup> B.C. Housing, December 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Policy-makers have agreed on the figure of 30% of gross income as an upper threshold for what a household should have to pay for housing. Housing costs above 30% mean that other basics such as food and clothing must be sacrificed.

<sup>22</sup> *Voices of Burnaby Seniors: A Survey of Burnaby Citizens 55 years and Older*. Prepared for the Burnaby Seniors’ Interagency Society, 2007.

meaning that they spend 30% or more of household income on shelter costs. In particular, single elderly women over the age of 75 - who outlive the male portion of their age cohort - struggle with housing costs.

Previous studies such as *Beyond Statistics (2002)* and *The Summary Report on Homelessness in Burnaby 2005*<sup>23</sup> (the *Woodward Report*) report on the high cost of owning or renting a house in Burnaby, and on extremely low vacancy rates for rental units. They note long waitlists for subsidized housing units.<sup>24</sup> To illustrate, in September 2005, B.C. Housing and Management Commission (BCHMC) reported 1,347 people on its waitlist who listed Burnaby as their home municipality.

With regards homelessness, the first count of homeless people in Burnaby (and in the Metro Vancouver region as a whole) occurred in 2002. A second regional count took place in 2005. The most recent regional homeless count took place in 2008. All three were point-in-time, twenty-four hour counts.

Eighty-four homeless people were enumerated in Burnaby in the 2008 regional count, a figure 2.1 times higher than the figure (40 persons) obtained in 2005, and 4.9 times higher than the figure (17 persons) obtained in 2002. All three regional counts suggest that the homeless population in Burnaby includes youth, families, persons with disabilities, individuals with mental health concerns, seniors, and people living with addictions. Lack of income, the high cost of housing, and addictions were cited as the major reasons for homelessness. Other factors included mental illness, unemployment, eviction, unaffordability of housing, and flight from abusive relationships.<sup>25</sup> Of the 84 people identified in the 2008 count, 92% (77 persons) were street homeless, compared to 95% in 2005, and 59% in 2002. Of the street homeless found in Burnaby in 2008, there were five persons under the age of 25 years - a decrease from the nine persons found in 2005.

A second method of counting - a six month prevalent count by the Homeless Outreach Worker - was used in Burnaby in 2005. During the 2005 six month count, the Homeless Outreach Worker surveyed 61 homeless individuals.<sup>26</sup> The count found more women among the homeless (23%) than did the 2005 twenty-four hour count (5%).

According to the Woodward Report, in addition to outright homelessness, risk of homelessness is also of concern. In 2001, 6.4% of the Burnaby population (13,055 persons) lived in households that were considered at risk of homelessness - meaning that even a small setback could affect their ability to provide shelter.<sup>27</sup> This group was spending more than 50% of their income on shelter, with the average renter household

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<sup>23</sup> Jim Woodward & Associates Inc. *A Summary Report of Homelessness in Burnaby 2005*. Prepared for the Progressive Housing Society, September 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Fairley, Wendy et al. *Understanding Food Security Through Community Mapping: A Look at Burnaby*. Simon Fraser Health Region Preventative Services, April 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Jim Woodward & Associates Inc.

<sup>26</sup> This figure is considered low, as it missed individuals known to be homeless.

<sup>27</sup> Jim Woodward & Associates Inc.

spending 67% and owners spending 69%. Youth and children under the age of 19 years, and households headed by lone parents are particularly vulnerable to losing housing.<sup>28</sup>

There are also incidents of “hidden” homelessness whereby people “couch surf” among friends or family, not knowing where they will stay from one day to the next.<sup>29</sup> This problem is mentioned among immigrants, refugees, and refugee claimants, who may not rely on emergency shelters.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Responding to the Issue***

The City of Burnaby has, over the years, supported the provision of affordable housing in a number of ways including land leases to co-operative and non-profit housing providers, inclusionary zoning<sup>31</sup>, controls on rental conversion, and the accommodation of secondary in-law suites in single-family dwellings. As well, the City has a *Fast Track Approvals Process* for non-market housing, and has, through its Community Benefit Bonus Policy, facilitated the development of nineteen affordable housing units, and provided grants totalling \$682,000 to three affordable housing projects to help offset project expenses.

Unfortunately, little non-market housing is currently being developed due to the absence of funding programs at the Provincial and Federal levels, where responsibility for housing resides.

Regarding homelessness, Jim Woodward’s *Summary Report of Homelessness 2005* includes a number of suggestions to address homelessness that focus on providing both permanent affordable housing and temporary shelter in conjunction with more support services and outreach.

Since 2005, the Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness, a coalition of community agencies and organizations, government bodies, and concerned citizens, has been actively working to address homelessness in Burnaby. In conjunction with Progressive Housing Society, the Task Force has succeeded in establishing a weekly homeless outreach resource centre, a mobile outreach van, and an extreme weather shelter. The outreach resource centre operates on Thursday mornings from Southside Community Church in southeast Burnaby and provides access to health care, food, donated clothing, and toiletries, and provides housing search assistance. The van provides similar services. The extreme weather shelter operates for a limited number of nights each winter when weather conditions are such that they are deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to the life or health of homeless persons (e.g., temperatures at or below -2 Celsius or significant snow accumulation or freezing rain, or severe winds). The shelter was

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<sup>28</sup> 2001 Census Bulletin – Households and Persons At-Risk of Homelessness. Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness.

<sup>29</sup> Jim Woodward & Associates Inc.

<sup>30</sup> Hiebert, Daniel et al. *The Profile of Absolute and Relative Homelessness Among Immigrants, Refugees, and Refugee Claimants in the GVRD, Executive Summary*. Prepared for the National Secretariat on Homelessness. MOSAIC, May 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Through inclusionary zoning, the City required that 20% of units in newly developing communities on publicly-owned land be affordable. The policy resulted in the development of 390 non-market housing units.

accommodated at St. Frances de Sales Church during the winters of 2007/08 and 2009/09. A regular site was not found for the winter of 2009/10. The search by the Task Force on Homelessness for an appropriate site for a co-located emergency shelter and transitional housing units continues, as does the search for a site for an extreme weather shelter for the winter of 2010/11.

In terms of other vehicles for addressing homelessness, the Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addiction, which offers integrated, residential long-term treatment for British Columbians with combined mental health, physical health and addictions issues, is located in Burnaby.

## **5.4 Issue/Trend #4: Aging of the Population**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

In 2006, 14% of Burnaby's population (28,140 people) were aged 65 years or older, a change of only 1% since 1986. Those aged 80+ years represented 4% of Burnaby's population. The aging trend is most noticeable, however, in the baby boom generation. Those aged 40 to 59 years (the age of the baby boomers in 2006) represented 30% of the population in 2006 compared to 23% in 1986. Over the next few years, the seniors' population in both Burnaby and Metro Vancouver will grow rapidly, as the baby boom generation enters its senior years. As the baby boom generation ages, planning for seniors is paramount.

