Strengthening Communities Strategy

—

Community Engagement
Summary Report

Christchurch
City Council

This report summarises the key themes identified during community engagements we undertook to inform the refresh of our Strengthening Communities Strategy 2007–2017.

Contents

Background

Our Strengthening Communities Strategy 2007-2017 was developed to provide a framework to guide our work with community organisations, which in turn work in a range of ways to help develop strong communities.

Thirteen years on, this strategy is being refreshed to better align with current and anticipated community needs and aspirations, and with our community priorities and outcomes, set out in our Strategic Framework.[1]
The Strengthening Communities Strategy 2021-2031 will guide how we work with community and volunteer groups and other stakeholders to build strong and resilient communities over the next 10 years and beyond.

A project team, led by staff in the Community Support Governance and Partnerships Unit was established, comprising both internal staff and external stakeholders, to help guide the development of the strategy refresh. This team provides strategic advice and subject knowledge. Its membership includes:

- Christchurch City Mission
- Age Concern
- Community and Public Health – disability and health in all policies lens
- Social Equity and Wellbeing Network - Third Sector representation
- Elected member working group input.
- Ngāi Tahu Relations Team
- Christchurch City Council
  - Monitoring and Research Team
  - Policy and transformation Team
  - Community Planning and Partnerships Unit
    - Community Development Advisors
    - Community Recreation Advisors
  - CCC Parks Unit

From August to October 2020, we engaged with a wide range of representatives from communities, both geographic communities and communities of identity or interest.

Staff and elected members provided input. Engagement ranged from informal discussions through to workshops and meetings. Kanohi ki kanohi (face to face) discussions were held with over 20 workshop groups involving approximately 350 people. We received online Have Your Say submissions from 42 organisations and 17 residents. This summary captures general themes and specific considerations from these diversely targeted engagements.

Our sincere thanks to the very many people who have contributed their time, ideas and interest.

[1.] *https://ccc.govt.nz/the-council/how-the-council-works/20182028-vision/strategic-framework - Appendix 1*

Engagement objectives

Our intention in undertaking the early engagement was that the discussions and submissions would:

- Identify things that support the development of healthy and connected communities
- Share challenges and opportunities
- Provide us with direction for a 10-year action plan to build strong, resilient communities
- Give feedback on our role in strengthening communities

Participants were provided information about the existing purposes of the strategy, its key achievements over the 13 years to 2020, and our Strategic Framework: Developing Resilience in the 21st Century.

Participants were asked a series of questions designed to find out how strong communities look and feel, and what people believe local government's role in helping to build strong and resilient communities is.

Questions were grouped into four categories –people, place, participation and preparedness – to enable thinking and conversations unconstrained by the existing strategy goals. The questions also encouraged participants to consider the whole of Council role in building citywide and neighbourhood layers of community identity and social capital.

Who we engaged with

Location	Stakeholder group	Type of engagement
Qtopia Biz Dojo	Rainbow community	Workshop
CCC Civic Offices	Community and local/central govt sector representative	Workshop
Kianga Ora Office	Interagency Network for Refugees and Migrants	Workshop
Have your Say	17 residents and 42 organisation respondents – *Separate report Appendix 1*	Online survey
Christchurch City Mission	Women's programme	Discussion group
Christchurch City Mission	Men's Programme	Discussion Group
Beckenham Service Centre	Selected local groups (balanced) reduced due to Covid19.	Workshop
	Richmond Residents Association	Online submission
	Pacific Communities Advocate	Submission via Email
Linwood Service Centre	Linwood Central Heathcote Network groups	Workshop
Civic Offices	Parks Team	Meeting
Beckenham Service Centre	Age Friendly Spreydon Cashmere Advisory Group	Workshop
Woolston Community Hall	Environment Canterbury Youth Advisory Group (16-24yrs)	Workshop
-	Barrier Free- Accessibility	Submission via email
Online (Zoom)	Funding Leaders Advisory Group	Meeting
-	Burwood East Residents Association	Workshop?
-	South Shore Residents Association	Community led discussion- submission via email.
Rarakau Riccarton Centre	Council Community Development and Recreation Advisors	Workshop
Online (Zoom)	Combined Community Boards	Workshop
F-W-H Service Centre Board Room	Fendalton Waimairi Harewood Community Liaison Group	Workshop
Fendalton Service Centre	Libraries Leadership Team	Meeting
	CCS Disability Action and Blind Low Vision (NZ)	
Justice Precinct	Civil Defence Management Team	Meeting
Civic Offices	Civic Offices	Urban Planning

Key feedback

Question 1: What does a healthy and connected community look like?

