



scəwəθən məsteyəx^w
TSAWWASSEN FIRST NATION

Community Safety Strategy

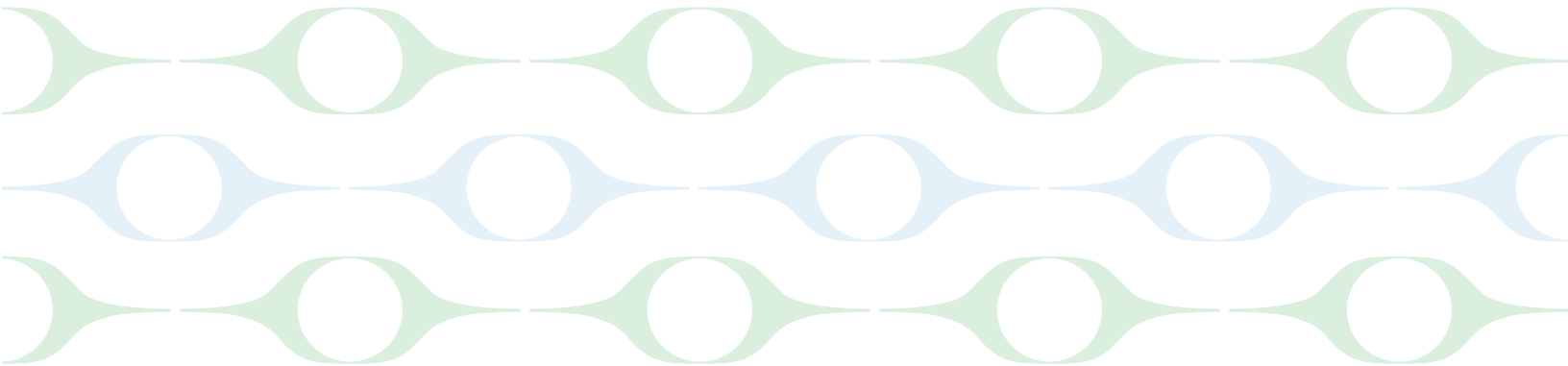
Panel Report

March 2026



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Acknowledgments

The panel gratefully acknowledges the many people whose contributions made this report possible. Our work built on the existing CSS and the substantial efforts already undertaken to implement it.

Community members contributed their experiences, concerns, and solutions; staff added critical operational knowledge and largely defined the recognized needs in each house post. Together their input forms the backbone of this report.

We are thankful for the insight and guidance provided by:

- **TFN Members** who participated in workshops, engagement sessions, Members Gatherings, family meetings, and surveys.
- **TFN staff**, from the following departments who shared enormously of their subject-matter expertise and experience, which was essential throughout the process: **Health and Social Services, Lands, Lands – Planning Services, Legal, Municipal Infrastructure, Member Services, and Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs**, and in particular: Katie Alexander, Mary Childs, Chrystalynn Gurniak, Connor Hasegawa, Shawn Jacobs, Andrew Lawrence, Priyanka Roy, Komal Shaikh, Twyla Smith and Alexandra Turcotte.
- The **Delta Police Department TFN Service Team**, in particular Constable Chad Bristow and Constable Jason Martens, who provided valuable insight in relation to policing and enforcement from whose.
- **Executive Council**, for their direction and continued support.
- **The CSS Steering Committee**, comprising Chrystalynn Gurniak, Twyla Smith, Mary Childs, Andrew Lawrence, Maura Gowans, Carmen Lachlan and Katie Alexander whose advice and oversight guided the panel's approach.

We also extend our sincere appreciation to **TFN staff** who provided tireless logistical and administrative support, including Alexandra Turcotte, Connor Hasegawa, Courtney Chambers and Jen Jansen. Their coordination ensured the panel could carry out its mandate effectively. And we recognize Kaymi-Yoon Maxwell for their untiring support in pulling this document together.

Summary

Background

In 2013, Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN) developed its first Community Safety Strategy to address illicit activities through counselling, environmental design, and enforcement. A decade later, TFN recognized the need for an updated, holistic strategy reflecting current community needs. In response, Executive Council established a Steering Committee and engaged an expert Panel to guide the development of a renewed strategy grounded in community voices, Indigenous law, and best practices. This report and the recommended strategies it contains are the result of the Panel's work under the guidance of the Steering Committee.

Approach

The Panel undertook extensive community engagement from 2022–2025, including at workshops, Members' Gatherings, health fairs, and targeted family and youth sessions. These were complemented by research into other First Nations' approaches, academic literature, and Coast Salish legal principles.

Guiding Principles

The Panel's work is anchored in Tsawwassen snəweyət (teachings) uncovered through this process: siʔéṁstəxʷ (respect), čəčəwítəl (help one another), 0əʔit teḡənt (gratitude), ʔl (love), ʔəwə0ət (healing), nəčəʔmat (working together as one), and xʷtetəlqt (accountability).

