



North Cowichan is creating a new Community Engagement Policy and Framework. The goal of the policy and supporting framework is to establish a step-wise approach for municipal-led engagement and communications activities to support meaningful engagement. From September to December 2020, we sought community feedback to help shape the future of engagement at North Cowichan!

This is a summary of the engagement process and what was heard when we asked the community to help us better understand barriers to engagement, what topics are of interest, and what meaningful engagement looks like. The engagement was developed based on the International Association for Public

Participation (IAP2) planning methodology and best practices. A full engagement report was prepared by Delaney, the engagement people, as a neutral third-party and reflects in more detail what was heard during the engagement process. It is available on our website: www.northcowichan.ca/engage.

Communications and Outreach



Engagement

Several engagement approaches were used to connect with approximately 1,500 community members and stakeholders. These included:



11 stakeholder
Interviews



Focus groups
(four community organizations)

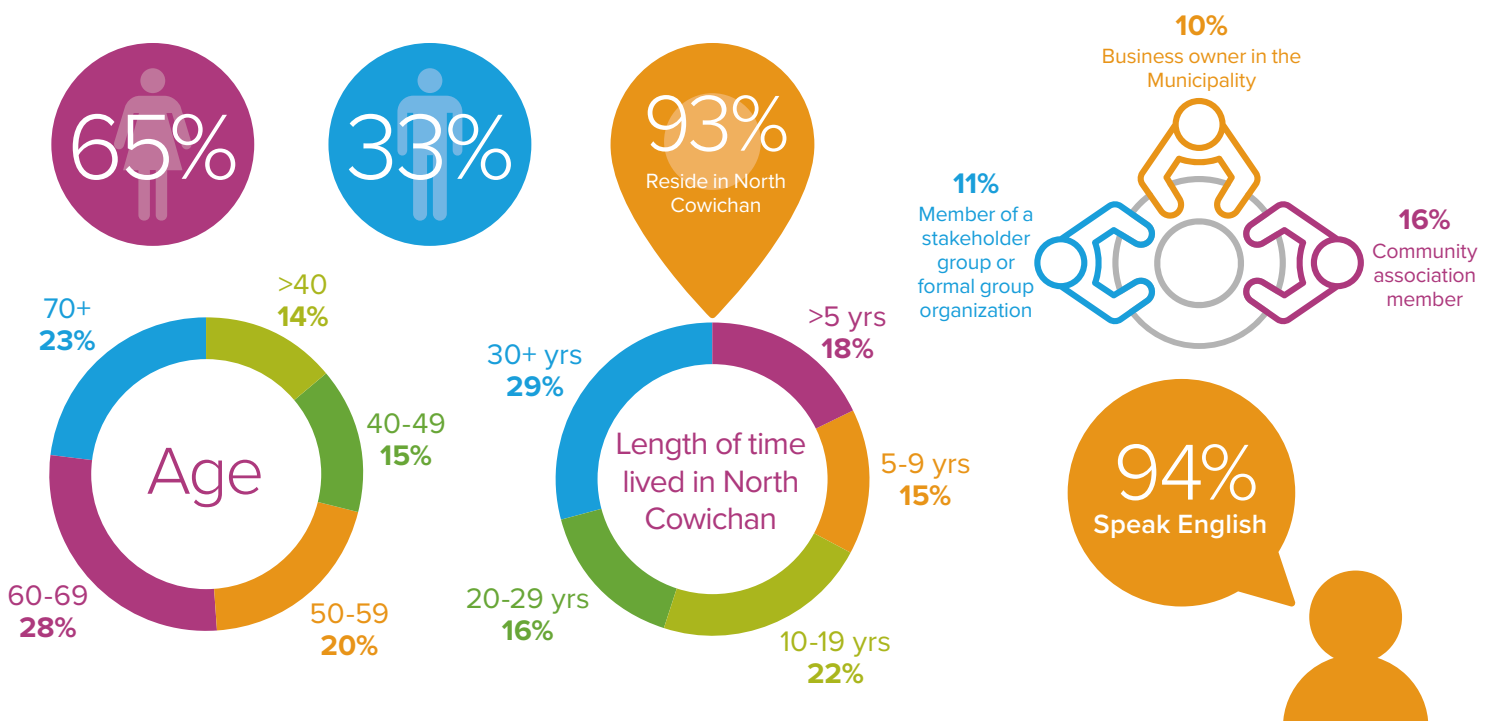


Virtual open houses
(27 participants)