While many comments referred to place, or participation, and some to future preparedness, generally comments pointed towards people, community organisations, agencies and the Council.

Responses showed awareness of communities operating from city-wide to neighbourhood levels and covered aspects such as:

- Inclusivity is demonstrated when people of all walks of life are smiling and engaging with each other, interacting, and seeing their own cultures, leadership and identities being celebrated.
- Visual signals of welcome such as cultural symbols encourage a sense of belonging and community.
- The importance of freedom from physical barriers to accessibility, such as lack of transport, and financial limitations to participation.
- Inequity can be reduced by ensuring homes are healthy, everyone has access to support services and amenities, and healthy food is available for all.

- The importance of neighbours knowing each other, working together for voluntary causes, reaching out to those who are lonely, and helping others contribute what they can to care for and have a say about their own environments.
- When communities are valued for their views and interests. People feel welcome to play the sports they like, follow their interests or practice the faith of their choice, and they know they are valued as members of the whole community.
- Support agencies and funders are working together and commonly understand and agree on what their communities need.

Verbal and written feedback consistently highlighted certain words: resilient, resourceful, compassionate, involved, safe, liveable, cohesive, highly engaged, trusting, reciprocity, happy, cooperative, well-resourced and inclusive.

There were also recurring phrases and statements: "We look after our most vulnerable"; "We have places to meet each other"; "We care for our environment"; "We have opportunities to be involved and contribute"; "Diversity is embraced"; "Accessibility and understanding increases our sense of belonging and inclusion"; "We can see ourselves in the community".

"A place where people live, grow, learn, enjoy, have fun, feel safe, are connected, are supported, and where people can input into decisions and solutions and know what's going on."

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Question 2: People – towards a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion

What are the best ways we can build a community where people feel included and diversity is welcomed?

"We before me"

Encouraging inclusive behaviour was a common theme in responses. Suggestions as to how we could achieve this identified:

- Working through the right mix of services, events, facilities, and communications

- Providing opportunities for interaction between diverse peoples

- Community hubs that welcome all to organised or casual encounters

- Greenspaces for all ages, capabilities and interests, where people can easily connect and learn

- Having many types of events, activities and learning opportunities

- Reciprocity and partnership with community groups

- Broadening engagement to get better community representation

- Diversity education to break down attitudes and build understanding

- Creating a culture that encourages participation without fear of "getting it wrong"

- Community advisory services and funding support for key organisations, community builders and networks

- Assistance to encourage wider participation in volunteering

- Supporting local leadership, using diverse communication methods, and helping to provide inclusive gathering places for many different communities

- Leading a conversation about the city's collective culture by promoting who we are as a city community, especially through major events, with positive messaging reinforcing inclusiveness and diversity

Barriers, challenges, obstacles and opportunities identified included:

- Unequal participation: due to deprivation factors, disconnection, lack of confidence within minority groups, language and cultural barriers, and a shortage of discretionary time.

- Insufficient capacity: to use/access communication technology, and the need for alternative or better understood connections and processes. Groups not feeling listened to.

- Neighbourhood design: Need to better mix populations and age groups. Neighbourhoods with high fences, gates, dogs, and empty houses reduce interactions between residents.

- Insufficient knowledge or education about and trust between different ages, cultures and ethnicities.

- Inconsistent accessibility to public spaces and places.

Question 3: Place.
What would increase our sense of belonging? What can we do to increase our use of publicspaces and places?

Three strong themes relating to role were identified:

- **Making places and spaces**

  - Places need to be physically, financially, and culturally accessible and safe.
  - Common spaces need to be fit for the purpose of bringing people of all ages and abilities together, in both natural and built environs.
  - They need to be user-friendly, affordable, and welcoming.
  - Signage, artworks, natural features, and architectural design contribute to a sense of belonging.
  - Community hubs should reflect the community they serve in their style and decoration.

- **Telling people what is available and where**

  - Simple and widely available messages about locations, costs, types of facilities or greenspaces, and effective communication about what is on at these places and spaces.
  - Clear and effective language about how to hire facilities, or pay for day-to-day use (such as memberships).
  - Ensure everyone is told they are welcome, through advertising.

- **Encouraging community ownership**

  - Places and spaces that are created in consultation with their communities with more feedback about decisions and timeframes.
  - Places where community members and groups can organise to tidy, restore, maintain and improve their own spaces.
  - Care is a desired component of activation, which is motivated by the ownership that accompanies being in or using a place.