Structure

The report and recommended strategies are organized around four inter-related and interdependent foundational sḡéḡtəkʷ or house posts, each of which is essential to a safe and healthy community: I) ʔəwə0ət (Health and Wellness); II) ʔə0ət (Safe Housing); III) ʔəqʷmát (Physical Infrastructure); and IV) šxʷkʷecxənam (Public Order and Safety).

Recommended Strategies

The Recommended Strategies set out in the report provide a comprehensive, community-driven framework to strengthen health, housing, infrastructure, and public order in Tsawwassen. Rooted in Tsawwassen and Coast Salish legal traditions and contemporary best practices, they are intended to set a pathway for safer, healthier, and more resilient futures—fulfilling the TFN government's constitutional commitment to improve the quality of life for all Members.

The Report

This is a comprehensive report supported by detailed appendices, which can be referred to in order to explain and augment each of the recommended strategies.

Report



REPORT

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Introduction

In 2013 scəwəθən məsteyəx^w (Tsawwassen First Nation, also referred to as throughout this report as “Tsawwassen” or TFN) developed a Community Safety Strategy (CSS), the purpose of which was to reduce illicit activities, such as toxic drug consumption, on Tsawwassen Lands through counselling, environmental design initiatives, and suppression measures for large-scale offenders. Through consultation with Tsawwassen government and staff, it was determined that the 2013 CSS had become outdated. Recognizing the need for an updated CSS to better serve the current needs of members of Tsawwassen First Nation (referred to as “Tsawwassen Members” or simply “Members”), Executive Council formed the CSS Steering Committee to create a new CSS. The Steering Committee sought out a panel of professionals with a breadth of expertise in various areas related to community wellness and safety to facilitate engagement with community and research best practices (the “Panel”). This report and the new CSS recommended by the Panel are the products of the Panel’s work.

The Panel

The Panel is made up of the following members, each of whom has worked to author the areas of this report and recommendations associated with their area of expertise: Janice Abbott, Kim Baird, Dr. Shannon McDonald, Dr. Sarah Morales, and Melinda Skeels. Biographies for each of the Panelists are at [Appendix A – Panelist Biographies](#).

This Report

In this report, the Panel outlines its work, findings, and recommendations. We start by considering the context in which the Panel has done its work and setting out the methodology we employed, including a summary of our engagement with the Tsawwassen community. We then outline the core guiding principles that we learned from the community and have used to guide our work. The remainder of the report is organized into four house posts: *Health and Wellness* – *laṭawəθat*; *Safe Housing* – *laṭəθat*; *Physical Infrastructure* – *ḥəq^wmát*; and *Public Order and Safety* – *šx^wk^wecxənam*. Under each house post, we set out what we learned from community members; the current state of services and programs; a discussion and analysis of our findings; and our recommendations for the new CSS. The report is underpinned by a series of appendices setting out greater details in respect of many of the topics covered.

It is the Panel’s hope that this document will provide a foundation upon which the Tsawwassen government may continue to support the health and safety of Tsawwassen community members.

Towards a new Community Safety Strategy

Supporting TFN's Strategic Vision

The Tsawwassen government is obligated under the Tsawwassen Constitution to “make best efforts to improve the quality of life for all the Members of the Tsawwassen First Nation” (section 2.2). This imperative includes fostering a healthy and safe community.

These goals are recognized in the Tsawwassen First Nation xʷəliwənstəxʷkʷ θə syəwénəł ct (Honouring Our Ancestors) Charter, one of the themes of which is Health, Wellness, and Safety. Desired outcomes under that theme include *Community Safety* and *Supportive Housing*. A related theme is *Complete Communities, Assets, and Infrastructure*, which includes *Well Maintained and Accessible Infrastructure* and *Culturally Appropriate and Affordable Quality Housing* amongst its desired outcomes.

The Tsawwassen First Nation 2026-2031 Strategic Plan focusses on strategies and actions for the TFN Government to take in the next 5 years to move toward the vision articulated in the Charter. The completion and implementation of a new CSS is one of those strategies.

The 2013 CSS

The 2013 CSS has as its goal the following:

... to set out a variety of options for how the Tsawwassen Government intends to take measures to protect its land and to prevent the abuse and exploitation of the land for purposes unhealthy to the Tsawwassen community. In addition, these measures are designed to enhance the safety and security of Tsawwassen Members living on Tsawwassen Lands.

With this goal in mind, the 2013 CSS focused on three areas: (1) counselling and other supports for Tsawwassen Members who are struggling with problematic relationships with substance use as part of an overall holistic approach to health; (2) reducing and preventing illegal activity on TFN lands through design of community infrastructure; and (3) discouraging drug trafficking and use of criminalized drugs on TFN lands by making those activities more difficult or more public.