2 online surveys
(1,461 respondents)

Snapshot of respondents for the survey



What We Heard

Three consistent themes emerged from feedback heard across the engagement:

1

The community is seeking inclusive and transparent engagement.

"No transparency, public involvement is not a priority. Feel silenced."

2

Hearing the community voice and acknowledging feedback is important.

"...wish there was more follow-up info about results of that engagement and how much of the results of such engagement are considered by the people making decisions."

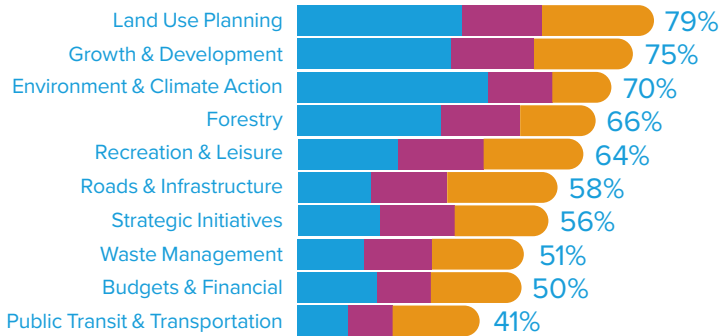
3

Community engagement is a community effort and should create opportunities for relationship or bridge-building between the municipality and the community.

What does the community want to be engaged on?

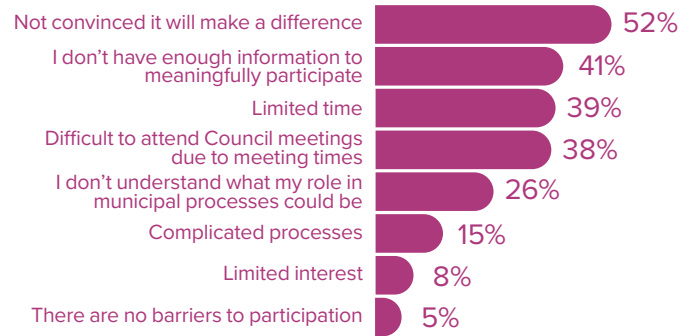
Respondents showed a high level of interest in land use planning, growth & development, and the environment and climate action.

● Very Interested ● Interested ● Somewhat Interested



Barriers to engagement

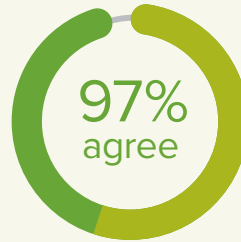
Respondents expressed a fair amount of skepticism towards the utility of participating in engagement, which poses a barrier to further participation.



Attitudes toward engagement

● Strongly Agree
● Agree

Respondents felt strongly that they want to live in a municipality that is committed to meaningful engagement with its residents.



Respondents felt strongly that increased collaboration would make North Cowichan more reflective of how its residents would like it to be.



When asked, "Engagement will be a success if..." nearly all respondents expressed a desire for authentic engagement:

"A variety of voices and opinions are not only heard, but respected and included."

"Elected members are willing to honestly consider community input before making a decision."

"Action is taken by the municipality that reflects the needs and wishes of the community as arrived at through collaboration and consensus."

What's Next?



For information, or to email us your feedback:
250.746.3156 | megan.jordan@northcowichan.ca
www.northcowichan.ca/engage f t

