

Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

to be held via Zoom and in person, Room A – City Hall

Friday, July 17, 2026

at 3:00 p.m.

1. **Call Special Committee Meeting to Order**

We acknowledge that Penticton, where we live and work, is on the traditional lands of the Syilx People in the Okanagan Nation.

2. **Adoption of Agenda**

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

3.1 Minutes of the May 12, 2026 Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

Recommendation:

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee adopt the minutes of the May 12, 2026 Special meeting as presented.

4. **New Business**

Czeck 4.1 Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan – Engagement Report

Staff Recommendation:

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee receive the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan Engagement Report for information and review, as a foundational document to inform the consideration of strategies, implementation actions, and measures of success at the next Committee meeting.

5. **Next Meeting**

The next regular Public Safety Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on August 19, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

6. **Adjournment**

Special Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

held via Zoom and in person, Council Chambers
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
at 3:00 p.m.

Present: Michael Magnusson, Chair
Tia Carlesimo, Vice-Chair
Cheyanne Fath (via Zoom)
Cherry Fernandez
Scott Jacobsen
James Palanio
Riley Thompson
Alex Waddington
Holly Wakeman (via Zoom)

Regrets: Ryan Graham, Councillor
Campbell Watt, Councillor
Heather Montgomery
Jeff Leonard

Staff: Julie Czeck, General Manager of Public Safety and Partnerships
Anthony Policicchio, Facilities Manager
Hayley Anderson, FOIPPA and Records Management Specialist
Janet Glowa, Legislative Assistant

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Special Public Safety Advisory Committee to order at 3:01 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee adopt the agenda of May 12, 2026 as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Adoption of Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the February 18, 2026 Public Safety Advisory Committee Meeting

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee adopt the minutes of the February, 2026 meeting as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. New Business

4.1 2026 Lakeshore Seasonal Safety Update

Julie Czeck, General Manager of Public Safety and Partnerships and Anthony Policicchio, Facilities Manager, provided Committee with a presentation on the 2026 Lakeshore Seasonal Safety Update.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee recommend that Council approve the 2026 Seasonal Safety Strategy, including the following financial requirements:

- \$65,000 to fund CCTV installation on City-owned infrastructure and expand the Chamber of Commerce Camera Program for Lakeshore Drive businesses experiencing high police calls for service.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee recommend that Council approve the 2026 Seasonal Safety Strategy, including the following financial requirements:

- \$63,000 in capital funding for Phase 1 improvements to establish the Jubilee Pavilion as a seasonal Community Policing hub beginning in 2026, with consideration of additional capital investments to support the future stationing of uniformed police officers through the 2027 budget process.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Next Meeting

The next regular Public Safety Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on August 19, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. as the Regular meeting scheduled for May 20, 2026 has been cancelled.

5. Adjournment

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee adjourn the meeting held on May 12, 2026 at 4:07 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Certified Correct:

Hayley Anderson
FOIPPA and Records Management Specialist



Memo to Committee

penticton.ca

Date: July 17, 2026
To: Public Safety Advisory Committee
From: Julie Czeck, General Manager, Public Safety and Partnerships
Subject: Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan – Engagement Report

Staff Recommendation

THAT the Public Safety Advisory Committee receive the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan Engagement Report for information and review, as a foundational document to inform the consideration of strategies, implementation actions, and measures of success at the next Committee meeting.

Executive Summary

The City of Penticton is developing a Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan to provide a coordinated, long-term framework for improving community safety, health, and quality of life. Recognizing that community safety extends beyond crime and enforcement, the Plan considers the broader social, health, housing, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to community wellbeing.

To inform the Plan, the City undertook two phases of engagement involving more than 2,200 survey responses, two public open houses attended by over 600 participants, and 235 focus group participants representing residents, Indigenous communities, service providers, businesses, community organizations, and regional and provincial partners.

The engagement findings revealed strong alignment regarding the key issues affecting wellbeing in Penticton. Participants consistently identified housing affordability, homelessness, mental health, substance use, social disorder, community safety, and social connection as priority concerns.

A central finding was the community's desire for balanced "yes, and" solutions rather than "either/or" approaches. Participants expressed support for enforcement and prevention, housing supports and accountability, treatment and recovery services alongside safe public spaces, and compassionate responses combined with visible action. Participants recognized that improving community safety requires both immediate responses to community concerns and long-term investments that address underlying causes.

Common themes included the importance of building public trust, communicating clearly and openly, and recognizing that people experience safety and wellbeing in different ways depending on their circumstances and community.

Based on engagement findings and supporting data analysis, five interconnected priority areas emerged:

1. Community Safety & Crime Prevention
2. Emergency Management, Response & Community Resilience
3. Housing Security & Homelessness Response
4. Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports
5. Community Belonging & Inclusion

These priorities provide the foundation for Phase 3 of the project, which will focus on developing implementation actions, partner commitments, success measures, and the draft Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan for Council consideration in Fall 2026.

Background

In 2022, the City completed a Community Safety Resource Review that recommended establishing a dedicated resource to coordinate community safety efforts and lead development of a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. In response, the City established the Public Safety and Partnerships Division in 2024 and in 2025 initiated development of a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan informed by data analysis, community engagement, and collaboration with community partners. The purpose of the CSWB Plan is to establish a coordinated framework that identifies shared priorities, strengthens partnerships, aligns community efforts, and supports long-term improvements in safety and wellbeing outcomes.

Engagement Overview

Development of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan is occurring through a four-phase process, with community engagement serving as a foundational element throughout. To support this work, the City retained Urban Matters as an independent facilitator to lead a comprehensive engagement process.



To date, engagement has included:

- 1,841 responses to the Phase 1 survey;
- 417 responses to the Phase 2 survey;
- More than 600 participants across two public open houses; and
- 235 participants in focus groups and targeted engagement activities, including approximately 50 Indigenous participants.

Focus groups were designed to ensure a broad range of perspectives and lived experiences were represented, including youth, seniors, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, equity-deserving populations, people with lived and living experience of homelessness, families, businesses, and community organizations. Engagement also included targeted conversations with School District 67, the RCMP, Penticton Fire Department, Bylaw Services, Interior Health, BC Housing, provincial social service and justice agencies, faith-

based organizations, business associations, Indigenous partners, and numerous community organizations and government partners. The full engagement methodology, participant groups, and findings are contained in Attachment A.

Analysis

What We Learned

Across all engagement activities, several themes emerged consistently. Community members and participants across the engagements identified homelessness, housing affordability, mental health challenges, substance use, and social disorder as issues having the greatest impact on overall wellbeing. Participants also recognized the strong connection between these challenges and broader issues such as poverty, social isolation, accessibility of services, and increasing demands on emergency responders and community agencies.

At the same time, participants expressed a desire for visible and responsive public safety services alongside investments that address root causes and improve long-term outcomes. One of the strongest themes to emerge from the engagement process was a desire for "yes, and" solutions rather than "either/or" choices. Participants consistently expressed that improving community safety and wellbeing requires holding two realities at the same time: responding to immediate community concerns and investing in up-stream preventative, and long-term solutions that address root causes. For example, participants emphasized the need for:

- Prevention *and* public safety;
- Housing supports *and* individual accountability;
- Safe, welcoming public spaces *and* access to treatment and recovery services;
- Compassion *and* visible enforcement.

Rather than viewing these priorities as competing or mutually exclusive, participants generally saw them as complementary and interconnected. The engagement findings suggest that the community is seeking balanced responses that address the underlying factors that contribute to vulnerability, crisis, and social disorder while also identifying the factors that will improve safety today.

Public Trust, Communication and Perceptions of Safety

Participants said that how safe people feel does not always match crime statistics. Factors such as visible social issues, high-profile incidents, news coverage, and social media can shape people's perceptions of safety, even when crime rates are stable or declining. Participants wanted clearer and more consistent communication about community safety issues, better awareness of available services and supports, regular updates on safety initiatives, and more opportunities to share feedback and have conversations with the City. Building public trust was identified as a re-occurring priority that supports all five community safety focus areas and will require ongoing communications, community engagement, and transparency to be successful.

Equity and Inclusion

Participants also emphasized that safety and wellbeing are not experienced equally across the community. Youth, seniors, Indigenous peoples, racialized communities, newcomers, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+

individuals, and those with lived or living experience of homelessness identified unique challenges and barriers that require targeted and inclusive responses. Some participants also highlighted the impacts of racism, discrimination, stigma, and social exclusion on individual and community wellbeing, noting that experiences of bias can affect access to services, feelings of belonging, and perceptions of safety. These findings reinforce the need for an equity-focused approach that addresses systemic barriers, promotes inclusion and belonging, and ensures that future actions respond to the diverse needs and experiences of community members.

Community Strengths

Community feedback identified many existing strengths and positive efforts that will help support the successful implementation of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. Participants consistently pointed to a high degree of alignment on key community priorities, an established network of partnerships and collaborative relationships, dedicated service providers and community organizations, and a strong culture of volunteerism and civic engagement. Equally important was the continued willingness of residents, organizations, and government partners to work together to address complex community challenges. Collectively, these strengths position Penticton well to advance a coordinated and community-driven approach to safety and wellbeing.

Five Priority Areas for Penticton's CSWB

Based on engagement findings and supporting data analysis, five interconnected priority areas emerged:



1. Community Safety & Crime Prevention: Focuses on reducing crime and victimization, maintaining safe and welcoming public spaces, reducing social disorder (encampments, open drug use etc),

enhancing traffic safety, addressing racism and hate-motivated incidents, and strengthening prevention and early intervention efforts.

2. Emergency Management, Response & Community Resilience: Focuses on emergency preparedness, risk reduction, public education, regional collaboration, and strengthening the community's ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

3. Housing Security & Homelessness Response: Focuses on improving access to safe, stable, and appropriate housing across the housing continuum through homelessness prevention, strengthened shelter and support services, increased affordable, supportive, and transitional housing options for diverse populations, including youth and seniors, effective encampment management, and coordinated regional action to address homelessness and housing insecurity.

4. Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports: Focuses on prevention, treatment, recovery, mental wellness, youth prevention initiatives, and reducing stigma associated with mental health and substance use challenges.

5. Community Belonging & Inclusion: Focuses on social connection, accessibility, food security, childcare, transportation, Indigenous relationships, and reducing barriers to participation for all community members.

These priorities reflect the community's view that improving safety and wellbeing requires coordinated action across social, health, housing, emergency preparedness, and public safety systems.

What This Means for the City

While municipalities are often the first to experience and respond to the local impacts of homelessness, mental health crises, substance use, public disorder, and other community safety concerns, many of the systems required to address the underlying causes of these challenges - including healthcare, housing, mental health and addictions treatment, income supports, and elements of the justice system - fall under provincial and federal responsibility.

This places municipalities in a unique position. Although local governments are not the primary funders or mandate holders of these social systems, they are closest to community realities and are often the first point of contact for residents seeking action. Municipalities are therefore well-positioned to identify emerging issues, convene partners, coordinate local responses, and advocate for the investments and policy changes needed to improve outcomes. Within a Community Safety and Wellbeing framework, municipalities generally contribute through three complementary roles:

- **Lead** initiatives within municipal jurisdiction, including community safety planning, emergency preparedness and response, bylaw enforcement, crime prevention initiatives, and the provision of local policing services.¹

¹ Municipalities that contract RCMP policing services do so through a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA), established under the Provincial Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) between the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada. Under this framework, municipalities with populations between 5,000 and 15,000 are responsible for 70% of eligible policing costs, while municipalities with populations over 15,000 are responsible for 90% of eligible policing costs.

- **Support** initiatives led by other organizations, including housing, homelessness, mental health, substance use, and social inclusion efforts.
- **Advocate** to senior governments for funding, policy changes, and services that address community needs and underlying social challenges.

This framework helps ensure municipal efforts remain focused on areas where the City can have the greatest impact while leveraging partnerships to address broader systemic issues.

NEXT STEPS

With the completion of community engagement and priority identification, Phase 3 will focus on translating the findings into practical and measurable actions. Attachment A (p.47) provides a conceptual example of how the Community Safety & Crime Prevention priority area could be translated into goals, actions, measures of success, and partner responsibilities within the final Plan.

Over the next month staff will be working with key partners, including PSAC to:

- Develop strategies for each priority area with corresponding implementation actions;
- Identify partner roles and responsibilities within each strategy;
- Establish performance measures and outcome indicators;
- Develop governance and reporting frameworks; and
- Prepare of the draft Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan for Council consideration in Fall 2026.

Financial implication

Council allocated \$75,000 in the 2025 Budget to support the independent analysis, engagement, and plan development. Pending Council's adoption of the CSWB Plan, funding for implementing the priority actions identified through this process will be brought forward separately for Council approval either through the budget process or separate Council Reports as actions become implemented.

Attachments

Attachment A – Full Engagement Report

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Czeck



WHAT WE LEARNED

COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELLBEING PLAN (CSWB) ENGAGEMENT REPORT



JULY 2026



The City of Penticton would like to acknowledge Urban Matters and The W Group for their support during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) planning process. Urban Matters conducted background research, a jurisdictional review, and engagement activities, while The W Group supported the design and analysis of community surveys. Working collaboratively with these consultants, City staff synthesized research, engagement summaries, survey results, and operational data to develop this report.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge with respect and gratitude that this report was developed on the traditional and ancestral lands of Sn'pinktn (Sin-Pink-tin) (Penticton) which forms part of the unceded Syilx territory of the Okanagan Nation, Syilx People of the Okanagan Nation.

We honour their enduring connection to the land, waters, and all living things, and recognize their role as caretakers since time immemorial.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***Safety and wellbeing is that deeper feeling of “I am okay here.
I can breathe here. I belong here.”***

- Participant, equity-seeking engagement

The City of Penticton is developing a Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan to support a safer, healthier, and more connected community. The plan intends to provide a coordinated, long-term approach to addressing complex social challenges through collaboration between local government, Indigenous partners, health and social service providers, public safety agencies, community organizations, the school district, businesses, and other levels of government.

A CSWB plan will establish a coordinated roadmap to address interconnected challenges, guide decision-making, support Council priorities, and inform investment decisions for community-based initiatives. The City of Penticton has engaged extensively with the community across two phases of planning, including public surveys, open houses, facilitated focus group sessions, one-to-one conversations, and targeted outreach.

- **The Phase 1** survey (December 2025) received over 1,800 responses, and the October 2025 Council Open House welcomed more than 400 participants.
- **In Phase 2**, the February 2026 survey generated over 400 responses, while the May 2026 Open House drew close to 200 attendees. In addition, 235 people took part in Phase 2 focus group sessions and targeted activities.

Focus groups were designed to capture a broad range of perspectives and lived experiences, including those of youth, seniors, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, equity-seeking populations, people with lived and living experience of homelessness, families, businesses, and community organizations.

Additional engagement involved key community and government partners, including Indigenous partners, School District 67, the RCMP, Penticton Fire Department, Bylaw Services, Interior Health, BC Housing, provincial social service and justice agencies, faith-based organizations, business associations, and other local partners.

Based on this community engagement and data analysis, five priority areas have emerged:

1. **Community Safety and Crime Prevention:** Community safety is foundational to quality of life and reflects the extent to which residents, businesses, and visitors feel safe in their homes, neighbourhoods, and public spaces. This priority focuses on creating safe, welcoming, and well-maintained community spaces; reducing violent crime, property crime, and racism or hate-motivated incidents; improving traffic and road safety; and strengthening prevention and early intervention efforts. Through engagement, the community identified a desire for increased visibility of enforcement officers, improved maintenance of public spaces, enhanced crime prevention initiatives, and a balanced approach that combines enforcement with proactive measures to address the root causes of safety concerns.
2. **Emergency Management, Response and Community Resilience:** A resilient community is prepared to prevent, respond to, and recover from emergencies and other disruptions. This priority focuses on strengthening preparedness through regional planning, risk reduction, public education, and cross-sector collaboration. Participants emphasized the need for improved emergency preparedness, access to information and resources, and clear, timely communication before, during, and after emergencies, particularly as communities face increasing risks from wildfires, extreme weather, and other emergencies.
3. **Housing Security and Homelessness Response:** Safe, stable, and affordable housing is a key determinant of health, wellbeing, and community safety. This priority focuses on the full housing continuum, including homelessness prevention, housing stability, affordable housing, and supportive and transitional housing options. Engagement participants emphasized the need for a coordinated regional response to homelessness, strengthened encampment management, increased affordable and supportive housing supply, and improved data-sharing and collaboration to support evidence-informed decision-making.
4. **Mental Health, Substance Use and Wellness Supports:** Mental health, wellness, and access to supports are essential to individual and community wellbeing. This priority focuses on strengthening prevention, treatment, recovery, and wellness services across the continuum of care. Participants identified the need to expand detox, treatment, and recovery services, promote mental wellness, strengthen youth prevention initiatives, and reduce stigma associated with mental health and substance use challenges.
5. **Community Belonging and Inclusion:** A strong community is one where everyone feels connected, valued, and able to participate fully in community life. This priority focuses on fostering social connection, improving accessibility, reducing barriers to

participation, and ensuring community members have access to the supports and opportunities they need to thrive. Through engagement, participants identified food security, accessible public spaces and transportation, affordable childcare, stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, and greater equity and inclusion as key areas for action.

The findings demonstrate broad recognition that community safety extends beyond crime prevention and enforcement, to upstream prevention and early intervention, social connectedness, housing stability, mental health and substance use supports, emergency preparedness, accessibility of services and places, and the overall condition of public spaces. These findings will inform specific strategies for implementation in the upcoming Penticton Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, to be presented to Council in the fall of 2026.

“We must meet people where they are.”

- Participant, SD67 youth leadership engagement



CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

A Vision for Community Safety & Wellbeing

In 2022, a community safety resource review was completed, with recommendations that included establishing a dedicated City position to coordinate safety efforts and lead the development of a Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan.

In response, the City of Penticton introduced the Public Safety and Partnerships Division in 2024 with a mandate to advance this work. The division is responsible for social development, bylaw services, and the coordination of activities with the RCMP, Fire Services, and community partners to support community safety and wellbeing initiatives.

In 2025, focus was put on building the foundation and forming partnerships that would support the development of the CSWB, with the goals to:

1. Identify **shared priorities** for Penticton's safety and wellbeing;
2. Build and **clarify community roles** and partnerships in the plan; and
3. **Develop a multi-year plan** aimed at improving overall community wellbeing.

The City of Penticton's Vision Statement reflects the community's long-term aspirations for safety, wellbeing, and quality of life. It serves as the foundation of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan, providing strategic direction for priorities, partnerships, and actions across all areas of implementation.

The vision embodies a shared commitment to building a connected, resilient, and inclusive community where residents, businesses, and visitors feel safe, supported, and engaged. It establishes a common framework for decision-making, collaboration, and investment, helping to ensure that community safety and wellbeing initiatives align with Council's broader goals for the future of Penticton.

Vision Statement

Penticton is a connected, resilient, and healthy waterfront city focused on safety, livability, and vibrancy.



Roles, Responsibilities, and Enabling Conditions

The CSWB planning process reaffirmed that community safety and wellbeing is a shared responsibility among municipal, provincial, federal, and Indigenous governments, as well as community agencies, businesses, and residents.

While municipalities are often the first to experience and respond to the impacts of issues such as homelessness, mental health crises, substance use, public disorder, and community safety concerns, many of the systems that address the root causes of these challenges, including healthcare, housing, mental health and addictions treatment, income supports, and elements of the justice system, fall under provincial and federal jurisdiction.

This creates an important leadership role for municipalities. Although local governments are not the primary funders of social systems, they are closest to community needs and are uniquely positioned to identify emerging issues, convene partners, coordinate local responses, and advocate for investments and policy changes.

As a result, municipalities typically contribute to Community Safety and Wellbeing through three key roles:

- **Lead** initiatives within municipal jurisdiction, including community safety planning, emergency preparedness and response, bylaw enforcement, crime prevention initiatives, and the provision and funding of local policing services.¹
- **Support** initiatives led by other organizations, including housing, homelessness, mental health, substance use, and social inclusion efforts.
- **Advocate** to senior governments for funding, policy changes, and services that address community needs and underlying social challenges.

¹ Municipalities that contract RCMP policing services do so through a Municipal Police Unit Agreement (MPUA), established under the Provincial Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) between the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada. Under this framework, municipalities with populations between 5,000 and 15,000 are responsible for 70% of eligible policing costs, while municipalities with populations over 15,000 are responsible for 90% of eligible policing costs.

