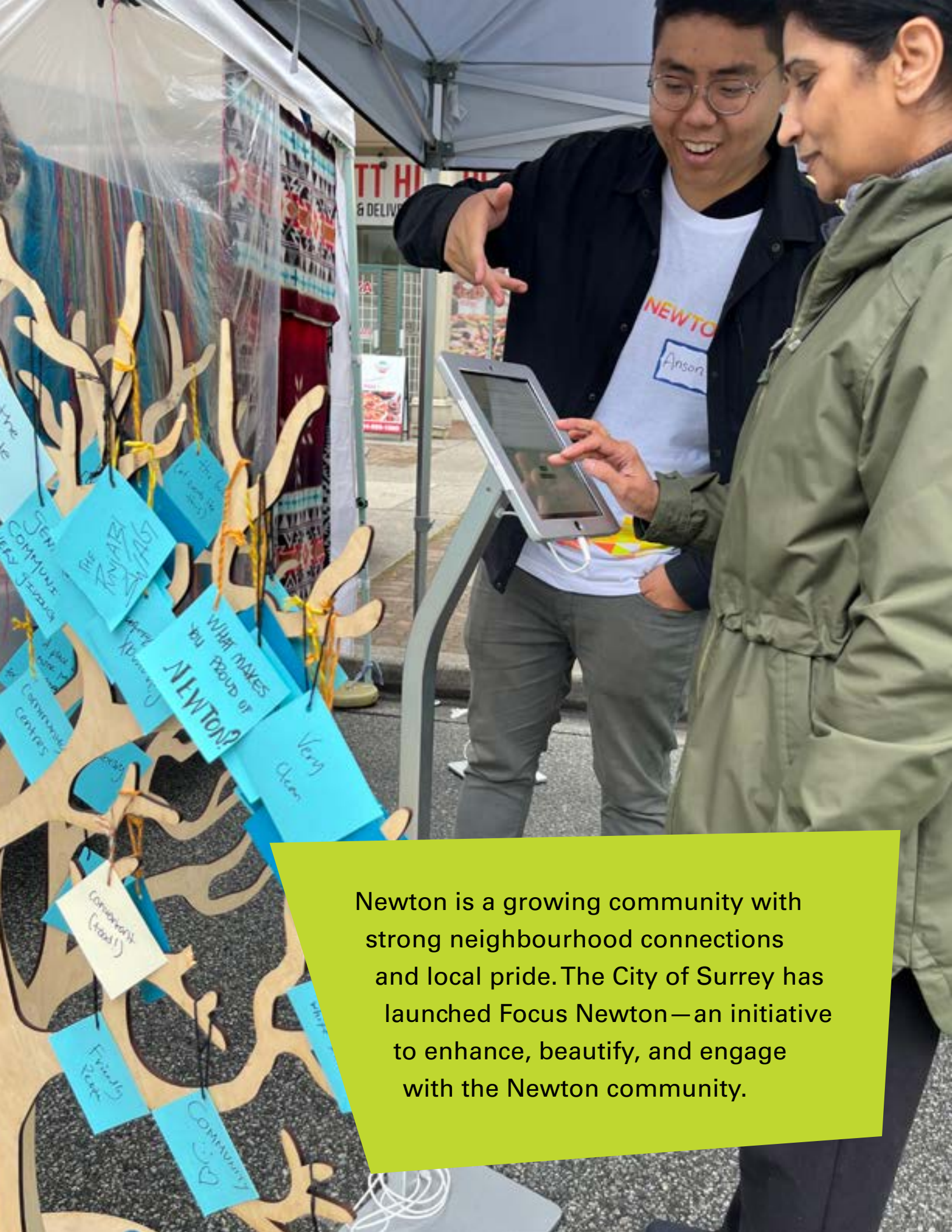




Community Engagement Summary Report

OCTOBER 2023

FOCUS NEWTON



Newton is a growing community with strong neighbourhood connections and local pride. The City of Surrey has launched Focus Newton—an initiative to enhance, beautify, and engage with the Newton community.



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Focusing on Newton

In February 2023 Mayor and Council initiated Focus Newton, an initiative to enhance, beautify and engage with the Newton community. In order to hear feedback from the community on where the City should focus its rejuvenation and enhancement efforts, a public engagement campaign was planned.

Public engagement for Focus Newton included community open house events, an online survey, and a series of survey outreach sessions—all with the goal of hearing from diverse and representative Newton residents. Informed by input from the community, the City of Surrey will develop a plan to guide actions over the next three years with the goal of beautifying and enhancing Newton.

Through Focus Newton, the City of Surrey will invest in Newton’s future—to improve and beautify Surrey’s most populated Town Centre.



