

2023



DUNBAR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

Who we are

The University of British Columbia's Sustainability Ambassador program is a leadership-based volunteer program based on personal, collaborative, and community-engaged sustainability-focused learning for UBC students. The program is made up of 5 different cohorts, each with its own specific sustainability-related topics. Over the past 7 months, the 'Ethical Civic Engagement' Cohort has been working in partnership with the members of the Dunbar Residents' Association (DRA) to create a youth engagement strategic plan.



UBC Sustainability, 2023



Dunbar Residents' Association, 2021

Our project

The DRA has brought forward to us the issue of their increasing concerns surrounding decreased community engagement for youth in the neighbourhood, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with the DRA, we aim to create a 3-5 year strategic plan focused on increasing youth engagement, specifically for those around the ages of 18-25, in the Dunbar neighbourhood. During the research for this strategic plan, in addition to general community engagement, we decided to specifically explore issues surrounding food insecurity, social isolation, and diminished intergenerational relationships.

To better understand the needs of the community and its members' perspectives on community engagement, food insecurity, social isolation, and intergenerational relationships, we carried out initial research by exploring local organizations, events, and initiatives that could help mitigate these issues. We completed this by researching the programs offered and the events hosted by these organisations as well as interviewing representatives to learn more about those that we were particularly interested in.

We then conducted a survey that was distributed in person and online to residents of Dunbar, West Point Grey, UBC Endowment Lands, Kitsilano, and other areas in Metropolitan Vancouver. The collected data was analyzed, and informed this strategic plan in order to share our conclusions and recommendations with the DRA and other community organisations.

**Working to
increase youth
engagement in
the Dunbar
community**



Dunbar Community Centre, 2023

To address these concerns, we have brought together our collective research to propose three recommendations for the Dunbar community. While each of these recommendations primarily focuses on one key area we have decided to support in this plan, such as community food security, combating social isolation, or fostering intergenerational relationships, each recommendation will additionally address the remaining areas as well. Our three recommendations include a sponsored community food bank, an online youth opportunity page, and an intergenerational involvement team. These recommendations will be explored much more thoroughly in the following recommendations section of this strategic plan.

GOALS



As previously mentioned, through conversations with the DRA it became evident that the primary goal of our strategic plan would be to increase youth engagement in the Dunbar neighbourhood. Dunbar's proximity to UBC's Vancouver campus means that many university students living off-campus are renting here. This has created an interesting dynamic due to the significant proportion of short-term renters who may not feel a sense of connection to their community in Dunbar. Instead, they may find their sense of community at UBC, leading to less of a desire to engage in the community they actually live in. This quick turnover results in a cascading effect throughout the community. In addition, the pandemic's effects have led to a majority of community programs and events being paused or even completely abandoned, which has taken a noticeable effect on the availability of community events and programs causing community engagement to deteriorate further for everyone.

We discovered that the COVID-19 pandemic took a significant toll on the issues of social isolation, food insecurity, and fostering intergenerational relationships. Due to this, we decided to consider these issues when conducting our research and proposing our recommendations. The loss of jobs and increased income instability led to an increase in food insecurity, as evidenced by a 35% national increase in food bank visits since the arrival of COVID-19 according to Food Banks Canada's HungerCount (2022). Social isolation was also heightened due to the large number of people being confined to their homes which can lead to many subsequent issues, such as mental health challenges (Cosco et al., 2021). In relation to social isolation, intergenerational relationships were also significantly affected during the pandemic as the social isolation that was experienced by the majority of the population was amplified in both severity and duration because of the increased vulnerability to the disease among older populations (Drury et al., 2022). Furthermore, the general decrease in access to, and knowledge of technology also affected the ability of older adults to stay connected.

Overall, through the insights of this plan, we hope to aid the DRA and the rest of the Dunbar community (and other Vancouver neighbourhoods) to work toward reducing these pressing concerns and improving the health and well-being of their community in the upcoming years.



BACKGROUND

Social Isolation

Social isolation is becoming a common issue in today's technologically advanced society with an increased measure of loneliness from individuals in certain communities. This issue is prevalent among diverse demographics however, some groups are more at risk than others. According to the Journal of Medical Internet Research, during the COVID-19 pandemic, seniors experienced increased social isolation due to physical distancing and stay-at-home orders, as well as increased vulnerability (Cosco et al., 2021). The lack of formal or informal support from family or friends and religious or community centres also contributed to the isolation (Cosco et al., 2021). For younger, more technologically savvy generations, people were able to stay connected through the pandemic. The Journal for Applied Gerontology states this support that technology offers is less accessible for older generations who could not access or understand such devices and online systems due to challenges such as reduced visual acuity and manual dexterity (Adepoju et al., 2022). As a result of this isolation from common sources of social interaction, mental health implications, such as cognitive decline and depression became more prominent in older generations (Maharani et al., 2019).

In the Dunbar neighbourhood, there are large populations of students living amongst various demographics of permanent residents. These different demographic groups experience different levels of social isolation. In Vancouver, according to 2020/2021 Coastal Health in Fraser Health Data, 6.4% of respondents aged 18+ years reported sentiments of social isolation, with males feeling more socially isolated than females. Where, social isolation was recorded as highest among middle-age, 40 to 64, groups and second highest among 65+ age groups. Furthermore, social isolation was found to be more prevalent in urban areas.

Our team researched past and current strategies that are being used to mitigate social isolation in Vancouver and Canada as a whole. Over the pandemic, a public-private partnership was utilised as a strategy to pair students in academic institutions to care for and create companionship with adults over 65 years of age. This strategy was employed to create opportunities for students to develop social work and nursing skills. In turn, the results of their placements proved successful by providing both practical skills, as well as creating opportunities for companionship through shared interests.

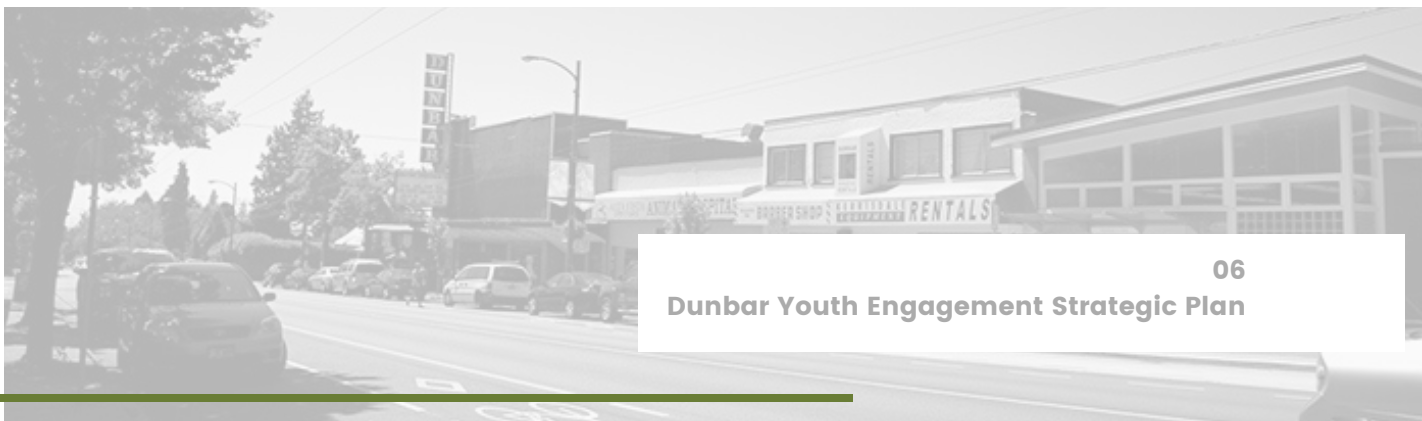
More local strategies in Vancouver that address social isolation operate through neighbourhood/community houses. Some examples are the intergenerational youth committee at the West Vancouver Recreation Centre (westvancouver.ca), as well as the learning opportunities in tech support for older adults and seniors the South Vancouver (southvan.org) neighbourhood house provides.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is undoubtedly a global issue, and Canada and specifically Vancouver are no exception. In 2021, 5.8 million Canadians across 10 provinces were reported to be living in food-insecure households (Statistics Canada's Canadian Income Survey, 2022). The Greater Vancouver Food Bank also stated that with the recent rise in food insecurity, they are now looking after approximately 14,000 people a month across Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminister and the North Shore, on top of about 20,000 people in their distribution area (2023). High cost of living, increasing inflation, and low social assistance are all causes of the rapidly rising rates of food insecurity in Vancouver and the Greater Vancouver area (Gul & Marsten, 2022). Food insecurity affects the general health of people at an individual level which in turn, places a large burden on the healthcare system and is extremely costly for public healthcare budgets (Lee, 2013).