Barriers, challenges, obstacles and opportunities identified included:

- Ensure public places and spaces are inclusive, multicultural, multi-generational and multi-ability.
- Ensure people from diverse backgrounds know when public places and events are free and open to all.
- Have more community/urban rangers to work alongside community groups.
- Create intergenerational facilities in parks with games, equipment, and spectator seating to suit all ages and physical abilities.
- Add value to social housing, for example by installing a community garden, and providing barbeque areas so that those in small units can host friends and family. Encourage street parties – Summer with your Neighbours.
- Expense was seen as a barrier to using recreation centres and swimming pools; need to encourage free and fun introduction to community events; there was reluctance to enter unkempt parks because of safety concerns.

Question 4: Participation

How do we encourage more residents to become involved in community activities?
Do you feel like you have the opportunity to be involved in decision-making? If not, what are some of the reasons stopping you from taking part?

"Opportunity is there but not everyone knows"

Responses to this question covered both contributing to and influencing decision-making and participation in its broadest sense.

Empowerment

- Lack of awareness, low confidence to speak out, uncertainty about the impact of feedback, and unfamiliarity with processes were identified as impediments to participation and trust that participation can make a difference.

- Supporting the learning, presence and expansion of diverse community leadership is important in maintaining and growing wider involvement.

Information

- Use simple language - written and online language should be less "official" or academic and more inclusive and tailored correctly to different communities, and supplied in ways that are best for reaching the intended audience.

- Use a range of tools, tailored and targeted group messaging that connects through locations online and in key places.

- Opportunities exist with open forums and through community organisations but many people are unaware or don't necessarily feel welcome.

- Community board forums were identified as an effective engagement opportunity, however more work is required to encourage new contributors.

Assistance

- Our community liaison roles were mentioned as being useful in connecting with and supporting community leaders and community organisations, enabling them to share knowledge and understanding, increase participation, and build local capacity to plan, organise, fund and lead activities.

Representation

- Working beyond those who are already familiar with how Council works

- Ensuring that diverse methods of engaging and working with communities are used

- Going to diverse and sometimes small groups to break down language and cultural barriers towards better tailored assistance and engagement

- Equitable representation also requires meeting places that are accessible for community groups of diverse age, culture, ability, and interests.

Timing and process

- Written submission opportunities work better when communities can discuss and develop ideas together.

Question 5: Preparedness
What can the community do to prepare for disruption and change in our lives?

This workshop question generated responses that about Civil Defence emergencies and also expected longer term change. Some of the responses were relevant to both unexpected transformative change such as natural disasters, anticipated and more incremental change such as city development or economic and environmental change. The responses can be grouped into themes of preparing for emergencies and preparing for expected future change.

"Start with what you have"

Communities preparing for emergencies

- Household, organisation, and community plans were considered important for communities to manage in emergencies. Knowing the neighbourhood, having safe places to gather, and local clusters or organisations to lead assistance were identified as key elements of good planning.

- Fast access to accurate information – knowing where to access official information and direction, and understand how to provide this to the places where people will naturally go to find it.

- Knowing what we have learned about the ways people will help each other and those that will likely need help, was seen as a pre-existing readiness element. Being able to make the best use of this social capital in our neighbourhoods depends on ongoing encouragement and support for neighbours to stay connected, to update awareness of local strengths and weaknesses, and to encourage everyone to have a suitable readiness plan.

- Useful emergency situation communication channels that should be used were identified as Plains FM, Council website (in other languages), text messages, and Facebook. Social media use was also seen to isolate some groups.

- Preparation should include up to date understanding of and connection to the roles of official emergency services and city wide agencies, through interagency collaboration, neighbourhood support groups, action clusters, and local events.

"Encourage both self-responsibility and shared responsibility"

Communities preparing for known change ahead requires:

- Changes and risks need to be communicated in a timely fashion to the community and their members so they can plan.

- Use a diverse range of media platforms for the appropriate delivery of information including translation and plain English.

- Community group meetings highlight risks and the resources available and communication that reaches deeper into local populations. Strong community groups that know each other and collaborate to bring people together and lead adaptation.

- Supporting people to accept the idea or inevitability of change as a behaviour changer, from resistance to acceptance, and finding new ways for people to adjust, participate and feel valued.

Question 6: What do you think the Council's role is in helping to build strong communities?

"People/citizens have joint responsibility with the Council to build strong communities. The Strengthening Communities Strategy is a partnership document – make this clear in the strategy".