As noted above, a 2007 survey of over 650 Burnaby residents 55 years and older by Voices of Burnaby Seniors (VOBS) found that 72% of survey respondents own their own homes. Sixty percent of respondents noted that they attend a seniors' centre or participate in a seniors' program at their local community centre, a key component of staying connected and healthy. Sixty-two percent of respondents reported that they volunteer outside the home. One third of respondents reported occasionally having difficulty getting to where they need to go; 25% do not have a driver in the household. In bad weather, fewer respondents go out.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Data collected through the VOBS survey suggest a need to investigate the range of rental and purchased affordable housing for seniors, and explore housing options that will allow seniors to remain physically and financially independent. Programs provided by Burnaby Citizen Support Services, including grocery shopping, phone buddies, and volunteer visitors, assist in that goal. Results of the VOBS survey also reinforced the importance of promoting and supporting the active engagement of seniors in community life. The survey also concluded that it is critical to ensure the built environment and transit system are accessible for people who use mobility aids. VOBS is currently working on many of the issues identified through the survey. Most notably, the organization has recently received a Provincial *Age-Friendly Community Grant* to undertake an accessibility assessment of key pedestrian routes in the Edmonds Town Centre where a significant concentration of seniors reside.

A number of other community agencies in Burnaby offer services targeted to seniors including peer counselling, falls prevention education, health alert/health watch, home health care, Meals on Wheels, and transportation to medical appointments. The City operates seniors centres in each of Burnaby's four quadrants.

## **5.5 Issue/Trend #5: Provision of Quality Early Childhood Experiences**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

According to the 2006 Census, there were 9,510 children below the age of five years in Burnaby. The early years are the most critical for neurological development, as the most significant brain growth occurs in the first six years of life. Research has shown that the experiences of early childhood have a profound impact on the overall health and well-being of individuals throughout their lifetime.

The University of British Columbia's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) uses an assessment tool called the Early Development Instrument (EDI) which measures children's development across five domains including physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. With HELP's assistance, Burnaby kindergarten teachers used the EDI in 2003, 2006, and 2008 to assess school readiness for each child in their classes. Children who scored in the lowest 10% of the range of scores are considered vulnerable within that developmental domain. Results from the 2008 assessment suggest the following:

- city-wide, 32% of Burnaby children were vulnerable in at least one domain of their development, a slight decrease from 33% in 2006 and 2003;
- only 4 of 20 neighbourhoods in Burnaby had less than 20% of children vulnerable in at least one domain;
- 10 of 20 neighbourhoods in Burnaby had more than 30% of children vulnerable in at least one domain, a decrease from 12 neighbourhoods in 2006;
- there was a decrease in vulnerability in four of the five domains since the 2006 assessment: social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. There was a slight increase in vulnerability in the physical health and well-being domain since 2006;
- the highest proportion of vulnerability was found on the communication skills and general knowledge domain – the domain that includes an assessment of children's knowledge of English. The same was true in 2006 and 2003;
- the lowest proportion of children vulnerable, again in each of the sample years, is in the physical health and well-being domain;
- 8 of 20 neighbourhoods had a decrease in the proportion of children vulnerable in at least one domain between 2006 and 2008; and

- 11 of 20 neighbourhoods<sup>32</sup> had an increase in the proportion of children vulnerable in at least one domain between 2006 and 2009.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Thanks to a myriad of senior government and United Way funding streams focussed on early childhood, the Burnaby Early Childhood Development (ECD) Community Table, a community-based committee comprised of government and social service agency representatives, has been facilitating the delivery of a comprehensive, integrated ECD service delivery system in Burnaby since 2003. Part of the focus of the Table's work has been on a number of service gaps identified in local studies, including pre- and post-natal outreach and drop-in programs, parent and family literacy and numeracy programs, and clothing and toy exchanges. The report *Early Childhood Development in BC*<sup>33</sup> acknowledges the benefit of a centralized hub for offering coordinated ECD services. Two such hubs have been established in Burnaby to date: at Lochdale Community School and at Morley Elementary School.

## **5.6 Issue/Trend #6: Challenges Accessing Affordable Child Care**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

As noted above, there were 9,510 children below the age of 5 years in 2006. The 29,840 children aged 0 to 14 years accounted for 15% of Burnaby's population. As of July 2009, there were a total of 4,010 licensed child care spaces in Burnaby, including out-of school spaces for children aged 6 to 12 years. When categorized for age group, Burnaby has approximately 6 licensed spaces for every 100 infants and toddlers (those below 36 months in age), 20 licensed spaces for every 100 3 to 5 year olds, and 9 licensed spaces for every 100 6 to 12 year olds. Overall, there are approximately 11 licensed child care spaces per 100 Burnaby children under the age of 13 years. Clearly, many Burnaby families which need child care are challenged to find it in their home community.

Shortage of spaces is not the only challenge for young Burnaby families seeking child care. As of spring 2009, fees for licensed child care in Burnaby averaged about \$1,100 per month for an infant/toddler, about \$730 per month for a 3 to 5 year old, and about \$370 per month for school-aged care. Families with more than one child in care spend a significant portion of their income on child care. The Provincial government does provide a child care subsidy for low-income parents, the size of which is based on family income and family size. The income threshold for eligibility is fairly low, and the maximum subsidies available cover only between one-half and three-quarters of the fee, depending on the type of care.

Local studies reviewed identified a shortage of affordable child care, and a lack of drop-in emergency and respite child care as significant gaps in child care services.

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<sup>32</sup> The sample size in one neighbourhood in 2006 was insufficient for analysis.

<sup>33</sup> *Early Childhood Development in BC: First Call's Framework for Action*. February 2003.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Recommendations from the studies reviewed focus on the need for an augmented supply of child care spaces, increased affordability in childcare, improved eligibility levels for child care subsidy, and centralization of child care resource and referral information to assist parents in locating spaces. Many of these needs are being examined by the aforementioned Burnaby ECD Community Table.

Burnaby's Child Care Resources Group, a subcommittee of Burnaby Council's Social Issues Committee, keeps Council apprised of issues in the child care field. Burnaby Council has a long history of advocating to both senior levels of government for a publicly-funded, universal child care system. As well, as noted above, the City of Burnaby has acquired five child care centres, offering 208 licensed spaces, through Burnaby's Community Benefit Bonus Program, and has a Child Care Policy aimed at ensuring adequate child care spaces for a growing population. To illustrate, in accordance with its Child Care Policy, the City requests, through the Rezoning process, that developers of major residential, commercial, industrial or mixed-use developments address the child care needs generated by their developments. In this manner, commitments to child care spaces have been made at UniverCity and in other major developments in Burnaby.

## **5.7 Issue/Trend #7: High-Risk Behaviour Among Youth**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

According to the 2006 Census, there are 39,670 Burnaby residents aged 10 to 24 years (20% of the Burnaby population), with 10,850 youth in the 10 to 14 year age group, 12,790 youth in the 15 to 19 year age group, and 16,030 youth in the 20 to 24 year age group.

While the vast majority of Burnaby youth are engaged in positive activities and maintain healthy relationships with peers and others in their lives, there is a proportion of Burnaby youth who are engaged in high-risk and dangerous behaviours, or who are at-risk of such activity.<sup>34</sup> Responses to a January 2007 survey of front-line service providers in Burnaby and New Westminster, conducted by the Burnaby-New Westminster Task Force on the Sexually Exploited and High-Risk Youth, suggest that a lack of appropriate supports and services renders the following groups of youth particularly vulnerable to engaging in high-risk behaviours:

- aboriginal youth;
- homeless and/or street-entrenched youth;
- immigrant and refugee youth, especially those from war zones and other traumatic situations;
- lesbian, gay, trans-gendered, bi-sexual, and questioning (LGTBQ) youth;
- youth with mental illness and disabilities – both physical and cognitive; and
- youth living in poverty.