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank (2023) also reported that around 24% of their new registrants in the past year have been post-secondary students, highlighting the specific problems that university students face in relation to food insecurity. The UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS) report also noted the same trend, as over 35% of UBC Vancouver campus' undergraduate students have faced and/or are facing some level of food insecurity (2022). With these statistics, it would seem reasonable to expect higher rates of food insecurity on university campuses, as well as communities neighbouring post-secondary institutions.

We decided to examine local effective mitigation methods by looking at organizations, programs, and initiatives that may address food insecurity in Vancouver. We found that some of the more common initiatives in the area include community gardens and food banks. These methods of supporting community food security are nothing new but are reliable ways to provide affordable access to food for those who need it most (Dhillon et al., 2021). Formerly, the Dunbar area had a few adjacent community gardens including the Dunbar and 28th interim community garden which was decommissioned in Spring 2021 and the Dunbar and 40th temporary community garden which was decommissioned in spring 2022. Along with the Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB), Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks (VNFN), and the Food Stash Foundation (FSF) which serve all of Vancouver and its neighbouring cities, the Westside Food Collaborative caters more specifically to Dunbar and its surrounding neighbourhoods.



Intergenerational Relationships



As the name suggests, intergenerational relationships refer to social or familial bonds between individuals or groups of different generations or ages (Sneed & Chan, 2023). The importance of nurturing these relationships cannot be understated. A study on the effects of intergenerational programs on the mental health of elderly adults found a correlation between these programs and a decreased risk of social isolation and loneliness due to the greater sense of meaningfulness and the prevention of depressive mood (Murayama et al., 2014). Given the circumstances of this same study, intergenerational programs would also serve to strengthen potential intergenerational ties among communities (Murayama et al., 2014).

The Dunbar neighbourhood varies slightly from the rest of Vancouver regarding its age demographics. According to the 2020 Dunbar-Southlands Neighbourhood Social Indicators Profile, Dunbar has a larger proportion of their population consisting of both children and youth (13-24) as well as older adults (~40+), and consequently, a smaller proportion of young adults (25-34). This large spread of generations provides Dunbar with a unique opportunity to foster intergenerational relationships through community engagement. As one may expect, the COVID-19 pandemic also had a detrimental effect on this relationship.

While looking into existing programs and events that could aid in this area of concern, we found many organizations and programs with this same goal in mind. For example, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House's "Better at Home" and "Safe Seniors Strong Communities" programs provide seniors in the community with help with tasks such as grocery delivery, yard work, housekeeping, transportation, social calls, and prescription delivery (southvan.org). Another example that supported the reduction of social isolation was West Vancouver Recreation Centre's intergenerational youth committee, which involves youth in the planning and participation of intergenerational activities meant to strengthen community relationships and to promote understanding, respect, and sharing of knowledge and experience (westvancouver.ca). We also looked into the idea of community dinners, specifically Maple Ridge Secondary's program where high school students volunteer to prepare and serve meals to members of their community. These models all provide opportunities for community members to foster intergenerational relationships with others in their community.

METHODS



Initial Research

To begin with the scoping process of this strategic plan we conducted a literature review and preliminary research on local initiatives. Maintaining a focus on our key goals, we used research from the literature to explore the issues of community food insecurity, diminished intergenerational relationships, and social isolation. We also researched local initiatives at a variety of community houses, community centres, and other organizations in Vancouver and its neighbouring cities. We explored the programs offered through their websites to search for relevant examples we could use to further shape our plan.



Interviews

In order to gain a more in depth understanding of the operations of these initiatives of interest, we reached out to request interviews with these organizations. These interviews were conducted over Zoom and our questions focused on the goals of the programs and how they were ensured to have been met. We also inquired about the logistics of implementing and continuing to run these programs successfully.



Surveys

A survey was developed to gather information on the community's perspectives on food insecurity, social isolation and intergenerational relationships (see appendix). The purpose of the survey was to collect data on residents' perceptions of the relevance and necessity of neighbourhood activities to address the aforementioned problems that had been identified. The survey was conducted in-person and online to reach a larger audience and increase youth involvement.

Survey Design:

The survey was composed of nine closed-ended questions and two open-ended questions to allow for quantitative and qualitative analysis. A set of two demographic questions about the participant's age and neighbourhood was also included to provide context for the collected survey data. The survey was designed to take approximately 2 minutes to complete to encourage participation. The survey was distributed through Qualtrics, a web-based survey platform, as well, a paper opinion.

Sampling Method:

Our intended demographic were residents of Dunbar, West Point Grey, UBC Endowment Lands, Kitsilano and others in Metropolitan Vancouver. To further collect findings for our community partner and beneficiary of our analysis and recommendations, emphasis was placed on the community of Dunbar. The survey has been distributed via social media (UBC Geography's Instagram page & personal social media pages), newsletters (DRA, UBC Scholar's Community, UBC Forestry, UBC AMS, UBC IMES, & UBC Sustainability), personal connections, and in-person through a total of five outreach events. In-person outreach was held at various locations in and around Dunbar, all locations, dates, and times are detailed in the table below. For higher engagement in in-person outreach events, cookies were provided for those who completed the survey.

Location	Date	Time
16th Ave. & Dunbar St.	January 14th, 2023	12pm-2pm
16th Ave. & Dunbar St.	January 15th, 2023	9:30am-11:30am
4th St. & Alma St.	January 23rd, 2023	5pm-7pm
Vancouver Public Library (Dunbar Branch)	January 29th, 2023	2pm-4pm
Stong's Market	February 1st, 2023	5pm-7pm

Data Collection and Analysis:

Qualtrics enabled the collection of survey responses and the export of raw data to a spreadsheet. A visual analysis program, Tableau, was then used to simplify and present raw data in graphical form for analysis and visualisation purposes. Methods such as quantitative and qualitative data analysis were used. Utilising Tableau, the qualitative data were analyzed by identifying the major themes and trends.



Nolan Babin & Tiya Tanaka in front of the VPL Dunbar Branch in January, collecting surveys from Dunbar residents to research their strategic plan



Dissemination of Results

Through a written strategic plan and stakeholder presentation, results, conclusions and recommendations were shared with community partners to inform future decisions regarding youth engagement in the Dunbar neighbourhood. These results were shared visually through bar graphs and tables found in the following section. Written conclusions were shared to summarize data collected as well as include qualitative data collected from responses to open-ended questions on the survey. Finally, 3 main recommendations were made based on the complete accumulation of data and research we have collected.



RESULTS

I. Demographics

Age of Participants vs Neighbourhood

Age	Neighbourhood						
	Dunbar	Kerrisdale	Kitsilano	Other	UBC	UBC + Endowment ..	West Point Gr..
18-25	25		3	16	1	23	6
26-40	9		2	2			1
41-55	6		3	1			
55-70	2		1				3
70+	5		1				1
<18	2	1		1			

Table 1. Based on the survey results collected from our outreach events, encompassing all the participants who filled out our survey, the majority of them fall into the 18-25 age group, followed by the 26-40 and 41-55 age groups.

Age of Respondents in All Neighbourhood

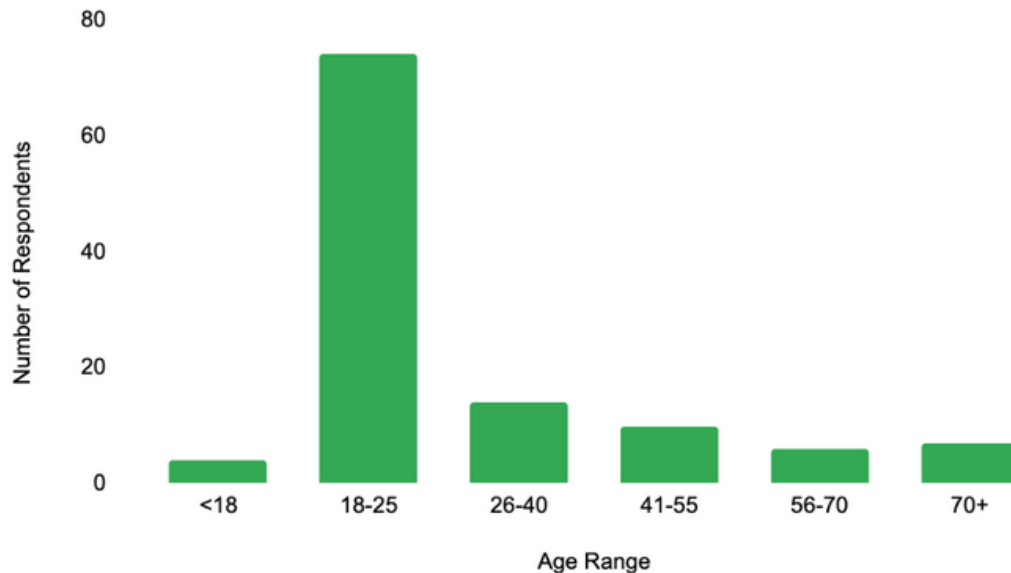


Figure 1. Number of respondents during the in-person and online outreach, gathered through Qualtrics.com. Participants were classified under different age ranges: 18-25, 26-40, 41-55, 56-70, and 70+.