Participants were asked about our role in building strong communities, and what the focus should be for the refreshed Strengthening Communities Strategy. Our ideal role was described in several ways:

- As a facilitator, bridger, linker and resourcer
- Protector and maintainer of the built and natural environment
- Provider of understanding staff, especially those who work in community
- Supporter of strong and responsive community boards
- Encourager of grass-roots initiatives and supplier of complementary service
- Funder of community groups and those which work with them
- Listener to identify capacity needs, and partner/supporter
- Facilitator of networking and collaboration
- Advocate of community to central government
- Keeper of a safe city
- Provider or supporter of affordable fun events

Question 7: Can you identify the top three opportunities that Council should focus on in its refreshed Strengthening Communities Strategy?

"Help to build the community by being in the community"

Opportunities are noted as follows:

- Improve and extend communication flows by using inclusive language, accessibility features and improving the navigability of the website
- Support community development along with active engagement to encourage inclusion
- Invest in developing leadership in under-led communities
- Build on existing social energy, acknowledging community wisdom and celebrating success.
- Partner and collaborate within and across communities.
- Target messages and invitations in an open and inclusive way to encourage diversity of attendance and participation in events and activities
- Specifically focus on building authentic relationships with the Pasifika community
- Target funding and resources for local responses to local issues

Targeted Stakeholder Consultation and Key Sector Considerations

Targeted engagements were held with a wide range of key groups, however participation across the whole engagement series was diverse and feedback is incorporated throughout this document.

Pasifika communities

Pasifika communities are diverse and there needs to be deliberate resourcing for engagement. Renewing and building key contacts within the community and Council is required, with a proactive approach to the recruitment of Māori, Pacific and culturally and linguistically diverse communities to Council (CALD) staff positions.

Reference was given to the 2007 strategy commitment to include Pacific peoples' voices. The refreshed strategy needs to do so too, and to act on them.

It is also important to ensure that the refreshed strategy aligns with the Pacific world view of wellbeing and community. Consideration should also be made of the constitutional responsibility Aotearoa has to the realm of New Zealand Countries – The Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau.

Obstacles remain for Pacific peoples to partner or become involved due to lack of resources and lack of clarity about who to work with in Council.

Positive reference was made to Pacific peoples being distinctly distinguished as a strategic action area in the Christchurch Arts Strategy. It speaks to Christchurch being a city of the Pacific and the distinctiveness of Pacific peoples and their aspirations.

The Pacific community has been actively involved in providing submissions over the years and supporting engagements from long term planning, district plan reviews, the living wage, the Multicultural Strategy co-development and review, Housing Subcommittee, Canterbury Multi Use Arena investment, and Te Pae Pikari Youth Standing Committee, among others, but further work is required to ensure a wider representation of Pacific views, and stronger more trusting relationships between communities is built.

Vulnerable communities

"We're the public - we are interested in the city too"

We met with the Christchurch City Mission's men's and women's day programmes. The sessions were lively, thoughtful and aspirational. Participants stressed a desire to be involved in the fabric of city/civic life but had little knowledge about how to go about it, nor did they feel they had "permission" to do so.

There was significant interest in volunteering and helping others through collective activities that enable safe and attractive local environments.

Obstacles preventing people from participating included access to employment, mental health support, poverty and securing warm and affordable housing. Past criminal records or lack of work experience made it difficult to enter the workforce. Some participants expressed frustration and would value the opportunity for second-chance employment. Volunteering was seen as a stepping stone to gaining experience and finding sustainable employment and they sought Council's support in this.

Communication about how to access the arts, creative pursuits, and free events needed to be improved. Opportunities to gather and talk to one another were also important.

"We need to be reached out to specifically - not just through blanket media".

Priority areas identified for Council to focus on included:

- Funding and supporting local community activities
- Community safety and good environmental design
- Helping people to find volunteering opportunities across the city
- Regular, accessible information about what's on, what's available and how to participate.
- Assistance to undertake community-led ideas
- Providing opportunities for us to help out and give back

Migrant and newcomer communities

"Everyone needs to feel comfortable being themselves"

Participants universally expressed that a sense of safety and security was important. This covered the built environment as well as the social environment. A city where racism is challenged and where equal opportunities are abundant.

Common themes throughout the conversations included:

- Cultivating a welcoming culture at a city and neighbourhood level
- Providing opportunities to develop relationships with mana whenua and to better understand our Treaty obligations.
- Connecting with Māori and other cultures to provide a greater sense of belonging to place.
- To gather and learn from one another through storytelling and to share cultures through events, networks and forums.