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<sup>34</sup> Examples of high-risk behaviours include substance abuse, gang involvement, criminal involvement, involvement in the commercial sex trade, non-attendance at school, and living on the street.

As if to underscore these findings, the Fraser Health Authority's Community Profile 2009 for Burnaby notes the following:

- Burnaby's serious juvenile crime rate for the years 2004 to 2006 was 5.2 compared to the provincial rate of 4.5;<sup>35</sup>
- Burnaby's 2006 teen pregnancy rate (per 1,000 teens aged 15 to 19 years) was 19.8, placing Burnaby ninth among thirteen FHA communities; and
- Burnaby's 2006 teen abortions rate (per 1,000 teens aged 15 to 19 years) was 14.9, placing Burnaby sixth among FHA communities.<sup>36</sup>

Moreover, Burnaby School District recently acknowledged a 15% to 17% non-completion rate among Burnaby students, with one-third of the school drop-outs being Aboriginal youth, and one-third being other cultural minority youth.

A review of local studies and needs assessments on youth suggests that poverty among youth is not a new issue - in 1996 more than 37.8% of Burnaby youth were living below the Low Income Cut-Offs<sup>37</sup>. The studies note that, among youth, poverty has been linked to dropping out of school, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, suicide and juvenile offences.

Although Burnaby youth have access to a wide array of services and resources, responses to the survey by the Task Force on Sexual Exploitation suggest that there are many gaps in services which make it difficult to support and/or treat youth who engage in high-risk behaviours. Those gaps are focused primarily in the following five service areas:

- safe, affordable and supportive housing for youth;
- targeted youth services and supports (i.e., for the six groups of vulnerable youth noted above);
- youth health services.
- youth detox and addictions treatment; and
- youth outreach.

These findings are consistent with those in local studies, which also identified gaps in employment opportunities and services to combat youth isolation and youth criminal involvement.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

The City operates youth centres in each of Burnaby's geographic quadrants.

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<sup>35</sup> Rate is calculated per 1,000 population and is an average for 2004 to 2006. Source: Police Services Division, Ministry of Public Security and Solicitor General.

<sup>36</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Laidley, Jennefer.

The Burnaby School District, along with partners such as the City of Burnaby, Fraser Health Authority, and local youth-serving agencies, are currently exploring the creation of a multi-service store-front hub to respond to the needs of Burnaby's high-risk youth. The intent is to provide a safe, welcoming, accessible community-based space where multiple service providers can co-locate to create a support network for high risk, vulnerable youth, aged 12 to 19 years, who require intense intervention and outreach to get them engaged in community services and supports. The vision is that the hub offer an alternative education model, youth health services, and recreational opportunities, as well as a host of other services and resources. At this point, the project Steering Committee is seeking a site and targeting a September 2010 starting date for the hub.

In terms of preventing future high-risk behaviour, the *Burnaby School Age Initiative (BSAI)*, a collaborative group of local service agencies, has identified five key areas to meet the needs of children 6 to 12 years. Those areas include: increased awareness of available programs/services; increased affordability of programs/services; provision of opportunities for parental and family involvement; enhanced inclusivity; and access to more community spaces. BSAI has developed an extensive list of recommendations pertaining to the five areas for improving child development in the middle years.

The importance of including youth in decision-making about matters that affect them – both as a means of meeting their needs and of creating future community leaders – cannot be overstated. Although the City of Burnaby has done an admirable job of delivering youth service programs, and has a Youth Strategy to promote the active engagement of youth in community decision-making, there remains minimal youth involvement in the development, assessment and delivery of civic services. To create opportunities for youth input, it is important to systematically incorporate youth views into structured decision making. With the development of the Social Sustainability Strategy, the City of Burnaby has an opportunity to build on its youth strategy and to create permanent opportunities for meaningful youth engagement.

## **5.8 Issue/Trend #8: Family Violence and Child Safety**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

There is limited current statistical information on family violence and child abuse in Burnaby.

Burnaby RCMP files suggest that, in 2009, the RCMP received 1,359 calls for service related to domestic violence. This compares to 1,904 calls for service in 2008, and 1,696 calls in 2007.

Dixon Transition Society, which operates Burnaby's transition house and second stage housing units for victims of domestic violence, reports receiving 2,262 crisis calls in 2009. In 2009, approximately twenty-seven Burnaby women and twenty-six Burnaby children found refuge in Marguerite Dixon Transition House. Another 209 Burnaby women and 97 Burnaby children, however, were turned away in 2009 due to lack of bed space. A relatively constant number of Burnaby women (about eighty) have received

“Stopping the Violence” counselling through Dixon Transition Society each year over the past nine years.

Statistics on reported cases of child abuse in Burnaby are not available from the Provincial Ministry of Children and Family Development. It is known, however, that in 2007, the rate at which Burnaby children (0 to 18 years) were taken into care by Provincial child authorities was 4.7 per 1,000 population – though the reasons for the apprehensions were not detailed.<sup>38</sup> This is down from a rate of 5.4 per 1,000 in 1997, when Burnaby was second only to Vancouver in terms of children “in need of protection”.<sup>39</sup> In 2003, the child abuse rate in Burnaby was 7.7 per 1,000, and the child-in-care rate was 5.8 per 1,000. These rates compare, respectively, to 7.6 and 9.9 per 1,000 children (0 to 18 years) province-wide.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Suggestions in studies for addressing family violence and child safety include:

- more support services, such as programs for children who have witnessed violence in the home and access to legal information for women;
- more transition houses;
- more multicultural intervention programs; and
- treatment programs for assaultive men.

In addition to the services offered by Dixon Transition Society, there are a number of other programs operating in Burnaby - offered through Provincial agencies and non-profit organizations such as Burnaby Family Life Institute, Cameray Centre and Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services Society - which target family violence. Such family violence prevention programs attempt to address the issue through education, counselling or intervention, and the range of services identified above.

## **5.9 Issue/Trend #9: Quality of Life for Aboriginal People**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

In the 2006 Census, 3,005 Burnaby residents, representing 1.5% of the general population, identified themselves as Aboriginal<sup>41</sup>. This compares to a 1996 figure of 1% of Burnaby’s population. Of neighbouring municipalities, only Richmond and those on the North Shore had lower proportions of Aboriginal residents in 2006.

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<sup>38</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 9.

<sup>39</sup> Wachtel, Andy and Jennifer Cleathero. *Little Acorns: A Status Report on Early Childhood in the Lower Mainland*. United Way Research Services, June 1998.

<sup>40</sup> Cerillo, Nonita and Cindy Carson, *Child Profile Fraser Health Region (Draft)*. Fraser Region Early Childhood Development Strategic Framework Project, November 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Aboriginal identity refers to those persons who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, (i.e., North American Indian, Metis, or Inuit), and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian as defined by the Indian Act of Canada and/or who were members of an Indian Band or First Nation.)