II. Participants' (in all neighbourhoods) perceptions of the relevance and necessity of neighbourhood activities to address food insecurity, social isolation and intergenerational relationships.

Figures 2a-h. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, all participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with multiple statements regarding events and resources within their neighbourhoods that address food insecurity, social isolation, and intergenerational relationships.

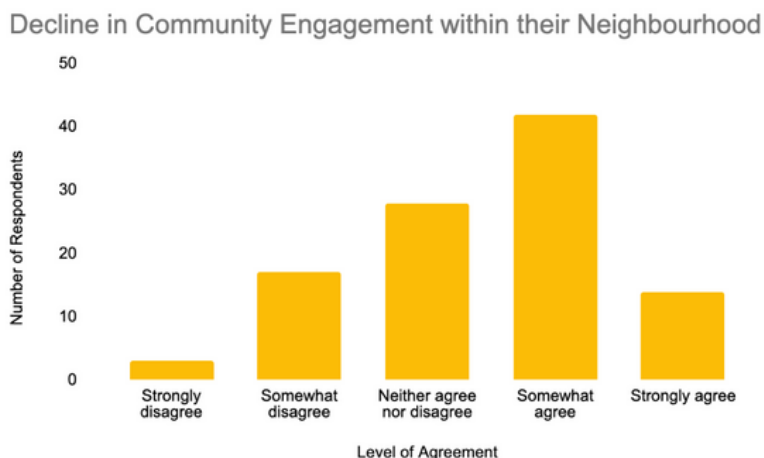


Figure 2a. The relationship between all respondents and their views regarding the adequacy of community engagement in their neighbourhood since the start of COVID-19 pandemic. The statement given to the respondents was “Community engagement in my neighbourhood has decreased since the pandemic began.”

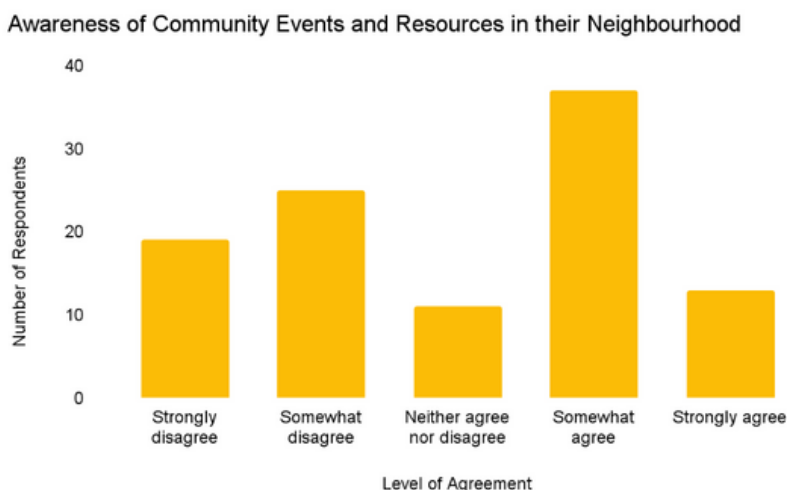


Figure 2b. The relationship between all respondents and their views regarding their awareness of community events and resources in their neighbourhood. The statement given to the respondents was “I am aware of community events and resources offered in my neighbourhood”.

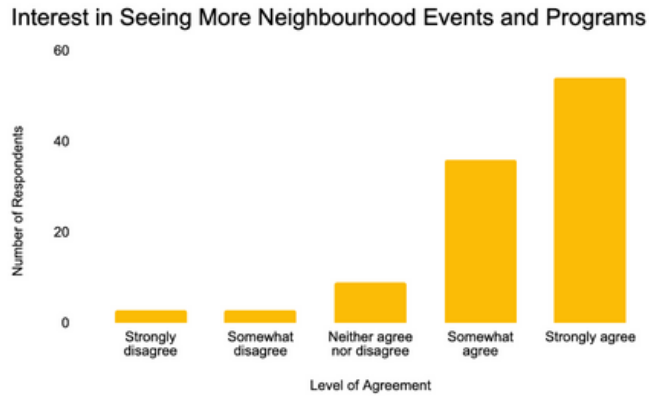


Figure 2c. The graph tells us the relationship between all respondents and their perceived interests in seeing an increase in community events and programs in their neighbourhood. The statement given to the respondents was “I would be interested in seeing more neighbourhood events and programs in my neighbourhood in the future”.

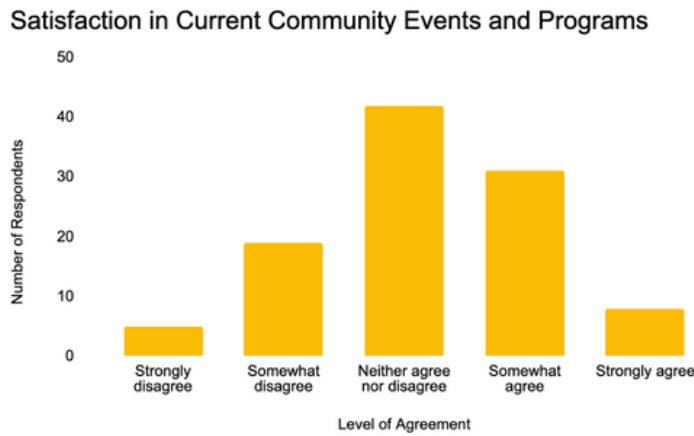


Figure 2d. This graph shows the relationship between all respondents and their self-rated satisfaction of the present events and resources. The statement given was “I am satisfied with the community events or programs in my neighbourhood.”

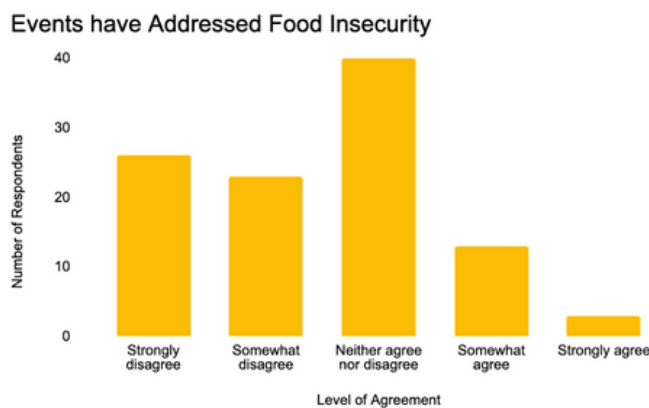


Figure 2e. The graph shows the relationship between all respondents and their thoughts regarding their neighbourhood’s actions in addressing food insecurity. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have addressed food insecurity.”

Events have Addressed Social Isolation

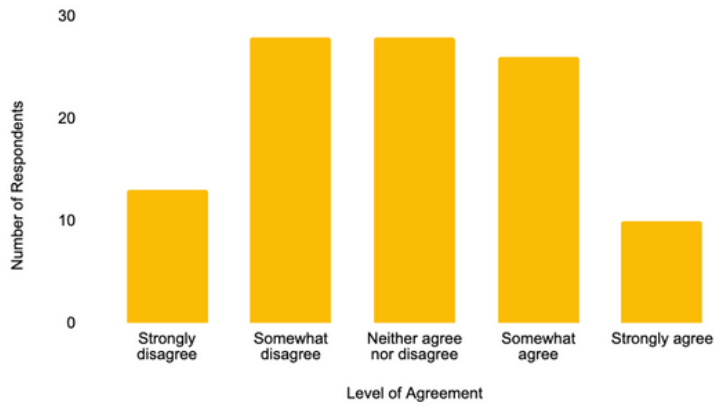


Figure 2f. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their thoughts regarding past events addressing social isolation. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have addressed social isolation”.

