

**Calgary**



# Calgary Safety and Wellbeing Plan for Calgary

**Engagement Summary**  
Summer 2025



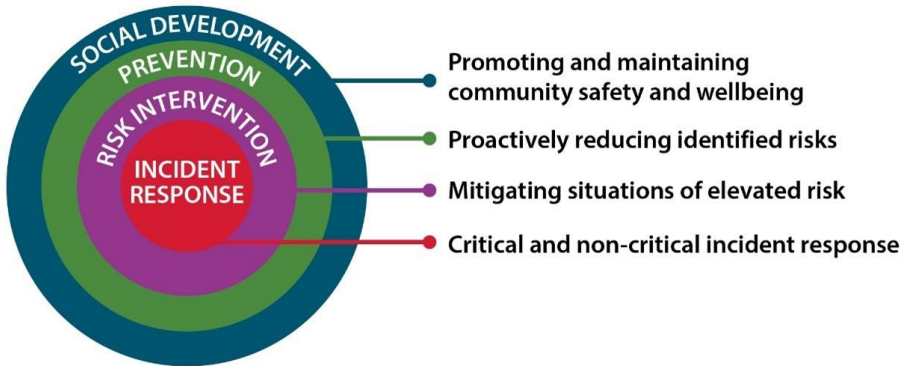
## Project overview

Calgarians have told us that community safety and wellbeing are important to them. As a result, public safety is a City of Calgary corporate priority, recognizing that we all deserve to feel safe and be safe, no matter who we are or where we are. Community safety and wellbeing also align with many Council 2023-2026 directions (see Resilient Calgary).

Safety, feelings of safety, and wellbeing are influenced by many factors including (but not limited to) poverty, housing, experiences of racism or discrimination, access to services, neighbourhood design, participation in community events, and frequency of emergency events.

Addressing the root causes of social issues and safety concerns is a shared responsibility that requires collaboration, commitment and investment from many. The Community Safety and Wellbeing (CSWB) Plan for Calgary will align existing strategies, plans, policies and services with a common vision. It will describe the contributions that The City, community partners and other orders of government currently make to address community safety and wellbeing. It will highlight priority areas and strategic directions to further advance the work around the CSWB themes, gaps and opportunities. These will represent the most important local needs. While many activities and investments are underway, a coordinated strategy will align work to these priority areas and strategic directions, advancing progress over the next five years.

The plan will be built on a framework that connects activities and investments to incident response, risk intervention, prevention and social development categories.



The framework shows how supports in prevention, social development and risk intervention can help reduce the need for more expensive incident response. Incident response approaches alone cannot deliver sustained solutions towards community safety and wellbeing. Investments and activities across the continuum can result in long-term positive changes over time.



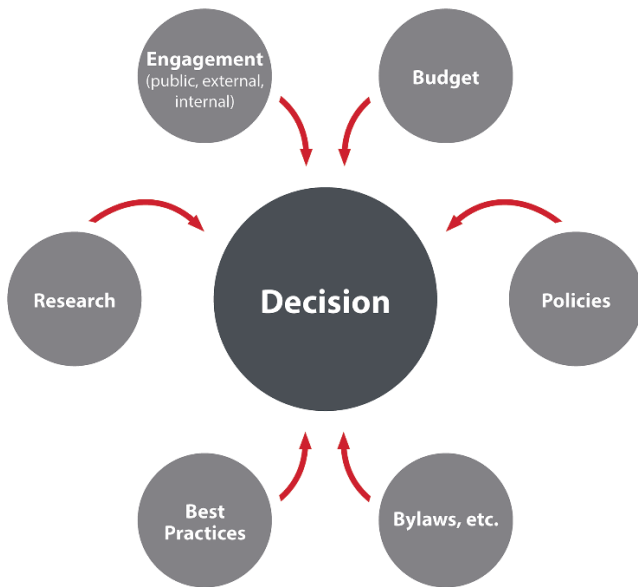
## Our engagement approach

A meaningful and purposeful engagement process was conducted for the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan for Calgary. The engagement process had three phases including internal engagement, external targeted engagement, and combined targeted engagement including internal and external interest holders. In each phase, interest holders gave feedback that helped shape the Plan, and that feedback was then shared and discussed in the next phase of engagement.

To further this project and understanding, we engaged with targeted interest holders at a 'Consult' level on The City's Engagement spectrum. This means we gathered feedback from participants to analyze issues and explore ideas. By consulting with industry sector and internal interest holders, we aim to understand and consider their concerns and ideas in the development of a CSWB Plan for Calgary.