Compared to Burnaby's population as a whole, Burnaby's 2006 Aboriginal population:

- was younger;
- had a lower homeownership rate;
- had a lower marriage rate; and
- was more transient over the previous five year period.

Information on Aboriginal income and educational levels was not included in Census data releases. However, the social challenges faced by Canada's Aboriginal people – both on- and off-reserve – are well documented, and there are no reasons to assume that the situation for Burnaby's Aboriginal residents is different. Poverty, low educational attainment, poor health, unemployment and discrimination continue to plague many First Nations people.

The following facts provide some insight into the historical situation of Aboriginal people:

- in 1996, just 3% of Aboriginal people aged 15+ years had a university degree, compared with 13% of the non-Aboriginal population. Additionally, 54% of Aboriginal people had not completed high school, compared with 34% of the non-Aboriginal population;<sup>42</sup>
- in 1996, 48% of Aboriginal men aged 15+ years were employed, compared with 66% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Similarly, just 41% of Aboriginal women were part of the paid workforce that year, versus 53% of non-Aboriginal women;<sup>43</sup> and
- between 2003 to 2008, only 38% of Aboriginal students enrolled in Burnaby School District schools in Grade 8 went on to complete high school. This is lower than the Provincial rate of 47%.<sup>44</sup>

As might be expected, given their relatively low education and employment levels, the incomes of Aboriginal people have historically been substantially lower than those of non-Aboriginal Canadians. In 2000, among all poor families with children in British Columbia, Aboriginal families with children lived the furthest below the poverty line - \$19,563 below.<sup>45</sup> The *Aboriginal Child Profile* indicates that in British Columbia in 2005, 52.1% of Aboriginal children lived below the poverty line. The same report notes that, on average, Aboriginal families in British Columbia tend to be younger, with 12% headed by parents under the age of 25.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*. Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series, pg. 5.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Fraser Health Authority, *Community Profile 2009*, pg. 14.

<sup>45</sup> Kerstetter, Steve, *Child Poverty and Income Inequality in British Columbia: A Status Report*. First Call B.C. Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2006.

<sup>46</sup> Cerillo, Nonita and Jenny Cleathero. *Aboriginal Child Profile*. Draft. Fraser Region Early Childhood Development Strategic Framework Project, November 2005.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Spirit of the Children Society, a relatively new non-profit organization, delivers services to Aboriginal families in Burnaby, New Westminster and the Tri-Cities.<sup>47</sup> The organization's services include family drop-in for children, aged 0 – 6 years, and their parents; a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder program; an infant development program; men's and women's support circles; youth groups, including a girls' strengthening group; and a youth mentorship program. The Provincial Ministry of Children and Family Development also offers a stream of services to Aboriginal children and their families.

## **5.10 Issue/Trend #10: Concerns About Food Security**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Food security implies that access to food is available to all people, at all times, in order to have an active, healthy life.<sup>48</sup> Obesity, heart disease, and diabetes are but a few of the health conditions that are related to diet, and that reduce quality of life for individuals and add to cost of the medical system. There is growing recognition regarding the intersection of food security issues, and low income, poor health, lack of affordable housing, low wages, unemployment rates, and low education levels. Food security is integral to creating a complete community that provides one of the basics of life as well as options for residents to support local economies while supporting the environment.

A review of previous studies yielded the following information regarding food security:

- in 2004, nearly 8% of British Columbia's population experienced food insecurity;<sup>49</sup>
- families on temporary income assistance may need to spend 31% to 44% of their income on food<sup>50</sup>; and
- those on wait lists for subsidized housing are likely spending a large portion of their income on shelter, and a small portion on food.<sup>51</sup>

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Suggestions from studies to address food insecurity include: creation of an overlay ranking major grocery stores in categories by cost to see how specific areas are served, development of farmers' markets and community gardens, and improvements to bus routes in low income areas. Obviously, financial self-sufficiency is also a crucial step towards food security.

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<sup>47</sup> Spirit of the Children succeeds other Burnaby-based non-profit organizations focused on Aboriginal services, such as Arrows to Freedom Society, which are no longer operational.

<sup>48</sup> It is understood that food needs to be available, accessible, affordable, and culturally and environmentally appropriate.

<sup>49</sup> Dietitians of Canada, B.C. Region. *The Cost of Eating in BC: Little Money for Food – The Reality for Some BC Families*. November 2005.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Fairley, Wendy

There are numerous programs offered by charitable organizations operating in Burnaby, including five locations of the Food Bank, which provide free meals and free food to a wide age-range of Burnaby residents. As well, Burnaby has an active Food First Committee, a collaborative community-based effort of representatives from local service agencies, the City, the Health Authority, the School District, and relevant Provincial ministries. The Committee sponsors the bi-annual Empty Bowls gala, the proceeds of which are used to support a range of breakfast, lunch and snack programs, cooking clubs, and emergency food programs for Burnaby children and their families.

At the macro level, there are roles for all levels of government, community organizations, businesses, the non-profit sector, and residents themselves in promoting access to affordable food sources for all Burnaby citizens.

## **5.11 Issue/Trend #11: Gender Inequality**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Gender inequality is a complex and systemic social issue involving a range of inter-related factors. While it is not unique to Burnaby – and will take many generations and work by many partners to rectify - it does have an impact on the social wellbeing and sustainability of any community.

There are a number of variables that can be used to assess gender equity – only some of which are tracked by Canada’s Census. Those for which Census information is available include income, labour force activity, occupation, and educational attainment.

According to 2006 Census data, females make up 51% of Burnaby’s population. Although women, as noted above, attain equal or higher education levels than men, their incomes are considerably lower. For individuals aged 15+ years with employment income, for example, men earned, on average, \$11,320 or 42% more per year than women. The labour force participation rate of women aged 15+ years in 2006 was 59%, a full 10% lower than the participation rate of men. The unemployment rate for women was 7.4%, compared to 6.2% for men. In terms of occupation, for those aged 15+ years with labour force experience, 64.2 % of management positions were held by men, compared to 35.8% by women. Similarly, 12.6% of the male labour force held management positions, compared to 7.7% of the female labour force.

The income disparity between the genders is particularly acute for lone-parents. The difference in annual before-tax income between male-led and female-led lone-parents families in Burnaby is \$16,253 - or 35%. The prevalence of low income among female-led lone parent families is 36.3% compared to 20.7% for male-led lone-parent families. Of Burnaby’s 9,285 lone-parent families, 83% are led by women. Moreover, 82% of lone-parent families with three or more children are led by women. Serving as the primary caregiver, while having access to fewer resources, places a heavy financial burden on single-parent women. The 2002 report, *Beyond Statistics: The Burnaby*

*Poverty Profile*<sup>52</sup>, notes that it is also more difficult for single parent families to afford to live in neighbourhoods which are relatively problem-free.

Another measure of gender equality is the extent to which women participate in decision-making – particularly through elected office. According to a recently published Canadian book on women and politics<sup>53</sup>, females, who represent at least 50% of the population, generally make up only 20% of elected officials in Canada.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

A considerable effort needs to be made to engage a wide spectrum of women in order to address gendered issues that affect the health of an entire community. Women's issues – including those identified above - need to be addressed at a societal level, and by all levels of government and the community itself.