Events Fostering Intergenerational Relationships

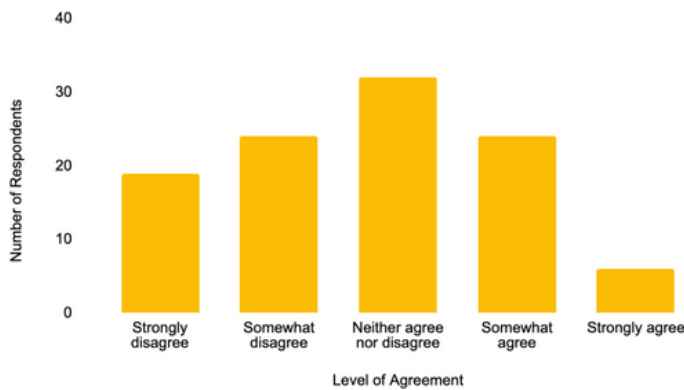


Figure 2g. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their views regarding past events fostering intergenerational relationships. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have fostered intergenerational relationships”.

Adequacy of Community Events Dedicated to Youth.

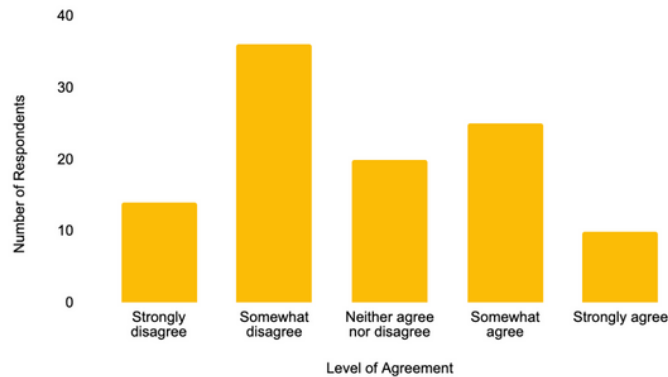


Figure 2h. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their thoughts regarding the adequacy of community events dedicated to youth. The statement given was “My neighbourhood has enough community events dedicated to youth”.

III. Perceptions of participants in Dunbar regarding the relevance and necessity of neighbourhood activities to address food insecurity, social isolation and intergenerational relationships.

Figures 3a-h. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, participants rate their level of agreement with multiple statements regarding events and resources within Dunbar that address food insecurity, social isolation, and intergenerational relationships.

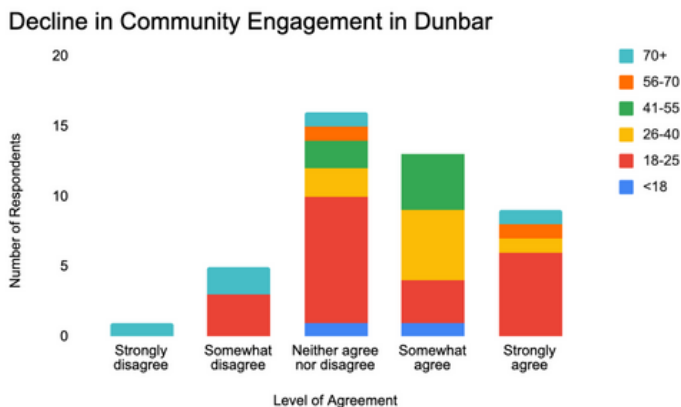


Figure 3a. The relationship between all respondents and their views regarding the adequacy of community engagement in Dunbar since the start of COVID-19 pandemic. The statement given to the respondents was “Community engagement in my neighbourhood has decreased since the pandemic began.” The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

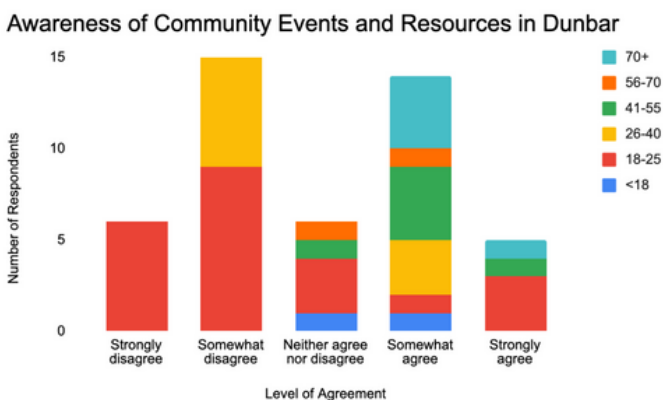


Figure 3b. The relationship between all respondents and their views regarding their awareness of community events and resources in Dunbar. The statement given to the respondents was “I am aware of community events and resources offered in my neighbourhood”. The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Interest in Seeing More Dunbar Events and Programs

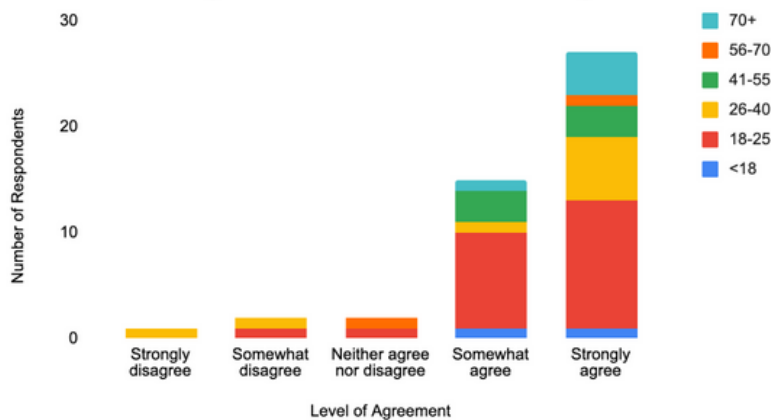
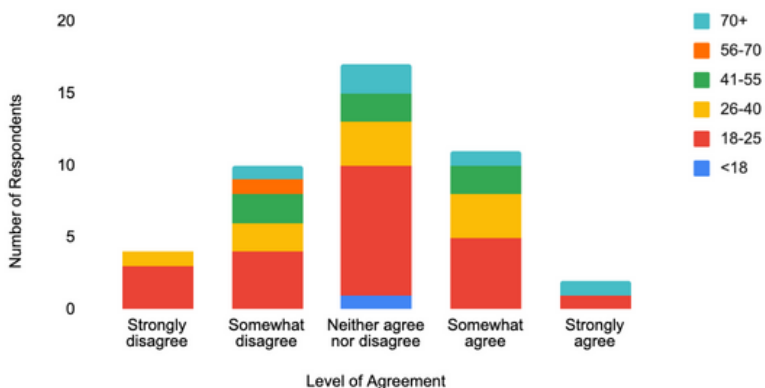


Figure 3c. The graph tells us the relationship between all respondents and their perceived interests in seeing an increase in community events and programs in Dunbar. The statement given to the respondents was “I would be interested in seeing more neighbourhood events and programs in my neighbourhood in the future”. The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Figure 3d. This graph shows the relationship between all respondents and their self-rated satisfaction of the present events and resources in Dunbar. The statement given was “I am satisfied with the community events or programs in my neighbourhood.” The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Satisfaction in Current Community Events and Programs in Dunbar



Events in Dunbar Have Addressed Food Insecurity

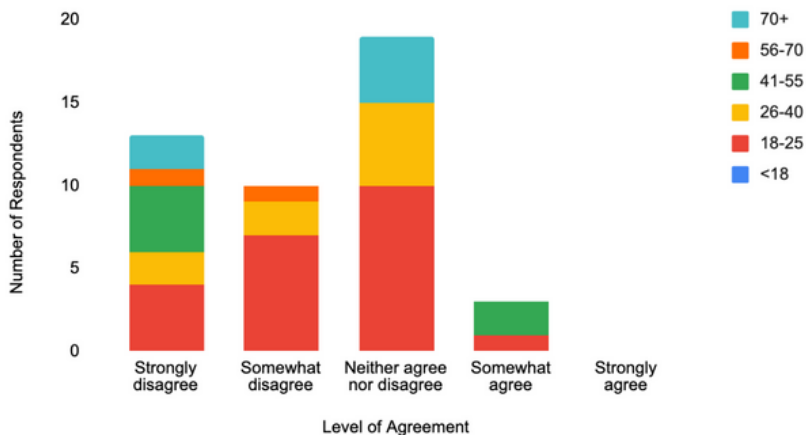


Figure 3e. The graph shows the relationship between all respondents and their thoughts regarding Dunbar’s actions in addressing food insecurity. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have addressed food insecurity.” The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Events in Dunbar have Addressed Social Isolation