The City's role within each priority area of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan reflects these responsibilities:

Priority Area	Municipal Role
Community Safety & Crime Prevention	Lead / Advocate
Emergency Management, Response & Community Resilience	Lead / Advocate
Housing Security & Homelessness Response	Support / Advocate
Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports	Support / Advocate
Community Belonging & Inclusion	Lead / Support

Importantly, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan cannot take a one-size-fits-all approach. Different populations experience safety and wellbeing challenges in unique ways. Youth, seniors, Indigenous peoples, and equity-seeking groups, including immigrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, may face distinct barriers, vulnerabilities, and systemic inequities. Meaningful progress requires an equity-focused approach that recognizes and responds to these differing experiences and needs.

Achieving lasting change also depends on several enabling conditions. Strong partnerships, shared accountability, data-informed decision-making, sustainable funding, community engagement, and coordinated action across sectors are essential to addressing complex challenges that no single organization can solve alone.

Success requires collaboration across all levels of government, recognizing that each has distinct but complementary responsibilities. Municipalities play a critical role as conveners, coordinators, and advocates, helping align local priorities with provincial and federal investments and initiatives to achieve shared community safety and wellbeing outcomes.

Phases of CSWB Planning

The Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan is being developed through a four-phase process, with community engagement serving as a cornerstone throughout. As illustrated in Figure 1, the process was designed to support ongoing and iterative conversations with residents, Indigenous communities, service providers, businesses, community organizations, and government partners. This approach ensured that the plan remained grounded in lived experience, informed by diverse perspectives, and responsive to evolving community needs.

Figure 1. CSWB Planning Process



Phase 1: Establishing the Baseline

Phase 1 focused on building a foundational understanding of community safety and wellbeing in Penticton. Work completed during this phase included:

- A jurisdictional scan and review of leading practices;
- Community data and trend analysis;
- A community-wide safety survey that generated more than 1,800 responses; and
- An Open House with over 400 participants.

Together, these activities established a baseline understanding of community conditions and identified the issues of greatest concern to residents and community partners.

The findings informed the development of the Emerging Community Safety and Wellbeing Framework (Figure 2), which reflects residents' perspectives on the factors shaping safety and wellbeing in Penticton. The framework highlights the interconnected nature of social wellbeing, community wellbeing, crime prevention, and public safety, recognizing these outcomes as part of a continuum rather than distinct areas of work.

Grounded in a shared vision and guiding principles, the framework guided Phase 2 engagement activities. It helped participants explore community challenges, validate findings, identify priorities, and discuss opportunities for action.

Figure 2. The Emerging CSWB Framework



Phase 2: Building Consensus

Building on the findings from Phase 1, Phase 2 focused on validating community feedback, exploring key issues in greater depth, and building consensus on priorities for action. Appendix 1 provides a detailed summary of the themes, insights, and priorities identified through Phase 2 focus groups and engagement sessions. Phase 2 engagements included:

- A second community-wide survey that generated 417 responses;
- Targeted partner engagement sessions, including ongoing dialogue with the Penticton Indian Band;
- A youth photo project with School District 67 (SD67), the South Okanagan Immigrant & Community Services (SOICS), RCMP Indigenous Policing Services (IPS), and the Oonakane Friendship Centre (OFC);
- Community focus groups including with equity-seeking populations; and
- A public open house, attended by approximately 200 participants.

Who Was Engaged

In total, 235 individuals participated in Phase 2 focus groups and targeted engagement activities, including approximately 50 Indigenous participants. Participants represented a broad cross-section of the community, including youth, seniors, families, newcomers, Indigenous peoples, equity-seeking populations, and individuals with lived and living experience of homelessness. The following groups were engaged:

- Youth & Senior serving agencies
- School District 67 (SD67)
- 100 More Homes Penticton
- Social service providers
- Oonakane Friendship Centre (OFC)
- Interior Health (IH)
- BC Housing (BCH)
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)
- Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR)
- Justice sector partners, including Corrections and Probation
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)
- Bylaw Services
- Penticton Fire Department
- Penticton and District Search and Rescue (PENSAR)
- Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS)
- Businesses, including the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Penticton Business Improvement Association, and Penticton Industrial Development Association
- Faith communities
- City of Penticton Accessibility Committee & Public Safety Advisory Committee

How Participants Were Engaged

Engagement sessions were facilitated by Urban Matters through both in-person and virtual formats and ranged from 1.5 to 3 hours. Participants were provided with an overview of the CSWB process, the purpose of the plan, and opportunities for involvement in future phases. Discussions focused the following key questions:

- What does safety and wellbeing mean to you?
- Do the priorities identified in the emerging framework align with your experience?
- What areas should be prioritized to improve safety and wellbeing in Penticton?
- What is currently working well?
- What gaps or challenges exist today?
- How should progress be measured?
- What role should your organization or community play in implementing the plan?
(for service organizations)

To better understand community perspectives on safety and belonging, engagement included a youth photo safety project, a community survey, and a public open house. Twenty-nine youth from Princess Margaret Secondary School, OFC, SOICS, and RCMP Indigenous Policing Services (IPS) identified and photographed locations where they felt most safe and least safe in Penticton, resulting in nearly 100 submissions. The project offered insight into youth experiences of safety, inclusion, and community connection, and the findings were later showcased at the Council Open House for broader community reflection and discussion.

To further validate and build upon the findings from Phase 1, a follow-up survey was distributed to residents to confirm priority focus and better understand the actions they considered most important for future implementation. Additional feedback was gathered during the public open house, where members of the public responded to the same questions and priorities through an interactive engagement activity, helping to further refine and confirm community priorities.



WHAT WE LEARNED

The Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) engagement process included two phases of community consultation. Phase 1 focused on understanding residents' perceptions of safety, community challenges, and factors affecting wellbeing. Phase 2 validated those findings, explored potential solutions, and identified shared priorities for action. Full survey results are provided in Appendices 3 and 4, while a detailed summary of focus group and engagement findings is included in Appendix 1.

Despite the different objectives of each phase, the findings were highly consistent. Across surveys, focus groups, open houses, and targeted engagement sessions, participants emphasized that community safety and wellbeing are influenced by a broad range of **interconnected** social, economic, health, and environmental factors.

Participants consistently identified homelessness, housing insecurity, mental health challenges, substance use, open drug use, and public disorder as among the **most significant issues** affecting quality of life in Penticton. Participants also recognized the close relationship between these challenges and broader factors such as poverty, social isolation, lack of access to services, and increasing pressures on emergency responders and community support systems. At the same time, engagement findings reinforced the importance of **visible and responsive** public safety services.

The Phase 1 survey identified the top priorities to be:

- Increased police presence (65%);
- Expanded treatment and recovery services (48%);
- Enhanced bylaw presence (46%); and
- Improved access to affordable housing and shelter options (42%).

The Phase 2 survey reinforced these priorities while highlighting several additional areas for future action:

- Emergency preparedness and community resilience initiatives (75%);
- Police, bylaw, and coordinated community safety initiatives (73%);
- Public safety infrastructure such as lighting, cameras, and environmental design improvements (59%);
- Youth, family, recreation, and community programming (58%); and
- Crime prevention and safer public spaces (57%).

Collectively the findings demonstrate strong support for a balanced approach that combines enforcement and emergency response with prevention, housing, health care, social supports, recreation, and community development. Participants consistently emphasized that addressing immediate safety concerns and addressing root causes must occur simultaneously in order to achieve lasting improvements.

A notable finding throughout the engagement process was the **gap between perceptions of safety and measured crime trends**. While crime rates have generally declined in recent years, many residents reported feeling less safe than in the past. Participants identified the visibility of homelessness, encampments, public drug use, public disorder, highly publicized incidents, and social media narratives as factors influencing perceptions of safety. This highlights the importance of clear communication, public education, and transparent reporting regarding community safety issues, available services, and ongoing initiatives.

The engagement process also reinforced that **safety and wellbeing are not experienced equally across the community**. Youth, seniors, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, people with disabilities, racialized populations, 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, families experiencing economic hardship, and people with lived and living experience of homelessness described unique challenges affecting their sense of safety, belonging, and access to supports. Participants emphasized the importance of approaches that are inclusive, accessible, culturally safe, and responsive to diverse community needs.

While the specific actions identified varied between engagement activities, a high degree of alignment emerged around several key areas for future investment and collective action:

- Expanding access to mental health, substance use, treatment, recovery, outreach, and crisis-response services;
- Increasing the availability of affordable, supportive, transitional, and emergency housing, with particular attention to the needs of youth, seniors, and individuals seeking substance-free housing options.
- Strengthening homelessness prevention and coordinated housing responses;
- Investing in prevention and early intervention for children, youth, and families;
- Creating safer, cleaner, and more welcoming public spaces;
- Enhancing traffic safety, transportation options for seniors, and community accessibility;
- Enhancing emergency preparedness and community resilience;
- Strengthening opportunities for recreation, arts, culture, and community connection;

- Advancing reconciliation and addressing racism, discrimination, stigma, and barriers to inclusion; and
- Improving communication, collaboration, data sharing, and coordination across organizations and systems.

The engagement process also identified significant community strengths that can support implementation of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. Participants highlighted **Penticton's strong network** of community organizations, Indigenous partners, service providers, health-care organizations, educational institutions, businesses, emergency services, and government agencies. Existing partnerships and collaborative initiatives were viewed as **important assets** that can be further strengthened to address shared challenges and **advance collective outcomes**.

Penticton's CSWB Priorities

Based on the engagement findings and supporting data analysis, five interconnected priority areas emerged, all with the aim to support Penticton's vision.



1. Community Safety & Crime Prevention: Focuses on reducing crime and victimization, maintaining safe and welcoming public spaces, reducing social disorder (encampments, open drug use etc.), enhancing traffic safety, addressing racism and hate-motivated incidents, and strengthening prevention and early intervention efforts.

2. Emergency Management, Response & Resilience: Focuses on emergency preparedness, risk reduction, public education, regional collaboration, and strengthening the community's ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

3. Housing Security & Homelessness Response: Focuses on improving access to safe, stable, and appropriate housing across the housing continuum through homelessness prevention, strengthened shelter and support services, increased affordable, supportive, and transitional housing options for diverse populations, including youth and seniors, effective encampment management, and coordinated regional action to address homelessness and housing insecurity.

4. Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports: Focuses on increasing detox, treatment and recovery options, mental wellness, youth prevention initiatives, and reducing stigma associated with mental health and substance use challenges.

5. Community Belonging & Inclusion: Focuses on social connection, accessibility, food security, childcare, transportation, Indigenous relationships, and reducing barriers to participation for all community members.

The Role of Advocacy and Collective Action

Many of the priorities identified through the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan extend beyond municipal jurisdiction and require action from provincial and federal governments, health authorities, Indigenous partners, community organizations, and the justice system.

While the City plays a **direct and leadership role** through planning, emergency management, transportation, recreation, bylaw enforcement, police contract management, and community development, many of the issues affecting community safety are rooted in broader health, housing, social, and economic challenges.

As a result, the City also plays an important role in **convening partners, strengthening collaboration, and advocating** for the policy, funding, and system changes needed to improve both safety and wellbeing outcomes.

Throughout the engagement process, participants identified several areas where **advocacy and intergovernmental collaboration** will be critical to advancing local priorities. These opportunities are summarized below:

- Increased Crown Counsel capacity and justice system resources to address repeat offending and complex community safety issues.

- Expansion of the Integrated Crisis Response Team (ICRT) model and other integrated health and public safety responses.
- Bed based detox, treatment, recovery, and recovery-oriented housing capacity in the South Okanagan.
- Dedicated funding streams for youth emergency shelter, transitional housing, and supports for youth at risk of homelessness.
- Improved after-hours Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) services and participation in local response and coordination tables.
- Greater flexibility within provincial funding programs, including the Specialized Investigation and Targeted Enforcement (SITE) program and the Community Safety and Targeted Enforcement (C-STEP) initiative, to support prevention, intervention, and community safety initiatives.
- Provincial leadership, policy direction, and resource commitments related to encampments on Crown land.
- Implementation opportunities associated with Bill 17 and modernization of policing models (i.e. enabling tiered policing).
- Modernization of the *Motor Vehicle Act* and expansion of automated traffic enforcement tools.
- Monitoring and evaluation of bail reform and its impacts on community safety.
- Increased provincial and federal investment in housing, homelessness, mental health, and substance use services.

The opportunities identified through engagement highlight areas where coordinated advocacy and partnership efforts can help address gaps in services, resources, and system responses to support positive outcomes for Penticton residents.

“A community is only safe if it is safe for its most vulnerable members.”

- Participant, Accessibility committee



CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The Community Safety and Wellbeing planning process has provided Penticton with a clear picture of the issues affecting residents, the strengths that exist within the community, and the opportunities for collective action. The engagement findings demonstrate strong consensus around the need for a more coordinated and proactive approach to community safety; one that recognizes the interconnected nature of public safety, housing, health, social wellbeing, and community resilience.

The findings also confirm that many of the challenges facing Penticton cannot be addressed by any single organization acting alone. While the City has an important leadership role in areas such as public safety, emergency management, transportation, recreation, and community development, meaningful progress will depend on strong partnerships with Indigenous governments and organizations, health authorities, community agencies, businesses, school districts, provincial ministries, and residents themselves.

For the City of Penticton, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan will provide more than a framework for identifying challenges; it will establish a roadmap for coordinating efforts, aligning investments, strengthening partnerships, and focusing resources where they can have the greatest impact. The Plan will also provide a foundation for advocacy, enabling Council to advance local priorities with senior levels of government and seek the policy, program, and funding supports required to address issues beyond municipal jurisdiction.

The five priority areas identified through the engagement process provide a practical structure for action over the coming years:

- 1. Community Safety and Crime Prevention**
- 2. Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience**
- 3. Housing Security and Homelessness Response**
- 4. Mental Health, Substance Use and Wellness Supports**
- 5. Community Belonging and Inclusion**

Together, these priorities reflect a shared understanding that community safety is not simply the absence of crime, but the presence of conditions that allow people to be safe, healthy, connected, and resilient.

There is also the acknowledgement that, despite extensive engagement throughout plan development, some voices have not been fully heard – for example, engagement with the Penticton Indian Band is still in process. As CSWB planning moves forward, there will be additional opportunities for conversation.

The next phase of the work is already under way and will focus on translating these priorities into a coordinated five-year action plan. This will include refining implementation actions, identifying lead and supporting organizations, establishing measurable outcomes, and confirming opportunities for advocacy and partnership development. Particular attention will be given to actions that can be pursued directly by the City, actions that can be advanced through collaboration, and areas where provincial and federal advocacy will be required. Appendix 2 provides a snapshot of what is to come to translate Penticton's priorities into action.

Ultimately, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan positions Penticton to take a more strategic, integrated, and evidence-informed approach to addressing complex community issues. By aligning municipal leadership with community expertise and partner resources, the City and its partners will be better positioned to improve quality of life, strengthen resilience, and achieve meaningful, measurable improvements in safety and wellbeing for all residents.



APPENDIX 1:

CSWB PRIORITIES: A DEEPER LOOK

Building on the research and engagement completed in Phases 1 and 2 of the CSWB planning process, five broad priority areas have emerged. These themes reflect consistent input from surveys, open houses, focus groups, and targeted engagement, and represent the areas where the community sees the greatest need for coordinated action.

The following sections draw together insights from across all engagement activities to demonstrate why these have been identified as core pillars for advancing community safety and wellbeing in Penticton.

Penticton's five safety and wellbeing priorities are:

- 1. Community Safety & Crime Prevention**
- 2. Emergency Preparedness, Response & Community Resilience**
- 3. Housing Security & Homelessness Response**
- 4. Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports**
- 5. Community Belonging & Inclusion**

Together, these five priority areas recognize that community safety is about more than crime and enforcement alone. Safety and wellbeing are influenced by a broad range of social, economic, health, and environmental factors. By addressing these interconnected priorities, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan takes a proactive approach that focuses on prevention, partnership, and creating the conditions for all residents to live healthy, safe, and fulfilling lives.

1. Community Safety and Crime Prevention

Community Safety and Crime Prevention is about creating safe public spaces, reducing crime and victimization, and addressing factors that contribute to unsafe behaviours. This includes enforcement, crime prevention programs, traffic safety, community policing, and efforts to reduce racism, discrimination, and hate-motivated incidents.

Why it matters: People are more likely to thrive when they feel safe in their neighbourhoods, parks, downtown areas, and public spaces. Safer communities support economic vitality, social connection, community pride, and overall quality of life. Effective crime prevention also helps reduce demand on emergency services and the justice system by addressing issues before they escalate.

"A community is only safe if it is safe for its most vulnerable members."

- Participant, Accessibility committee

Public Confidence & Visibility of Law Enforcement

Community engagement findings identified safety as a significant concern for Penticton residents. The 2024 Penticton Community Safety Survey found that 69% of respondents felt unsafe in the downtown area at night, with homelessness, mental health-related issues, and person and property crimes identified as the primary contributors. Because nearly 90% of survey respondents were over the age of 40, these themes were explored further through youth-focused engagement activities, including a photo-based exercise summarized in its own section below.

Residents consistently emphasized the importance of safe, accessible, and welcoming public spaces. Beaches, parks, downtown areas, and other high-use community spaces were seen as critical to both community wellbeing and for public confidence in local agencies. Many participants called **for more visible and consistent patrols**, particularly in identified hotspot areas and during peak seasonal periods.

Perceptions of safety were also strongly influenced by the use of public spaces. Participants noted that visible homelessness, encampments, public drug use, and signs of disorder can contribute to feelings of insecurity, regardless of actual crime rates. At the same time, many observed that social media can amplify misinformation and anecdotal accounts, reinforcing negative perceptions of safety. As a result, residents emphasized the

need for more proactive, transparent, and consistent communication from public agencies to provide accurate information, explain ongoing actions, and clarify reporting processes and service responsibilities.

Phase 2 survey findings reinforced these concerns. Nearly all respondents (96%) rated the safety and maintenance of public spaces—including parks, trails, transit areas, and public washrooms—as important or very important. Similarly, 92% identified violent crime, including intimate partner violence, as important or very important, while 91% expressed the same level of concern regarding property crime, including break-ins, theft, and vandalism.

Specific survey comments echoed these priorities, with residents calling for increased police visibility, improved response times, stronger bylaw enforcement, and enhanced safety measures in parks, downtown areas, and other public spaces. Overall, the findings demonstrate a strong desire for both tangible safety improvements and clearer, ongoing communication to strengthen public confidence in community safety efforts.

Public Space Maintenance

The design, maintenance, and activation of public spaces were consistently linked to perceptions of safety. Participants identified adequate lighting, cleanliness, timely repairs, and regular community use as important factors that contribute to a sense of safety and confidence.

Phase 2 focus groups supported an approach that combines public realm improvements with **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** (CPTED) principles, including visibility, maintenance, activation, and design features that encourage positive community use and discourage disorder.

Residents also highlighted the importance of measures such as improved lighting and expanded security camera coverage, including the Lakeshore security project, to enhance both actual and perceived safety.

Public washrooms, alleyways, and portions of the downtown core were repeatedly identified as areas of concern due to garbage, graffiti, discarded needles, and other visible signs of substance use. To address these issues, participants prioritized more frequent cleaning of public washrooms, ongoing needle and waste removal, prompt graffiti removal, and regular maintenance of parks, pathways, benches, and other shared spaces. Participants indicated that maintaining clean, well-kept public spaces is essential to fostering community pride and improving perceptions of safety.

Youth-Identified Safer Locations

Through the photo project and other engagements, Penticton youth consistently identified waterfronts, maintained parks, places with high foot traffic and nearby businesses, visible security, and supervised spaces as the safest environments.

Youth commonly associate safety with positive activity and a sense of “safety in numbers.” The presence of families, peers, tourists, City staff, or security personnel contributes to increased comfort.

For youth, **safety is also shaped by emotional familiarity**—places connected to childhood memories, daily routines, or areas where youth feel confident navigating independently. Environments that are clean, open, and well-maintained, with clear sightlines, greenery, seating, and a calm atmosphere, further support a sense of wellbeing.



Locations identified as safer include:

- Okanagan Beach, waterfront walkways, benches, the Peach, and the outdoor rink
- Skaha Beach and Park, Gyro Park, Rotary Park, and Marina Way Park;
- Japanese Garden (*during daytime hours*);
- Structured and supervised spaces (*during operating hours*), such as schools, the Foundry, hospital, RCMP detachment, library, museum, civic buildings, places of worship, and the Oonakane Friendship Centre; and
- Active commercial areas such as Front Street, Westminster Avenue, Main Street, and Backstreet Boulevard (*during business hours*).