May 2023

Project launch



June-August 2023

Community Engagement, surveys and open houses



October 2023

Community Engagement Summary Report



December 2023

Focus Newton Action Plan complete



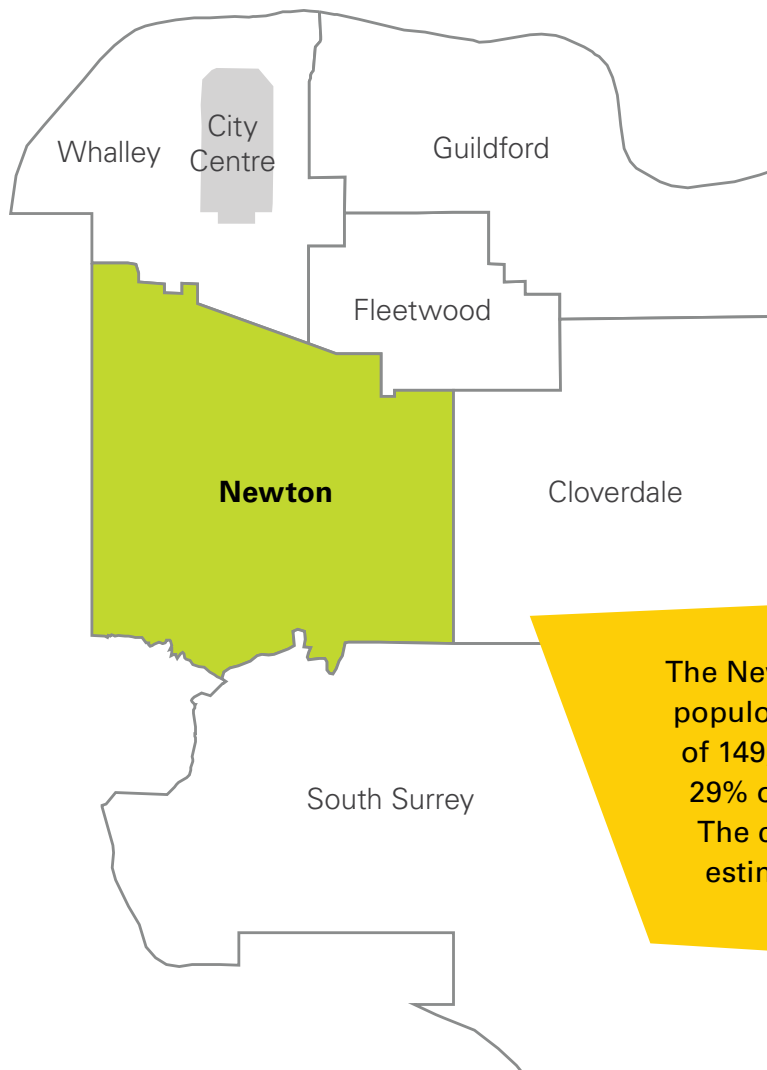
Newton in Context

The Newton area, like all other areas of Surrey and the Lower Mainland, is situated on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish people, including the Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo nations who have ancient and ongoing ties to this place.

This upland area of Surrey was once abundant with coniferous forest. As newcomer settlement began to take place in the late 19th century, logging and land clearing began to make room for farms, homes, and roads. Settlement increased considerably following the end of World War I. Settler farmers of the area were known as stump farmers, with homes, outbuildings, and crops built around and among the stumps which remained.

Numerous businesses opened in the vicinity of 72 Avenue and King George Boulevard, and gradually municipal services and amenities were established. Newton is still an economic centre in Surrey. Newton has Surrey's largest inventory of fully-serviced industrial and mixed employment lands, making it home to a variety of industrial sectors.

A culturally diverse community, Newton is home to the region's largest South Asian community and the heart of South Asian culture. Every year Newton hosts one of the largest Vaisakhi Parades outside of India, welcoming more than 500,000 people.



The Newton community is Surrey's most populous community, with a population of 149,040 people (accounting for 29% of Surrey's total population). The community is growing steadily, estimated at 12% annually.

2016 Census

Major Projects in Newton

The Focus Newton project coincides with several ongoing capital projects taking place to meet the growing needs of the Newton community.



Bear Creek Park Stadium

The City is building a new grandstand with seating for over 2,200 people, changerooms, public washrooms and an upgraded track.



Kabaddi Park

Two new rubberized volleyball courts and walking loop upgrades are now complete.



Newton Athletic Park

New synthetic turf fields and a walking track were recently completed. Additional upcoming amenities include a new field house and public washrooms.



Unwin Community Park Master Plan

A planning process for a new Master Plan for Unwin Park will commence in 2024.



Strawberry Hill Hall

The rebuilt Strawberry Hill Hall will provide multipurpose room space, cultural programming and 18 before and after school care spaces.



Whippetree Park

This new quarter-hectare neighbourhood park is located in South Newton near 62 Avenue and 128 Street.