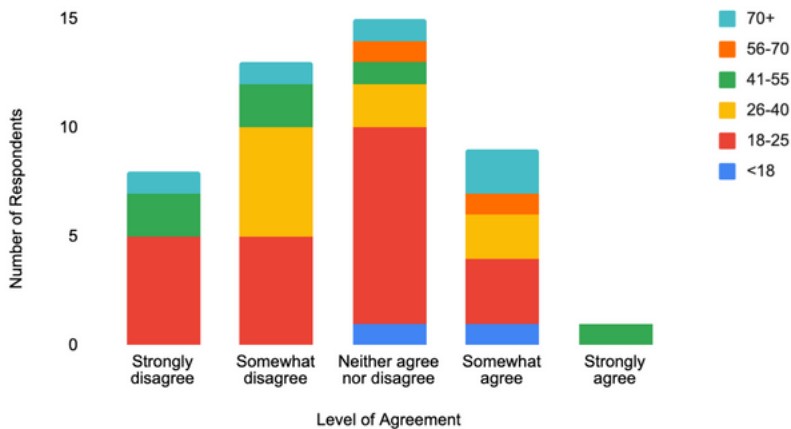
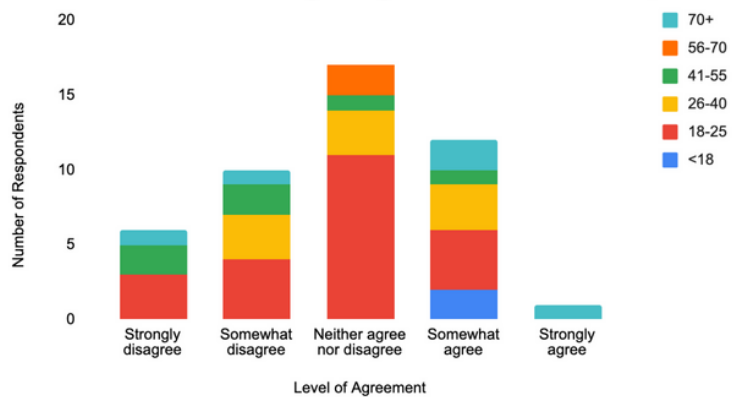


Figure 3f. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their thoughts regarding past events addressing social isolation in Dunbar. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have addressed social isolation”. The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Figure 3g. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their views regarding past events in Dunbar that foster intergenerational relationships. The statement given was “Past neighbourhood events have fostered intergenerational relationships”. The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Events in Dunbar Fostering Intergenerational Relationships



Adequacy of Community Events in Dunbar Dedicated to Youth

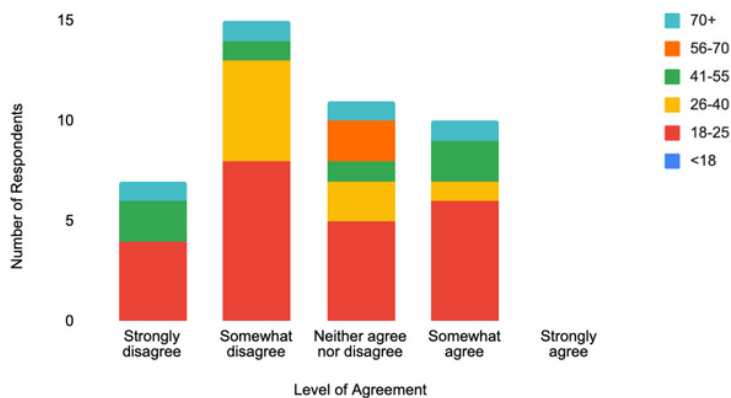


Figure 3h. The graph shows the relationship between all participants and their thoughts regarding the adequacy of community events in Dunbar that is dedicated to youth. The statement given was “My neighbourhood has enough community events dedicated to youth”. The stacked bars represent the different age ranges, with corresponding colors. Youth participants, aged 18-25, are represented as red bars.

Number of Residents they Know in the Neighbourhood

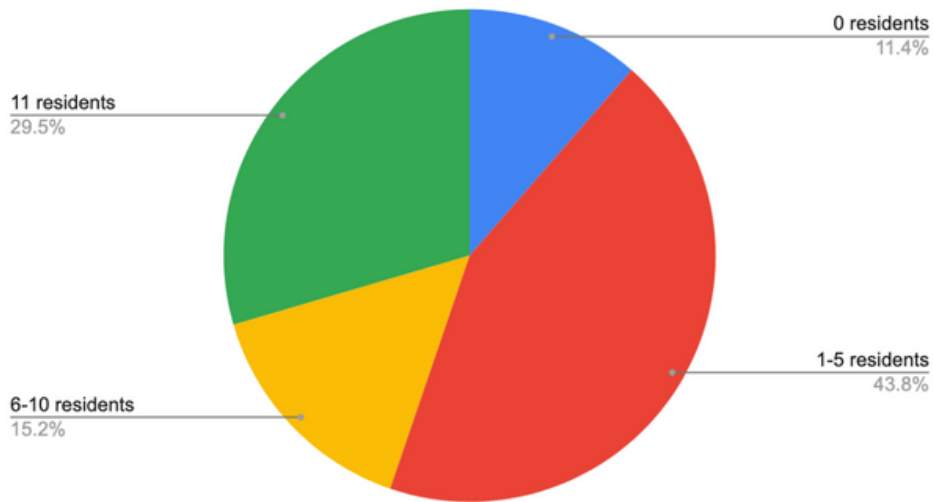


Figure 4. Participant’s response to the question: How many other residents do you know in your neighbourhood?

Community Events and Programs they have enjoyed in the past			
Halloween Events	On the go breakfasts	green farming events	Park events with booths, entertainment and prizes
Block Party on the street	board game nights	Open events at the local community center, with a carnival-like theme	Yearly Potluck
Summer Festival (Kitsilano)	trivia nights	Rock painting	Dunbar Community Center Holiday Craft Fair
Meet and greet socials at the beginning of year	BUy Nothing Group	Dragonboat	Lord Kitchener Holiday Craft Fair
Dog show on campus	Point Grey Fiesta	Block Party	Dunbar Theatre Movies
Greek day party on Broadway	Salmonberry Days	Dunbar Little League	
Kits house church events	Butterflyway pollinator garden project	Impromptu sliding days at Chaldecott Park	
Kitsilano street Festival	Point Grey Christmas event	mug painting and cookie decorating	
Harvest Festival	Lunar new year events,	UBC Events	

Table 2. When prompted with the question "In the past, what are some community events or programs in your neighbourhood that you have particularly enjoyed? (either ongoing or no longer running)", most respondents answered that they have not heard of any while some have mentioned events listed in this table.

Community Engagement Initiatives they would like to see in the future			
Events relating to sustainability and food security	Showcasing local businesses	Better means of communication between residents rather than just a newsletter (eg. social media)	Intergenerational and multicultural initiatives, esp. around sustainability, food security, combatting social isolation
Music, social, outdoors	Community garden	Street party with potluck and games	Sidewalk art
More sports	No car blocks, picnic tables, games & activities left on playground	Food insecurity initiatives	Getting people more involved on campus
Scavenger hunt	'Hot chocolate festival' type of event	Advocating for climate change & diversity	Monthly meetings
Networking events	Hiking groups	Book clubs	Community building activities
Mural/ urban art project	Summer festival	Clothing swaps	Recycling events
Fix-it cafes	Guided forest walks (birding, plant & fungi identification)	Musqueum-led sharing	More chances for disabled youth to learn from disabled adults and elders
Excercise events	Career fairs	Social gathering with common interests in food	Street festival, street bbqs, food truck days
Informal drop in events	Parades	Flea markets, craft fairs	Events for 20-25 y/o without kids

Table 3. When prompted with the question "What community engagement initiatives would you like to see in your neighbourhood?", respondents answered with the events listed in this table.

DISCUSSION



The results of our survey highlight some key areas that need to be addressed in order to increase youth engagement in the Dunbar neighbourhood while tackling food insecurity, social isolation, and intergenerational relationships.

Based on the survey results collected from our outreach events, the majority of the participants fall into the 18-25 age group (61.7%), followed by the 26-40 (11.7%) and 41-55 (8.3%) age groups. Dunbar and UBC Endowment lands show the highest youth population (18-25 age group) in comparison to other neighbourhoods. However, it is crucial to take into account that our survey results may not fully accurately represent the true demographic of all neighbourhoods, as most of the channels we promoted our survey on (i.e., social media and newsletters) were aimed at students, limiting the number of older residents participating. Due to this limited data collection method, the results may be skewed toward the 18-25 age group. Moreover, the survey results were based on a small sample size of 120, which may limit the generalizability and reliability of our findings to a larger population.