## How participant feedback will be used

Interest holder feedback is essential for the development of the CSWB Plan for Calgary. Feedback from this engagement process has informed the development of the plan. It is important to note that technical data, policies, budgets and best practices will also inform the plan.



## Engagement techniques and overview

Over 200 interest holders were involved from sectors such as justice, health, mental health, addictions, youth, climate and the environment, emergency management, arts and culture, ethno-cultural groups, and internal, The City of Calgary, subject matter experts. Feedback was gathered using a variety of engagement methods including:

- 1:1 interviews from September 2024 – March 2025
- Attendance at various advisory committees
  - 7 advisory committees from January – March 2025. Total of 62 participants.
- Online feedback questionnaire
  - Open from January 27 – February 23, 2025. Total of 332 page views with 66 submissions of input.
- In-person workshops
  - 4 workshops taking place from late April to early May 2025. Total of 121 participants.



Photo from CSWB Workshop



## What we asked

### 1:1 Interviews with City of Calgary Strategy, Plan and Policy Leads

1. Tell us about your work and how it is progressing?
2. Does your work have dedicated funding or a funding/investment stream? If yes, tell us about it (i.e., funding amounts, primary audience, general uptake)
3. Are there activities underway that you want to highlight as strengths and that could be built upon within a CSWB Plan?
4. Is there additional or historical context related to this work that we should know about?
5. What measurement, if any, are you currently doing or developing related to your work?
6. Are you aware of community-based (external) strategies, plan, initiatives, or collaboratives that the CSWB Plan Project Team should connect with as part of our Part 2 engagement? Can you share the best contact?
7. Do you have any further feedback related to the CSWB Plan in general?

### Advisory Committees

1. What are the most important community safety and wellbeing issues facing the communities or population you represent in Calgary?
2. What is currently being done to contribute to community safety and wellbeing in Calgary?
3. What are future opportunities that can be implemented over the next 1 to 5 years to improve community safety and wellbeing for Calgarians?

### Online feedback questionnaire

1. What are the most important community safety and wellbeing issues facing the communities or population you serve in Calgary?
2. What is your organization currently doing that contribute to community safety and wellbeing in Calgary? (e.g., strategies, plans, collaboratives, policies, service delivery)
3. What future opportunities can your organization implement over the next 1 to 5 years to improve community safety and wellbeing for Calgarians?
4. Do you have any additional ideas to improve community safety and wellbeing for Calgarians that haven't been mentioned yet?



## In-person workshops

The draft Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan priority areas and strategic directions package was presented to interest holders to review and provide feedback on. Participants were then asked the following questions:

1. What do you think about each proposed priority area?
2. What do you think of the strategic directions listed in the priority area? Are these the strategic directions that will contribute to improve outcomes within this priority area? Are there additional strategic directions to consider?
3. Are we accurately presenting the current gaps and opportunities? Is something missing?
4. Is there a priority area missing?

The Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan project team was asked to develop common definitions for the terminology of Community Safety and Wellbeing. Creating common definitions will help to use them consistently, avoid confusion, and apply them to various plans, policies, and strategies. Interest holders were also asked to provide feedback on the following definitions:

**Community safety** refers to creating conditions that support the security of people to be and feel free from harm, danger, discrimination, or risk in both public and private spaces. It considers safety incidents, feelings of safety, and vulnerabilities that may impact physical, psychological, and social safety.

**Wellbeing** refers to the social, cultural, economic, environmental, emotional, and physical conditions for individuals and communities. These conditions impact the ability to meet needs related to education, health care, food, housing, income, social supports, and cultural expression. Wellbeing impacts quality of life, access to opportunities, connections to and inclusion in society, and participation in community.



## What We Heard

The following are high level themes that emerged from the engagement process. Our qualitative data collection process focuses on gathering in-depth insights and narratives. As such, we do not provide percentages of comments or list themes in order of most frequent to least frequent, as this approach emphasizes the richness and context of the feedback, rather than quantitative metrics.

