



Strategic Priority 4: Safe and Resilient Delta

What we are trying to achieve: OBJECTIVES

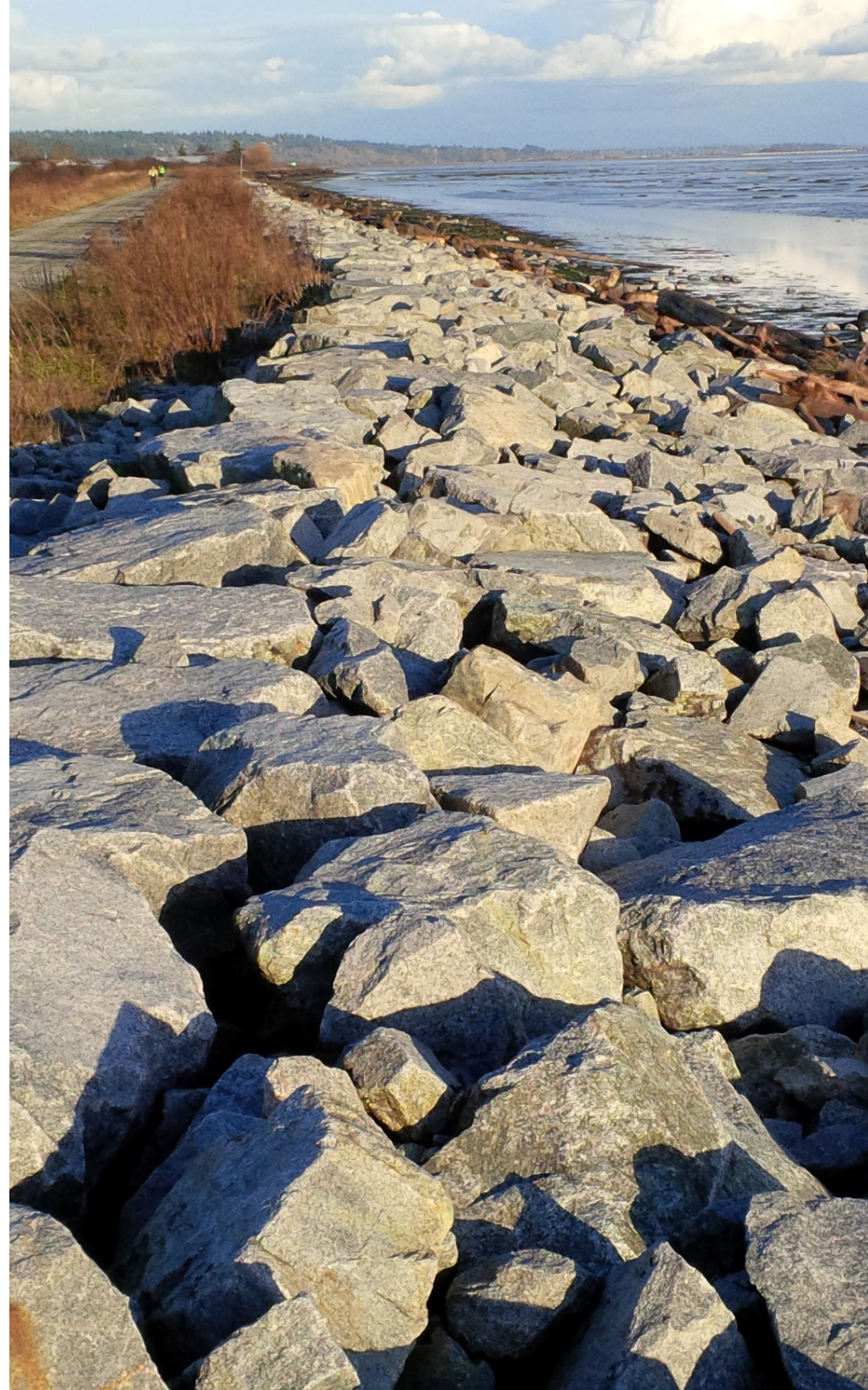
- Mobilize community capacity to address racism and discrimination.
- Strengthen community resilience and emergency preparedness.
- Increase safe mobility for all residents.

A table of actions for each strategic priority can be found on page 65.

Why it is important:

Canadian municipalities face increasingly complex public safety challenges. First responders are on the front lines responding to public health emergencies, crimes, and natural disasters like floods and wildfires. The traditional approach to public safety (i.e. reactive interventions and punishments through policing or criminal justice system) has not proven to be highly effective on its own. We also know that this approach often disproportionately affects racialized groups. The COVID-19 pandemic, a rise in hate crimes and recent extreme weather events have changed our relationships with and perception of safety. Thinking about safety has become a part of our day-to-day lives. It is a part of our 'new normal'. Municipalities are strategically positioned to mobilize coordinated community responses and effectively engage other key players in emergency and crises situations.