Municipal government is responsible for implementing and/or upholding any gender equality requirements established by the senior levels of government. As well, equal employment opportunities, pay equity, flexible work hours as well as parental and educational leave, and employer-sponsored child care programs all foster opportunities to advance gender equality. The City of Burnaby has implemented a number of such initiatives, and is an equal opportunity employer, basing offers of employment on such criteria as skills, knowledge and ability. This practice has resulted in a gender-balanced City workforce.

## **5.12 Issue/Trend #12: Declining Labour Force Participation and High Rates of Unemployment**

### ***Current Situation and Trends***

Over the past twenty-five years, there has been a gradual decrease in the labour force participation rate<sup>54</sup> in Burnaby (from 68% in 1981 to 64% in 2006.) The decline has been led particularly by a decrease in male labour force participation, which dropped to 69% in 2006 from 80% in 1981.

In the same time period, Burnaby's unemployment rate has fluctuated from a low of 5% in 1981, to a high of 11% in 1986, levelling at almost 7% in 2006. The 2006 figure is the highest among the communities neighbouring Burnaby, and exceeds the 2006 Metro Vancouver average. As for different segments of the population, Burnaby also had the highest unemployment rates for men (6.2%), and for women (7.4%).

Past studies suggest that unemployment among families affects children in a number of ways, including an increased risk of family violence, inadequate income for the basics of life, and parental illness and depression.

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<sup>52</sup> Laidley, Jennefer.

<sup>53</sup> Bashevkin, Sylvia. *Women, Power, Politics: The Hidden Story of Canada's Unfinished Democracy*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

<sup>54</sup> The labour force participation rate is the percentage of the population 15 years and older in the labour force.

### ***Responding to the Issue***

Burnaby's Official Community Plan includes a number of long-term goals associated with commerce and industry which aim to increase the overall commercial industrial self-sufficiency of the city, attract and accommodate high quality employment-intensive industries, contribute to Burnaby's employment and tax base growth, and contribute to the achievement of a more complete community.

A number of initiatives are underway in Burnaby that could have a positive impact on employment. The City's Economic Development Strategy, for example, aims to improve the local economy through tapping into new opportunities, and reducing constraints and obstacles to investment and job creation in the city. The overall Strategy includes sectoral strategies in a number of areas ranging from film, digital entertainment and new media to information technology, biotechnology, and heavy industry. A number of initiatives of the Burnaby Board of Trade, including marketing Burnaby as a thriving centre of commerce – both nationally and globally, leading international trade delegations, and reducing barriers to immigrants entering the local workforce, also have the capacity to produce positive results.

## **6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Burnaby is already an outstanding community in which to live, learn, work, invest and play, but ongoing efforts are needed to maintain past achievements and realize new social goals. The City has a vision to keep striving towards a Burnaby in which residents and businesses enjoy:

- a healthy and liveable community with a high quality of life and wellness, connections in the community, and opportunities for the participation of all residents;
- a high quality physical setting including a clean natural environment, a lively and livable urban fabric, and a wide variety of open spaces and parks; and
- a robust and sustainable local economy which provides jobs, attracts investment, and contributes to a fiscally strong local government.

These elements of community – social, physical and economic – are interrelated and cannot be treated in isolation from each other. However, it is sometimes necessary to focus attention on one component - as the City is doing with the creation of a Social Sustainability Strategy - to increase knowledge, identify and solve problems, and take advantage of opportunities.

This Context Document – and its three companion documents<sup>55</sup> – provide an overview of the strong social foundation upon which Burnaby's Social Sustainability Strategy can be built as well as information on some of the social challenges faced by Burnaby residents. It is hoped that it will serve as a springboard for moving Burnaby towards its goal of social sustainability.

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<sup>55</sup> Those companion documents are: 1) Demographic Tables for Burnaby and Metro Vancouver 2) Social and Demographic Trends in Burnaby and Neighbouring Communities, 1981-2006 3) City of Burnaby: An Inventory of Key Social Achievements, Activities and Contributions.

## **An Overview of Social Development Plans and Strategies Created by Other Canadian Municipalities**

Social sustainability strategies and plans have been – and continue to be - developed in other Canadian jurisdictions. A selection of such plans and strategies is provided below.

1. City of Surrey, British Columbia  
*Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents (2006)*

The City of Surrey, B.C. identified and investigated key social issue priorities (in partnership with the Social Planning and Research Council) while creating the Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents. The issue areas or themes include: Housing and Homelessness; Substance Abuse and Addictions; Children and Youth; Crime and Public Safety; and Community Development and Diversity.

The first phase of the process saw the consultants engage in a literature review from which a compilation of key directions, recommendations and action areas were distilled to approximately 90. A first stage community consultation process prioritized these recommendations and the consultants then developed two key items for each of the issue elements. The first was an inventory of community groups working on each issue and the second was a social responsibility matrix that detailed the different types of roles and responsibilities associated with each level of government, community groups, health authority, etc.

Phase II research explored each of the issue areas with a view to determining areas of action, capacity-building opportunities and collaboration. A large number of interviews and focus-groups took place, with data compiled into a report that identified areas of key municipal activity and “actions for others.” Short-term and mid-term initiatives were identified for each.

2. City of Calgary, Alberta  
*Social Development in the Centre City and Beyond (2005)*

The Centre City is a large regional planning area that includes six community districts with a population of approximately 30,000 – accounting for roughly 3.2% of the total City population.

To better understand the social issues that have been a concern in this large geographic area in recent years, the City of Calgary commissioned a report amalgamating the themes and recommendations arising from research and background documents on social, economic, health, and related issues in the Centre City. In a parallel process, public and stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken in the summer and fall of 2005 to collect ideas from a wide range of people in the public, private and community sectors on how to make the Centre City more liveable, thriving, and caring. Specific Research

included demographic analysis, asset and event mapping, socio-economic analysis and other issue-specific research.

On December 12, 2005, Council approved a Strategy to Develop a Social Plan for the Centre City. The report *Centre City Issues and Opportunities: Final Research Synthesis, 1999-2005* identifies social development as a critical component of sustainable urban development. Research and work to date were then integrated with recommendations from past studies and consultations into *The Caring Centre City: A Blueprint for Social Action* (April 2006).

In conjunction with its larger community planning exercises, Calgary has also undertaken Environmental Scanning via its “Social Outlook” reports. The last Social Outlook was created in 2004 and reviews a number of social and economic trends that are, or will, affect the City as a whole.

3. City of Nanaimo, British Columbia  
*Social Development Strategy for Nanaimo (September 2004)*

*The Social Development Strategy defines a social vision for Nanaimo, goals to achieve that vision and strategies to achieve those goals. It was commissioned in response to identified social issues, including high rates of income assistance, increasing homelessness and poverty, persistently high unemployment levels and substance misuse issues.*

In September 2004, the City of Nanaimo released its Social Development Strategy. This document discusses six key areas for social development:

- Education and Learning
- Employment and Income
- Community and Health Services
- Housing and Shelter
- Safety and Security
- Community Life

It also presents strategies that aim to support work in each of these areas. As part of the process of achieving this vision, the Social Development Plan advocates for the creation of a Social Development Group – a designated body to “champion and take ownership of the strategy and to ensure its implementation.”