Participants saw our role as:

- Supporting communities to access information and resources
- Support to develop community leadership and organisational capability
- Providing opportunities for cultural expression.
- Work in partnership with communities to reduce barriers to inclusion and participation
- Ensure translated information and culturally appropriate ways of communicating.
- More education about how to link with local community boards and how to be more active in joint decision-making.

Disability Communities

"I don't want to be seen as perpetually angry but feel it's the only way to get results".

Representatives from the disability sector and advocacy groups described a strong community as one that is working, collaborating, accessible and inclusive of grassroots activities. Appropriate and accessible public transport and consideration for different abilities in planning and delivery of services was deemed very important.

It was felt that the disability community shouldn't have to fight for basic rights, rather it should be a fundamental part of Council planning and delivery and that it is budgeted for accordingly. One participant expressed that they felt they were continuously advocating and it was very tiring.

Places and spaces were a significant area of interest- Accessibility being a critical requirement to belonging.

Council needs to provide consistent and accessible information for the disability community, such as improving the Council's booking system for facilities-how do we know which ones are accessible or not?

"It would be good to know before we go somewhere as we often have far more planning to do than others before we leave".

Equity and Inclusion

- For people who don't like noise and crowds, could there be consideration given to having alternative options including quiet shopping times? More people would attend events if this was the case.
- More family friendly environments where disabled and non-disabled family members could be together- parks and playgrounds. Could a rating system work for parks and facilities and be available online?
- Clear signage and appropriate building design needs to reflect the community's needs.
- Design considerations for non-verbal members of the community. Lifts don't have a text number for emergencies and they cannot call. Consider flashing light fire alarms in toilets.

Participation

- Council could produce more easy read documents - ideally significant Council documents, such as the Long Term Plan and Annual plan process should be available on line or in print in libraries and service centres.
- There is a level of cynicism in surveys and consultation feeling like people keep repeating themselves.
- There are so may needs and so many different ranges of disability- we need to focus higher and look at ensuring the best outcome for the majority
- Disability awareness should start at school and carry on through into our public institutions

Preparedness

"Our disability organisations and collaborations need to be more organised. We need support to build our capability and capacity however we are getting better at responding to disruption. We need to continue to adapt systems that work for us collectively"

The group felt our role should be that of encouraging collaboration, establishing partnership opportunities, gathering information and disseminating it appropriately, identifying what people need and encouraging community-led responses.

Working with the disability community in partnership to honour the Accessibility Charter that Council is a signatory to would be a good way to progress.

Rainbow Community

"We are respected and belong"

The rainbow community is diverse in nature, and want this diversity to be respected and to feel welcome in the wider community. While having support from others in the LGBT+ community is important, normalisation of diverse genders and sexualities within the wider community is what is sought. Participants expressed feeling tokenised or excluded. They seek a combination of physical spaces, and social supports to continue the good-willed expansion that this community has seen in recent years.

> **Central to achieving belonging within the community is ensuring that everyone is welcomed at events and initiatives around the city. Not just in principle, but intentionally stated on signage and through vocabulary used.**

Participants believe that education and opportunities for interrelation are key to bringing those who may not understand the rainbow community together – where people are not afraid to ask questions or scared of offending anyone when trying to learn. Face-to-face interaction in these situations is key to the process of education and understanding. More opportunities where this can occur the better.

Youth and children

The youth sector in Christchurch describes itself as very engaged and well organised, utilising social media and relying on technology more than in previous generations.

Many young people care deeply about the environment and related challenges such as public transport, retaining nature for outdoor recreation, and regenerative farming/ agriculture (jobs). Council needs to better harness this energy and consider fresh approaches.

Alongside this, the child and youth sector(s) are managing a historically growing challenge of mental health struggles, anxiety and depression, which are proving to be barriers for many in this population group. Working together is critical and youth-led responses need to be well supported.

The development of engaging spaces for youth in the city was of high priority, as well as activities provided by Council that are both affordable and interesting to children and youth.

The sector is interested in civic matters, such as Council, but find that it is currently presented in a way that is not interesting, or that discourages youth involvement and would appreciate the opportunity to shape how Council engages with children and young people.

Council visibility and accessibility of engagement opportunities requires more focus. Recompensing their knowledge, time and skills can be provided in different ways, from catering events to petrol vouchers as volunteer recognition.