Newton Community Centre

The Newton Community Centre will offer a state-of-the-art community hub for Newton residents of all ages to learn, exercise, and enjoy a fun and healthy environment. Recreation, childcare, culture, and library spaces will be advanced in the first phase of development. A master plan of the site has been developed that includes construction of a future aquatic facility.

Who We Connected With

42,421 Informed Residents

An informed resident is defined as an individual or group that has made at least one single visit to the project website, received a postcard, or engaged in the project through social media.

Ways residents were informed:

- 3,465** Website page views
- 37,491** Postcards mailed to Newton residents
- 136** Emails delivered to Newton residents
- 847** Newton-based CitySpeaks panel members invited
- 482** Social media engagements (through clicks, reactions, comments and shares)

2,019 Engaged Residents

An engaged resident is defined as an individual or group that has contributed to the project website, attended a pop-up event, connected through phone or email, or completed the survey (in person or online).

Ways residents were engaged:

- 1,314** Survey respondents
- 33** Mapping activity participants
- 681** Community event attendees

There were a variety of opportunities for people to get learn about Focus Newton and share their ideas. Three open houses, an online survey, and six survey outreach sessions were organized. The project was successful in reaching thousands of Newton residents.



Overview of Survey Demographics

As part of the online survey, demographic information was collected from the 1,314 respondents. However, it's important to note that this data does not account for the additional feedback provided by over 600 in-person participants at the three open house

Gender

- Female (51%)
- Male (48%)
- Non-binary and self-describing (1%)

Age

- 19 younger (3%)
- 20-29 (10%)
- 30-39 (19%)
- 40-49 (19%)
- 50-59 (17%)
- 60 or greater (30%)

Language

- What language(s) do you speak?
- English (94%)
 - Punjabi (27%)
 - Hindi (15%)
 - French (8.3%)
 - Urdu (4.4%)
 - Chinese languages (3.3%)
 - Tagalog (2.8%)
 - Others combined (17%)

Engagement Highlights



Open House at Newton Rec Centre

Drawing over 200 attendees, this open house offered interactive and informational boards, a mapping activity, lawn games, a library booth, a kids activity booth, a chalk talk wall and popcorn and refreshments.

Open House at T.E. Scott Community Picnic

With over 400 participants at this event, 150 participants provided feedback. This family-friendly neighbourhood picnic offered interactive and informational boards, a mapping activity, lawn games, a photo booth, a painting activity, a bouncy castle and food.

Open House at Miri Piri Tournament

With over 130 participants, this event offered interactive and informational boards, a mapping activity, lawn games, kids games and freezies and refreshments.

Survey and Outreach Sessions

In total, the survey received 1,314 online responses and ten printed responses. Six outreach sessions were held at sporting events, community events and business hubs.

What We Heard Through Engagement





Engagement Results Overview

Many people expressed pride in Newton and also shared their insights on how spaces in the community could be enhanced. Overall across the engagement activities, we heard strong support for:

- More landscaping and green spaces
- Improved and expanded recreation facilities and park amenities
- More family-friendly events and activities
- Cleaner and safer spaces, that are regularly maintained
- Improved streets to reduce congestion and enhance pedestrian safety
- Better active transportation infrastructure to prioritize transit and cycling
- More outdoor spaces, cafes, and restaurants in the neighbourhood where they can gather socially

Participants were asked to share what words came to mind when thinking about Newton. Positively, Newton was described often as “*diverse*” and “*busy*”. Unfortunately, “*dirty*” was a word that was also mentioned.

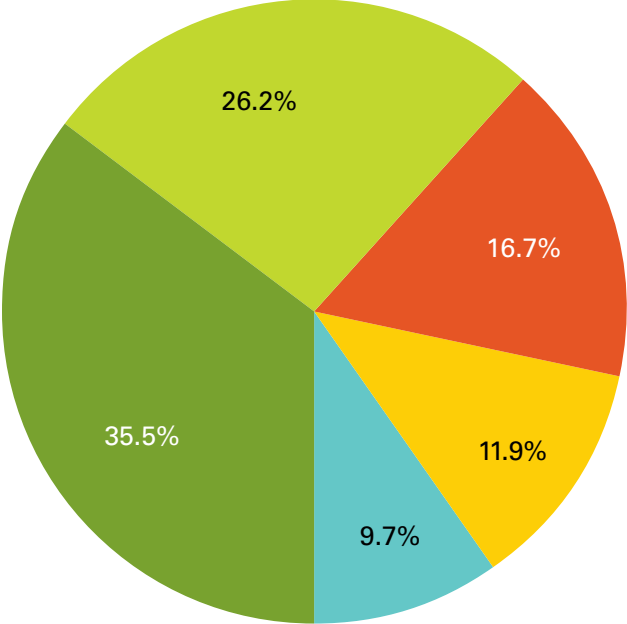
Understanding Newton

Finding Connection

Survey respondents shared that they find connection at the following locations. Less than 1% of total respondents noted that they don't feel connected within their communities.