Social Isolation

A significant proportion of respondents reported feeling disconnected from their peers and community. Based on the survey results, youth within all neighbourhoods were in agreement that community engagement has decreased since the pandemic. Residents in the Dunbar community had the largest number of youth sharing this sentiment. Moreover, the majority of youth also reported not being aware of the community events and resources offered within their neighbourhood, with Dunbar reported having the least youth awareness of community events.

There may be several factors that have led to the lack of resource awareness among the youth in the reported neighbourhoods. This can be due to scarcity of community events, inadequate advertisement, or lack of information regarding what the residents need. As the majority of youth in neighbourhoods surrounding UBC and the Endowment Land are students, there is a high-frequency inflow and outflow of students especially in the Dunbar neighbourhood. This might cause some challenges for youth to find community events and make connections. Furthermore, with the recent COVID-19 pandemic that has ravaged everyday lives, it is likely that community events have been canceled, reduced capacity, or changed into online formats due to restrictions. This may have also impacted the youth's overall awareness and satisfaction with community programs and events.

The youth in all neighbourhoods generally agree that they would like to see an increase in events and programs in their neighbourhood in the future, except for UBC Endowment Lands, which had the highest awareness of community events and programs. This again shows the need to create more events or programs that target youth and a better advertisement strategy for higher engagement. However, as the majority of the youth responded that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the programs and events on campus, including UBC Endowment Lands, this shows that there is room for improvement for programs or events currently in place, and thus the need for continued community involvement in the event and program development.

The participants feeling disconnected and lacking self-awareness is particularly concerning given the negative impact that social isolation can have on mental health and physical well-being (Brandt et al., 2022). Overall, this suggests that efforts to increase youth engagement should prioritize strategies that foster a sense of belonging and community among young people.

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity was also identified as a significant issue, with a large proportion of respondents reporting that their community has not successfully tackled food insecurity concerns. This suggests that any efforts to increase youth engagement should also take into account the broader social and economic context in which youth live in, and consider ways to address basic needs such as food security.

Many youth were also struggling to access healthy and nutritious food, which can impact their physical and mental health, as well as their ability to participate fully in their communities. This suggests that efforts to increase youth engagement should take into account the diverse needs and experiences of different subgroups within the youth population, in addition to mitigation methods to address the unique challenges faced by these groups.

Overall, our survey results suggest that this engagement plan for the Dunbar neighbourhood should prioritize strategies that foster a sense of belonging and community, address basic needs like food security, and promote intergenerational relationships and connections. By taking these factors into account, we believe that Dunbar can create a more inclusive and supportive community that enables youth to thrive and participate fully in the life of the Dunbar area.



Intergenerational Relationships

Our analysis of the survey data also revealed interesting findings related to intergenerational relationships. While many young people, aged 18-25, reported feeling disconnected from their peers and community, a significant proportion also reported feeling disconnected from older generations.

In Dunbar, most 18-25 and 26-40-year-olds were unaware of community events offered in their neighbourhood. On the other hand, the majority of 70+ year-olds were somewhat aware of these events. Overall, the majority of respondents across age groups and neighbourhoods were unaware of community events and resources offered in their neighbourhood. In addition, our survey reveals that most youth participants neither agree nor disagree that the Dunbar community has established events that foster intergenerational relationships. Thus, both youth and elderly residents reported unawareness of community events and the inadequate quality and quantity of events targeting connections between different generations.

Older residents were more involved in community events while younger residents were less engaged in Dunbar, despite their interest in community programs. This could be attributed to many younger residents staying in Dunbar for a short period of time due to their degree program and general, quick turnover of student housing. As a student, they may prioritize their engagement at UBC, rather than focusing on becoming a part of the community. However, despite the difference in priorities and schedules of the two age groups, respondents still identified lack of opportunities to connect with older generations as a barrier to engage in community events. This highlights the importance of modifying the current events the community is offering and the creation of opportunities for young people to connect with varying groups.



RECOMMENDATIONS



No. 01 – Youth Webpage on the DRA Website

Centralized page on the DRA website to promote events, resources, work, & volunteer opportunities specifically for youth in the Dunbar area as well as annual outreach events.



No. 02 – Sponsored Food Bank & Events

Community food bank sponsored by local grocery stores and restaurants in Dunbar as well as events throughout the year aimed at promoting community food security and food literacy.



No. 03 – Dunbar Youth Association

A leadership program for youth to work alongside the DRA, intended to promote fostering intergenerational relationships, building leadership skills, & encouraging youth to get more involved in their community.

No. 01 –

Youth Webpage on the DRA Website



Introduction

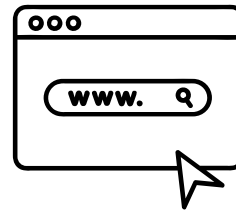
With the majority of young people surveyed stating that they were unaware of their neighbourhood amenities and events, the following recommendation aims to increase youth engagement and reduce the feeling of disconnection within the Dunbar neighbourhood. The results from the survey only speak to young people aged 18-25, however, we have extended our recommendation to high school students since fostering a connection to one's community at a young age will prevent disconnection later in life. Thus, this plan will include two components targeted toward both high school and post-secondary students:

Goal of Recommendation

1. A centralized page on the DRA's website for youth to access resources, events, and volunteer opportunities in the Dunbar neighbourhood.
2. Annual outreach strategies for both high schools and universities to advertise the website and the opportunities available.

No. 01

Details of Recommendation



(1) Youth Webpage on the DRA's Website

This webpage for youth in the Dunbar neighbourhood aims to connect young people with local resources, events and volunteer positions, and will be categorized into either high school and post-secondary student opportunities. The webpage would provide a comprehensive list of available services and programs, as well as a calendar of upcoming youth-focused events, activities and volunteer opportunities, similar to the calendar currently provided on the website. Furthermore, it would also include links to the websites of local community organizations, as well as their contact information for youth to get involved in their neighbourhood. All high-schooler targeted events and postings should have an emphasis on volunteer hours eligibility, as secondary students require a certain number of volunteer hours to graduate, this will act as an incentive for them to access this resource hub. In the long-term the webpage could also include an interactive map to increase user accessibility and experience by highlighting the locations of community organizations, resources and volunteer opportunities.

Going beyond providing opportunities for youth to work and volunteer, the webpage could feature interactive content such as forums and message boards to facilitate discussion and networking among young people and provide a platform for them to share their stories and experiences. In this way, the website would serve as a hub of information and connection for youth in the Dunbar neighbourhood.

The DRA has already begun partnerships with a class at the University of British Columbia, dealing with social and organisational connectivity (INFO 250). This class is currently working on a social media strategy with dunbar residents. This class's project is something to keep in consideration when involving post-secondary students in volunteer-based Website Creation and Technology Assistant positions.

No. 01

(2) Outreach

The purpose of this annual youth outreach program is to advertise the website and the opportunities available to the local youth. We suggest continuing to partner with local high schools and UBC to create leadership opportunities for students. Through these partnerships, the webpage will be advertised so students will be able to gain volunteer hours, resume boosters, and generally valuable experiences.

We suggest having separate outreach events for both secondary and post-secondary students. High school outreach could be in school advertising, such as physical flyers posted in hallways and the website link provided to guidance counsellors and teachers to share with students. On the other hand, post-secondary outreach could be done through various university or faculty news outlets (news outlets/emails can be found through individual faculties, schools, and departments. Done through the “UBC directory of faculties and schools at UBC Vancouver’s campus”). As well, simply adding this to the newsletter can also promote the programs available to youth. In addition to being informational, this outreach will also provide youth with the opportunity to make the initial connection with like-minded peers and the community at large, helping to foster a sense of belonging. Finally, we recommend utilizing social media platforms to spread the word about the program and increase youth engagement.

Ongoing/ End of Program Assessments

The aim of conducting ongoing assessments is to gather data from youth and adults about their experience since the implantation of this strategic plan. We recommend redistributing the survey we have already created (see appendix) so there can be a direct comparison in trends. The DRA webpage and youth webpage can be used to assist in this data collection.

No. 02 –

Sponsored Food Bank & Events



Introduction

We have now explored what food insecurity is, its root causes, and the severity of this issue in the Greater Vancouver area, especially in Dunbar and among youths. Concurrently, based on our survey results, a large proportion of our survey participants from Dunbar identified that past neighbourhood events did not address food insecurity and would like to see more events related to increasing food security in the future. To act on this, the UBC Sustainability Ambassadors would like to propose the establishment of a sponsored food bank and accompanying events throughout the year, which the DRA can carry out in the long run.