Theme	Detailed explanation
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High value in the ability to form and leverage partnerships, relationships, and coordinate programs and support services to best serve Calgarians. The importance of integrated service models to improve care coordination and reduce gaps.</li> </ul>
<b>Providing safe spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong desire for the need of public safety and safe spaces (both public and private).</li> <li>• Inclusive design should be part of planning, permitting, and infrastructure decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Impacts of technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online risk is a broad topic where risk which can include grooming, fraud and scams, trolling, threats, and hate speech. It can impact all ages.</li> </ul>
<b>Role of programs and support services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High value in building foundations for physical and emotional wellbeing with programs and support services. Within these programs and support services, cultural and sub-populations with higher needs should be considered to best serve Calgarians.</li> <li>• Ensuring fair and equitable access to programs and support services improves the safety and wellbeing of Calgarians of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Building inclusive communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of a strong sense of belonging and connection to community and its ability to empower natural support systems. People want to feel valued, seen, and included—not just present.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need to meet basic and economic needs such as food security and transportation needs, and overall concern for the current state of employment opportunities, livable wages, affordability, and cost of living.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for improved housing security through housing choice, accessibility, and affordability. The illusion of choice in housing is misleading—many people don't have options.</li> <li>• Zoning and land use policies can either help or hurt housing development and current bylaws sometimes create barriers. Tenants, especially newcomers, need education on their rights and responsibilities.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an interest in aging in place and a desire for tools and resources to assist this process.</li> </ul>
<b>Preventative/ Upstream interventions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventative/upstream interventions are very important for Calgarians' safety and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Mental health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health is a very important local safety and wellbeing issue, in addition to its importance at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental health can be influenced by a variety of factors relating to safety and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Substance use, addiction and treatment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substance use and addiction is an important issue for the community safety and wellbeing of Calgarians. There is a strong need for accessible and timely rehabilitation and treatment programs and services for Calgarians experiencing addiction to substance use.</li> <li>• Calls for trauma-informed care, resilience-building, and culturally appropriate supports.</li> </ul>
<b>Climate change and natural disasters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for increased preparation for responding to emergencies resulting from climate change and natural disasters. Awareness campaigns are needed to ensure people know what supports are available. Better coordination between The City of Calgary, businesses, and community partners is needed.</li> <li>• Needs to include all three phases: preparation, response, and recovery.</li> </ul>
<b>Social disorder and crime</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern over social disorder and crime, and a strong desire for the need of public safety and safe spaces (both public and private).</li> </ul>
<b>Social isolation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation is a very important issue for the safety and wellbeing of Calgarians. Community and connectedness are very important for building the foundations of physical and emotional wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Domestic violence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic violence is an important safety and wellbeing issue.</li> <li>• Domestic violence survivors need tailored supports like micro-grants and credit repair.</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency and crisis preparation and response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for increased preparation for responding to an emergency and/or crisis.</li> <li>• Mental health and psychological safety are essential parts of emergency response.</li> </ul>
<b>Intergenerational trauma</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergenerational trauma is an important issue for the safety and wellbeing of Calgarians. A trauma informed response is needed to support Calgarians.</li> </ul>

<b>Social supports capacity and funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern over the capacity of various organizations and agencies and the desire for more sustainable funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Equity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued advancement and implementation of equity focused programs and services.</li> <li>• Systemic and institutional racism must be addressed explicitly.</li> </ul>
<b>Truth and Reconciliation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to the White Goose Flying report in response to Truth and Reconciliation is of high importance.</li> </ul>
<b>Unhoused Calgarians</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback indicated a high concern for the safety and wellbeing of unhoused Calgarians. This complex issue relates to many other themes heard within this engagement process.</li> </ul>
<b>Training, education, and empowerment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback indicated the importance of training, education, and the empowerment of Calgarians in various areas to support the safety and wellbeing for all. Community led initiatives and natural support systems within the community benefit safety and wellbeing for Calgarians. Training, education, and empowerment builds resiliency within Calgarians that benefit safety and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase physical features of safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback indicated a desire for an increase in safety within physical infrastructure. Examples include using CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles to prevent crime by designing the physical environment that positively influences human behavior.</li> </ul>
<b>Trust, police, reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many communities, including Indigenous and newcomer groups, don't feel safe with police.</li> <li>• There's a need for alternative responses, trauma-informed training, and clearer reporting systems.</li> <li>• People want to know who to call and when (e.g., 911 vs. 211) and need better public education on this.</li> </ul>
<b>Data, evaluation, accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People want to know how safety is being measured, tracked, and improved.</li> <li>• There's concern about data accuracy and the need for community input in evaluation activities.</li> <li>• Transparency and feedback loops are needed so people know their concerns are being heard.</li> </ul>
<b>Culture, creativity, spirituality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts, culture, and spiritual wellbeing are important for safety and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Cultural identity and representation in public spaces matter for belonging.</li> </ul>
<b>Active transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical infrastructure promoting active transportation promote health and wellbeing for Calgarians.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports Calgarians getting out into their communities, which creates more eyes on the street and more active and healthy communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Traffic safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern for speeding and a strong desire for traffic calming measures within communities.</li> </ul>