4. City of Edmonton, Alberta  
*Vision for Social Well-Being and Quality of Life (2003)*

*People and communities in our city face barriers that keep them from taking full advantage of Edmonton’s quality of life. Citizens are calling for greater collaboration*

*and focus, so that everyone can pull together to ensure that individuals, families, and communities gain the abilities they need to build healthy, fulfilling lives.*

Edmonton's social vision was instigated in part as a follow-up to the City's 1995 economic vision. The document is short and very positive in tone, emphasizing ideas about high quality of life and social well-being, but its focus is on presenting a vision and broad goals rather than detailing tangible steps and action.

The document begins with a definition of social well-being, followed by a vision consisting of two concise statements. Interspersed throughout the document are brief profiles of organizations in the community that serve social needs and quotes from individuals related to social goals. It also concludes with a list of ways that community members can contribute to the social vision and an invitation to become involved.

The Vision outlines Council's mandate related to social well-being in five statements about the City's role (these are essentially broad goals). Examples include:

- "Seeking opportunities to collaborate with individuals, organizations, communities and other governments"; and
- "Offering all citizens access to effective programs, facilities and services that enhance the quality of their lives".

Next are five statements about Council's top priorities (essentially objectives – slightly more specific than the goals, but still relatively broad). Examples include:

- "Serving as a central source of the information citizens can use to access quality of life and achieve well-being"; and
- "Encouraging respect, understanding and collaboration among the diverse people who make up our community."

The section "Our key challenges" lists three immediate actions or first steps to be taken. These are still relatively broad and complex actions to undertake; the Vision does not include specific and measurable steps that explain how the vision and goals presented will be achieved.

5. City of Ottawa, Ontario  
*The Human Services Plan (2003)*

*The Human Services Plan is the people component of the Ottawa 20/20 sustainable growth planning process.... While its goal of maximizing investments in people to ensure a high quality of life may seem familiar, Ottawa's new Human Services Plan introduces concepts and directions tied to sustainability, innovation, creativity, and collaboration to create an exciting vision and plan to ensure that this goal is reached for Ottawa in 2020.*

Ottawa's Human Services Plan is one of five growth management plans that are collectively called the "Ottawa 20/20" plans. These plans are designed to work together to guide the city's development within a sustainability framework, the ultimate goal of which is "to accommodate growth and change without undermining the environmental or social systems on which we depend." Seven guiding principles underpin all five Ottawa 20/20 plans:

- A Responsible and Responsive City;
- A Caring and Inclusive City;
- A Creative City Rich in Heritage, Unique in Identity;
- A Green and Environmentally Sensitive City;
- A City of Distinct, Liveable Communities;
- An Innovative City Where Prosperity is Shared Among All; and
- A Healthy and Active City.

The plan also draws connections to several "supporting plans" – previous City initiatives that address more specific areas related to social needs.

In terms of a conceptual framework, the document introduces and defines the concept of "Quality of Life" and lays out three "key considerations" required for the delivery of human services: sustainability (balance between the ecological, economic, and social as well as the financial sustainability of services and programs), innovation and creativity, and collaboration.

Five major strategic directions are identified: Diversity and Inclusion, Access to the Basics, Safe and Healthy Communities, Focus on Prevention, and A Working City. Each strategic direction is followed by a discussion of the situation and challenges and how to best address them, and one to three policy statements. Under each policy statement there are a number of specific actions to be taken. The plan also contains a great deal of detail about the implementation process; for example, advisory committees that will be involved, budgetary and financial considerations, priority actions, communications strategy, and monitoring and evaluation.

6. City of Prince George, British Columbia  
*Social Plan (2002)*

*The Social Plan is intended to complement the OCP. As such, the Prince George Social Plan initiates the building blocks that lead to a sustainable social infrastructure for the community. This social infrastructure ensures equal opportunity for improved quality of life for all Prince George residents.*

The City commissioned the Community Planning Council of Prince George, an independent non-profit organization, to develop a social plan that could be integrated with the City's Official Community Plan. Reflecting the City's view of the

interconnectedness of social development with other areas of planning, the Plan sometimes diverges into the economic (e.g. exploring alternative industries) and physical (e.g. downtown revitalization).

The Plan describes the methods that went into its preparation (i.e. research into other cities' social plans, focus groups and neighbourhood consultations, and a social service agency survey). A section of the report is dedicated to presenting youth input into the information-gathering process for the social plan.

The recommendations are grouped into eight issue areas: Housing; Health, Welfare & Education; Unemployment & Poverty; Community Safety; Substance Misuse; Downtown Revitalization; and Recreation. For each issue there are between two and five objectives; several initiatives (or specific actions) to be undertaken in the immediate, mid-term, and long-term future; and a list of "suggested partners" – government and community agencies with which the city can work to achieve its objectives.

7. City of Hamilton, Ontario

*A Social Vision for the New City of Hamilton (2002)*

*The City needs a Social Vision because there is currently no overall plan or strategy for advancing a social agenda. A framework is required for tackling these difficult problems in a systematic and systemic way.*

The impetus for undertaking the Social Vision project was strongly tied to Hamilton's efforts to re-build its local economy. As the City of Hamilton proceeded with an economic development strategy, it acknowledged the devastating impacts that the regional economic collapse had had on the social well-being of Hamilton residents, and realized that the links between economic development and social development were not being adequately addressed.

The document emphasizes that economic progress is not possible without addressing skills development, social needs, and quality of life considerations. It pays special attention to increasing job opportunities for disadvantaged people. There is also a strong focus on multi-sectoral and collaborative work, building relationships, and raising public awareness.

The piece begins with a vision statement and articulates five key goals in achieving the vision, as well as core values and operating principles. It lays out a process that can be applied to all future initiatives undertaken in pursuit of the social vision. The bulk of the document is dedicated to describing three suggested flagship initiatives in order to present concrete and practical ideas for tackling the complex challenges that the City faces. The flagship initiatives address the areas of children and families, skills development, and affordable housing. For each of the flagship initiatives, a goal is articulated in one to three succinct statements, a rationale is given for why the area must be addressed, and a plan of action is described laying out specific steps to be taken.

8. City of Toronto, Ontario

*A Social Development Strategy for City of Toronto (2001)*

*As the social component of the city's Strategic Plan, the Social Development Strategy describes some of the challenges Toronto faces, enunciates the shared values that bind us together as a city, and describes the principles that should underlie our approach to social development. It also lays out a set of specific strategic directions to guide Toronto's course.*

The City of Toronto's Social Development Strategy begins with a statement about Toronto as one of the world's best places to live, followed by a description of social problems and challenges and the city's resources and strengths to respond. It explains and defines social development, stating that the concept "encompasses principles of social equity, social well-being and citizen engagement, and is an important determinant of healthy communities and quality of life."

The methodology utilized consisted of environmental scanning, demographic analysis, and an assessment of existing levels of service provision (including the revamping of jurisdictional responsibilities following the amalgamation of six smaller municipalities into the new 'megacity'). The document was also fed by neighbourhood-based and sector specific consultations, youth-specific activities, additional community meetings and the development of at least one secondary research document.