Goal of Recommendations

With the objective to increase youth engagement while addressing food insecurity, we propose having a sponsored food bank to be set up in the Dunbar neighbourhood as a long-term solution. To extend its positive impacts on the community, such as improving social isolation and intergenerational relationships, we also propose that the sponsored food bank collaborates with the sponsors to host individual events suitable for all ages in the community throughout the year.

However, despite the sponsored food bank offering a long-term solution, it is crucial to note that it will only solve food insecurity to a certain extent and is unable to completely eradicate it. Thoroughly resolving this issue requires addressing the fundamental causes and broader socio-economic issues mentioned in the background and discussion sections of this engagement plan.

No. 02

Details of Recommendations

What is a sponsored food bank and its accompanying events?

It is called a “sponsored” food bank since the food provided for Dunbar residents experiencing food insecurity will be sourced from sponsors. Potential sponsors to be recruited through email include local businesses like grocery stores, supermarkets and restaurants in Dunbar. We also recommend collaboration with apps such as Too Good To Go and other Vancouver-based non-profit organisations, such as the Vancouver Food Runners, where volunteers can rescue surplus food from food donors and bring it to a non-profit partner. At the same time, the sponsored food bank can partner with UBC student clubs to further promote the importance and the need of a food bank in the Dunbar area since some students, as well as, to increase awareness of food insecurity amongst youth. In turn, this can help establish new relationships that the food bank might not be aware of to further expand its sponsorship network. As an example, the Little Mountain Neighbourhood House has successfully developed a sponsored foodbank, namely the Food Distribution Program and Community Fridge and Pantry (Community Programs | Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, 2018). Through this program, they receive food sponsorship and donations from Vancouver-based non-profit organisations and foundations.

Potential problems that the sponsored food bank may experience in its operation include limited storage for food, duration of food storage and expiration dates, consistency of the quantity of food sponsored, and the variation of nutritious food available for people to choose from. Particularly, the availability and variation of nutritious fresh produce is a concern, since food banks largely tend to offer less healthy non-perishable food. Therefore, this sponsored food bank should aim to have a variety of both non-perishable and perishable food available for people to choose from.

No. 02

Furthermore, we also recommend that the food bank and its sponsors collaborate to initiate and host a variety of events throughout the year to supplement the food bank in terms of addressing food insecurity, increasing youth engagement and improving social isolation on a more regular basis. Based on the research and the input of Dunbar residents gathered during our outreach events, ideas for the types of events include, but are not limited to, community meals and cooking classes taught by a nutritionist. In particular, community meals and

cooking classes are found to positively contribute to group dynamics, and the new cooking techniques and knowledge participants learn from the class promotes sustainable food practices in the long run (Dyen and Sirieix, 2016). Another event example is a “Nutrition Week”, where the community will hold mini events with different healthy fruits/vegetable juice stands and an invited nutritionist as a guest speaker. Overall, with these events, Dunbar residents can learn more information about diets and nutrition, sustainable food systems and a proper way to cook nutritious meals under a budget.

In exchange for the sponsorship, the partners would be promoted for free during community events, on social media (mainly through Instagram), and on the DRA website and newsletters. Promoting them would act as an incentive for sponsors to continue supporting the operation of the food bank. This would also allow the Dunbar community to highlight local businesses. Subsequently, creating a win-win situation that is favourable for both parties and the Dunbar residents.

Potential venues

With approval, potential locations that can serve as a permanent food bank locations are:

- Dunbar Community Centre
- St. Philip’s Anglican Church
- Schools within the district (Lord Byng Secondary School, Lord Kitchener Elementary School); gyms and halls in the school can be utilized.

Potential locations for one-day events are:

- Outdoor Parks: Balaclava Park, Memorial West Park, etc.

Coordinating with these locations and requesting for approval should be done months in advance by volunteers and the assigned Engagement and Communication Coordinator will have to be hired before the food bank’s operation.

No. 02

Potential sponsors for the food bank and events

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank and local businesses in the area that can be contacted for possible sponsorship and support of this program are as follows:

- From the Dunbar Business Village Association: (<https://dunbarvillage.ca/business-directory/>)
 - Moore's Bakery
 - Sweet Somethings
 - Perchance
 - Handi Cuisine of India
 - Stong's Markets
 - Save-on-Foods
 - Starbucks Coffee
 - Tim Hortons
 - Dairy Queen
 - Subway

Marketing and Promotional Plan to attract attendees and highlight sponsors

- Creation of a Social Media Account
 - Creation of Dunbar's social media, such as Instagram, is recommended to promote sponsors and their businesses. Social media can also highlight the potential events, enable a closer connection to the online community, and attract attendees.
 - The said account can also serve as a learning hub by posting educational videos or infographics tackling issues of food insecurity and providing nutritional information. Posters such as "The Proper Way to Store Produce" and "How to Lessen Food Waste" are some topics that can be taught online through Instagram.
 - Social Media Manager and/or Content Creator Volunteer positions should be made. By sharing these opportunities on a volunteer portal, high schools and/or university, volunteers can be hired on a term basis. They are expected to create posters, continuously update the Instagram account, engage with the followers, and monitor other activities.

No. 02

- Refer to an example Instagram poster on the right:
- Website Improvements
 - We also recommend the current website be developed and routinely updated. We recommend the creation of a volunteer portal through the website, wherein we can post the open positions of volunteers. A separate “tab” on the website can also be added for more involvement opportunities. In this tab, the events and food bank plans will be promoted. The website can also be used to highlight the sponsored partners.



- *More about social media and website improvements, and volunteer positions explained under the recommendation (Social Isolation) mentioned above.*

Logistics/Execution

- DRA is expected to hire an Engagement and Communications Coordinator.
 - We recommend this to be a paid position, possibly through a grant.
 - The right candidate should have previous experience, as the responsibilities that come with the position are:
 - Creation of a database of contact information of possible sponsors
 - Setting up proposal meetings with sponsors to formally introduce the program and come to an agreement.
 - Draft and revise a Memorandum of Agreement for each sponsor.
 - Establish consistent communication with the sponsors.
 - The coordinator would serve as the first point of contact for any inquiries they have.
 - Promote volunteer positions, manage the hiring process
 - Help coordinate events, with the help of volunteers
 - Document the whole process and the events for a final-year report

No. 02

- Aside from managing social media, more youth volunteers can be hired to:
 - Run the food bank's daily operation (shift-base)
 - Record events (ex: photographers) for promotional materials on social media.
 - Help with protocols for registration, check-in and other event-day procedures.
 - Oversee event operations and troubleshoot any issues that may arise.
- Coordinate with UBC project-based courses such as LFS 350.
 - Students in this course work in groups with different community partners. Students can volunteer and help in event-planning, social media operations, and any short-term events held during the term.
 - To get involved with this course in particular, the DRA can contact either Dr. Will Valley (will.valley@ubc.ca) or Stephanie Lim (stephanie.lim@ubc.ca)

Draft a Binding Agreement - Memorandum of understanding (MOU) between DRA and Sponsors

- The MOU would outline the details of the partnership between the two parties, the DRA and the recruited sponsors of the food bank and/or events.
- Although it is not legally binding, an MOU signals that the contract is imminent. Signing an MOU should be a requirement to prevent sponsors from backing out or not fulfilling their duties. It is an expression of agreement to proceed with the proposal.
- Within the MOU, we recommend specific contents to be included:
 - Name of the parties or businesses involved
 - Background and Purpose: Description of the project on which they are agreeing and clear list of what incentives the sponsors are getting
 - Scope
 - Each party's roles and responsibilities
 - Budgeting: How much is needed from the sponsors should be clearly outlined. DRA should be transparent on the needed budget for events
 - Terms: State the dates of when the MOU is effective upon.
 - Signatures of both parties

No. 02

Potential grants for the DRA to apply

With all the costs involved in the planning processes and future operation of the food bank, events and the need to hire an Engagement and Communications Coordinator, DRA can apply for grants to help fund their operation. Some potential grants include:

- Sustainable Food Systems Grants by the City of Vancouver (<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/sustainable-food-systems-grants.aspx>)
- Food Banks BC (<https://www.foodbanksbc.com/food-banks-canada-training>)
- Vancouver Foundation (https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/grant-seekers/find-grants/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwXmMhBhDJARIsANFGOSucuZkpCyiIbMT_yjnN9876Mm8DvEvduXHmyFULKEggTxYWLkjXhAwaAnPyEALw_wcB)

Ongoing/ End of Program Assessments

In order to make improvements for future events, by the end of each year, an annual post-event evaluation report about all the events and sponsorships should be written. The report may include reflections on what went wrong and can be improved, the events' highlights, and more information about what people enjoyed and would like to see again. This information can be gathered through a quick survey during the events and food bank program, as well as on social media. This is done, in part, to make recommendations that can be incorporated into future event planning and strategy. This report is a collaboration between the full-time coordinator and volunteers who attended and participated. Input from the sponsors can also be collected to gather key improvement strategies for the following year's sponsorship. Once the evaluation report is finalised, it is key to communicate the report, event outcomes and feedback to key stakeholders (i.e., DRA and sponsors) for approval; if approved, the information should be published online to ensure transparency and for the public to read.