Youth-Identified Less Safe Locations

In contrast, youth consistently identified certain environments as less safe, particularly those that feel enclosed, poorly lit, unpredictable, or unmanaged, with concerns heightened at night. These include:

- Public washrooms;
- Downtown alleys, Nanaimo Square, and areas around Martin Street and Main Street after hours;
- Commercial zones near Value Village, Burger King, Tim Hortons, Starbucks (Main Street), the bottle depot, and areas around liquor stores, bars, and restaurants;
- Empty lots and parking areas, including Walmart;
- Poorly lit pathways, especially in parks, along creeks and channels, and under bridges;
- Bus stops and transit environments;
- The cemetery; and
- Areas near encampments.



Overall, youth perspectives highlight the importance of activity, visibility, maintenance, and familiarity in shaping how safe spaces feel, and the need to address lighting, design, and activation in areas perceived as unsafe.

Safety and Security for Seniors

Seniors expressed concerns about personal safety when out in public, particularly in the evenings, noting that perceived risks, such as fear of assault or theft, are significantly limiting independence and participation in community life, even in the context of stable or declining crime rates.

They also highlighted practical concerns, such as hesitancy to leave mobility aids like scooters or walkers unattended due to risk of theft. Specific issues included poor lighting in parts of the downtown and trail networks, concerns with fast-moving e-bikes on shared pathways, and the impact of visible homelessness and public substance use on feelings of overall safety.

To address these challenges, there was **strong support for increasing the visible presence of RCMP and bylaw officers**, including patrols on bikes and trails, alongside community-based solutions such as designated safe walking zones, walking buddy programs, volunteer or youth-elder patrols, and simple personal safety measures.

Racism and Discrimination

Participants consistently identified racism and anti-immigrant sentiment as significant and pressing safety concerns within the community. They described both overt and subtle forms of racism occurring in everyday settings, contributing to feelings of exclusion and vulnerability. These concerns were also situated within a broader context of Indigenous experiences, including the ongoing impacts of colonialism, intergenerational trauma, and the persistence of residential school denialism and minimization. Participants emphasized that these realities continue to shape trust, safety, and relationships with institutions today.

There was a strong call for **sustained anti-racism education, public awareness, and visible leadership in promoting inclusion**. Participants highlighted that experiences of racism and discrimination directly undermine individual wellbeing, family security, and trust in public systems. For newcomers, these dynamics can also negatively affect sense of belonging, social integration, and long-term settlement outcomes.

Some participants also expressed concern about a **lack of confidence in reporting mechanisms** and whether incidents of racism are taken seriously or acted upon effectively by authorities. The feedback points to the need for more coordinated, community-wide approaches that combine education, truth-telling, and reconciliation with responsive systems and clear accountability to create a safer, more inclusive environment for all residents.

Violent Crime, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Child Exploitation and Repeat Offenders

Violent crime and victimization were also raised as key concerns. Participants described feeling increasingly at risk in certain environments, particularly in public spaces and during evening hours, and noted that these concerns are shaped not only by direct experiences of crime, but also by fear, unpredictability, and a perceived lack of visible or coordinated response.

Discussions highlighted that victimization is not experienced equally. Certain populations, including women, youth, seniors, Indigenous peoples, and equity-seeking groups, face **heightened vulnerability** due to intersecting social and structural factors. Intimate partner violence, gender-based violence, and repeat victimization were identified as significant concerns, alongside gaps in early intervention and access to appropriate supports.

Participants also emphasized that pathways to **victimization often begin early in life**. Childhood experiences of abuse, neglect, violence, or exploitation were identified as critical risk factors that can shape long-term vulnerability. Without timely and effective intervention, these experiences can contribute to ongoing cycles of trauma, mental health challenges, substance use, housing instability, and increased exposure to harm later in life. Service providers and youth also identified the limited availability of Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) involvement in after-hours crisis response as a significant service gap in Penticton.

In addition, concerns were raised about repeat offending and **gaps in the justice system responses** (courts and corrections). Participants expressed frustration with what they see as a revolving door, where individuals cycle repeatedly through enforcement and the courts without addressing underlying issues or preventing further harm. This has contributed to a perception that accountability and deterrence are limited, while victims and communities continue to experience ongoing impacts.

At the same time, there was recognition that **enforcement alone is insufficient**, and that more effective integration between the justice system and health and social supports is needed to address the root causes associated with repeat offending.

Property Crime, Theft & Vandalism

Property crime was a clear and recurring concern, particularly within the business community. Businesses, residents, and service providers described theft, break-ins, vandalism, and repeated damage to property as pressures affecting livelihoods and economic development.

Business owners shared that their frustration with disorder and lower-level property crimes have resulted in them investing heavily in advanced security systems and patrols. **They feel the burden of solving this problem** on their own.

Participants in the focus groups called for a mix of prevention, enforcement, stronger sentences, and greater collaboration between businesses and service providers to reduce both opportunistic and repeat property crime.

Participants noted that enforcement responses can be inconsistent, potentially leading to **incident underreporting** when people choose not to report.

Business owners asked for improved online reporting systems, and for advocacy efforts to be made for tiered policing and possible enforcement on private property.



Traffic Safety

Participants highlighted connections between transportation infrastructure and everyday safety, pointing to the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates infrastructure improvements, enforcement, technology, and public education. Feedback emphasized the importance of well-designed streets, including safer crossings, traffic calming measures, improved lighting, and better connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users.

Participants also noted the potential to **expand the use of technology** and automation to support traffic enforcement, such as speed cameras and other tools that promote consistent compliance and reduce reliance on reactive enforcement. At the same time, **public education** was identified as a key component in shaping safer behaviours, with a need for ongoing awareness campaigns focused on shared responsibility, road safety, and respect for all users.

Together, these measures support a **balanced, proactive strategy** to reduce collisions, improve safety outcomes, and create a more accessible and inclusive transportation system for the entire community.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Engagements also strongly emphasized the importance of crime prevention and early intervention to address the underlying factors associated with crime and disorder. Participants frequently connected these issues to broader social challenges, including poverty, substance use, and unmet mental health needs, and expressed strong support for improving access to services that can intervene earlier and reduce continued involvement with the justice system.

Prevention was seen as most effective when supports are responsive, easy to access, and available **before situations escalate** into crisis. Participants noted that navigating existing services can be complex, highlighting the need for better coordination, clearer pathways, and stronger communication across systems. The School District was identified as a key partner in this work, given its central role in early identification, prevention, and connection to supports for children and youth. Strengthening collaboration between schools, social services, health providers, and community organizations was seen as critical to identifying risks early, supporting families, and interrupting pathways that can lead to longer-term vulnerability and system involvement.

Overall, the feedback points to **the need for a more integrated, upstream approach**—one that prioritizes prevention, strengthens cross-sector partnerships, and ensures individuals and families can access the right supports at the right time.

2. Emergency Management, Response & Resilience

Emergency Management, Response and Resilience focuses on preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters. This includes planning for wildfires, floods, extreme weather, public health emergencies, and other community-wide disruptions, while helping residents, businesses, and organizations build resilience.

Why it matters: Communities that are prepared for emergencies experience less disruption, recover more quickly, and are better able to protect people, property, and critical infrastructure. Building resilience strengthens a community's ability to adapt to challenges and supports long-term wellbeing in an increasingly complex and changing environment.

We need more than awareness – we need systems to support those with mobility and care needs.

- Participant, Council Open House

Emergency Management, Preparedness and Communication

Findings from both the 2024 Community Safety Survey and Phase 2 engagement point to a clear and consistent theme: while residents recognize the importance of emergency preparedness, many feel under-prepared and uncertain about how to respond in the event of a disaster.

Survey results indicate that only 20% of respondents (of 1,142 responses) feel very prepared, while approximately 70% report feeling somewhat prepared. While this suggests This highlights a significant opportunity to strengthen preparedness through targeted education and accessible information.

Focus group discussions reinforced these findings, with participants expressing uncertainty about what would happen during an emergency, where to go, how they would receive information, and how well the City of Penticton is positioned to respond. Concerns were particularly pronounced among seniors and service providers, who highlighted barriers related to mobility, transportation, and accessing emergency reception centres, as well as uncertainty around supports for pets and dependents.

Participants emphasized that effective emergency management must extend beyond municipal boundaries. There was strong support for enhanced regional coordination and planning, recognizing that events such as wildfires, extreme weather, smoke impacts, and service disruptions require a coordinated response across jurisdictions. This included calls for stronger region-wide and annual business continuity planning to ensure the maintenance of critical services during emergencies.

A significant gap identified through engagement was the need for improved emergency preparedness education. Residents are looking for practical, easy-to-understand guidance on how to prepare, including what supplies to have on hand, how to build household emergency plans, and where to access trusted, up-to-date information. There is a clear need for **education that is proactive, tailored, and accessible**, reaching people before emergencies occur, with particular attention to seniors and vulnerable populations.

Participants identified clear, timely, and transparent communication as critical to building confidence and reducing uncertainty. This includes delivering plain-language messaging through **multiple channels**—digital, print, and in-person—to ensure accessibility for residents with varying needs, language abilities, and access to technology. The use of trusted community partners and local networks was also highlighted as an effective way to strengthen reach and credibility.



During emergencies, residents emphasized the **importance of receiving clear direction** on what actions to take, along with information about available supports, evacuation procedures, and service continuity. Ensuring readiness to activate Emergency Operations Centres, supported by coordinated and accessible communication systems, was identified as essential to effective response and recovery.

Engagement also highlighted opportunities to strengthen internal capacity and coordination. Feedback indicated that the current model places significant pressure on limited resources, particularly within the Fire Service, which leads emergency preparedness efforts. **Strengthening alignment** between Emergency Management, Fire Services, FireSmart, and City Communications was identified as a key opportunity to improve consistency of messaging, public education efforts, and overall system effectiveness.

While emergency preparedness may not have ranked among the highest day-to-day priorities for residents, it remains a persistent underlying concern, shaped by increasing exposure to wildfires and climate-related events.

3. Housing Security & Homelessness Response

Housing Security and Homelessness Response focuses on ensuring people have access to safe, appropriate, and affordable housing. It includes homelessness prevention, supportive and transitional housing, coordinated service delivery, encampment management, and partnerships that address the root causes of housing instability.

Why it matters: Stable housing is one of the strongest determinants of health, safety, and wellbeing. Individuals who have access to housing are more likely to experience improved health outcomes, employment opportunities, and social connections. Addressing homelessness and housing insecurity also helps improve community safety, public health, and the use of shared public spaces.

“We need to do more to address homelessness in Penticton. It can make people feel unsafe; homeless people probably don’t feel safe either. A lot of people look down on them, but they need help and are surrounded by others who also need help.”

- Participant, youth leadership engagement

Both housing security and homelessness response were consistent priorities emerging from both the survey data gathered as well as the focus group discussions. These are vastly diverse topics separate from each other but have a correlation as well, as one is tied to the other.

Upon examination specifically of housing and housing security, there are indicators of economic stress leading to housing instability for approximately 24% of those renting in Penticton.² This was confirmed in focus group sessions where participants shared their fear of being priced out of the market in Penticton. This fear is exacerbated by sole income earners who are in the rental market. Having affordable housing was identified in the top

² Statistics Canada, 2021

five priorities for the support of a safe and resilient community in the 2024 Community Safety Survey. It is a consistent theme throughout all engagements with community.

A Regional Housing & Homelessness Framework

In survey data, homelessness ranked highest in its relationship with people's feeling and perceptions of safety. It was in the top five priorities to build a safe and resilient community.³ It was noted by almost all focus groups as a community priority, and there was acknowledgement that it will not be solved by municipal action alone.

There was strong support for a regional Housing and Homelessness Framework that clarifies roles, strengthens advocacy, and helps neighbouring communities contribute to the social support infrastructure needed across the region. The number of homeless counted annually continues to trend upwards, and different and more options must be explored.

Emergency Shelter & Encampment Response

In all engagements, emergency shelter and immediate housing options were consistently identified as insufficient, particularly for people **who need different kinds of environments** and support. As of April 2025, the Penticton Point-in-Time (PiT) homeless count was 194: 78 people unsheltered and 116 sheltered and 37% of respondents identified as Indigenous.⁴

Participants emphasized the need for additional emergency shelter options that reflect the **diverse needs** of the community, including youth, seniors, and individuals who don't use substances. There was also a strong desire to improve conditions and **safety at existing shelter sites** for residents and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Engagement findings highlighted that shelter, or housing alone, is often insufficient for individuals experiencing complex challenges related to trauma, mental health, substance use, or chronic crisis. Participants identified supportive housing, transitional housing, second-stage options, and integrated support services as essential components of a housing continuum that promotes stability and reduces reliance on emergency systems.

Visible homelessness and the use of public spaces for shelter were consistently raised with concern for both public safety and human dignity. Participants emphasized the need for a more coordinated, regional approach to encampments and public space management—one that integrates bylaw enforcement with outreach, health care, social services, and clear

³ 2024 Community Safety Survey

⁴ 2025 Homeless Count, Homelessness Services Association of BC

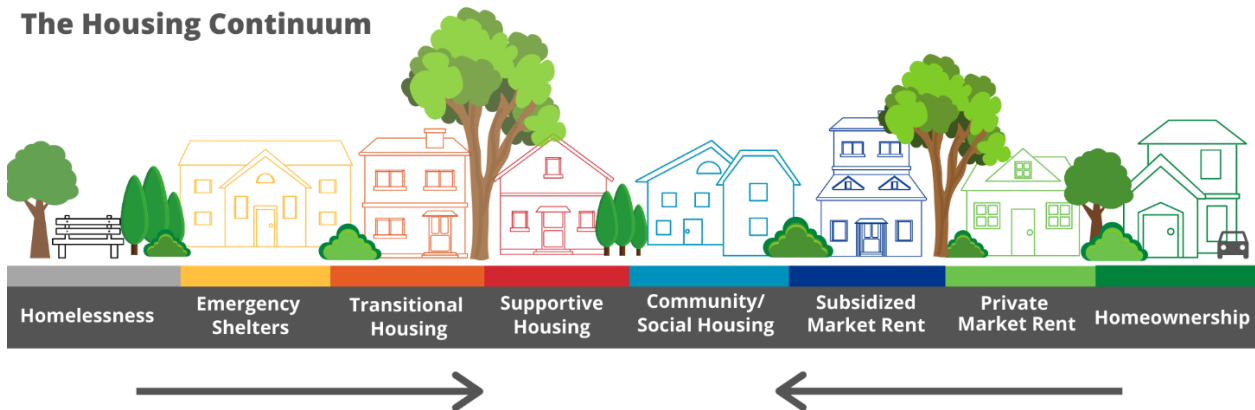
pathways to housing and supports. There was also specific concern regarding encampments on provincial land, highlighting the need for a clear and consistent provincial policy framework to guide how these sites are managed.

Expand Housing Capacity Across the Continuum

There is a lack of housing support across the continuum (shelters, transitional, and supportive housing). Participants called for **transitional housing** to bridge shelter and create stability in the housing continuum. Housing scarcity directly limits Bylaw's ability to enforce bylaws/address encampments, while also contributing to fear and instability for the broader community.

Homelessness is the single largest driver of safety/the perception of safety across the region. Participants noted that addressing housing can reduce downstream impacts on public safety, property crime, and community disorder. Participants noted there is limited local authority to resolve encampments and that there should be an emphasis on regional, collaborative solutions to support the resolution.

The Housing Continuum



Safe, Stable, and Supported Housing for Youth Ages 15–24

Participants highlighted a significant gap in youth-specific housing and emergency supports, noting the limited availability of emergency beds, transitional housing options, and other housing spaces tailored to young people. This gap is especially pronounced for **youth aging out of foster care**, who are 200 times more likely to become homelessness than their peers, without adequate transition planning and support⁵.

⁵ B.C. targets homelessness with funds for youth in foster care, housing for people with addictions | CBC News, 2022

Participants emphasized the need for more targeted, on-the-ground navigation services that can guide youth through available systems and connect them to appropriate resources. They underscored the importance of “warm handoffs” between services, ensuring that youth are not simply referred onward, but are actively supported through transitions, to reduce service fragmentation and prevent youth from falling through the cracks. Participants also noted that there is a need for better after-hours youth crisis coordination.

Addressing Stigma

Although crime data shows a downward trend, public perception has not kept pace, with many participants describing persistent fear and an emerging “**us versus them**” narrative. These dynamics are contributing to heightened tension around what community safety means and for whom it is prioritized—while housed residents express concerns about disorder, individuals experiencing homelessness also report feeling unsafe, vulnerable, and excluded.

Participants emphasized that strengthening community safety for everyone requires rebuilding trust, increasing transparency, and fostering a more shared understanding of lived experiences. This includes humanizing people with lived and living experience through authentic storytelling, promoting inclusive and non-stigmatizing language, and addressing fear-based narratives. Clear, consistent communication was identified as essential to bridging perception gaps, reducing stigma, and supporting more balanced, community-wide responses to safety and wellbeing.

Long-Term Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is a central concern, particularly for families, seniors, people on fixed incomes, and those earning below a true living wage. “Affordable” housing definitions were seen as disconnected from lived reality, with rents still far beyond what many working individuals or single parents can manage.

The lack of affordable housing, and housing options across the continuum contributes to the overcrowding within current available shelter spaces. The lack of shelter spaces or housing options for people who do not use substances or who are seeking to get clean is leaving a major gap in the housing continuum within Penticton.

Homelessness prevention efforts are far more effective than responding once people are unhoused, yet current systems are weighted toward crisis response.

Data and Transparency

Finally, participants emphasized the need for stronger data, coordination, and accountability across systems. There was support for better local information on housing needs, trends, and emerging pressures. Engagement supports the development of a coordinated data strategy with provincial and federal partners that improves the use of local data to guide funding, service delivery, policy decisions, and performance monitoring.



4. Mental Health, Substance Use & Wellness Supports

This priority area focuses on promoting mental wellbeing, preventing substance-related harms, expanding access to treatment and recovery services, and supporting individuals and families affected by mental health and substance use challenges. It also includes prevention, education, and stigma reduction initiatives.

Why it matters:

Mental health and wellness are critical foundations of a healthy community. When individuals can access the supports they need, communities experience better health outcomes, fewer crises, reduced pressure on emergency services, and stronger social and economic participation. Early intervention and prevention can significantly improve long-term outcomes for individuals and families.

“Services often feel fragmented, making it difficult for individuals to navigate and access the right support at the right time.”

- Participant, equity-seeking engagement

The community priority related to mental health support and substance use concerns was the second most prevalent topic in all the feedback received from residents and businesses. There is a broad understanding that these issues are greater than the capacity of the city of Penticton, and a regional, multi-sectoral and inter-governmental approach is needed.

In the 2024 Community Safety survey, less than 50% of residents (of 1,842 responses) reported feeling very safe or safe in their neighbourhoods, and the primary driver for this reduced sense of safety related to perceived increases in street homelessness and substance use. Those who expressed feeling “very unsafe” shared that it was directly related to escalating open drug use and drug dealing, among other issues. In the same survey, when asked to identify their top concerns in their neighbourhoods, they identified illicit drug use and activity as the second most prevalent driver.

In addition, in the same survey, **residents responded that they wanted additional investments in treatment and recovery sites** as the second of three top priorities to support a safe and resilient community. This was supported by the second survey where many respondents indicated that they wanted to have public spaces reclaimed for public use –

that they were taken over by people openly using drugs and there was drug paraphernalia scattered about, making it unsafe for residents.

This survey also pointed to a desire to have a longer-term plan for mental health and addiction supports, as the perception was that current systems were designed to be short-term and response-based instead of proactive and longer-term. Hand in hand with this recommendation is advocacy for additional treatment spaces and detox facilities, along with trauma-informed and culturally sensitive mental health support that is easy to access in a system that is easy to navigate.

Timely Access to Detox, Treatment, and Recovery

The need for timely access to detox, treatment and recovery his theme was echoed consistently throughout the focus groups, with business owners, residents, and service providers. Participants emphasized the lack of access to both immediate treatment options and longer-term supports, underscoring the challenges faced by individuals seeking timely and appropriate care.

Youth service providers and the RCMP spoke of **a serious gap in youth detox options**, as well as residential treatment options both for youth and adults. When someone indicates they are ready for treatment, there is a sense of frustration when they can't get it when they are vulnerable enough to ask. Participants repeatedly identified gaps in bed-based withdrawal management, treatment options, recovery supports, and stable housing after treatment.