A strong basis for the Social Development Strategy is the fact that, through government restructuring and downloading, the City has assumed stewardship for a range of services but has not been given the fiscal capacity to properly carry out its new responsibilities. Subsequently, the City created a vision for dynamic system of social and human services that "must be based on cooperative partnerships and sustained by the commitment and financial support of all levels of government." It focuses on adaptive, creative, and collaborative ways of maintaining, supporting, and enhancing this human services system in order to improve quality of life in Toronto.

The Social Development Strategy builds on the work of several task forces and committees established post-amalgamation: the Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force, the Task Force on Community Safety, the Seniors' Task Force, and the Children and Youth Action Committee. Five guiding principles are listed and defined: equity, equality, access, participation, and cohesion. The actual strategy is presented in 11 strategic directions that are grouped under three headings: Strengthen Communities, Invest in a Comprehensive Social Infrastructure, and Expand Civic Leadership and Partnership. Each strategic direction is accompanied by a brief interpretative text section and between two and six general but concrete goals.

Included as appendices are information on demographic trends, a chronology of the Social Development Strategy, a description of community consultation on social development, and a summary of a report called “Preserving our Civic Legacy” that was submitted to the City by the Community Social Planning Council.

9. City of North Vancouver, British Columbia

*Social Plan (1998)*

*The City of North Vancouver has addressed local social issues for a number of years. The Social Plan is a strategic response which defines the most appropriate ways in which the City can respond to current and future community concerns, while recognizing its limitations.*

The City of North Vancouver’s Social Plan is structured as goals, objectives, and actions. It has a single vision statement and value statements focused on the following four areas: Community Resources, Community Involvement, Community Wellness, and Community Expectations. The majority of the document is dedicated to listing concrete steps that will be taken in pursuit of social objectives. The Social Plan was prepared to compile the City’s existing social planning initiatives rather than to introduce or propose new goals, objectives, and actions.

North Vancouver’s Social Plan addresses the broadest range of issues of all the municipalities examined. It is organized into 13 issue areas, including:

- Community Life
- Youth
- Seniors
- Families and Children
- People with Disabilities
- Housing
- Community Social Services
- Safety and Security
- Transportation
- Cultural Diversity
- Arts, Culture, and Heritage
- Leisure Services
- Emergency Preparedness

## Defining Sustainability and Social Sustainability

Both sustainability and social sustainability have a number of definitions and applications. Social sustainability is most often considered to be one aspect of overall sustainability. The following are selected existing definitions and/or discussions of the terms.

### Sustainability

1. From the 1987 Brundtland Report (report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development):

*Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

2. From Leonie Sandercock, a professor and former director of Urban Planning at the University of British Columbia:

*To be sustainable, urban development has to be based on (investment in) a city's own resource endowments, which includes human, social, cultural, intellectual, environmental and urban capital, and needs to be guided by a long term vision of the good city, a vision that enjoys popular support because it has been put together through extensive discussion. So a model of inclusive democracy seems to be central to such a vision, as well as a local state which is attentive to the need for preserving and improving the quality of the city-region's wealth-creating resource complexes (the six forms of capital) while striving to encourage innovative thinking and practice.<sup>1</sup>*

### Social Sustainability

1. From Andrea Colantonio, *Measuring Social Sustainability: Best Practice From Urban Renewal in the EU*:

*"a coherent and comprehensive theoretical framework to a fully integrated approach to sustainability is still lacking from the literature and it is unlikely that one could be developed in the near future."<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scarp.ubc.ca/faculty%20profiles/leoniesustst.html>

<sup>2</sup> Colantonio, Andrea. (2007), *Measuring Social Sustainability: Best Practice From Urban Renewal in the EU*, Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development.

Colantonio attributes the lack of consensus on a social sustainability definition to the multifaceted nature of the concept of sustainability. Perhaps it is also due in part to the difficulty in establishing metrics to evaluate whether social sustainability has been achieved.

2. From Editors, *The Social Sustainability of Cities: Diversity and the Management of Change*:

*Development (and/or growth) that is compatible with harmonious evolution of civil society, fostering an environment conducive to the compatible cohabitation of culturally and socially diverse groups while at the same time encouraging social integration, with improvements in the quality of life for all segments of the population.*<sup>3</sup>

3. From The Commonwealth Association of Architects:

*Social sustainability requires the cohesion of society and the ability to work towards common goals while meeting individual needs, such as those for health and well-being, nutrition, shelter, education and cultural expression.*<sup>4</sup>

4. From Omann and Spangenberg, *The Social Dimension of Sustainability in a Socio-Economic Scenario*:

*Social sustainability focuses on personal assets including education, skills, experience, consumption, income and employment and comprises every citizen's right to actively participate in his/her society as an essential element.*<sup>5</sup>

Omann and Spangenberg contend that access to societal resources is a key element of social sustainability.

5. From World Bank Policy Paper<sup>6</sup> (2002):

*Social sustainability means maintaining social capital. Social capital refers to investments and services that create the basic framework for society. It lowers the cost of working together and facilitates cooperation: trust lowers transaction costs. Only systematic community participation and strong civil society, including government can achieve this. Cohesion of community for mutual benefit, connectedness between groups of people,*

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<sup>3</sup> Polese, M. and Stren, R., (Eds.), (2000) *The Social Sustainability of Cities: Diversity and the Management of Change*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.comarchitect.org/WebHelp/9\\_sustainable\\_development\\_definition.htm](http://www.comarchitect.org/WebHelp/9_sustainable_development_definition.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Omann I. and Spangenberg J.H., (2002) Assessing Social Sustainability. *The Social Dimension of Sustainability in a Socio-Economic Scenario*, paper presented at the 7th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Ecological Economics“ in Sousse (Tunisia), 6-9 March 2002

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.wiley.co.uk/egec/pdf/GA811-W.PDF>

*reciprocity, tolerance, compassion, patience, forbearance, fellowship, love, commonly accepted standards of honesty, discipline and ethics. Commonly shared rules, laws, and information (libraries, film, and diskettes) promote social sustainability.*

6. From Western Australian Council of Social Service:

*Social sustainability occurs when the formal and informal processes, systems, structures and relationships actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected and democratic, and provide a good quality of life.<sup>7</sup>*

7. From Metro Vancouver (2004):

*A framework for a socially sustainable community is comprised of three key components:*

- 1 Ensuring that the basic needs of residents are met,*
- 2 Ensuring individual or human capacity is maintained and enhanced and,*
- 3 Ensuring social capacity<sup>8</sup> is maintained and enhanced.*

The Metro Vancouver concept of social sustainability is underpinned by four guiding principles: equity, social inclusion and interaction, security, and adaptability.

Critical to fostering the social capacity (the third component of the framework) is providing citizens with access to information, proactively providing information, helping citizens use information in their deliberations, and collaboratively planning in discussion with those holding power – the democratization of planning. Creating social learning processes that enable citizens to form cohesive social action networks that can collectively pursue agreed upon goals is critical to achieving social sustainability.

8. From Baines and Morgan<sup>9</sup>, *Sustainability Appraisal*:

Baines and Morgan do not provide a general definition of social sustainability but attempt to study the main features and key themes encompassed by the concept. Baines and Morgan's work identifies the thematic areas of social sustainability as being basic needs and social well-being, social capital, equity, and social and cultural dynamism.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unisa.edu.au/hawkeinstitute/research/ecosocial/eco-links.asp>

<sup>8</sup> Social capacity refers to having the resources and resiliency to address future problems.