Older Adults

"A place where you can contribute"

Key attributes of a strong community for older people were described as having:

- Environments accessible for all abilities
- Frequent and accessible public transport
- Strong connections to neighbours
- Safe
- Socially inclusive with opportunities to connect and spend time out in nature
- A community that celebrates together
- Community pride in homes, and street maintenance
- Intergenerational spaces to learn and play together

Older adults have a range of skills and experience and discretionary time. Matching those with others, would provide older adults opportunities to contribute and belong. Council can support and broker these opportunities. Volunteering was seen as an ideal way to participate and make friends, reducing social isolation and loneliness.

Elected members – combined community boards

"Address structural exclusion- understand how and why it happens and respond".

Concern was raised about the sustainability of funding, the way we have previously funded community organisations, and the need for Council to be more creative about developing partnerships for better outcomes at reduced costs. Council needs to have clearer understanding/ definition of its role in community development for the next 10 to 20 years.

More emphasis is required by Council to ensure clear concise pathways to engagement and active citizenship. Additionally the organisation needs to better reflect the makeup of the Christchurch community - diversity and inclusion is critical to building strong communities.

Leadership development, governance training and further work on our Treaty relationship with mana whenua were raised as priority areas to focus on, as was supporting succession and youth development - for future generations.

Achieving active, thriving, connected and welcoming communities takes time and focus on relationship. They are built on trust and reciprocity and Council has a clear role in facilitating this.

Digital/virtual communities have grown significantly. Online communities are just as relevant and we need to include them in our work.

Disability is not just about accessibility - this community needs to be more engaged in the planning and design stage of facilities and services. A better commitment to the Disability Charter is required.

Residents associations

Southshore Residents Association, Burwood Residents Association and Richmond Residents Association contributed written submissions.

A healthy community was described as one that has:

- Infrastructure that is maintained and operational, protecting people and housing from flooding and erosion
- Ease of access to shops, schools, and recreational opportunities
- Good transportation links and cycle ways.
- Where people from all parts of the community are able to work together.

- Opportunities for locals to gather around common interests in family friendly environments.
- Local preparedness plans, where people know who to contact or where to go in times of emergencies.
- Access to good data and information in order to identify areas of vulnerability.
- Good connections and relationships with community boards

Council staff and elected members are central to good decision making and communities need to better understand how to influence decisions. Engagement needs to be done with honest intentions of listening, where the community can see their views incorporated in plans. Flexibility and adaptability is important in meeting the community where they are at.

Obstacles included lack of trust that communities can provide solutions for themselves. This could be mitigated by having fewer closed-door meetings and having hard conversations together.

Recognising the difference between consultation and engagement and supporting communities to find their own solutions. This means communities need to be resourced on an equal footing. Communities feel a sense of belonging when they are actively participating in the decisions that affect them. Our focus should be on acting together with the community and supporting independent community interests. Recognise and support local knowledge and expertise and enable the co-design of plans, projects and initiatives where people are at the heart of all stages of the planning.

"Many attempts at community participation fail because organisations promoting involvements are unclear about the level of participation on offer. Limited consultation, with few real opinions, which is presented as an opportunity for active participation is likely to produce disillusionment".
David Wilco Guide to Effective Participation.

Concern was expressed about the effect of high-density housing on a sense of community, especially where it decreases a sense of privacy, increases vehicle volumes and reduces the connection with nature, say when trees are felled. Engagement needs to be reflected in Council decision-making.

Council's priorities need to include honouring our past resolutions, equity in the allocation of funding for community infrastructure, and community boards working closely with the community on decision making.

Conclusion

This community engagement exercise has revealed that the respondents and participants care about each other and the city in which we live, with a strong sense of community and desire to contribute to the social fabric of the city.

It also revealed that there are many members of the community who may not be as connected or engaged for a variety of reasons. The refreshed strategy needs to acknowledge and provide solutions to this.

The community has consistently expressed that it values the role of Council in helping to build strong, resilient communities but there is also a desire for more of a partnership approach to decision making with better information and communication about opportunities to participate.

The following key themes emerged as being central to building strong and resilient communities, and will be considered in the refresh of the Strengthening Communities Strategy 2021-2031

- **Honouring our Treaty relationship**
- **Acknowledging our unique and special relationship with Pasifika communities**
- **Supporting multicultural and multi-faith communities**
- **Good community infrastructure**
- **Good governance and decision-making**
- **Healthy and safe communities**
- **Timely, inclusive and accessible information**
- **Accessibility and inclusion**
- **Opportunity**
- **Respect for difference**
- **Resourcing and community grant funding**
- **Leadership – both Council and community**
- **Opportunity for all**

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