The community safety approach recognizes the systemic societal inequities, and is based on collective efforts to prevent and reduce crime, build safe communities and mobilize community collaborations to develop equitable and proactive interventions.



Safe and Resilient Delta

What we know: LOCAL CONTEXT

Low Crime Severity Index (CSI): Compared to other cities, Delta is a safe community. Delta ranked number three for the Greater Vancouver/Lower Mainland area municipal police for the lowest CSI score. According to Delta Police Department (DPD), Delta's 2020 CSI was 57.04, down by 12% compared to 2019. Delta also has a significantly lower CSI than the average in BC (95.71)³⁸

Increased Traffic Violations and Collisions: While crime levels have generally decreased, Delta saw a substantial increase in traffic violations and collisions in 2021. Traffic collisions have gone up by 43%, and tickets for traffic violations by 62% (DPD Statistics, 2nd Quarter, 2021).

Rise in Hate Crimes: Similar to other communities in Metro Vancouver, there was a significant increase in hate crimes in Delta in 2021. While in 2020 Delta Police recorded 12 instances of suspected hate crimes, as of mid-September 2021, they registered 43 such incidents. Racial slurs and anti-Semitic graffiti were the most common behaviours noted.

Emergency preparedness: According to 2013/2014 My Health My Community survey, 32% of Delta residents reported having emergency supplies for at least three or more days, compared to 26.7% in Metro Vancouver. Residents of Sunshine Hills reported the highest level of emergency preparedness (46.3%), compared to 27.4% in Jarvis & Kennedy.

What we can build on: ASSETS

City's Emergency Plan: One of the critical elements of robust community emergency preparedness is municipal emergency management planning. Delta's Emergency Management Plan that guides municipal responses in emergency was updated in 2021 to include the heatwave response strategy and plans for cooling centres.

Easy Access to Data: Data about crime levels in Delta is easily available on DPD's website; it is updated quarterly and allows for comparison with previous years and quarters.

Coordination Between First Responders: Delta Police, Delta Fire & Emergency Services Department and City's Emergency Response team have established strong working relationships which allow for robust community response in case of emergency. The Delta Emergency Planners Committee, led by Delta Fire Department, brings together staff from multiple City departments and various community partners (Delta School District, Fraser Health, etc.)

Delta Police Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit was formed in 2020 to centralize and support ongoing efforts to examine DPD policies and procedures through an EDI lens.

The Delta Transition House – Azure Place - for women and children fleeing violence opened in 2017. It is located in Delta in an unidentified location and provides a safe home environment for women and their families who need a short-term place to stay during a time of crisis in their life.

Strong Community Collaborations Through Planning Tables:

- **Delta Opposes Violence Everywhere (DOVE)** works to prevent relationship violence through education, public awareness and coordinating efforts to reduce gaps in services that may exist. Information, support and resources are provided at various public events scheduled around Delta and on social media.
- **Delta Spoke BC** is a part of the Resilience BC anti-racism network and brings community members, faith-based groups and Delta School District together to identify local priorities and move anti-racism projects forward.

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- **Safe Active Transportation Delta** is a collaboration between FHA, City of Delta, ICBC, Delta Police and other community partners, working together to make Delta a safer community. The group promotes Vision Zero as a platform for eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

What we heard: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Racism and Discrimination-A Troubling Trend: As Delta sees a rise in hate crimes, community stories paint a similar sober picture. There have been stories in local newspapers of residents being discriminated against, yelled at, not being treated fairly and not feeling safe in their community.

Safety During the Pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic changed our perception of safety. The pandemic also highlighted pre-existing societal inequities, from a real risk of getting a life-threatening disease to impacts on our mental health, travel and job security. According to Statistics Canada, in the context of the pandemic, visible minorities generally report feeling less safe in their neighbourhoods than the rest of the population.³⁹ Domestic abuse reports in Canada have climbed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, organizations supporting survivors reported an increase in violence of 20 to 30% in certain regions.⁴⁰

Impacts of Climate Change: Summer of 2021 marked the year when BC's communities experienced all-time temperature records. According to coroners, the number of deaths recorded across BC during the province's record-breaking heat wave (June 25-July 1, 2021) was 815 people and 70% are deemed to be "heat-related".⁴¹ Various climate models indicate that Canadian communities will continue experiencing notable increases in the number of hot days/nights and extreme weather events (air quality advisories) as a result of climate change. These changes will continue having a disproportionately negative impact on vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, people with chronic health conditions and people living in poverty.

Delta is a premier birding area located on the Fraser Estuary and Boundary Bay. It is a vital stopover on the Pacific Flyway. The Ladner Christmas bird count is often the highest in Canada with over 140 species. Many birders come from around the world just to glimpse Delta's birds.