- Park
- Place of worship
- Recreation centre
- Other*
- Library

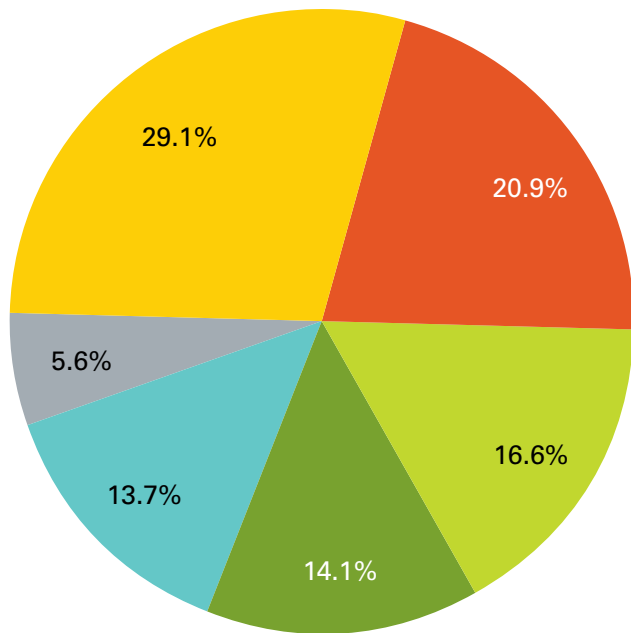
*Other responses included local cafes, neighbourhood events and public spaces.



Survey respondents were asked how they felt when spending time out and about in Newton—for example in public spaces or between errands. An almost even number felt a sense of belonging as those who did not. This indicates a need to improve public spaces to create a sense of belonging and connection for residents.

Neighbourhood Pride

Survey respondents shared that they are proud of the following features of their neighbourhood.

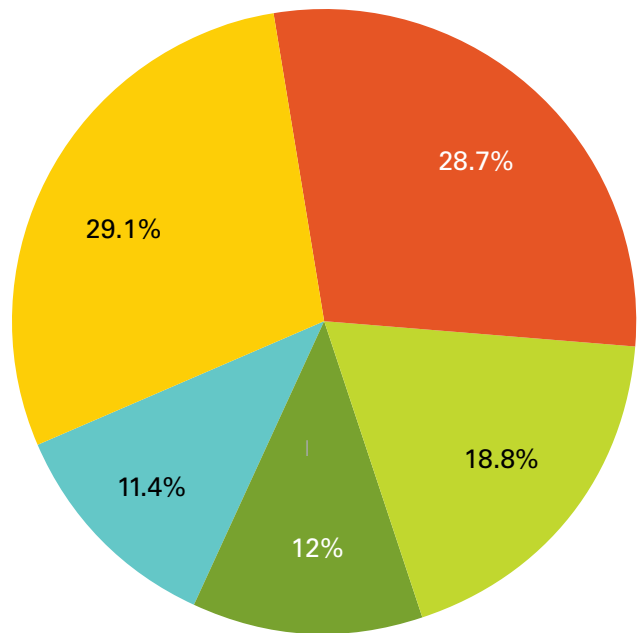


- Parks
- Open spaces
- Neighbours
- Celebrations and events
- Civic facilities
- Other*

*Other responses included local businesses, active transportation routes and places of worship.

Cleanliness and Care

A majority of respondents (over two thirds) do not feel that Newton is clean. When asked about the biggest cleanliness issues in Newton, people were most concerned about:



