



Strategic Priority 7: Inclusive and Accessible Delta

What we are trying to achieve: OBJECTIVES

- Build an inclusive community where powers are shared, differences are celebrated and diversity is valued.
- Enhance physical accessibility through the built environment and support social inclusion through the elimination of barriers for people with different abilities in Delta.
- Enhance community capacity to address immigrant needs in Delta.

A table of actions for each strategic priority can be found on page 71.

Why it is important:

Equity and inclusion are imperative for municipalities. Systemic and institutionalized forms of discrimination have created cities that don't work for everyone. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted multiple pre-existing and growing inequalities that vulnerable residents face when accessing health, employment and housing. From people with different abilities to racialized Canadians to Indigenous Peoples, the complexities of challenges faced by diverse residents in Canadian communities require multi-faceted collaborative community responses. Addressing social inequalities is challenging in the current climate and governance environments with limited municipal mandates and increasing demands in the social realm. Despite limited powers and resources, Canadian municipalities have been at the forefront in advancing social justice and inclusion.

“Building back fairer” and addressing structural inequities will require even more dramatic rethinking and shifts in the status quo policies and approaches from all levels of government.



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What we know: LOCAL CONTEXT

Diversity and Equity: In 2016, there were 36,300 Delta residents who identified as visible minority, which represents 36% of the total population. South Asian residents represent 56% of the visible minority group in Delta. The 2020 CDC BC’s survey about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic indicated that 42% of South Asians in the Fraser South region were stressed about their financial wellbeing, compared to 28% of their white counterparts; 20% of South Asians were not working due to the pandemic, compared to 13% of white residents.

Immigrants and Equity: In 2016, there were 31,230 immigrants in Delta or 31% of the total population; the majority of immigrants live in North Delta and 44% of all immigrants came from India. In 2015, the average income of Delta’s labour force was \$49,483; however, Delta’s recent immigrants in this group made less than a half of what total population earned (\$23,424).

Indigenous Population: In 2016, there were 2,710 people identified as Aboriginal living in Delta or 2.6% of the total population.

Strong Sense of Community Belonging: The 2013/2014 MHMC survey indicated that close to 70% of Delta residents have a strong or somewhat strong sense of community belonging, which is significantly higher than the rate for Metro Vancouver (56%).

Proportion of Delta selected population groups, Canada Census 1996-2016				
	1996	2001	2006	2016
Aboriginal identify	0.9%	1.6%	1.8%	2.7%
Visible minority	17.5%	23.4%	28.1%	36%
Immigrants	24.3%	26.8%	27%	31%

What we can build on: ASSETS

Vibrant Community Voices: Delta is a home to strong community voices. From Delta Pride Society and Housing Be Mine Society to The Harmony Initiative Society, the voices and needs of diverse residents and families are amplified through active community groups and organizations.

Language and Settlement Supports through Delta Schools: Delta School District provides settlement services to immigrant families with children enrolled in schools and newcomers enrolled into the DSD’s Language Instruction for Newcomers in Canada (LINC) program. Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) services are offered in Arabic, Cantonese, Dari, Hindi, Mandarin, Pashto and English and French.

Mayor’s Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-racism: in 2020, the City established a Mayor’s Task Force to provide recommendations to Council on actions and initiatives to support diversity and inclusion and combat racism and discrimination at the City and in the community.

City’s Accessibility and Mobility Advisory Committee (MAC): in 2020, the City formed a new Advisory Committee that gives residents with different abilities in Delta the opportunity to provide direct input on new and existing city infrastructure and programs to support mobility and accessibility.

Delta Police: was the first in Canada to sign the 30 x 30 Pledge, a series of low-cost actions that police departments can take to improve the representation of women in law enforcement, committing to the goal that 30% of its officers will be women by 2030. A new Delta Police Diversity and Inclusion unit was formed in 2021.

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What we heard: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Lack of supports for immigrants: There is no settlement agency in Delta and many immigrant residents seek settlement supports outside of Delta. Delta is home to a large number of Temporary Foreign Workers who often do not speak English fluently and might not know their rights in Canada.

City's Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Audit revealed room for improvement: A broad range of opportunities have emerged from the internal EDI audit conducted by an external party, including a need for more robust internal capacities to advance the EDI work.

More inclusive community engagement: The City regularly engages residents to identify community needs and develop approaches and strategies to address various issues, including land use, budgeting, new facilities, etc. As the City's makeup is changing, so should public engagement strategies to ensure that the City's decision-making processes are inclusive of the needs and voices of its diverse residents.

Various accessibility challenges: Various accessibility challenges have been identified by MAC and other community members, from challenges for people with different abilities to receiving City communications, including accessing web content to accessing transportation and public spaces.

