



City of Port Moody

Strategic Priorities Committee

Date: February 18, 2025
Submitted by: Community Services Department – Recreation Services Division
Subject: 2024 Mayor’s Youth Summit – Final Report

Purpose

To provide Council with a summary of the 2024 Mayor’s Youth Summit including key findings and next steps.

Recommended Resolution(s)

THAT the report dated February 18, 2025, from the Community Services Department – Recreation Services Division, regarding 2024 Mayor’s Youth Summit – Final Report be received for information.

Background

Youth play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the community they will one day inherit and be expected to lead. Ongoing efforts to engage youth with opportunities to express their opinions, collaborate with peers and discuss issues that are important to them and the future of the community, are not only important in developing the new leaders of tomorrow, but also in informing new policy directions for Council that are relevant to this segment of the population.

At the January 16, 2024, Strategic Priorities Committee meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

SPC24/003

THAT the following project proposals be approved at the staff recommended priority levels:

- Project Proposal – Mayor’s Invitational Youth Summit – Strategic Project Priority Level 1;

AND THAT a 2024 operating project be established for the Mayor’s Invitational Youth Summit with a budget of \$9,200 funded from the New Initiatives Reserve as recommended in the report dated January 16, 2024, from the City Manager regarding Corporate Project Plan – Jan 2024 Update and New Project Proposals.

On October 25, 2024, the City of Port Moody hosted the Mayor’s Youth Summit at the Inlet Theatre and Galleria. Attracting 86 youth (12-18 years old) from around the Tri-Cities, the

summit provided a platform for local youth to engage in discussions about critical issues affecting their lives and the community while achieving the following objectives:

- provide a platform for dialogue, youth advocacy and policy influence;
- be inclusive of all youth in Port Moody and the Tri-Cities;
- increase knowledge, share ideas and opinions on topics important to youth;
- develop leadership skills in youth to inspire new leaders of tomorrow;
- create new community connections between youth, strategic partners, City staff and City Council; and
- reinforce the City's commitment to understanding and responding to youth needs.

Themes were selected based on topics aligned with Council's Strategic Plan and those identified through a review of previous youth surveys. Selected themes included climate justice, mental health and wellness, social connectedness and youth spaces. In addition to City staff, members of the Youth Focus Committee were involved in planning and delivering parts of the event which included engaging community youth in a logo design contest and supporting key roles on event day.

Event Highlights

During the full day summit, youth were divided into five groups and took part in five different discussion groups facilitated by a community or organization representative, city staff and youth leaders. In addition to the discussion sessions, participants were provided lunch and allocated time to network with fellow youth, City staff, and community partners at the interactive booths. Highlights included the following:

- Welcoming: Introductory remarks were provided from Mayor Lahti and a welcome from Kwikwetlem First Nation Elder Xem-Tu-Mus (Stephen Armstrong).
- Engaging Workshops: Youth participated in interactive workshops led by youth leaders, city officials and community stakeholders, focusing on a variety of themes (noted above).
- Thought-Provoking Discussions: Youth provided feedback, opinions and potential directions for the City to consider in the discussed topics (summarized in the next section).
- Networking Opportunities: Youth were provided with the opportunity to connect with peers, mentors and community leaders who shared their passion for positive change. Many meaningful connections and opportunities for future collaboration were realized by bringing these groups together.

Discussion

What We Heard

Feedback from each of the discussion groups has been consolidated to reflect the key findings and is summarized below. The full report in **Attachment 1** includes detailed information on what we heard, and next steps.

Climate Justice

- An emphasis on the importance of sustainable energy transitions, including increased investments in renewable energy sources (solar, wind and water) and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.
- Initiatives aimed at minimizing waste and increasing recycling efforts were offered as areas of focus for future consideration.
- Environmental justice was identified as a key concern. Youth addressed calls for environmental policies and a need to protect vulnerable ecosystems.
- A strong desire for education and engagement, including school-based programs, community workshops and mentorship opportunities.
- A need for actionable solutions and the importance that their voices are heard when City policies and priorities are set through continued engagement and consultation.

Mental Health and Wellness

- Importance of having youth-led initiatives to create mental health support systems.
- A need for accessible and clear resources that address the stigma surrounding mental health.
- Increased opportunities for youth to volunteer and build connections were identified as being critical in fostering social and emotional well-being.