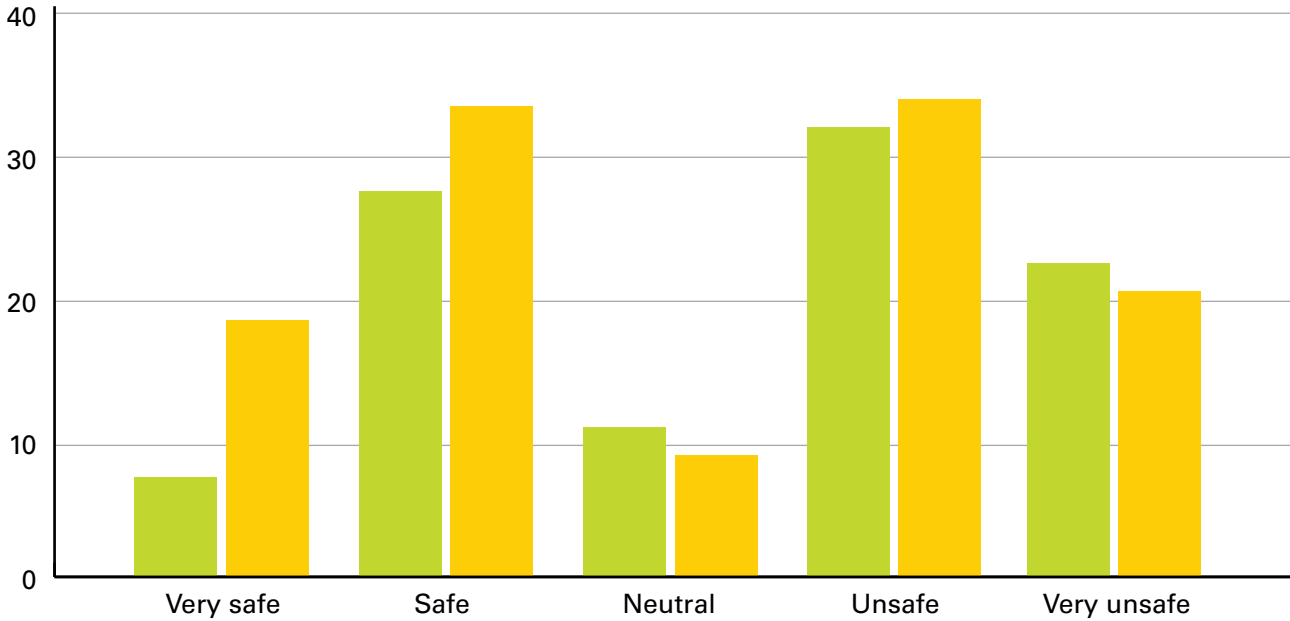
- Illegal dumping
- General litter on streets and sidewalks
- Unsightly private property
- Graffiti and tagging
- Destruction of property

Respondents also shared concern around homelessness and drug addiction in the Newton area, as well as the need for maintenance and care on both public and private property.

Feeling Safe

Overall, a similar number reported feeling unsafe as those who felt safe when walking alone in Newton. However, women, non-binary, and people who self-described their gender reported feeling less safe than the average male.