Discussions with service providers were constructive, highlighting strong existing relationships and a shared commitment to enhancing supports. Participants identified opportunities to expand programs, outreach, and longer-term strategies to better meet community needs.

At the same time, there was recognition that increasing treatment capacity, including additional beds, specialized services, and youth-focused detox options, falls beyond the scope of local service providers alone and requires coordination, investment, and leadership from other levels of government. There was also a shared emphasis on ensuring that future services are delivered in ways that are **trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, and responsive** to diverse community needs.

Sustainable Funding & Service Navigation

Service providers and partner organizations participating in the focus group sessions also identified challenges in accessing sustainable funding. Engagement findings point to a **potential role for the municipality in advocacy** and facilitation, helping the social sector connect to funding opportunities that can expand culturally safe, integrated mental health and substance use services.

Participants emphasized that strengthening the continuum of care depends not only on service design, but also on the ability of local organizations to secure stable resources and coordinate delivery over time. In this context, many jurisdictions with Community Safety and Wellbeing Plans have established dedicated coordination roles to support implementation, reporting, and grant development, helping to sustain and advance strategic priorities.

A major recurring issue was service navigation. Participants described systems that are difficult to understand, fragmented, and too dependent on individuals knowing where to go or how to self-advocate. There was strong support for making services easier to access, as well as for reducing stigma related to barriers to participation. Accessible information, coordinated referrals, and clearer pathways through services were repeatedly identified as priorities.

Overdose Prevention & Crisis Response

The engagement further supports evidence-based approaches to overdose prevention, rapid access to care, and crisis response. Participants described the need for stronger outreach, earlier intervention, harm reduction, more timely treatment access, and better collaboration among health, social service, enforcement, and community partners.

Mental health and addiction as the dominant drivers of calls for service; there could be more collaboration with Interior Health to support front line service providers, as well as advocacy for alternative models for chronically unhoused residents. The **Integrated Crisis Response Team (ICRT)** that pairs a nurse with a police officer was repeatedly raised as a best practice that is making a difference in Penticton, and one that should continue as part of any future CSWB.

There was also support for improved coordination and data sharing where appropriate so that local systems can respond more effectively to emerging needs, repeated crises, and



overdose risk. Overdose rates remain high in the interior health region, relative to the rest of the province; the need for more treatment capacity is ever-present.⁶

Prevention & Early Intervention

Systems were often described as difficult to navigate, fragmented, and reliant on individuals knowing where to go or how to advocate for themselves. Participants strongly supported making services more accessible and reducing the stigma that can create barriers to participation. **Accessible information, coordinated referrals, and clearer service pathways** were repeatedly identified as priorities.

Early intervention and prevention for youth also emerged as key themes. Youth wellbeing was identified as a critical priority across all Indigenous engagement sessions, with a strong emphasis on fostering purpose, opportunity, and supportive relationships. Youth participants described limited employment opportunities and a lack of direction, while expressing a clear desire for practical life-skills programming that builds confidence, independence, and readiness for the future.

Participants also called for **stronger partnerships between schools and community agencies** to expand mental health promotion, substance use prevention, mentoring, after-school supports, and connections to community-based services. There was widespread concern about missed opportunities to intervene earlier with youth and families experiencing trauma, social isolation, economic hardship, or other factors that can increase the risk of future crises.

A gap was also identified in dedicated police liaison roles that work alongside social workers in community-facing capacities. Expanding these collaborative, relationship-based positions was highlighted as a promising practice that aligns with a community safety and wellbeing approach.

Indigenous participants and other equity-seeking groups emphasized that **culturally safe services are a core component of quality care**, not an optional enhancement. Participants stressed the importance of services that recognize intergenerational trauma, connections to land and family, and the ways in which mainstream systems may fail to reflect Indigenous and other lived experiences. Without these considerations, services may exist but remain inaccessible in practice.

Public surveys and focus group discussions consistently highlighted the need for greater access to treatment and recovery services. While responsibility for these services largely rests with the health system and senior levels of government, participants identified an

⁶ BC Centre for Disease Control – Unregulated Drug Deaths

important role for the City in convening partners, strengthening coordination, and supporting service alignment.

This includes advocating for increased investment, helping service providers access funding opportunities, and advancing more integrated, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches that support earlier intervention along the mental health and substance use continuum. Despite these challenges, there is a strong commitment across sectors to improve outcomes, providing a solid foundation for collective action moving forward.

5. Community Belonging and Inclusion

Community Belonging and Inclusion focuses on creating a community where everyone feels welcomed, respected, connected, and able to participate. This includes improving accessibility, reducing barriers to services, supporting food security, strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities, expanding childcare, and fostering opportunities for social connection.

Why it matters:

A strong sense of belonging is closely linked to healthier, safer, and more resilient communities. When people feel connected and included, they are more likely to participate in community life, access support when needed, and contribute to the wellbeing of others. Inclusive communities also help reduce isolation, strengthen social cohesion, and improve overall quality of life.

“Nothing about us without us.”

- Participant, community leadership engagement

Reconciliation

Reconciliation and strong partnerships with the Penticton Indian Band (PIB) and Indigenous organizations are foundational to advancing community safety and wellbeing. Participants emphasized that meaningful progress requires moving beyond one-time engagement



toward sustained, respectful collaboration grounded in recognition of rights, lived experience, and the ongoing impacts of colonialism. This includes co-developing approaches, supporting Indigenous-led solutions, and ensuring Indigenous voices are meaningfully embedded in leadership and decision-making. Strengthening these relationships builds trust, enhances the cultural relevance and accessibility of services, and supports more effective, holistic outcomes for the entire community.

Elders and Indigenous participants clearly identified racism, discrimination, and stigma as persistent challenges, calling for stronger Indigenous representation, increased cultural safety, and greater accountability within public institutions. These perspectives align with broader engagement findings, which point to the need for anti-stigma education, inclusive language, and more proactive public awareness to address harmful narratives and build shared understanding. Together, this positions **inclusion and reconciliation** not as standalone efforts, but as essential conditions for equitable and effective systems.

While much of the insight informing this priority emerged through in-depth focus group discussions, qualitative comments from the 2024 Community Safety Survey also reflected experiences of racism and discrimination. These responses underscore a sense of disconnection and lack of belonging among some groups in Penticton, reinforcing the need for intentional, system-wide efforts to foster inclusion, trust, and community belonging.

Accessible Community Spaces, Activities, and Social Connection

Accessibility was consistently identified as closely linked to safety, inclusion, and participation. Focus group participants highlighted barriers across community facilities, public spaces, communications, and service delivery that limit access for persons with disabilities, seniors, caregivers, and others experiencing mobility or access challenges. The feedback underscores **the importance of applying an accessibility lens across programs, infrastructure, and communications** to ensure environments are increasingly inclusive, barrier-free, and safe for all residents.

Participants also emphasized the broader role of wellbeing, noting that recreation, community programming, and public events help reduce isolation, foster belonging, and support mental health. Accessible and inclusive municipal programming is an important part of the overall safety and wellbeing response, particularly for youth, seniors, families, and others who may be disconnected from supports.



Participants identified gaps in access to affordable, drop-in recreation and sports opportunities for both adults and children, as well as a need for more indoor options, especially during winter, and more diverse cultural programming. Newcomers, in particular, emphasized **the importance of low-cost, informal opportunities to connect**, noting that current program costs can be a barrier to participation.

Physical accessibility in public spaces was also raised as a significant concern. Participants pointed to issues such as limited seating and rest areas, lack of washrooms along trails and walking routes, heavy or inaccessible doors, missing ramps or automatic door openers, and unsafe crossings. Addressing these barriers was seen as essential not only for inclusion, but also for preventing physical decline, maintaining independence, and supporting overall health especially among seniors.

Food Security

Food security was a consistent concern, especially in focus-group discussions with service providers, families, faith groups, and seniors. Participants described **rising demand for food** supports and increasing pressure on local organizations. The engagement supports coordinated action that improves equitable access to nutritious food, strengthens local food systems, and addresses root causes of food insecurity such as low income, housing costs, transportation barriers, and social isolation.

Transportation & Infrastructure

Transportation and mobility were discussed as practical determinants of inclusion and access. Participants identified the importance of **affordable, reliable, and low-barrier transit** and transportation options for reaching services, employment, recreation, and community connections.

This was prevalent in the discussion with seniors and services supporting seniors in community. Social isolation because transportation was inadequate, infrequent and inaccessible is real and keeping seniors from thriving in community.

The engagement supports stronger coordination across municipal, regional, and provincial partners, alongside infrastructure improvements and mobility options that improve safe, equitable access across the community.



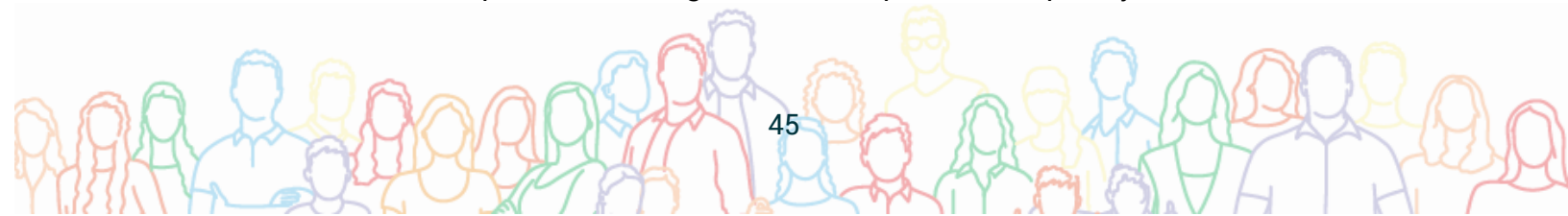
Trust, Belonging & Strong Families

Social cohesion, belonging, and trust were among the most important cross-cutting themes in the focus group sessions. In meetings with newcomers and service providers who assist new immigrants to the city, **participants linked safety with feeling welcome**, respected, connected, and able to participate fully in community life.

There was strong support for engagement with diverse and underrepresented populations, for equity-based decision-making, and for responses that address racism, stigma, discrimination, and exclusion as core community safety issues rather than secondary concerns.

Relationships with Indigenous communities were identified as a foundational part of an inclusive and effective plan. Indigenous participants and organizations emphasized the importance of cultural safety, trust, collaboration, and approaches that reflect Indigenous experiences, priorities, and strengths.

The engagement supports ongoing partnership with Indigenous communities, including opportunities for collaboration in planning and decision-making, actions that advance reconciliation, and responses that are grounded in respect and reciprocity.



Expanded childcare capacity and reduced barriers to access would strengthen family stability, support participation in community life, and improve long-term community wellbeing. Youth themselves highlight a lack of direction and limited access to employment opportunities, alongside a clear desire for practical life skills programming that can build confidence, independence, and future readiness



APPENDIX 2:

SAMPLE CSWB WORKPLAN

Below is a description of how the Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan is translated into tangible workplans. The CSWB identifies five overarching priorities, such as *Community Safety & Crime Prevention*. Each priority is supported by a set of strategies that describe the key approaches needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

For example, for Priority #1, the strategies focus on increasing public confidence in safety services, improving public spaces, reducing crime, strengthening prevention and early intervention efforts, and improving traffic safety. These strategies then guide the development of specific actions that can be implemented and reported on annually.

The 2027 Operational Business Plan (Table 1) is where the actions are turned into a detailed work plan. It outlines what will be done in Year 1, identifies longer-term opportunities for Years 2–5, highlights any advocacy needed from other levels of government, and assigns responsibility to a lead department and supporting partners. It also includes performance measures so progress and success can be tracked over time.

CSWB → 5 PRIORITIES → STRATEGIES → **ACTIONS** → OPERATIONAL BUSINESS PLAN

PRIORITY #1 – Community Safety & Crime Prevention: To foster a safe, welcoming, and resilient community by reducing crime and victimization, improving perceptions of safety, strengthening prevention and early intervention efforts, and enhancing safety in public spaces.

STRATEGIES: Community Safety & Crime Prevention

- Strategy 1: Increase community confidence and public safety through visible, coordinated, and responsive community safety services (see chart below for actions).

- Strategy 2: Create safer and more welcoming public spaces through environmental design, activation, and maintenance.
- Strategy 3: Reduce violent and repeat property crime through coordinated prevention, intervention, enforcement, and victim-centred approaches.
- Strategy 4: Strengthen prevention and early intervention efforts that address root causes of crime and discrimination.
- Strategy 5: Improve traffic safety and reduce unsafe road use.

Table 1. **Sample** 2027 Operational Business Plan Actions for the
Community Safety & Crime Prevention Priority (Strategy #1)

STRATEGY #1 Actions	Year 1 Activities	Years 2–5 Goals	Advocacy	Lead	Partners	Performance Indicators
1.1 Enhance visibility and coordination of community safety services.	• Develop an RCMP a 5-year resource plan. • Establish seasonal Community Policing Hub & Jubilee Pavillion. • Implement frontline technology improvements (Bylaw laptops in vehicles). • Expand targeted overnight security in priority areas.	• Implement RCMP resource plan recommendations. • Expand seasonal foot and bike patrols. • Increase visibility in high-priority areas.	Provincial policing reforms to enable tiered policing, regional integrated response resources, sustainable policing funding.	RCMP & Community Policing	City Facilities, Bylaw	Patrol hours, proactive enforcement activities, public safety perceptions.
1.2 Improve public awareness of community safety initiatives.	• Develop an annual public safety communications plan.	• Modernize the See Something/Say Something Campaign • Expand public awareness and community education initiatives.	N/A	City Comms	RCMP, Bylaw, Fire, community partners	Public engagement metrics, communications reach, public confidence survey results.
1.3 Strengthen opportunities for residents, businesses, and community organizations to participate in safety and crime prevention initiatives.	• Explore partnerships with business associations to support enhanced safety initiatives (i.e. cost-sharing overnight security to provide service on private property).	• Explore volunteer and ambassador programs (i.e. Red Jacket Program). • Explore neighbourhood-based initiatives such as Block Watch.	N/A	City Public Safety & Partnerships & Community Policing	Chamber, BIA, PIDA, community organizations, City Facilities	Participation rates, number of partnerships, number of community-led initiatives.

APPENDIX 3:

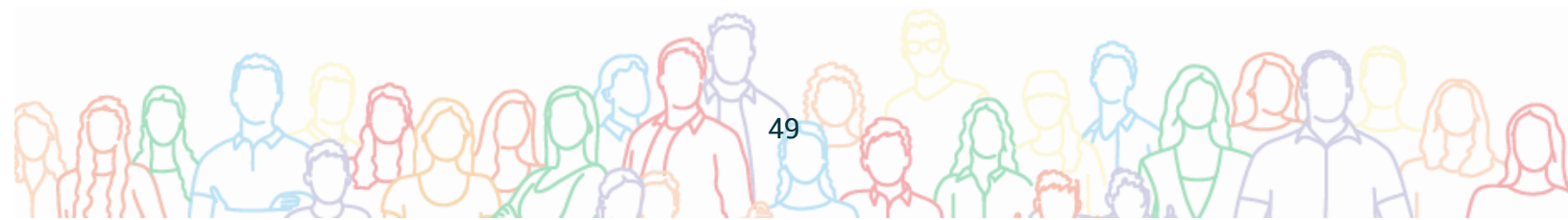
PHASE 1 SURVEY RESULTS



SHAPE
your city

Public Safety Questionnaire

Published March 2025



1.0 Overview

Earlier this year, Council refocused its priorities to two key areas: Safe and Resilient and Livable and Accessible. The Public Safety Survey launched at the Council-hosted Budget Open House on October 29, 2024, to help City Council and staff understand the level of safety residents feel in their neighbourhoods, the types of crime residents experience, their preferences for community safety investments, and to gauge their awareness for emergency preparedness.

Feedback will be used to help guide priority tactics and initiatives to increase public safety. The following document summarizes the activities completed and the findings from the process.

2.0 Community Participation

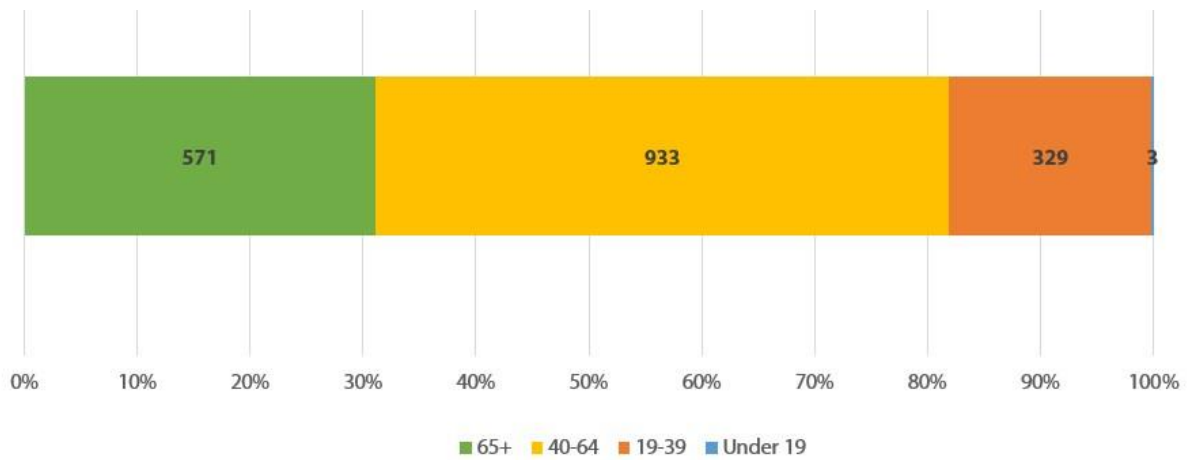
The engagement program was conducted between October 29 and November 29. The following diagram summarizes participation. A detailed timeline of engagement activities is provided in Appendix A.