Social Connectedness

- Importance of responsible digital citizenship, encouraging healthy social media and promoting online safety.
- A need for support systems to counteract the potential for social isolation online.
- Importance of real-world connections and the role of family and community in supporting healthy social development.

Youth Spaces – Recreation Facilities Study Input

- Increased demand for diverse activities: stronger focus on outdoor recreation (trails, parks, sports), creative arts and fitness.
- Continuing to create more diverse and accessible recreation services that cater to a wide range of interests and age groups.
- Need for more diverse facilities that include multi-purpose spaces for youth, including pools, fitness centres and youth centres.
- Focus on accessibility.
- Emphasis on community and a desire for spaces that foster social interaction.

Youth Spaces – Social Spaces

- Ensuring youth have safe, inclusive spaces to have fun, meet people and socialize.
- Identifying the barriers to accessing existing spaces were identified for future consideration, including transportation challenges, cost and feelings of exclusion.

Next Steps

Staff have completed a thorough review of the feedback and developed a series of action items to incorporate into existing programs and services. Those within the context of existing service

levels, deemed easy of implement and with low to no-cost impacts were identified. Some of the key actions identified include:

- Continue to involve youth in future policy decisions - Areas related to climate action, transportation, renewable energy, reducing waste and protecting the environment were identified by youth as being important to them.
- Youth driven program development – Regularly gather operational feedback on current youth programs and services, including placing a suggestion box in the youth centre to collect input on preferences for programs and other services.
- Offer “Try It” sessions for new programs – Look for opportunities throughout the year to introduce new programs on a trial basis that are free to try to gauge interest and add variety to current offerings.
- Partner with service providers such as Fraser Health to ensure mental health resources are accessible at recreation centres – Have resource information available for youth at recreation facilities and explore opportunities to offer workshops aimed at youth to support well-being and reduce the stigma around mental health.
- Continue to focus on youth staff training - Prioritize areas related to inclusion/diversity/equity/inclusion (IDEA), youth development, indigenous relations, communication and conflict resolution.
- Expand youth volunteer programs - Include opportunities to assist in a variety of programs and events in recreation, parks and environment including those related to recycling and environmental protection.
- Bring a friend day – Offer opportunities for youth to bring a friend to try a new program or activity.
- Outreach to parts of the City where youth participation and involvement is lower – Review recreation patron data and focus outreach and marketing initiatives in areas of the City where youth participation and involvement can be improved.
- Make programs and spaces more accessible to youth – Look for opportunities to address participants with disabilities through adaptive equipment, training staff and inclusive program design.
- Designate a specific area in the curling lounge in the recreation centre as a youth-friendly zone – Add seating, reconfigure space layouts and review wifi needs to create a safe and welcoming space for homework and social gatherings.

Together with information collected from recent youth engagement initiatives including the Port Moody Parks & Trails Engagement Event (spring 2024), the Recreation Facilities Study (spring 2024) and past youth surveys, the key findings from the Youth Summit will become a valuable resource to inform future workplans and other priorities within the Youth Services area.

Given the 2025 workplan focus on the Tri-City Reach Awards and the Recreation Master Plan update that are related to furthering youth connections, staff recommend scheduling the next youth summit in 2026. This timing will permit a new cohort of youth to participate and allow staff to incorporate the event into the 2026 budget process and prioritize in the 2026 Youth Focus Committee’s workplan.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Communications and Public Engagement Initiatives

There are no communications or public engagement initiatives associated with the recommendations in this report.

Council Strategic Plan Goals

The recommendations in this report align with the following Council Strategic Plan Goal(s):

- Strategic Goal 2.3 – Enhance Community Wellbeing.

Attachment(s)

1. 2024 Mayor's Youth Summit – Final Report.

Report Author

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2024 Mayor's Youth Summit – Final Report .docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 - 2024 Mayor's Youth Summit - Final Report.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jan 30, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Julie Pavey-Tomlinson, General Manager of Community Services - Jan 30, 2025 - 9:28 AM

Stephanie Lam, City Clerk and Manager of Legislative Services - Jan 30, 2025 - 1:55 PM

Lindsay Todd, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jan 30, 2025 - 2:20 PM

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jan 30, 2025 - 3:23 PM

Anna Mathewson, City Manager - Jan 30, 2025 - 6:20 PM