<sup>9</sup> Baines J. and Morgan B., (2004), 'Sustainability Appraisal: A Social Perspective' In *Sustainability Appraisal. A Review Of International Experience And Practice*, Dalal-Clayton B And Sadler B, (Eds), First Draft of Work in Progress, International Institute for Environment and Development, London

They contend that the broadly accepted common ingredients of social sustainability include:

- meeting basic needs;
- overcoming disadvantage attributable to personal disability;
- fostering personal responsibility, including social responsibility and regard for the needs of future generations;
- maintaining and developing the stock of social capital, in order to foster trusting, harmonious and co-operative behaviour needed to underpin civil society;
- attention to the equitable distribution of opportunities in development, in the present and in the future;
- acknowledging cultural and community diversity, and fostering tolerance; and
- empowerment of people to participate on mutually agreeable terms in influencing choices for development and in decision-making.

9. From Federation of Canadian Municipalities, *Quality of Life Indicators Project*:

Another approach to defining social sustainability is to measure Quality of Life (QOL) indicators. Across Canada, municipalities have struggled with appropriate data and tools to measure the strengths of their cities. To address this challenge, the large urban centres, with the support of the Big City Mayors Caucus and Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) staff, undertook the creation of a reporting system to monitor QOL in Canadian municipalities. Representatives from 16 municipalities developed a list of strategic and sustainable indicators of QOL, with a particular emphasis on social indicators on topics that are often not explored in depth. Key themes for a sustainable city according to the QOL criteria are:

- Enabling residents to meet their basic needs;
- Promoting a fair and equitable sharing of common resources;
- Developing and maintaining a vibrant local economy;
- Protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment;
- Offering opportunities for the attainment of personal goals, hopes or aspirations; and
- Supporting rich social interactions and the inclusion of all residents in community life.

This definition acknowledges that the QOL in any given municipality is influenced by interrelated factors such as: affordable and appropriate housing; civic engagement; community and social infrastructure; education; employment; the local economy; the natural environment; personal and community health; personal financial security; and personal safety.

## **A Demographic Snapshot of Burnaby Based on 2006 Census Data**

### **Population**

The population of Burnaby at the time of the 2006 Census was 202,799, making it the third most populated municipality in British Columbia. That population figure represents a 4.6% increase over 2001, which is less than the Metro Vancouver growth rate of 6.5%.

The median age of Burnaby's population in 2006 was 39 years; 85% of the population was aged 15 years and over. These figures are consistent with those for Metro Vancouver as a whole.

There were 3,005 Aboriginal people identified in Burnaby in the 2006 Census, comprising 1.5% of the general population. This compares to 1.9% of the general population in Metro Vancouver.

### **Families, Households and Dwellings**

In 2006, there were 78,030 households in Burnaby, of which 27% were one person households, 30% were two person households, and 18% were three person households. Only 4% of households had six or more persons. These figures are fairly consistent with those for Metro Vancouver. The average household size in Burnaby was 2.6 persons.

In 2006, there were 56,013 census families<sup>1</sup> in Burnaby. The majority (75%) were headed by married couples, 8% were headed by common-law couples, and 17% were led by lone-parents. These percentages are fairly consistent with the Metro region as a whole. The average family size was 2.9 persons.

Fifty percent of Burnaby's population aged 15+ years was legally married (and not separated) in 2006, and 35% had never married (they were either single or living common-law). Seven percent were divorced, 6% were widowed, and 3% were separated. These figures are reflective of Metro Vancouver as a whole.

In 2006, almost 62% of Burnaby residents owned their homes, while almost 39% rented. Burnaby's homeownership rate is slightly lower than the Metro Vancouver rate of 65%.

Single-family houses represented 27% of dwellings in Burnaby in 2006, as did two-family dwellings. Apartment buildings of less than five floors also accounted for 27% of dwellings, and apartment buildings of more than five floors accounted for 19%.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada uses the term Census Family to refer to a couple (married or common law) and their children who live together in the same home; a single parent and his or her child(ren) who live in the same home; or a couple without any children who live in the same home. Children in a Census Family include grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) but with no parents present. A Census Family is often referred to as a nuclear family.

## **Cultural Diversity**

Burnaby is characterized by an increasingly diverse population, with a higher percentage of immigrants and recent immigrants than Metro Vancouver. In 2006, immigrants<sup>2</sup> comprised over half (51%) of the city's population, compared to 40% for Metro Vancouver. Almost 11% of Burnaby's 2006 population had immigrated to Canada since 2001, compared to only 7% for Metro Vancouver. The birth country of the largest pool of immigrants to Burnaby is China.

In 2006, English was the language spoken most often at home for 62% of Burnaby residents, while 37% of residents spoke a non-official language at home. The most common language spoken at home – outside of English – was Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese) at 21% of Burnaby's population, with Korean second at 3%.

Over 55% of Burnaby's 2006 population identified themselves as visible minority<sup>3</sup>. Burnaby's visible minority figure is considerably higher than the Metro Vancouver average of 42%.

## **Labour Market**

Burnaby's unemployment rate has fluctuated greatly in recent years. Although the 2006 rate of 6.8% was low compared to recent years, it was slightly higher than the Metro Vancouver rate of 5.6%. The participation rate of Burnaby residents in the work force - at 64% - was slightly lower than the rate for Metro Vancouver (66.8%). Unemployment among those aged 15 to 24 years is traditionally higher than among the general population, and stood at almost 12% in Burnaby in 2006. This is fairly consistent with the Metro Vancouver average of 11%.

## **Education**

Burnaby's population is relatively well-educated. In 2006, about 22% of Burnaby's population aged 25+ years had achieved a high school certificate or equivalent, while 15% had not. Sixty percent of the age group had some type of post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, including 22% with a Bachelor degree. In 2006, educational attainment was approximately equally distributed between men and women per capita. These figures are consistent with those for Metro Vancouver.

## **Income**

While Burnaby's population consists of a range of income groups, Burnaby residents have, on average, lower incomes than Metro Vancouver residents. For example, the average income for Burnaby individuals aged 15+ years in 2006 was \$30,829, compared to the Metro Vancouver average of \$36,123. Burnaby's average household income was \$63,453, compared to the Metro average of \$73,258. The average family income was \$74,413, compared to \$87,788 for Metro Vancouver. Women earned significantly less than men, and the median income for both Burnaby men and women, aged 15+ years, was below that for Metro Vancouver. More than one quarter of

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada defines an immigrant as a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada defines visible minorities as persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

Burnaby homeowners, and almost half of renters were paying more than 30% of their gross income for housing in 2006.<sup>4</sup>

A more detailed 2006 demographic profile for Burnaby can be found in the companion document *Demographic Tables for Burnaby and Metro Vancouver*. As well, a demographic summary, including comparative data from 1981 onwards and comparisons with neighbouring municipalities, can be found in the document, *Social and Demographic Trends in Burnaby and Neighbouring Communities, 1981 to 2006*.

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<sup>4</sup> Canadian policy-makers have agreed on the figure of 30% of gross income as an upper threshold for what a household should have to pay for housing. Housing costs above the 30% threshold mean that other basics such as food and clothing must be sacrificed.

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