No. 03 –

Dunbar Youth Association



Introduction

Throughout this strategic plan, we have identified the importance of fostering intergenerational relationships in our communities and how the lack of these relationships can be seen in the Dunbar neighbourhood specifically since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our background information shows the negative consequences of a lack of intergenerational relationships while our survey results show that the student community as well as residents in the Dunbar neighbourhood are experiencing a lack of community events associated with fostering intergenerational relationships. Furthermore, the existing community events that could improve the relationships between generations were reported to be inadequate in both quality and quantity with the lack of youth resident involvement compared to the involvement of older adults. This trend emphasizes the need for improving and tailoring the existing community events and programs as well as the advertising method to increase the awareness of the events. In order to do so, the Sustainability Ambassadors are proposing the DRA create a youth association, a program made up of youth members responsible for working with the DRA, providing a youth's perspective to community issues, and working to create opportunities to foster intergenerational relationships in their community. The implementation of this program will not only support the youth in the Dunbar community in connecting with diverse age groups but also in building valuable leadership skills and getting involved in the community they live in.

Goal of Recommendations

No. 03

With the primary goal of improving youth community engagement, along with the secondary goal of working to foster intergenerational relationships we recommend establishing the Dunbar Youth Association as a long term solution for this issue. This program will also help tackle other social issues mentioned, such as social isolation, as it will allow people to socialize in the planning process and by participating in events, as well as building community food security if the events or programs coordinated by the team are based on addressing food insecurity in Dunbar.

Details of Recommendations

The Dunbar Youth Association (DYA)

The Dunbar Youth Association would be a youth (ages 18-25) leadership focused program, intended to encourage youth in Dunbar to get involved with their community and work to foster intergenerational relationships both for themselves as well as promoting this for others in Dunbar.

This team will be responsible for the following:

1. **Engaging in DRA meetings** to stay involved in community affairs and provide a youth's perspective on topics and issues discussed
2. **Work alongside the DRA** to aid and support in DRA and community projects
3. Take a lead in **planning and organizing intergenerational focused programs and events** with the support of the DRA

The effectiveness of such programs in boosting intergenerational relationships relies on promoting understanding, respect, and the sharing of knowledge and experience which was illustrated in West Vancouver Recreation Centre's intergenerational youth committee, as mentioned in our background section. The main purpose of the program will be to allow youth the unique opportunity to form these relationships and get involved in the affairs of their own community as well as to create events and programs targeted at improving intergenerational relationships. This program would involve a small (5-10 person) team of motivated and qualified youth who would attend monthly DRA meetings as well as separate meetings consisting of planning events and programs for the community as well as participating in intergenerational relationship focused activities and/or workshops.

No. 03

Membership Roles

The Dunbar Youth Association can be created by hiring volunteers or paid workers, and the committee involvement will benefit the volunteer workers as they can harvest beneficial skills including collaborative skills, project management, and stakeholder engagement. We would also recommend a member of the DRA to be appointed as a 'lead' role for this committee to act as a link between the DYA and the DRA in addition to being the primary support in any effort to plan programs or events.

Whether or not positions in this committee are paid or volunteer, advertisement of this opportunity is key. This can be done through advertisement on the Dunbar youth webpage (recommendation no.1), in the DRA newsletter, in local newspapers, and through job and volunteer boards, especially those specifically targeting our intended age demographic such as job/volunteer portals run through post-secondary institutions (eg. UBC CareersOnline). For this program as well as other part time positions mentioned in recommendations 1 and 2, UBC work learn, which can be either paid or volunteer positions, could be an option to look into, in this case it would be important to note that this would limit opportunities to only UBC students.

Established Meetings

Dunbar Youth Association will attend DRA meetings which are currently held over Zoom, monthly. In addition to these monthly meetings, members will also attend secondary monthly meetings specific to the DYA which could be held at a variety of locations including spaces at the Dunbar Community Centre, St. Phillips Anglican Church, or local highschool.

Budget

The majority of budget concerns will fall into two categories, the program basics and event planning. The primary budget costs will be those related to running the program such as the cost of space rentals to host monthly meetings, advertisement of the program, as well as payment to participants if this is decided to be a paid position. Event planning related costs



No. 03

will depend on the event or programs the committee plans, but considerations include staffing, programming equipment, cost of space rental, insurance, licenses or permits, advertising, and food/refreshments.

However, there could be potential revenue sources to help finance the project through sponsors, grants, fundraising, and community groups (Intergenerational Programming Toolkit, n.d.).

Event Considerations

Some events and programs that could be implemented include showcasing local businesses, summer festivals, street parties, community barbeques, craft fairs, & hobby specific clubs all of which were recommended by Dunbar residents and other participants in our survey. Other activities that are enjoyed by both seniors and youth include: physical activities, mentorship programs and career information sessions, workshops to make an accessible community for people with disabilities, events to explore diverse ethnic food, music and culture, and helping each other with home maintenance (Intergenerational Programming Toolkit, n.d.). However, additional research and communications with stakeholders will be needed to be conducted by the Dunbar Youth Association to find successful case studies and resources required to ensure a successful event or program.

When implementing the events, it is also important to consider a location that will allow easy access to all age groups. Therefore, the event location, public transit routes, parking spaces, wheelchair accessibility, or providing transportation options, should be carefully thought out to maximize participation.

ONGOING ASSESSMENTS OF STRATEGIC PLAN

The attached survey in the appendix of this strategic plan can be modified and distributed on a yearly basis. Questions regarding whether residents had heard about and attended specific events held in the previous year should be added. Possible response options for each specific event held could be “I have not heard of this event,” “I have heard of this event but not attended,” “I have attended this event.” The data collected from these added questions can be used to assess the success of the events held. The responses from the questions asked in the original survey can be used to compare changes in responses over the years to make inferences regarding the success of these initiatives.



CONTRIBUTORS

Authors:

- **Aaliyah McKinney** - Land and Food Systems, Food Nutrition and Health major, psychology minor.
- **Abhiudai Mishra** - Sauder, Marketing Major specializing in Business Analytics, Psychology Minor
- **Kaysha Reeder** - Forestry, Urban Forestry
- **Martina Francisco** - Science, Integrated Science - Neuroscience, Environmental Sciences, Conservation Biology, and resource economics minor.
- **Nolan Babin** - Forestry, Natural Resource Conservation.
- **Tiya Tanaka** - Sauder, Commerce Major, Specialization in Organization behaviour and Human resources with concentration in Sustainability and Social impact.
- **Vanessa Chan** - Arts, Geography: Environment and Sustainability

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APPENDIX

(1) Survey Questions

1. What age range do you fall into?

- a. <18
- b. 18-25
- c. 25-40
- d. 40-55
- e. 55-70
- f. 70+

2. What neighbourhood do you live in?

- a. Dunbar
- b. West Point Grey
- c. Kitsilano
- d. Mount Pleasant
- e. UBC
- f. Other: _____

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:

3. Community engagement in my neighbourhood has decreased since the pandemic began.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

4. I am aware of community events and resources offered in my neighbourhood.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

5. I would be interested in seeing more neighbourhood events and programs in my neighbourhood in the future.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

6. I am satisfied with my the community events or programs in my neighbourhood

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

7. Past neighbourhood events have addressed food insecurity.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

8. Past neighbourhood events have addressed social isolation.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

9. Past neighbourhood events have fostered intergenerational relationships.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

10. My neighbourhood has enough community events dedicated to youth.

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Somewhat disagree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Somewhat agree
- e. Strongly agree

11. How many other residents do you know in your neighbourhood?

- a. 0
- b. 1-5
- c. 6-10
- d. 11+

12. In the past, what are some community events or programs in your neighbourhood that you have particularly enjoyed? (either ongoing or no longer running)

13. What community engagement initiatives would you like to see in your neighbourhood?