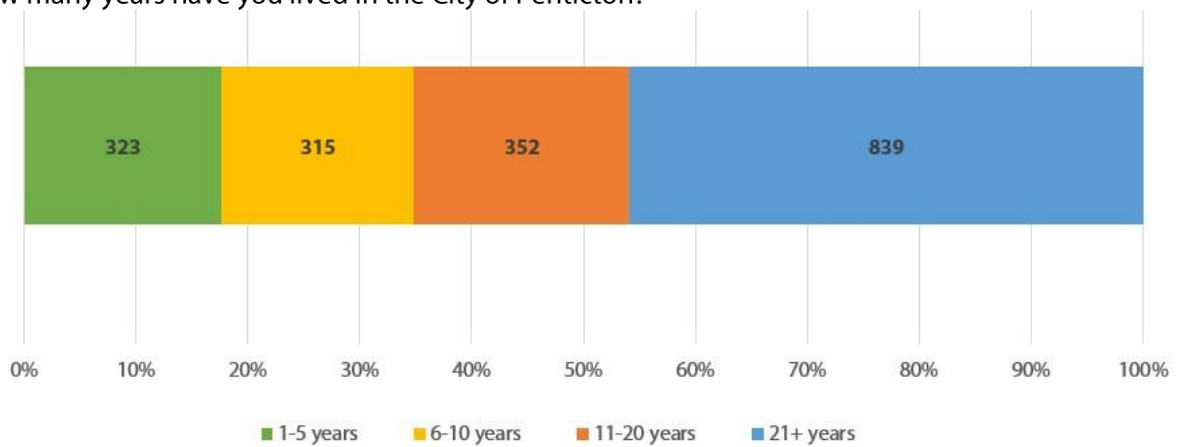
3.0 Feedback Form Results

One of the primary ways the City gathers formal feedback is through the use of feedback forms. The focus of the feedback form was to understand the level of safety residents feel in their neighbourhoods, the types of crime residents experience, their preferences for community safety investments, and to gauge their awareness for emergency preparedness. The deadline for feedback was Friday, Nov. 29. In total, **1842 feedback forms** were received. Please note that the key findings from those submissions are presented in this report and that complete results, including full comments, are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

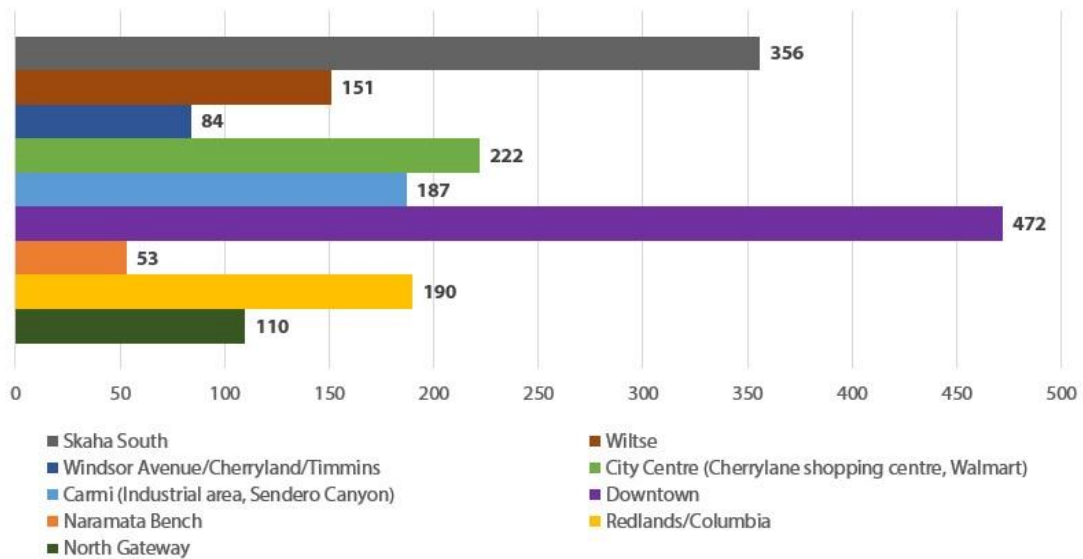
1. Please select your age category



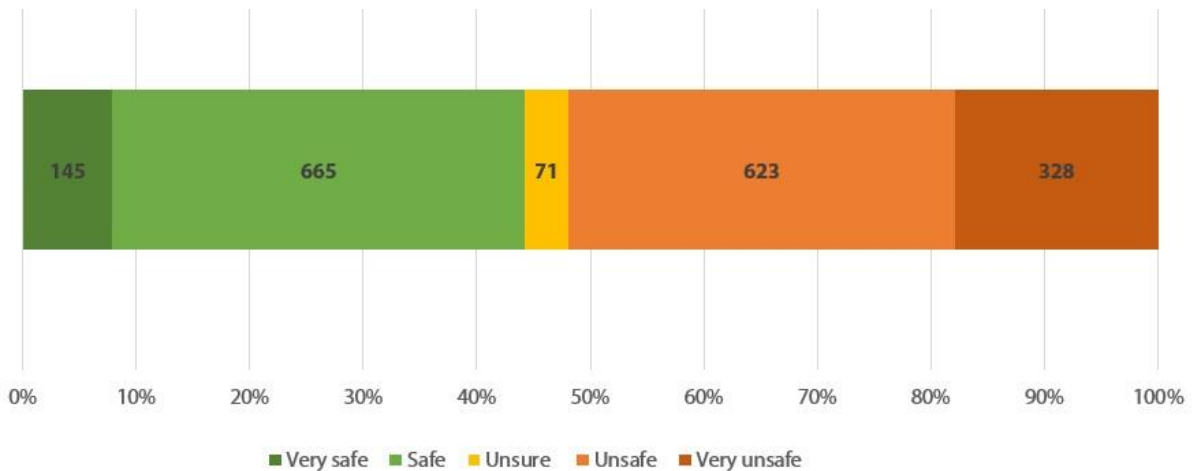
2. How many years have you lived in the City of Penticton?



3. Which neighbourhood do you live in?



4. How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood?



Respondents that selected 'Unsure' were invited to provide further comment. The following is a summary of the themes. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

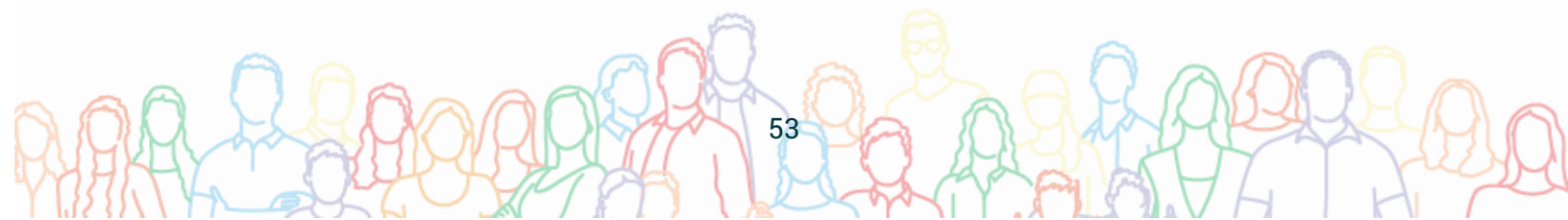
Increase of homelessness and drugs on the streets, uncomfortable walking in the evenings
 Increasing property and vehicle thefts
 Lack of visible police presence

Respondents that selected 'Unsafe' were invited to provide further comment. The following is a summary of the themes. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

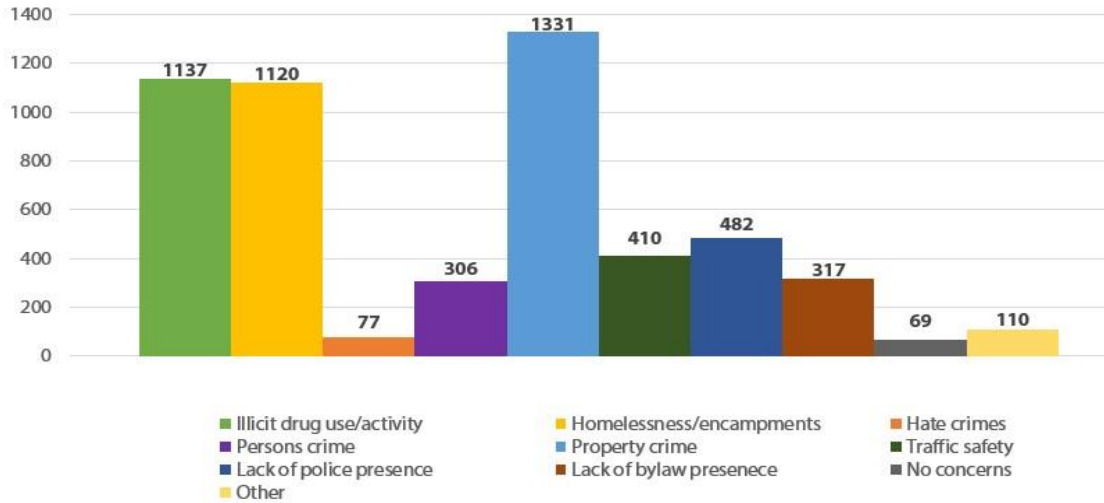
- People experiencing homelessness on drugs carrying weapons
- Too many encampments
- Open drug use and drug dealing
- Witnessing repeat thefts without consequences
- Physical assaults
- Property crime
- Traffic safety (speeding, no sidewalks in neighbourhood)
- Lack of police presence
- Thefts
- Drug paraphernalia in public spaces
- Increase in violent crimes (stabbings, homicides, more Emergency Response Team (ERT) incidents)

Respondents that selected 'Very Unsafe' were invited to provide further comment. The following is a summary of the themes. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

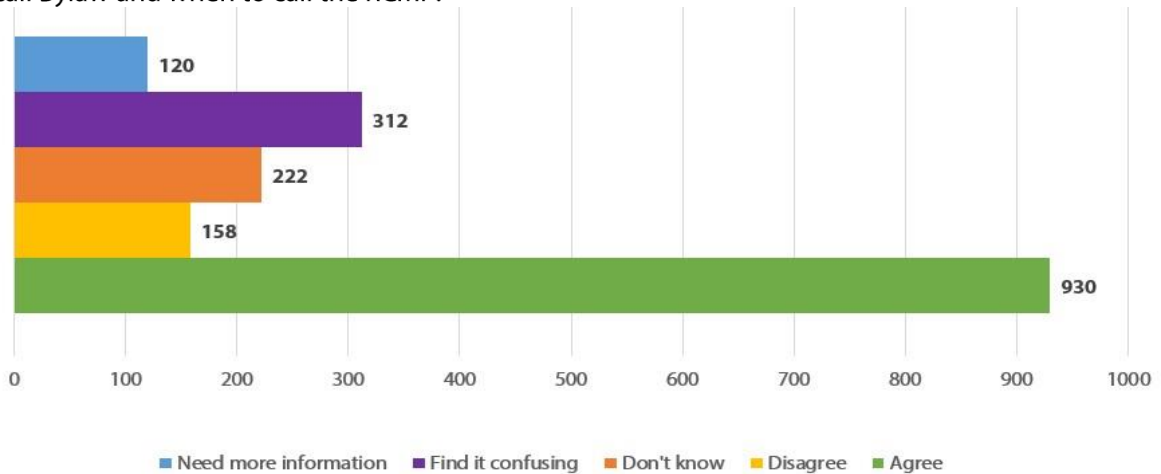
- Escalating open drug use, crime
- Increasing property and vehicle thefts
- Aggressive break-ins
- Physical assaults from those on drugs
- Vandalism
- Mental health issues resulting in aggressive behaviours from those experiencing homelessness
- Concern for the number of weapons carried by those experiencing homelessness
- Open drug use
- Increasing encampments and loitering on sidewalks
- Trespassing
- Increase in RCMP and ERT response in neighbourhoods
- Experiencing hate crimes



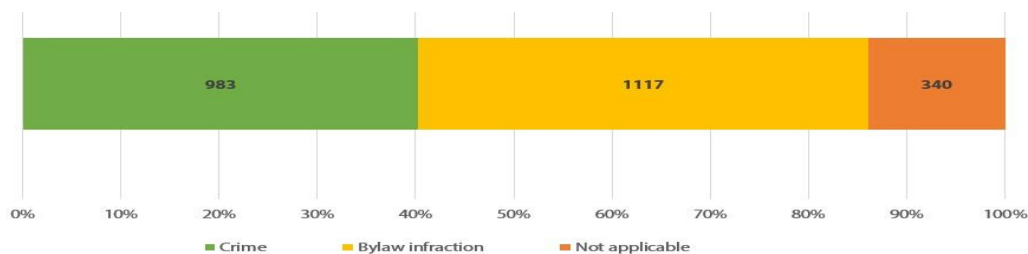
5. Which of the following issues are a top concern in your neighbourhood? Please select the top 3.
Note: This graph represents responses from all neighbourhoods. Individual results are presented in the Conclusion section.



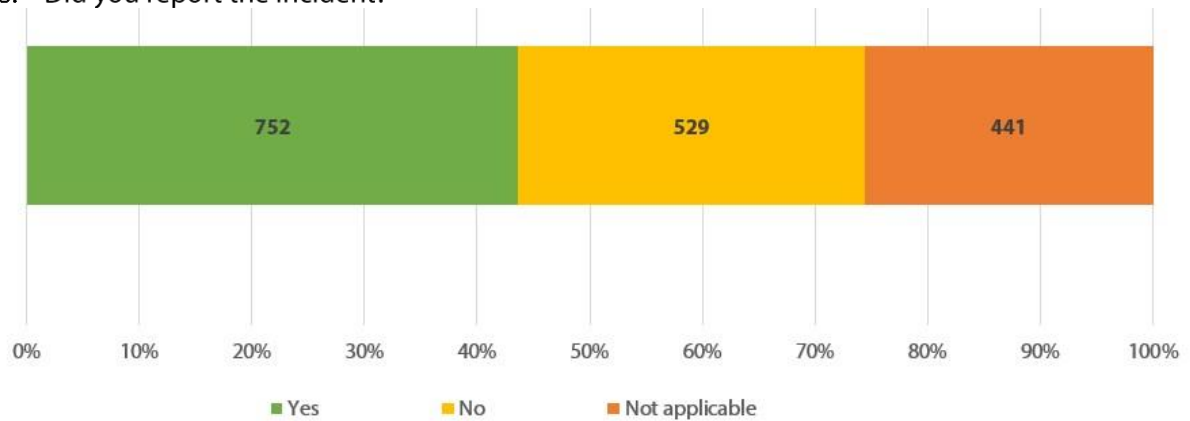
6. Please rate the following statement: I feel confident in knowing the difference between when to call Bylaw and when to call the RCMP.



7. Have you witnessed a crime or bylaw infraction in the last year?



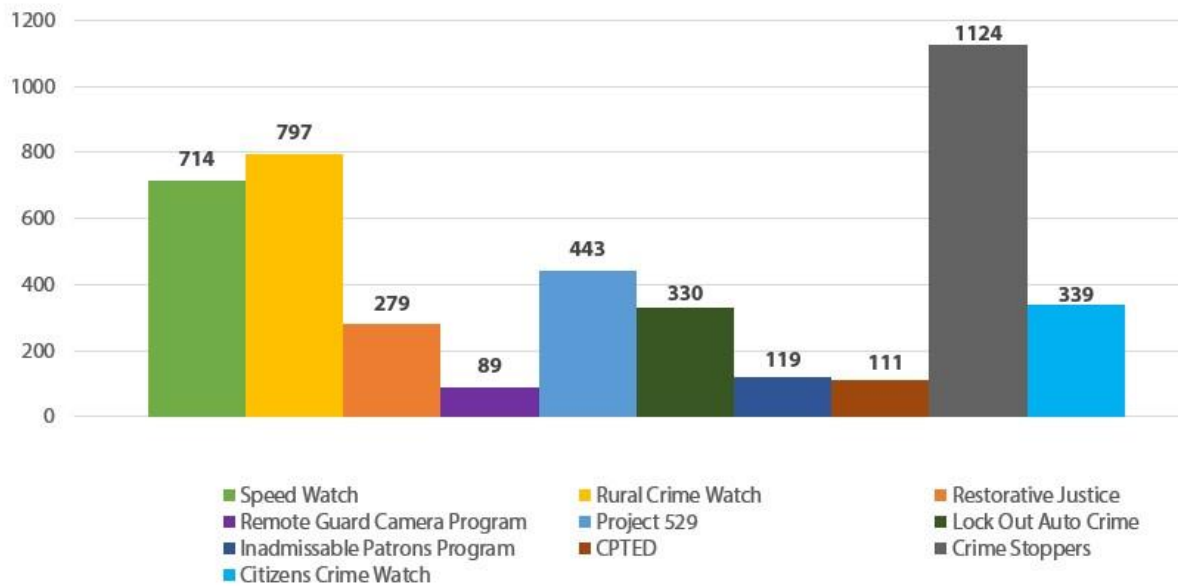
8. Did you report the incident?



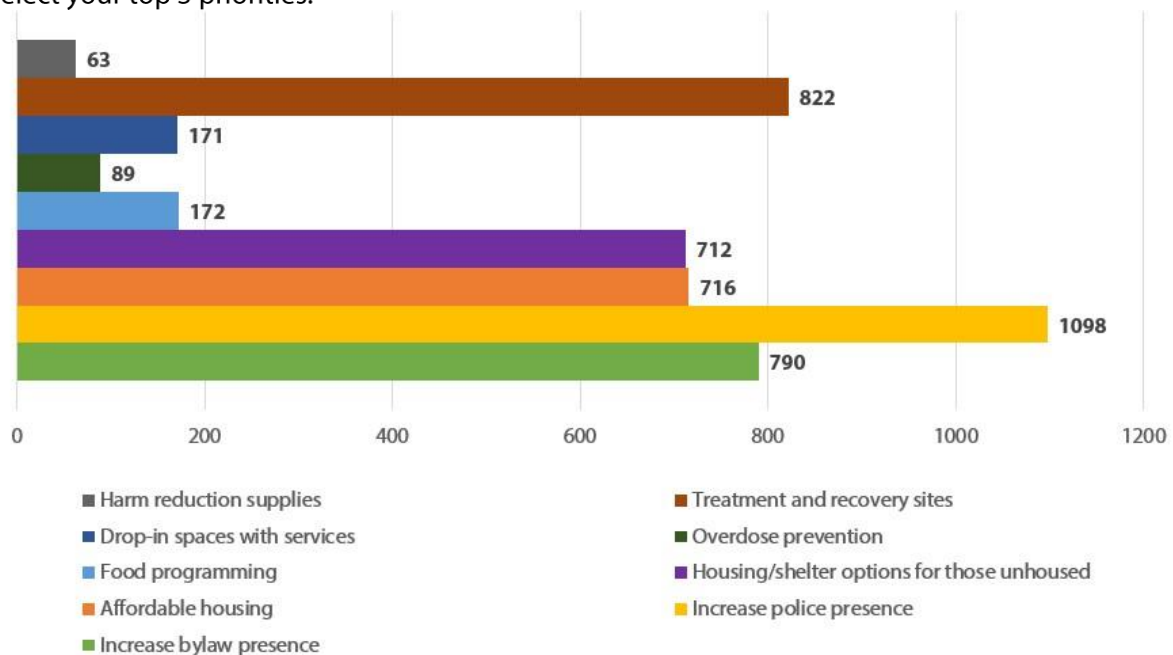
Respondents that selected 'No' were invited to explain why they did not report the incident they witnessed. The following are themes from the comments provided. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

- Concern that even if reported, nothing will change
- RCMP and Bylaw officers are already overwhelmed
- Have previously reported similar incidents without resolution
- Received no response from RCMP or Bylaw
- Unsure who to call
- When crime is happening daily, reporting it daily is not feasible
- Handled matter personally
- Incident was reported by someone else
- Concern that offenders aren't held accountable for their offences
- Concerned about repercussions of reporting

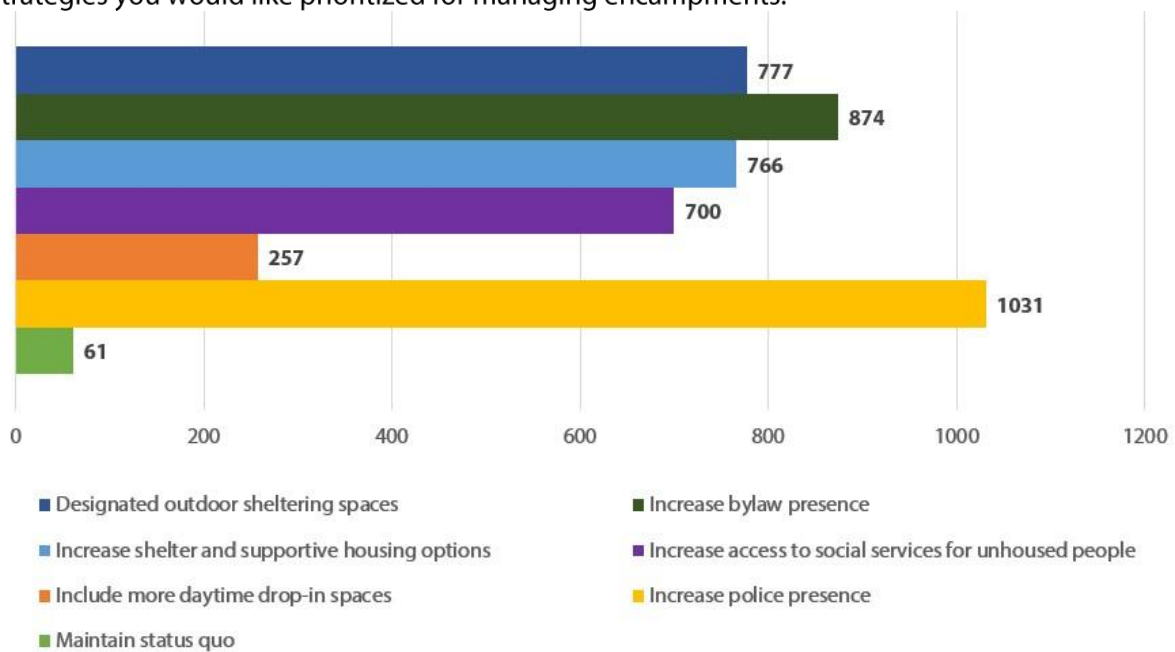
9. There are a number of initiatives and programs that can help address crime in neighbourhood areas. Are you familiar with the programs listed below? Select all that apply.