## Online feedback questionnaire

The following themes emerged from the online feedback questionnaire:

### High-level themes

- **Programs and support services**
  - High value in building foundations for physical and emotional wellbeing with programs and support services.
  - Within these programs and support services, cultural and sub-populations with higher need considerations are needed to best serve Calgarians.
  - Ensuring fair and equitable access to programs and support services improves the safety and wellbeing of Calgarians of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.
  - The importance of integrated service models to improve care coordination and reduce gaps. This includes opportunities for relationship and partnership development to leverage services within industry sector organizations.
  - Sustainable funding is an area of high importance.
- **Building inclusive communities**
  - The importance of a strong sense of belonging and connection to community and its ability to empower natural support systems. Feedback indicated current issues of mental health, addiction and recovery, isolation, equity, systemic barriers and discrimination.
  - The need for safe spaces (both public and private) is of high importance.
- **Economic wellbeing**
  - The need to meet basic and economic needs such as food security and transportation needs, and overall concern for the current state of employment opportunities, livable wages, affordability, and cost of living.
- **Housing**
  - The need for improved housing security through housing choice, accessibility, and affordability.
- **Preventative/upstream interventions**
  - The importance of preventative/upstream interventions is very important for Calgarians' safety and wellbeing.
  - Training and education on safety and wellbeing, both within organizations and to the public at large, is important.
  - Communication within sector agents and all levels of government is needed.



- **Mental health**
  - Mental health as a very important local safety and wellbeing issue, in addition to its importance at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental health can be influenced by a variety of factors relating to safety and wellbeing.
- **Substance use, addiction and treatment**
  - Substance use and addiction is an important issue for the community safety and wellbeing of Calgarians.
  - There is a strong need for accessible and timely rehabilitation and treatment programs and services for Calgarians experiencing addiction to substance use.

## **In-person workshops**

### **General takeaways:**

Participants were in general agreement with the [proposed priority areas and strategic directions](#) but did provide some considerations to improve the overall understanding of the CSWB Plan including the following:

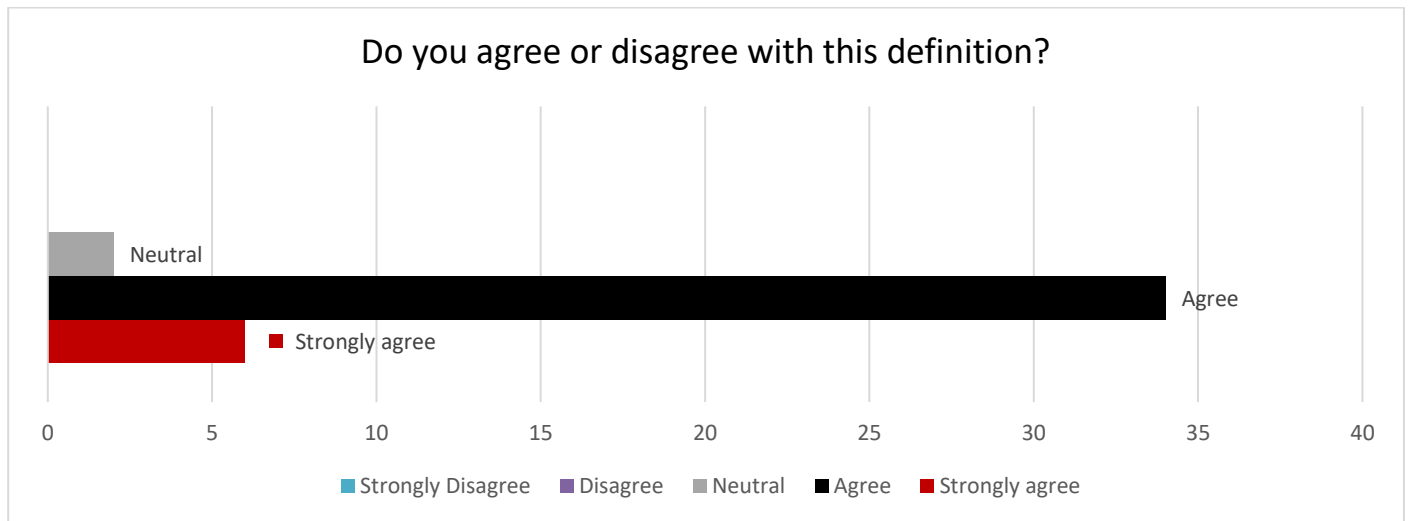
- The priority areas in the plan are closely connected and affect each other, so they should be looked at together as a whole. Feedback suggested these connections between priority areas be shown in a way that is easier to understand.
- Some feedback indicated a desire to potentially merge priority areas that are heavily connected or strongly influence each other.
- Equity, diversity, inclusion, and Truth and Reconciliation should be part of every priority area and the whole CSWB Plan. It should be shown in a clearer and easier way for people to understand its universal application.