■ Women, non-binary and self-describing ■ Men

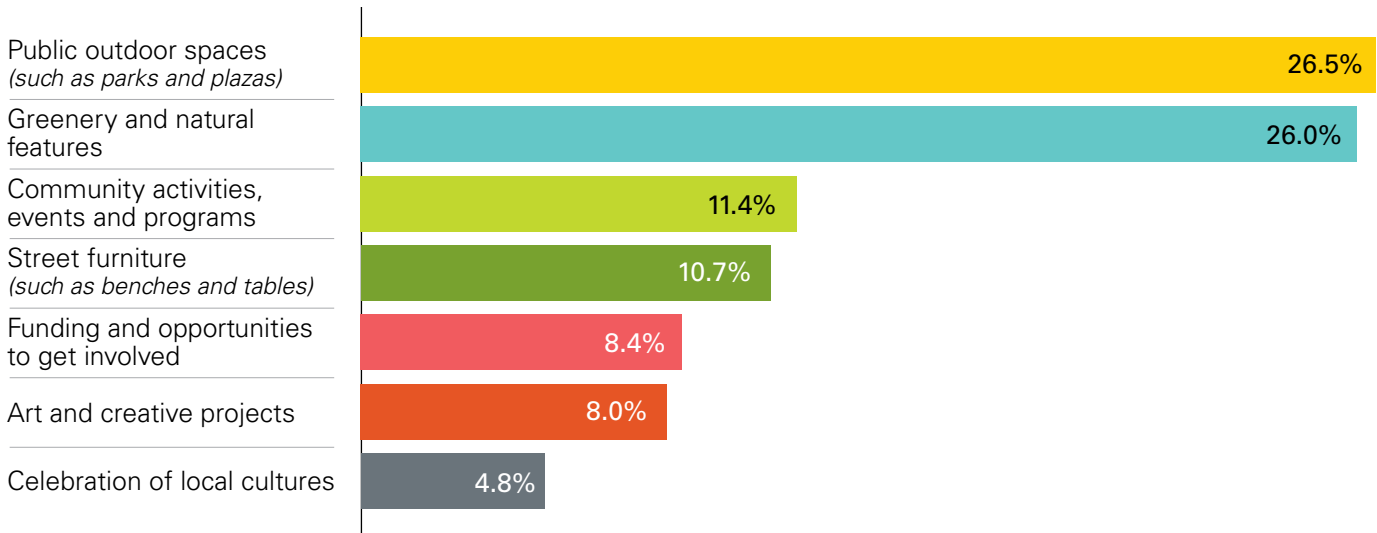




Priority Improvements

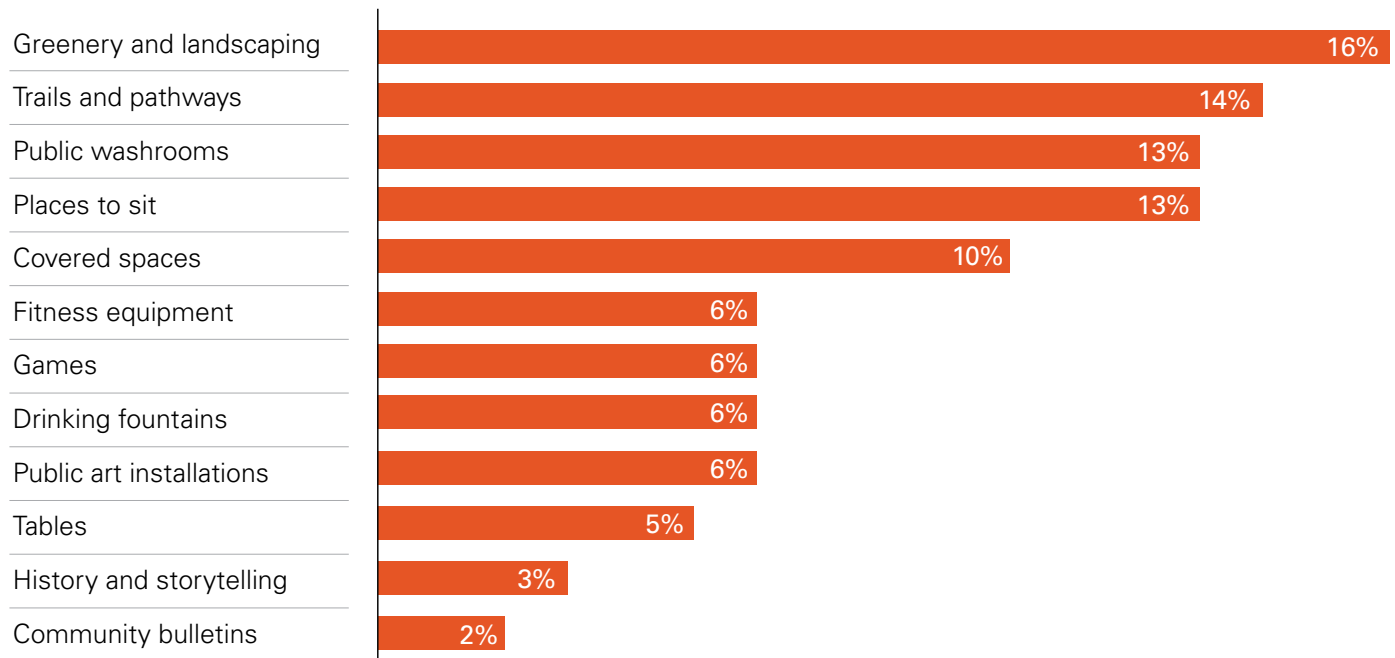
We wanted to find out the community's priorities in order to know which changes would have the most positive impact in Newton. In particular, we asked about improvements at parks and open spaces, on streets and sidewalks, and at events and activities. These findings are detailed on the following pages.

Survey respondents shared that they would like to see more:



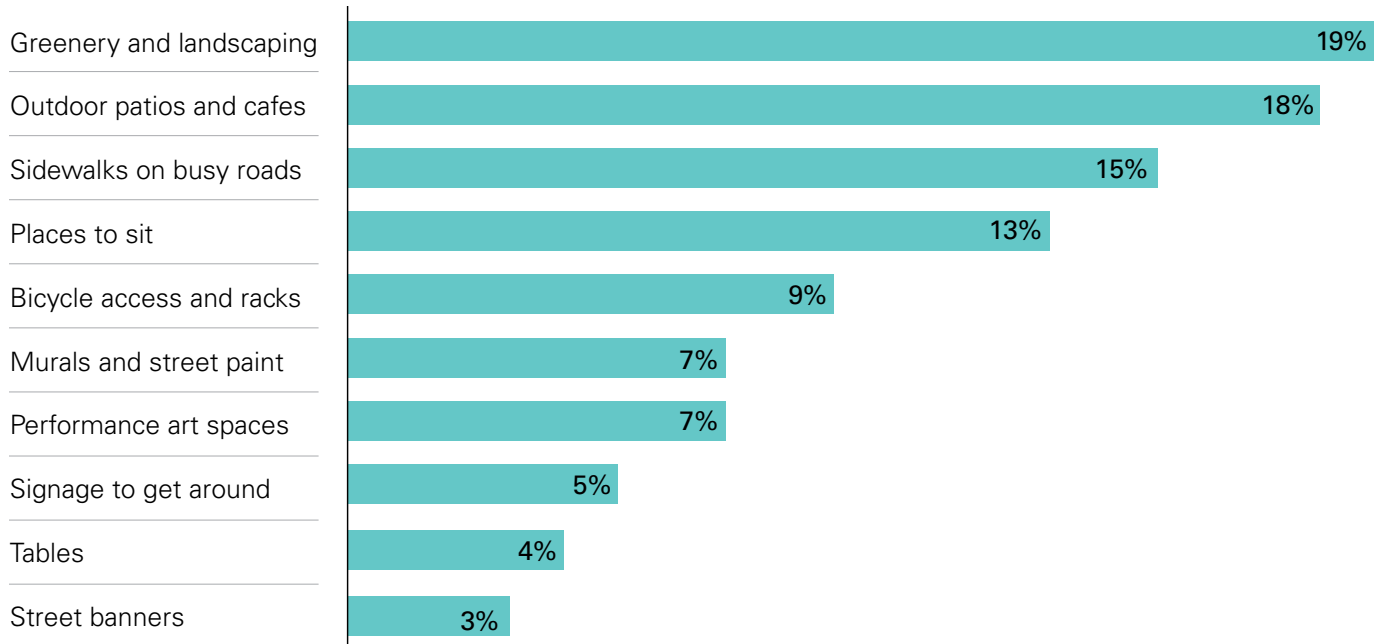
At Parks in Newton

Respondents shared what additions they would like to see at parks in Newton. Priorities identified include: greenery and landscaping, walking trails and pathways and various infrastructure to support a diverse range of people using parks. Parks were identified as important community spaces for families and friends to meet and gather. Other open ended survey responses shared the need for garbage cans and litter cleaning.



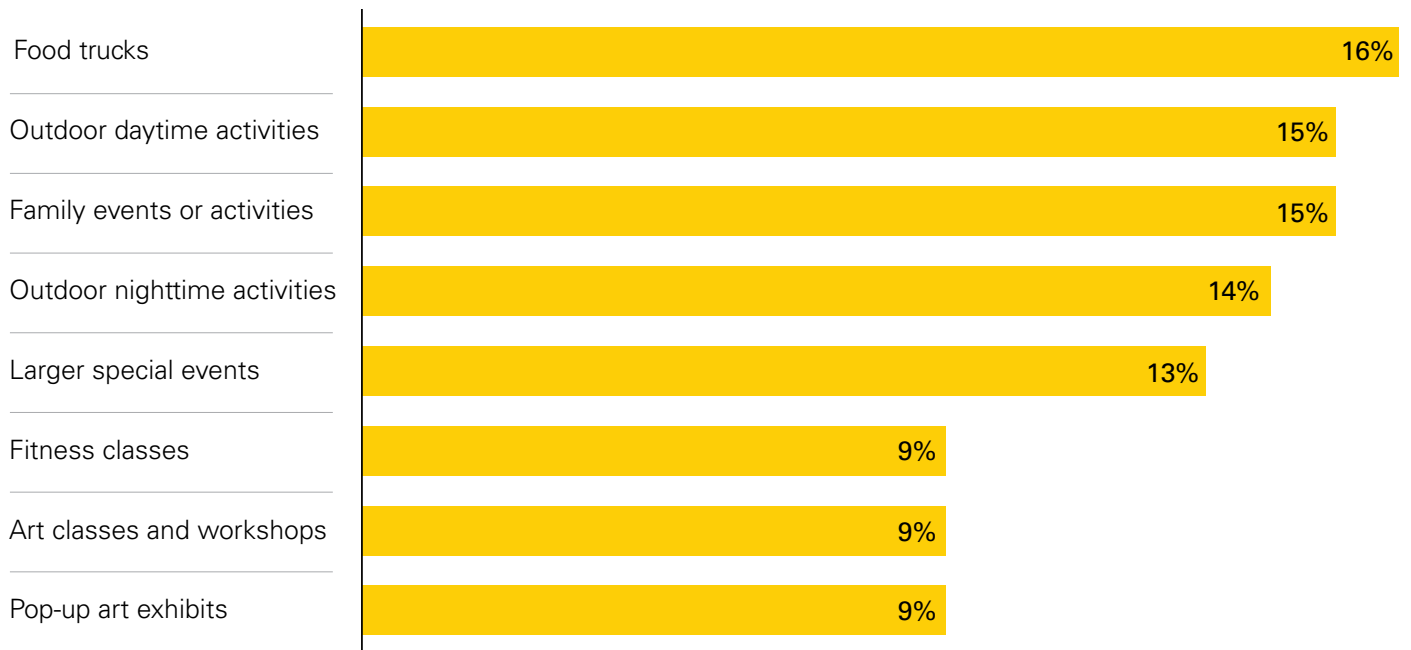
On Streets and Sidewalks in Newton

Respondents shared what improvements they would like to see along streets and sidewalks in Newton. Responses indicated a desire for vibrant public spaces with street-level activities, and the infrastructure to support that. Other open ended survey responses noted better lighting and larger pedestrian spaces, like plazas.