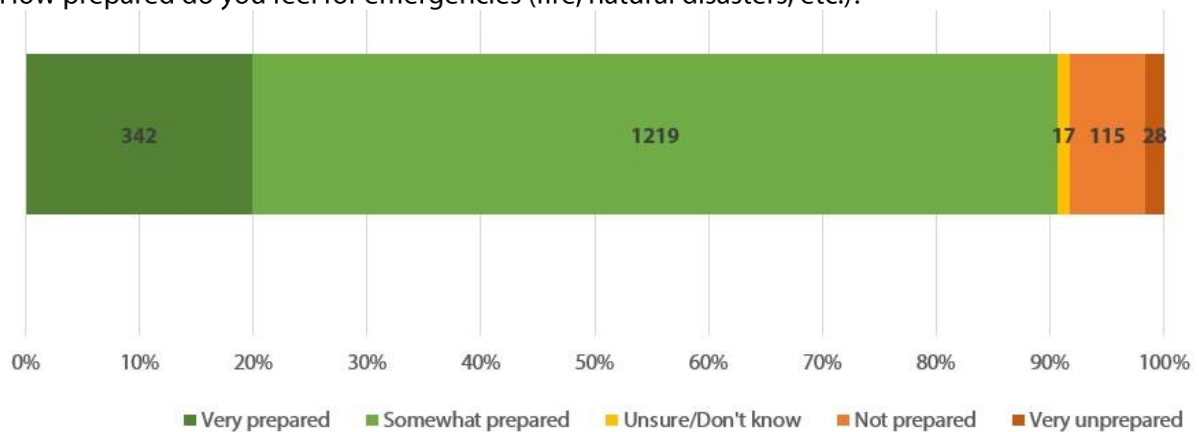
10. Where would you like to see future investments to support a Safe and Resilient community? Please select your top 3 priorities.



11. Encampments are on the rise in many communities in BC. For Penticton, please select the top 3 strategies you would like prioritized for managing encampments.



12. How prepared do you feel for emergencies (fire, natural disasters, etc.)?



Those that selected 'Unprepared' were invited to elaborate on their response. The following are themes from the comments provided. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

- Do not have an emergency kit or go-bag
- Do not know where to start, what to do
- Lack of information about local hazards
- Inability to afford and store go-bag
- Too difficult to prepare for all events
- Difficult to prepare a plan, especially with pet

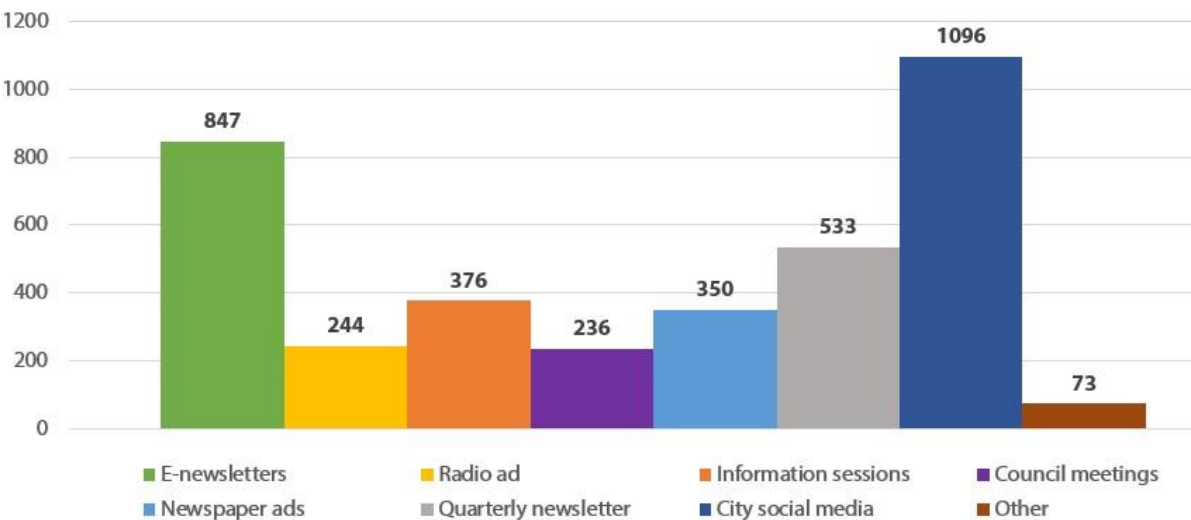
Those that selected 'Very unprepared' were invited to elaborate on their response. The following are themes from the comments provided. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

City hasn't provided enough information to residents about emergency planning
Unaware of what City's [emergency response] plan is or a lack of resources

Those that selected 'Unsure' were invited to elaborate on their response. The following are themes from the comments provided. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

Lack of information for how to prepare
No previous need to consider preparing
Only just learning about what hazards to prepare for

13. How would you prefer to receive information about public safety programs or initiatives? Select all that apply.



'Other (please specify)' included online news sites, television news, flyers, with utility bills, on the SOEC billboard, direct to email inbox, and pop-up booths in the community.

14. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding public safety in our community?

The following are summaries of general themes provided by respondents. Full comments are available at shapeyourcitypenticton.ca

Crime and Safety

- Concerns for personal safety when downtown, or in parks
- Concerns with open drug use, drug dealing
- Concerns of threats or threatening behaviours from those experiencing homelessness, including with weapons
- Desire to see “catch and release” program reformed
- Desire for [stronger] consequences for law and bylaw breakers
- Desire for more police
- Concerns regarding aggressive deer
- Desire for more traffic calming measures, concerns with excessive speeding

Homelessness and Addiction

- Desire for higher levels of government to take back their responsibilities (provide mental health services/facilities, affordable housing, rehabilitation programs)
- Concerns that services in Penticton are attracting those experiencing homelessness from outside the city
- Concerns with encampments in public spaces limiting general use (parks, trails)
- Concerns for “lack of rules” for those in social/supportive housing (tolerance for drug use, theft, violence)
- Concern that the amount of BC Housing facilities are disproportionate to the population of the city

RCMP and Bylaw

- Concerns with the lack of response from police and bylaw officers when crimes are reported
- Desire for extended bylaw hours
- Desire for stricter enforcement of laws and bylaws, especially related to vandalism, theft and public drug use
- Desire to have bylaw officers focus less on parking concerns and more on community safety issues
- Desire to organize neighbourhood/citizen safety initiatives
- Desire for more bylaw officer staff in order to prevent encampments before they start

Mental Health Services

- Concerns for the lack of long-term treatment facilities
- Desire to collaborate with provincial and federal governments to create more centres of support (rehabilitation centres, mental health units)
- Desire for programs for families and individuals to support them before they become homeless

Community and Economic Impact

Concerns that tourists avoid downtown areas because of safety concerns and encampments

Concerns for safety throughout Nanaimo Square, businesses losing business

Concerns with walking alone through neighbourhoods and parks (solo adults, older children/teens)

Desire to see use of CPTED throughout community

Concerns that guests and visitors won't return due to amounts of visible homelessness and public drug use

4.0 Conclusions

The main goal of this process was to gather feedback from the community to understand the level of safety residents feel in their neighbourhoods, the types of crime residents experience and to gauge community awareness for emergency preparedness.

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe (56%) and 43% feel safe or very safe. 2% of respondents are unsure whether they feel safe. The top 3 concerns for this neighbourhood are property crime (71%), followed by a tie of illicit drug use/activity and homelessness/encampments (70%).

Redlands/Columbia

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel safe or very safe at 69% and 26% unsafe or very unsafe. 5% of respondents are unsure whether they feel safe. The top 3 concerns for this neighbourhood are property crime (75%), followed by a tie of illicit drug use/activity and homelessness/encampments (40%).

Naramata Bench

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel safe or very safe at 74% and 26% unsafe or very unsafe. There were no unsure responses. The top 3 concerns for this neighbourhood are property crime (85%), followed by homelessness/encampments (48%) and illegal drug use/activity (42%).

Downtown

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe at 64% and 33% safe or very safe. 4% responded unsure. The top 3 concerns for this neighbourhood are illicit drug use/activity (79%), property crime (75%) and homelessness/encampments (69%).

Carmi (Industrial area, Sendero Canyon)

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe (50%), with 47% responding feeling safe or very safe. 3% responded as unsure. The top 3 concerns in this neighbourhood are property crime (77%), illicit drug use/activity (62%) and homelessness/encampments (58%).

City Centre (Cherrylane shopping centre, Walmart)

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe (71%), with 27% responding feeling safe or very safe. 2% responded as unsure. The top 3 concerns in this neighbourhood are homelessness/encampments (84%), illicit drug use/activity (80%), and property crime (72%).

Windsor Avenue/Cherryland/Timmins

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe (66%), with 31% responding feeling safe or very safe. 2% responded as unsure. The top 3 concerns in this neighbourhood are homelessness/encampments (83%), illicit drug use/activity (70%), and property crime (63%).

Wiltse

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel safe or very safe at 79% and 23% unsafe or very unsafe. 5% of respondents are unsure whether they feel safe. The top 3 concerns for this neighbourhood are property crime (79%), followed by homelessness/encampments (50%), and illicit drug use/activity (42%).

Skaha South

The majority of respondents living in this neighbourhood feel unsafe or very unsafe (52%), with 43% responding feeling safe or very safe. 6% responded as unsure. The top 3 concerns in this neighbourhood are property crime (79%), homelessness/encampments (70%) and illicit drug use/activity (66%).

Future investments to support a Safe and Resilient community

Respondents indicated their top three priorities for future investments to support a Safe and Resilient community are increasing police presence (65%), treatment and recovery sites (48%), and increasing bylaw presence (46%).

Strategies for managing encampments

Respondents indicated their top three priorities for managing encampments are increasing police presence (61%), increasing bylaw presence (52%), and designating outdoor sheltering spaces (46%), which eked ahead by 1% of increasing shelter and supportive housing options (45%).

Emergency preparedness

While the majority of respondents indicated they feel somewhat or very prepared for an emergency (91%), only 52% are registered for the City's emergency text notification system.

Next Steps

The feedback gathered through the engagement program is to be provided to the Safety and Public Partnerships team. It will also be shared with Council and the community-at-large.

Appendix A - Engagement Timeline

The following list summarizes the main methods that were used to raise awareness about the application and the opportunities for residents to provide feedback through the community engagement period that took place between October 29 and November 29, 2024.

Date	Activity
Oct. 29	Council-hosted Budget Open House
Oct. 29	Project information and survey on www.shapeyourcitypenticton.ca
Nov. 4	Eblast
Nov. 8	Service announcement
Nov. 13	Eblast
Nov. 18	Social media post
Nov. 27	Social media post
Nov. 29	Deadline for survey



APPENDIX 4:

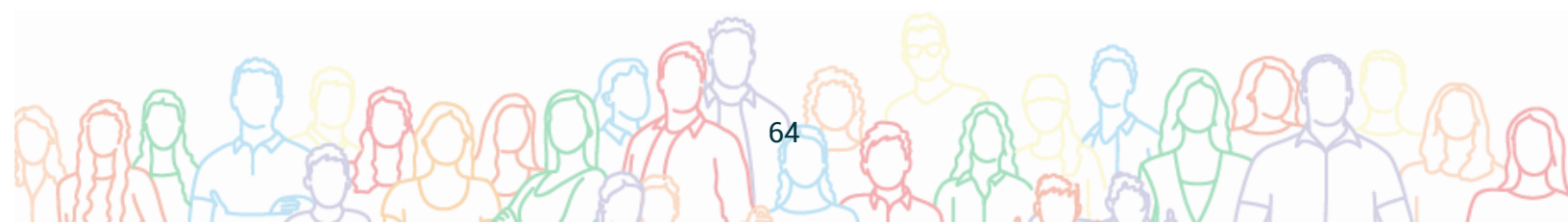
PHASE 2 CSWB SURVEY RESULTS



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Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan Engagement Report

Published July 2026



1.0 Overview

The City of Penticton is developing a Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan to support a safer, healthier, and more connected community. The Plan is intended to provide a coordinated, long-term approach to addressing complex social challenges through collaboration between local government, Indigenous partners, health and social service providers, public safety agencies, community organizations, businesses, and other levels of government.

A Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan recognizes that safety extends beyond crime prevention and emergency response. Community safety and wellbeing are influenced by a range of interconnected social, economic, cultural, environmental, and health-related factors that shape how safe, supported, and connected people feel within their community.

The City's emerging CSWB Framework identifies several interconnected dimensions of safety and wellbeing, including physical safety, social safety, economic safety, health and emotional wellbeing, cultural safety, and environmental safety.

The development of the CSWB Plan builds on recommendations identified through the 2022 Community Safety Resource Review, which recommended establishing a coordinated framework to align community partners around shared priorities and strengthen collaboration across sectors.

The Plan is intended to:

- Identify key community safety and wellbeing priorities
- Better coordinate services and partnerships
- Strengthen prevention and early intervention efforts
- Improve community safety and perceptions of safety
- Support data-informed decision-making
- Establish shared actions and accountability across sectors

The emerging vision for the CSWB Plan is:

Penticton is a connected, resilient, and healthy waterfront city focused on safety, livability, and vibrancy.

Background

Penticton, like many communities across British Columbia, is experiencing increasing social complexity and pressures related to housing affordability, homelessness, mental health and substance use, public disorder, and perceptions of safety.

Phase 1 research and analysis identified several key trends and areas of concern within the community:

- Property crime and theft
- Illicit drug use
- Homelessness and encampments
- Traffic safety
- Visibility of police and bylaw services

The findings also highlighted that visible social disorder, including open drug use, mental health crises, homelessness, and encampments, is a significant factor influencing residents' perceptions of safety.

At the same time, Penticton continues to experience population growth and demographic change, including an aging population and increasing demand for health, housing, and social supports.

Phase 1 findings further identified that housing instability, mental health challenges, and substance use are placing increasing pressure on emergency responders, public safety agencies, and community-serving organizations. Residents expressed support for a balanced approach that combines enforcement, prevention, housing, health services, and recovery supports.

The CSWB Plan is intended to provide a coordinated roadmap to address these interconnected challenges while strengthening long-term community resilience, safety, and wellbeing.

Purpose of Engagement

Community engagement is a central component of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan process. The survey was designed to gather input from residents and community members regarding community safety priorities, perceptions of safety and wellbeing, emerging challenges, and opportunities to improve quality of life within Penticton.

The engagement process sought to:

- Validate findings from Phase 1 research and analysis
- Identify community priorities and emerging issues
- Better understand perceptions related to community safety and wellbeing
- Identify areas of concern and opportunities for improvement
- Help inform future actions and implementation priorities for the CSWB Plan

Feedback was collected through an online survey available on the Shape Your City Penticton platform.

The engagement process aimed to capture a range of community perspectives and experiences, recognizing that perceptions of safety and wellbeing vary across the community.

2.0 SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Residents and community members were invited to provide feedback as part of the development of the Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan. Respondents were asked to review background information related to community safety and wellbeing in Penticton, including emerging priority areas identified through Phase 1 research and analysis, and to share their perspectives on community safety concerns, wellbeing priorities, and opportunities to improve safety, connection, and quality of life within the community.

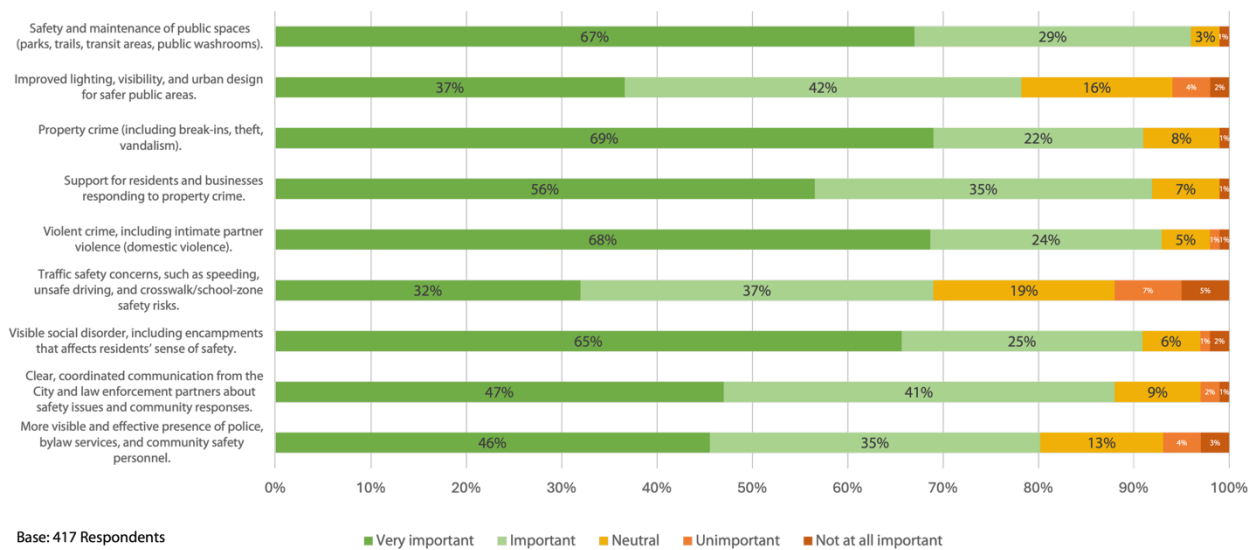
Feedback was collected through an online survey available on the Shape Your City Penticton platform.

3.0 SURVEY RESULTS

The City collected feedback through an online survey. In total, 417 completed survey responses were received.

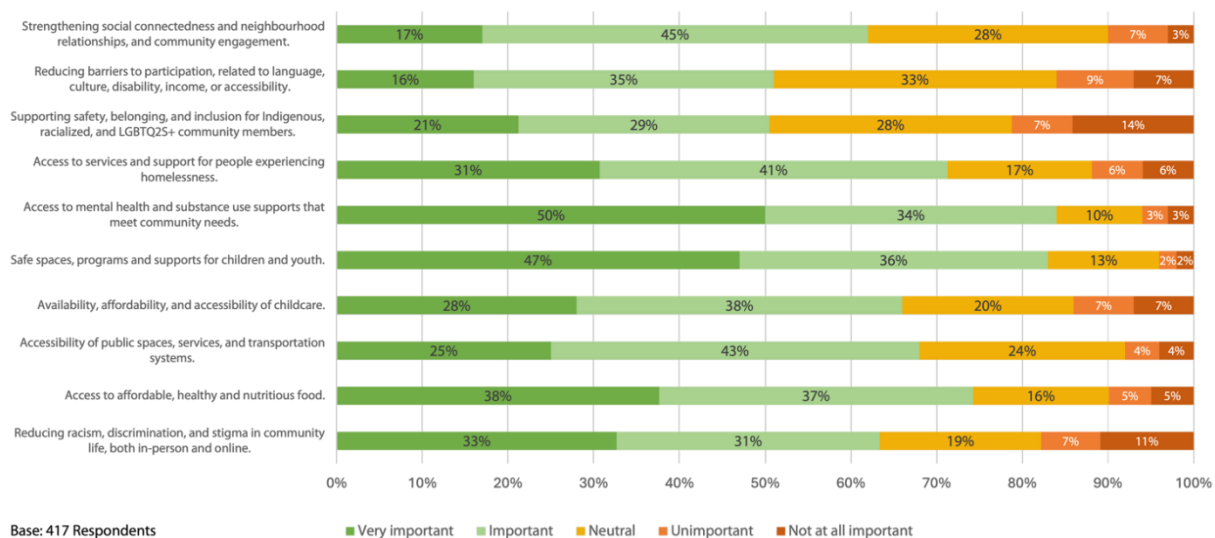
Question 1. Crime Prevention and Public Safety - Please rate how important each issue is to you.

Responses indicate that crime prevention and public safety issues are viewed as highly important by survey participants. A large majority of respondents rated maintaining safe public spaces, improving emergency response, reducing property crime, and addressing visible social disorder as either “important” or “very important.” Overall, the findings reflect broad concern regarding both community safety and perceptions of safety within Penticton.