Due to the large and diverse amount of feedback, please view the full [What We Heard Report](#) to get a fulsome understanding of the feedback from the In-person workshops.

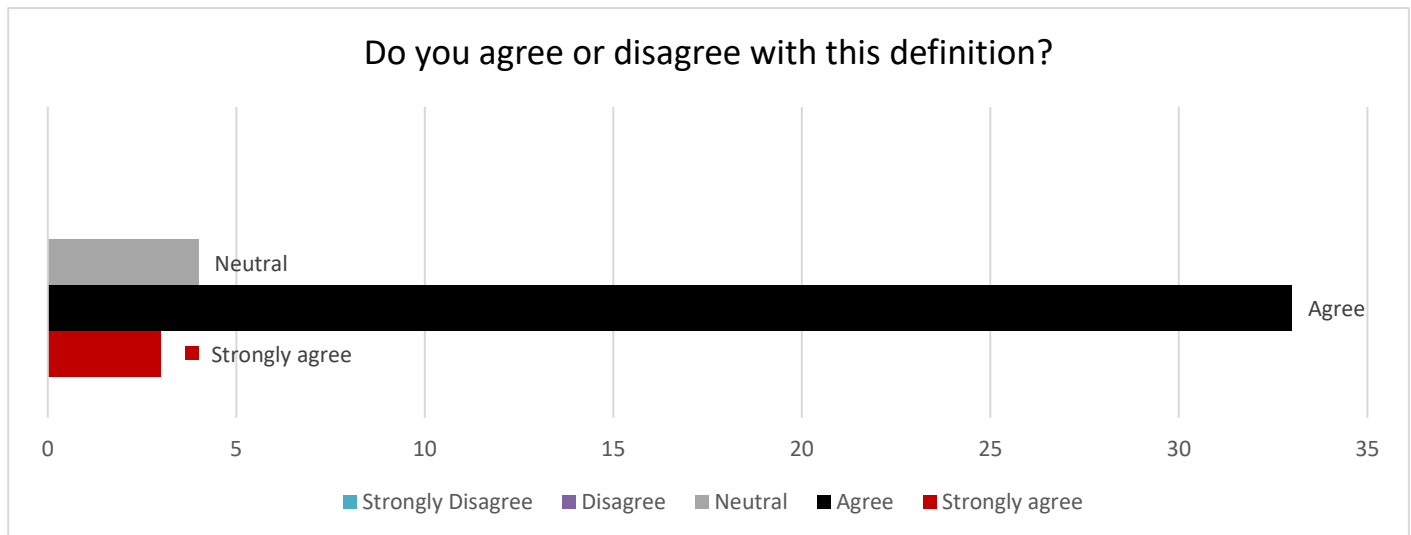


Feedback on the definitions of Community Safety and Wellbeing was obtained with a dotmocracy exercise at the In-person workshops. Overall participants were in general agreement with the proposed definitions of Community Safety and Wellbeing.

**Community Safety:** refers to creating conditions that support the security of people to be and feel free from harm, danger, discrimination, or risk in both public and private spaces. It considers safety incidents, feelings of safety, and vulnerabilities that may impact physical, psychological, and social safety.



**Wellbeing:** refers to the social, cultural, economic, environmental, emotional, and physical conditions for individuals and communities. These conditions impact the ability to meet needs related to education, health care, food, housing, income, social supports, and cultural expression. Wellbeing impacts quality of life, access to opportunities, connections to and inclusion in society, and participation in community.



## Full engagement reports

The full What We Heard Reports can be found below:

- [Online feedback questionnaire What We Heard Report](#)
- [In-person workshops What We Heard Report](#)



Photo from CSWB Workshop