Events and Activities in Newton

Respondents shared what types of events and activities they'd like to attend in Newton. Other open ended survey responses expressed support for music, shows and festivals (for entertainment and local food). Respondents also noted cleanliness and safety.



Public Art

The types of art that respondents indicated they most wanted to see in public spaces included art that involves light or water, art on plaza and sidewalk surfaces, discoverable art along paths, Indigenous art, and street banners.

Youth Voice (under 19)

Youth (under 19) in Newton would like to see more: public outdoor spaces; art and creative projects; community activities, events and programs; and greenery and natural features.

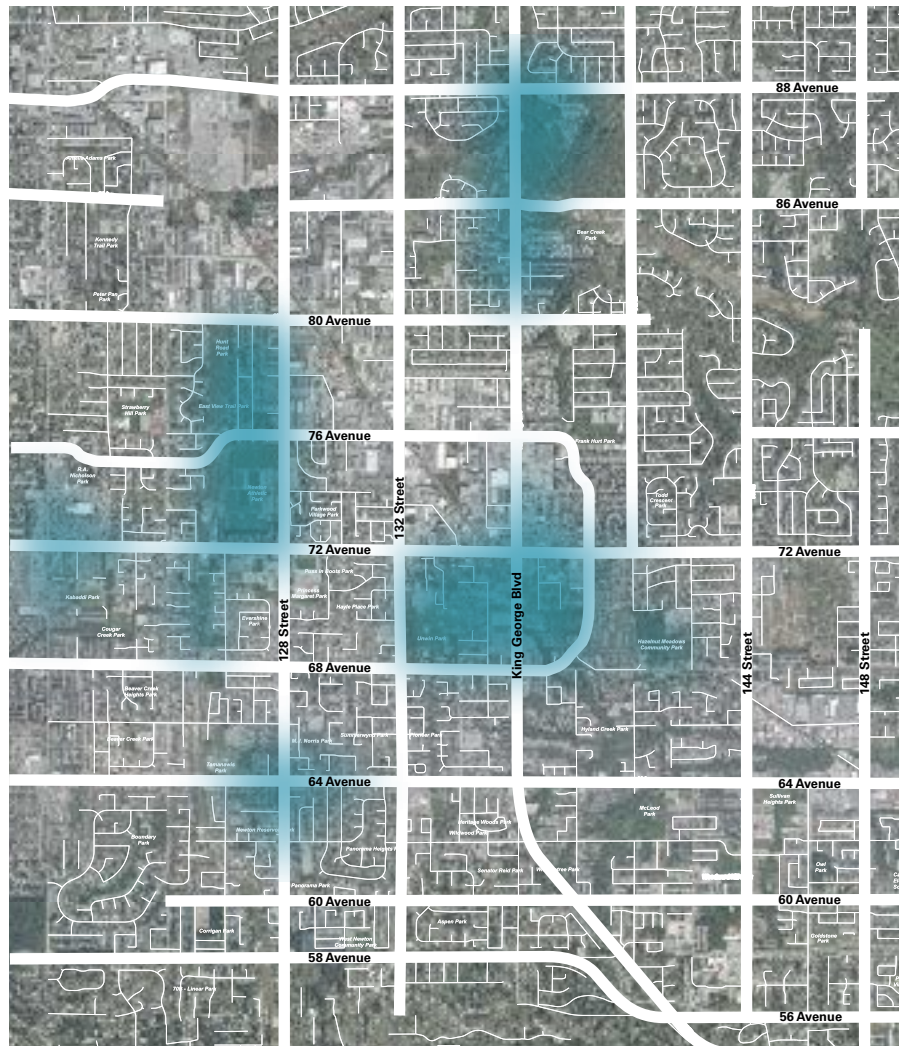
Grant Program

Survey respondents were asked if they would be interested in participating in a neighbourhood grant program to lead a creative, community oriented project. One third of respondents (33%) expressed interest in such a program.



Key Newton Locations

Survey respondents and open house participants identified the top locations in Newton where they love to spend time or that needed improvements. This feedback on important areas for Newton residents will be combined with other data sources (such as population density and land use designations) to help prioritize focus areas for the Action Plan.



Next Steps

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Focus Newton public engagement! Input from the community will help guide the Focus Newton Action Plan as it is developed in Fall 2023. The Action Plan will detail short and mid term priorities to help rejuvenate, beautify, and enhance Newton. The Action Plan will also explore the role of the City of Surrey in supporting the community and identify opportunities for residents who are eager to help enhance Newton.

The City of Surrey's Public Engagement Strategy is modeled after the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) guidelines and best practices.



How to Stay Involved
For update and more info on the engagement that took place, please visit surrey.ca/focusnewton.

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