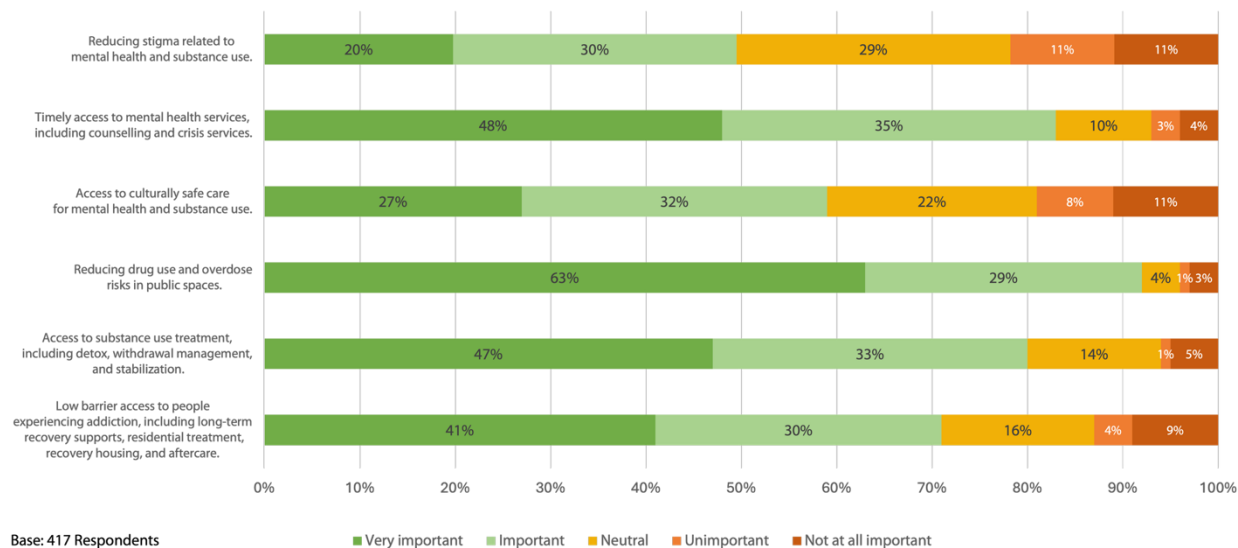
Question 2. Community and Social Wellbeing - Please rate how important each issue is to you.

Responses suggest strong support for initiatives that strengthen community wellbeing, accessibility, inclusion, and quality of life. High levels of importance were placed on affordable and accessible housing, support for vulnerable populations, and access to services and amenities. Respondents also identified social connectedness, youth supports, and inclusive public spaces as important components of a healthy and resilient community.



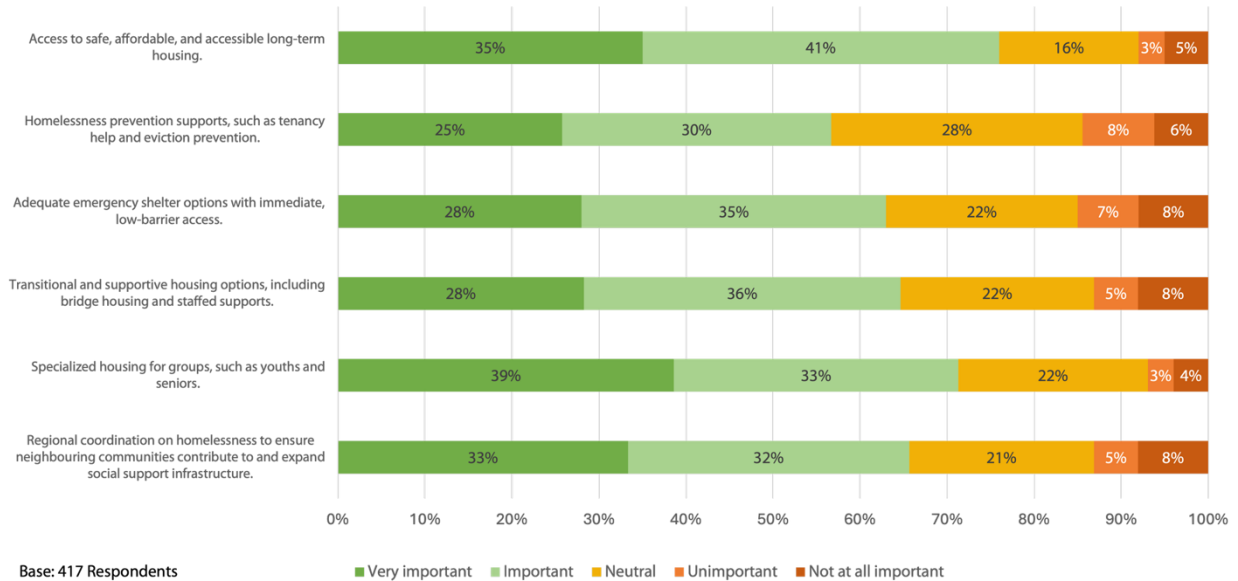
Question 3. Mental Health and Substance Use - Please rate how important each issue is to you.

Mental health and substance use-related priorities were consistently identified as important by survey respondents. A majority of respondents rated access to treatment, mental health supports, overdose prevention, and recovery services as either “important” or “very important.” Responses also reflected recognition of the relationship between mental health, addictions, homelessness, and community safety.



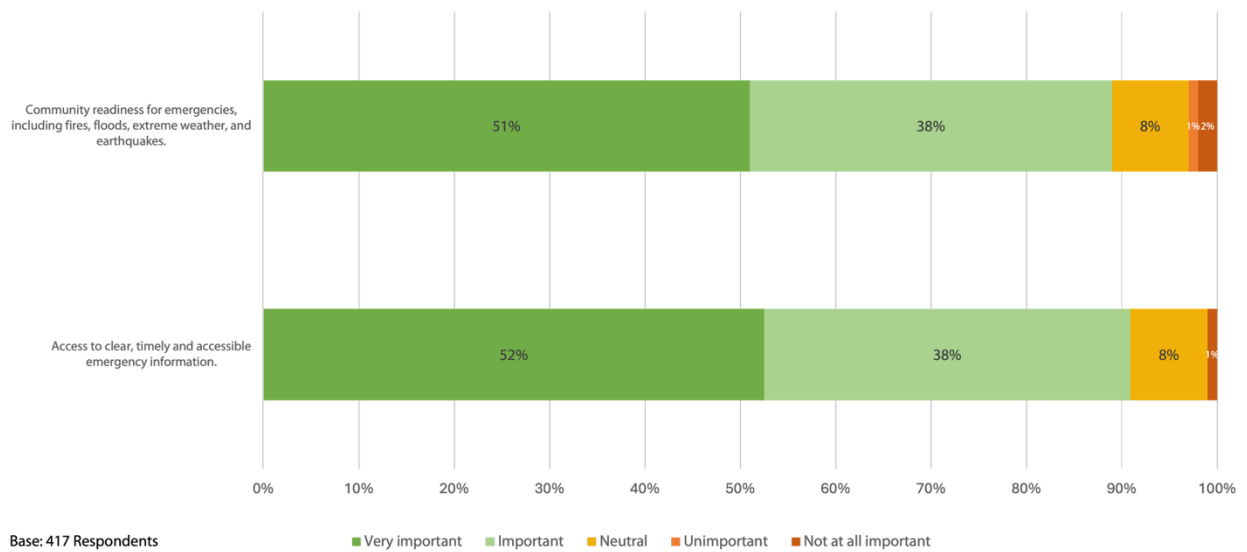
Question 4. Housing and Homelessness - Please rate how important each issue is to you.

Housing and homelessness emerged as significant priorities throughout the survey results. Respondents identified affordable housing, homelessness prevention, emergency sheltering, and supportive housing as important areas requiring increased focus. Overall, the results reflect broad concern regarding housing affordability and the impacts of homelessness within the community.



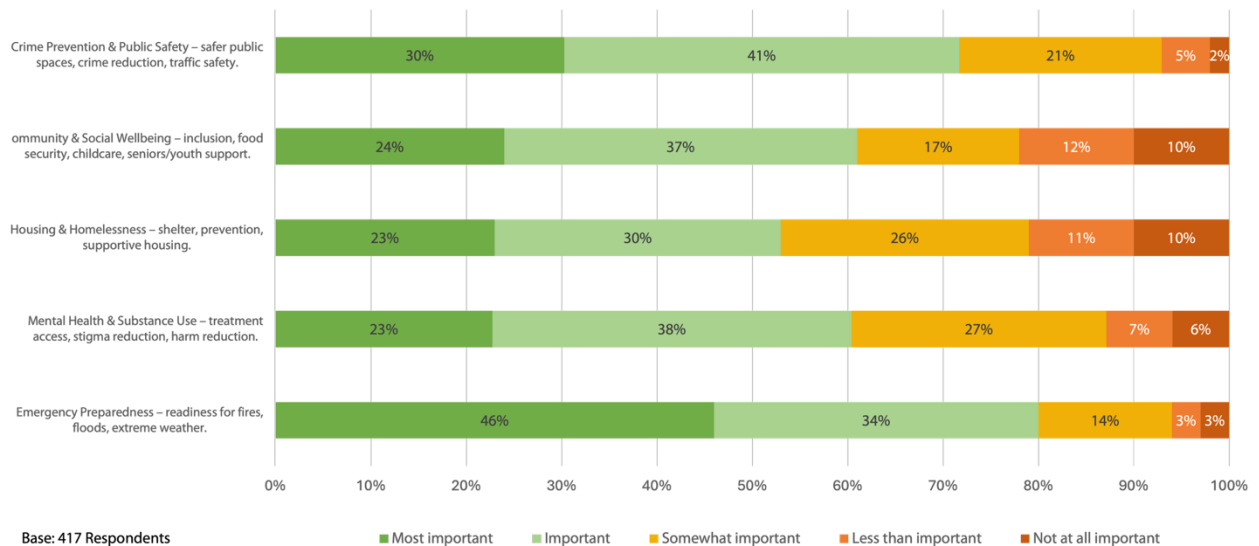
Question 5. Emergency Preparedness - Please rate how important each issue is to you.

Responses indicate strong support for improving emergency preparedness and access to emergency information. A large majority of respondents rated emergency communication, preparedness education, and community resilience initiatives as important or very important. These findings suggest that residents view emergency preparedness as an important component of overall community safety and wellbeing.



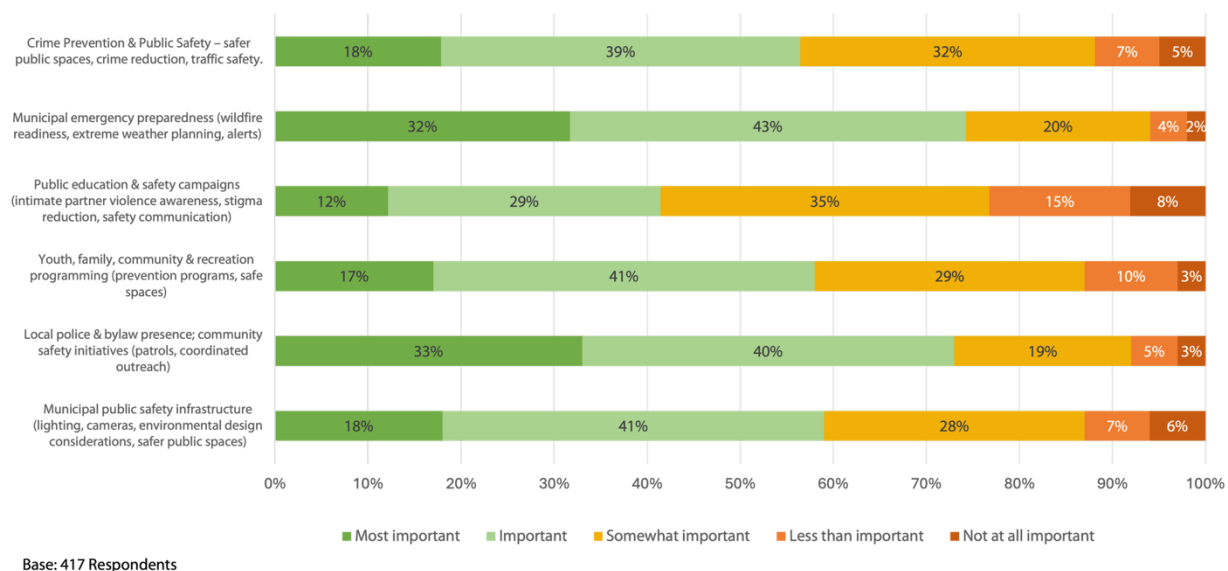
Question 6. Please rate these priorities from least important to most important.

Responses indicate that survey participants viewed all priority areas as important components of community safety and wellbeing. Strong levels of importance were identified across crime prevention and public safety, housing and homelessness, mental health and substance use, emergency preparedness, and community and social wellbeing initiatives. Overall, the findings reflect broad recognition that community safety and wellbeing involve a range of interconnected issues requiring coordinated and balanced approaches.



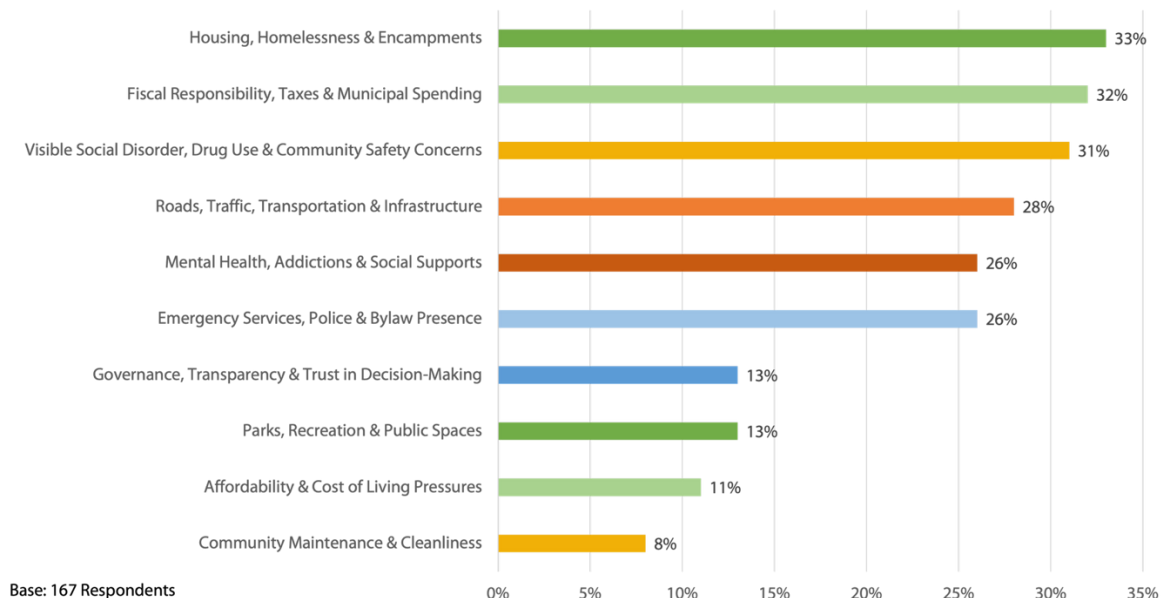
Question 7. Municipal Investments - Please rate how important each type of municipal investment is.

Responses suggest broad support for municipal investments that improve community safety, prevention initiatives, and overall wellbeing. Many respondents rated public safety infrastructure, emergency preparedness, youth and community programs, and neighbourhood safety improvements as important or very important areas for municipal investment. Overall, responses indicate support for balanced investments that address both safety and long-term community wellbeing.



Question 8. Are there any other comments you would like to make related to Municipal Investments?

The following chart summarizes key themes identified through analysis of respondent verbatim comments to Question 8.*



**Responses may reference more than one theme; totals exceed the number of respondents.*

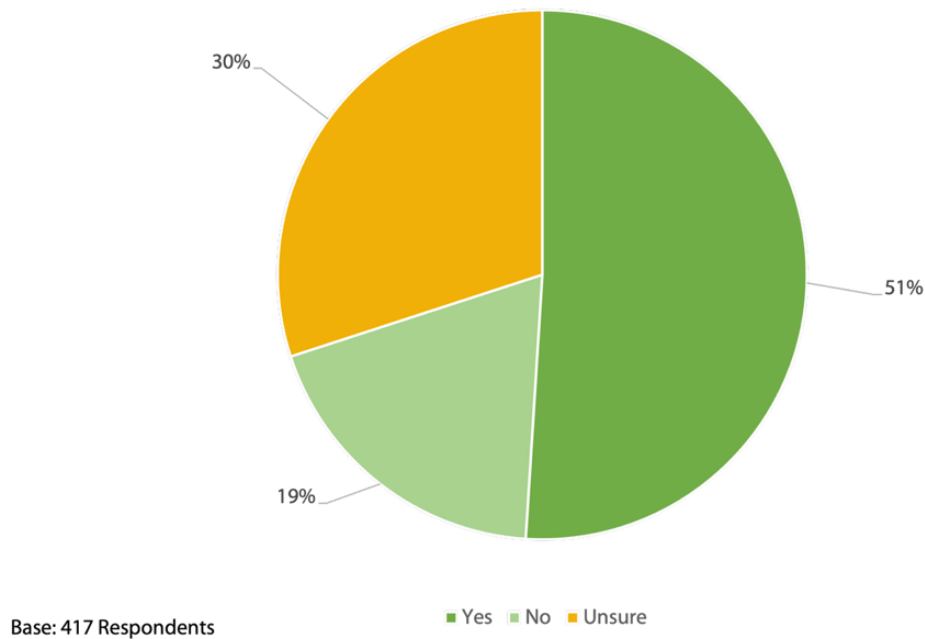
Responses to the open-ended question regarding municipal investments reflected a broad range of community priorities and concerns. The most commonly referenced themes related to housing, homelessness, and encampments, followed closely by fiscal responsibility and concerns regarding taxes and municipal spending. Respondents also frequently identified visible social disorder, including illicit drug use and community safety concerns, as important areas requiring attention.

Transportation and infrastructure-related issues, including roads, traffic, and parking, were also commonly mentioned, along with the importance of emergency services, police visibility, and bylaw enforcement. Many comments further emphasized the need for increased mental health, addiction, and social support within the community.

Additional themes included parks and recreation amenities, transparency and trust in municipal decision-making, affordability and cost-of-living pressures, and general community maintenance and cleanliness. Overall, responses reflected a desire for balanced municipal investments that support both public safety and long-term community wellbeing.

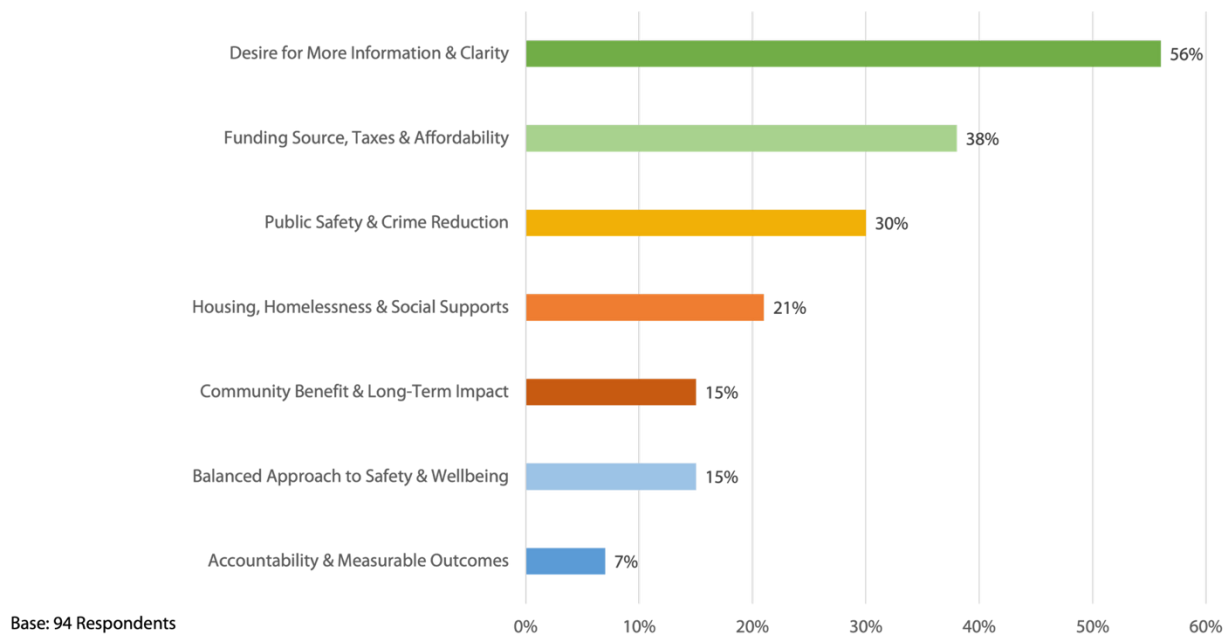
Question 9. Additional Funding Support - Would you support the City investing additional municipal funds to improve community safety and wellbeing?

Responses to this question were mixed, though overall sentiment leaned toward support for additional municipal investment in community safety and wellbeing initiatives. Approximately 51% of respondents indicated support for additional investment, while 30% indicated opposition. An additional 19% of respondents indicated they were unsure. Overall, the findings suggest that while many residents recognize the importance of investing in community safety and wellbeing, affordability, accountability, and implementation details remain important considerations for some respondents.



Question 10. What information would help you decide?

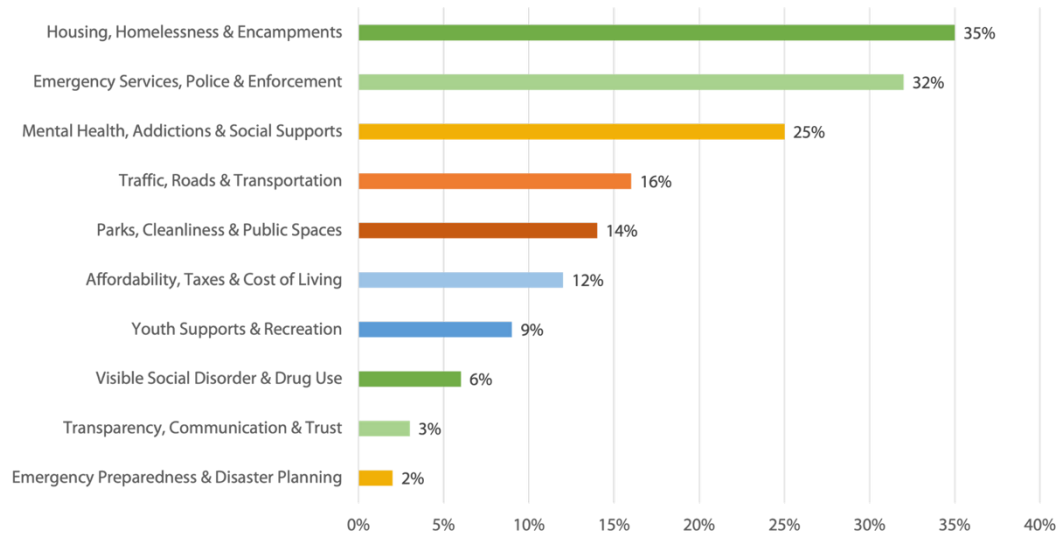
Responses from participants who selected “unsure” highlighted a strong desire for additional information and clarity regarding how municipal investments would improve community safety and wellbeing. The most commonly referenced theme related to the need for more information and clearer communication (56%), followed by concerns regarding funding sources, taxes, and affordability (38%). Respondents also identified interest in understanding how investments would address public safety and crime reduction (30%), housing and homelessness (21%), and broader community benefits and long-term impacts (15%). Overall, responses suggest that clearer information regarding funding, implementation, and measurable outcomes would help inform future decision-making.



**Responses may reference more than one theme; totals exceed the number of respondents.*

Question 11. Is there anything else the City of Penticton should consider as a priority for community safety and wellbeing?

Responses to this question identified a range of interconnected community priorities and concerns. The most frequently identified theme related to housing, homelessness, and encampments (35%), followed by emergency services, police, and enforcement (32%), and mental health, addictions, and social supports (25%). Additional themes included traffic and transportation safety (16%), parks and public space maintenance (14%), affordability and cost-of-living pressures (12%), and youth supports and recreation (9%). Overall, responses reflected a desire for balanced and coordinated investments that improve both public safety and long-term community wellbeing.



Base: 189 Respondents

**Responses may reference more than one theme; totals exceed the number of respondents.*

Key Themes from Verbatim Responses

Housing, Homelessness & Encampments

The most frequently identified theme related to housing affordability, homelessness, and encampments. Many respondents emphasized the importance of increasing access to affordable and supportive housing, addressing visible encampments, and improving supports for individuals experiencing homelessness. Comments reflected both concerns regarding community impacts and a desire for compassionate, long-term solutions focused on prevention, housing stability, and coordinated support services.

Emergency Services, Police & Enforcement

A significant number of respondents highlighted the importance of visible emergency services, policing, and bylaw enforcement in supporting community safety. Common comments referenced increased police presence, faster response times, stronger enforcement of existing bylaws, and improved public safety in parks, downtown areas, and other public spaces. Some respondents also emphasized the importance of balancing enforcement with prevention and social supports.

Mental Health, Addictions & Social Supports

Many responses identified mental health, addictions, and access to social supports as key priorities for improving community wellbeing. Respondents frequently referenced the need for increased treatment and recovery services, mental health supports, outreach services, and early intervention programs. Several comments acknowledged the connection between mental health, substance use, homelessness, and perceptions of safety within the community.

Traffic, Roads & Transportation

Traffic safety and transportation-related concerns emerged as another common theme. Respondents referenced speeding, dangerous driving behaviours, pedestrian safety, road maintenance, parking, cycling infrastructure, and traffic congestion. Several comments emphasized the importance of safer streets, improved intersections and crosswalks, and better transportation planning to support overall community safety and accessibility.

Parks, Cleanliness & Public Spaces

A number of respondents emphasized the importance of maintaining clean, safe, and accessible public spaces. Comments referenced park maintenance, cleanliness, graffiti, litter, public washrooms, and the overall appearance and upkeep of the community. Many respondents noted that well-maintained public spaces contribute positively to perceptions of safety, community pride, and quality of life.

Affordability, Taxes & Cost of Living

Some respondents expressed concern regarding affordability pressures, including housing costs, food costs, and the overall cost of living. Others referenced municipal taxes and the importance of ensuring public funds are invested responsibly and effectively. These comments reflected broader concerns regarding financial pressures facing residents and the importance of balancing investments with affordability considerations.

Youth Supports & Recreation

Several responses highlighted the importance of youth-focused programming, recreation, and prevention-based initiatives. Respondents referenced the need for more activities, safe gathering spaces, sports and recreation opportunities, and programs that support youth wellbeing, connection, and early intervention.

Visible Social Disorder & Drug Use

Some respondents specifically referenced concerns related to visible social disorder, including open drug use, public disturbances, vandalism, and disruptive behaviour in public spaces. These comments were often connected to broader concerns regarding perceptions of safety, community wellbeing, and the need for coordinated responses involving enforcement, outreach, treatment, and housing supports.

Transparency, Communication & Trust

A smaller number of responses emphasized the importance of transparency, communication, and public trust in decision-making processes. Respondents expressed interest in clearer communication regarding City priorities, funding decisions, implementation plans, and measurable outcomes related to community safety and wellbeing initiatives.

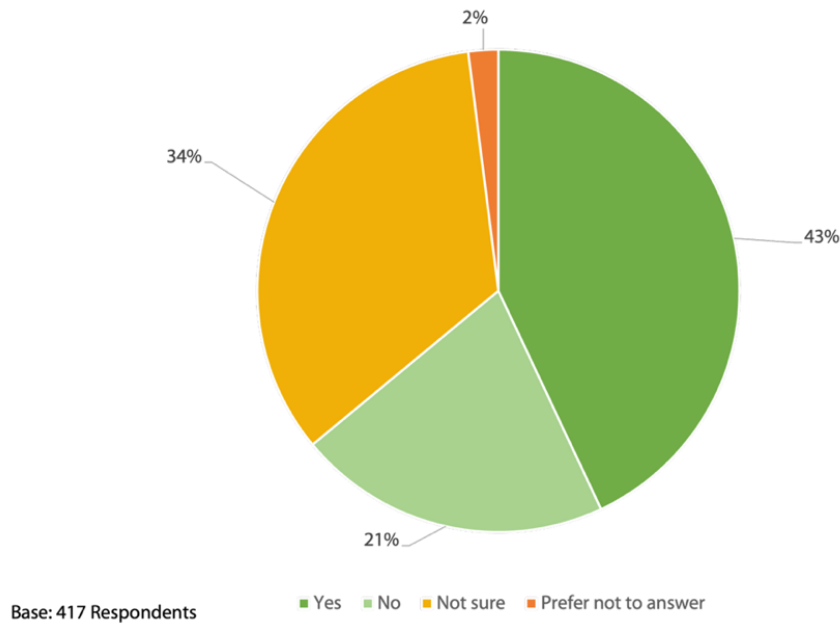
Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Planning

A limited number of responses referenced emergency preparedness and disaster planning as important considerations for community wellbeing. Comments included the importance of public education, emergency response planning, wildfire preparedness, and ensuring residents have access to clear information and resources during emergencies.

The following questions provide demographic information related to survey participation and help illustrate the range of perspectives represented throughout the engagement process.

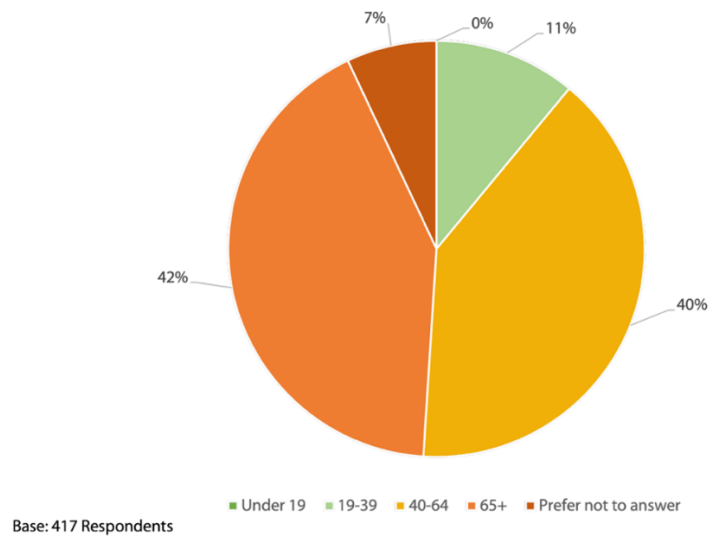
Question 12. Did you participate in the first Public Safety Survey in 2025?

Responses indicate that the survey included input from both returning participants and respondents who had not previously participated in the Public Safety Survey. Approximately 43% of respondents indicated they participated in the first Public Safety Survey in 2025, while 21% indicated they had not participated previously. An additional 34% indicated they were unsure, and 2% preferred not to answer.



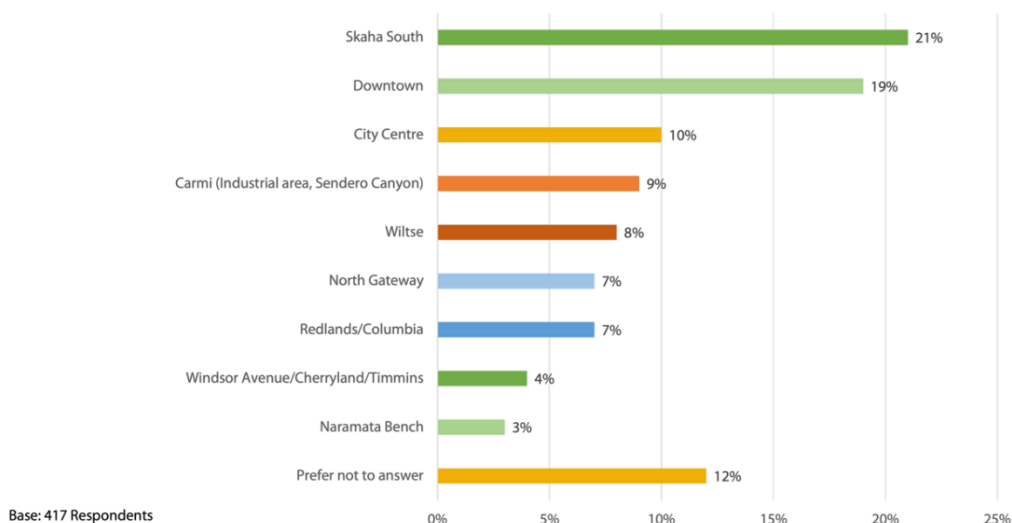
Question 13. Please select your age range.

Survey responses reflected participation from a range of age groups, with the largest proportion of respondents identifying within the 40–64 age category (43%), followed closely by respondents aged 65 and older (40%). Smaller proportions identified as under 19 years of age (11%) or preferred not to answer (7%). Overall, the survey received strong participation from middle-aged and older adult residents.



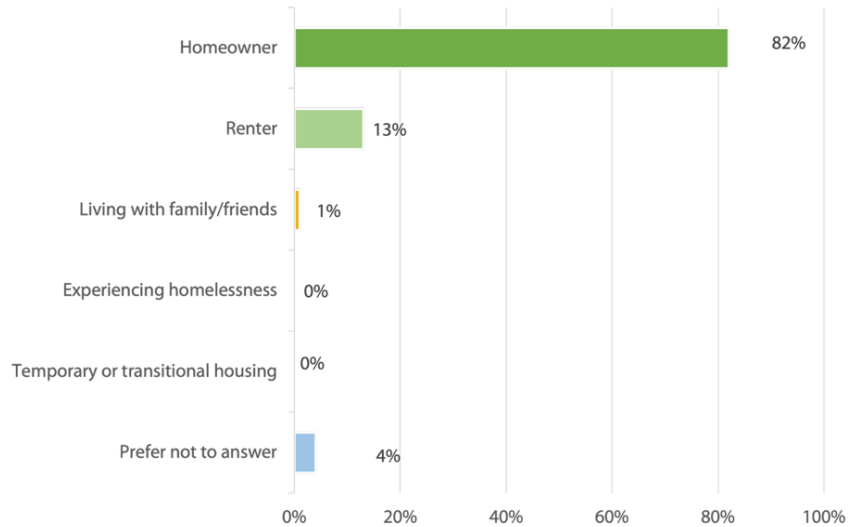
Question 14. Please select your neighbourhood.

Survey participation reflected representation from neighbourhoods across Penticton. The highest proportion of respondents identified as residing in Skaha South (21%), followed by Downtown (19%), and City Centre (10%). Additional responses were received from Wiltse, North Gateway, Redlands/Columbia, Windsor Avenue/Cherryland/Timmins, Naramata Bench, and Carmi/Sendero Canyon areas. Approximately 12% of respondents preferred not to identify their neighbourhood.



Question 15. Please indicate your housing status.

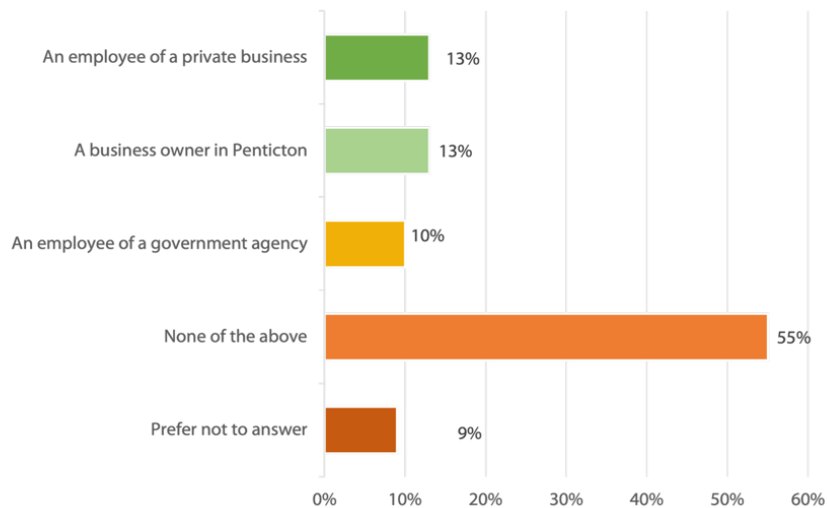
The majority of survey respondents identified as homeowners (82%), while 13% identified as renters. Smaller proportions identified as living with family or friends (1%) or preferred not to answer (4%). No respondents identified as experiencing homelessness or living in temporary or transitional housing.



Base: 417 Respondents

Question 16. Please indicate whether you are:

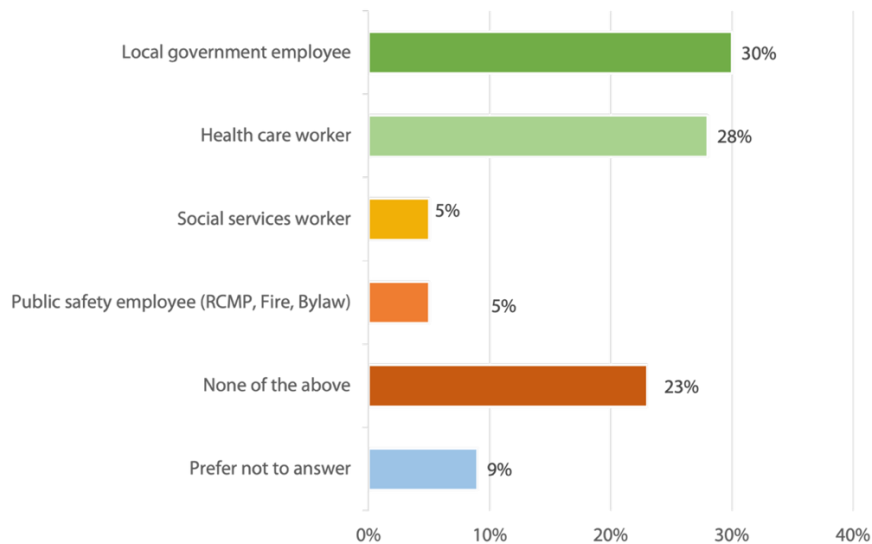
Responses reflected participation from a range of employment and community backgrounds. The largest proportion of respondents selected “none of the above” (55%), while 13% identified as employees of private businesses and an additional 13% identified as business owners in Penticton. Approximately 10% identified as government employees, and 9% preferred not to answer.



Base: 417 Respondents

Question 17. Are you a:

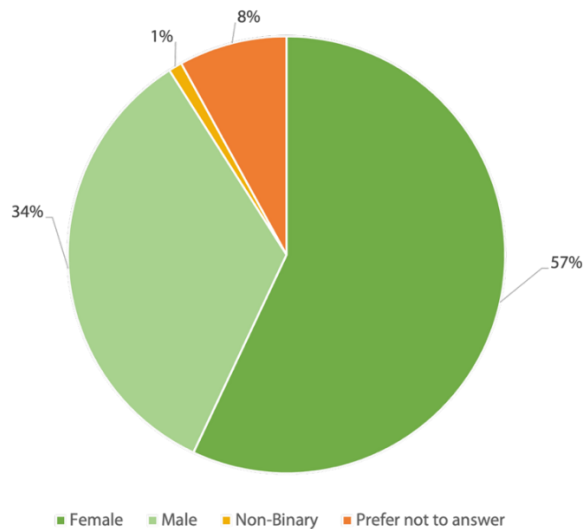
Survey responses included participation from several professional sectors connected to community safety and wellbeing. Approximately 30% of respondents identified as local government employees, while 28% identified as health care workers. Smaller proportions identified as social services workers (5%) or public safety employees, including RCMP, Fire, and Bylaw personnel (5%). Approximately 23% selected “none of the above.”



Base: 43 Respondents

Question 18. Please select your gender.

Survey participation included respondents identifying across multiple gender categories. The majority of respondents identified as female (57%), followed by male respondents (34%). Smaller proportions identified as non-binary (1%) or preferred not to answer (8%).



Base: 417 Respondents



4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The engagement process provided valuable insight into community perspectives regarding safety, wellbeing, and emerging priorities within Penticton. Overall, responses demonstrate broad recognition that community safety extends beyond crime prevention and includes housing stability, mental health and addictions supports, social connectedness, emergency preparedness, accessibility, and the overall condition of public spaces.

Survey findings identified crime prevention and public safety, housing and homelessness, mental health and substance use, and emergency preparedness as key priority areas for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. Respondents also emphasized the importance of balanced approaches that combine enforcement, prevention, housing, recovery services, social supports, and community-based solutions.

Open-ended feedback further highlighted concerns related to affordability, visible social disorder, transportation safety, public space maintenance, and the importance of transparency and accountability in municipal decision-making. At the same time, many respondents expressed support for coordinated investments that strengthen both community wellbeing and perceptions of safety over the long term.

Overall, the findings reflect a strong interest in collaborative, proactive, and prevention-focused approaches to community safety and wellbeing. The feedback gathered through this engagement process will help inform future priorities, partnerships, and implementation strategies as the City continues development of the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan.

APPENDIX A – ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

The following summarizes the timeline of the engagement process, which provided residents and community members with an opportunity to learn about the Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan and share feedback regarding community safety, wellbeing priorities, and future areas of focus. Information was made available through the Shape Your City Penticton webpage, supported by background materials and an online survey.

Date	Activity
March 4	Phase 2 Feedback Opens
April 8	Phase 2 Feedback Closes