Enhancing safety and security for Tsawwassen Members remains a priority for the Tsawwassen government. A decade after the existing CSS was drafted, TFN seeks to develop a more holistic CSS that considers contemporary community needs and addresses issues not only related to problematic substance use and illegal activities, but all of the complex and interrelated health and safety issues affecting Tsawwassen Members as part of its constitutional duty to make best efforts to improve the quality of life for all Tsawwassen Members.

Methodology

The CSS will be a stepping-stone to transforming the well-being of the Tsawwassen community; therefore, the Panel recognizes that this report and the recommended new CSS must be derived from community needs and be driven by the lived experiences and vision of Tsawwassen leaders and community members.

Accordingly, this report and the recommended new CSS were developed through a combination of primary and secondary research, with a focus on community engagement. We are also informed by the experiences of other First Nations communities facing similar challenges.

Primary Research

The Panel's primary research occurred through engagement with Tsawwassen community members, leadership, and staff.

Community Engagement

What we learned from Tsawwassen community members is key to the Panel's approach to writing this report and shaping the recommended CSS. The Panel engaged the community through a series of workshops, which resulted in dialogue, feedback, and ground-truthing of our initial findings. We have presented on several topic areas, including housing and harm reduction, to build capacity in relation to various approaches to community safety and to further solicit feedback from community members. Finally, Panel members attended three annual Tsawwassen Members' Gatherings where we sought input from Members and provided information on our research and the progress of this project.

We have summarized our community engagement sessions briefly below, with more fulsome accounts of each session set out in [Appendix B – Community Engagement](#).

We are thankful to all who took the time to share their concerns, needs, and suggested solutions with us over the course of this project. We worked to ensure your voices are reflected throughout this report and form the basis of our recommended CSS.

● **November 2022 – Members' Gathering**

In November 2022, the Panel was scheduled to introduce our role in developing the Tsawwassen Community Safety Strategy. Due to the power outage, we were unable to formally present; however, some of our members were able to stay for the Gathering and meet informally with community members about the project. The Panel members also attended Tsawwassen's Strategic Visioning session, which helped orient the Panel to the community's vision for safety, health, and wellness.

Methodology – Cont.

- **March 2023 – Initial Workshop and Visioning Exercise**

In March 2023, we had our initial workshop and visioning exercise with community. We had the opportunity to introduce the Panel and forthcoming work to the community and to engage in a high-level visioning workshop where we asked community members about their safety concerns and hopes for the future. The findings from this session are set out in [Appendix B1 – Initial Workshop and Visioning Exercise Summary of Input](#).

- **June 2023 – Health Fair**

Panel members attended TFN's June 2023 Health fair and set up table where we shared information about the Panel's work and gathered feedback from community members. The community responses gathered from this session can be found at [Appendix B2 – Health Fair Summary of Input](#).

- **July 2023 – Harm Reduction and Indigenous Laws Workshop**

In July 2023, we met with community to present on the topic of harm reduction and answer any questions about this approach to health and safety. The presentation slides are available at [Appendix B3 – Harm Reduction Workshop Slides](#).

We also had the opportunity to do an exercise with the community regarding Indigenous laws and legal orders, to illustrate that Tsawwassen oral traditions and customary laws can be a useful tool to help us examine this issue. The presentation slides are available at [Appendix B4 – Narrative Analysis Method Slides](#).

- **August 2023 – Housing Workshop**

In August 2023, we presented and engaged with community members on the topic of housing and its intersection with community safety and wellness. The presentation slides are available at [Appendix B5 – Housing Workshop Slides](#).

- **September 2023 – Members' Gathering**

In September 2023, we presented at the Tsawwassen Members' Gathering. There we shared what we had been working on during the past year and relayed some of the feedback and work done as a result of the community workshops. We also had an opportunity to present our proposed Guiding Principles and pillars and obtain community input to guide this work. Further information arising from this session is set out at [Appendix B6 – CSS Update and Ground Truthing](#) and [Appendix B7 – Community Responses from House Post Exercise](#).

Methodology – Cont.

● October 2024 – Members’ Gathering

In October 2024, Panel members set up an information table at the Gathering. We provided updates on our work and sought further information from community members about their community safety concerns and visions. We also had an anonymous online feedback portal for people to share their thoughts. Comments we collected in person and online are summarized at [Appendix B8 – Members’ Gathering Summary of Input](#).

Additionally, TFN staff organized and attended a harm reduction workshop for Members complete with harm reduction supplies such as Naloxone kits and fentanyl testing strips. The workshop emphasized the importance of healing through safe, non-judgmental relationships and provided examples of how harm reduction methods are used in daily life. Members said they were impressed with the harm reduction supplies and relatability of the content, with some asking for additional resources.

● May-July 2025 – Family, Individual, and Group Meetings

The Panel conducted a series of six meetings with families, an individual, and groups between May and July 2025. At these meetings, Panel members presented draft recommendations and sought feedback through small group discussions. The Panel members and participants discussed the draft CSS recommendations, shared insights into key community safety topics, and connected personal experiences to the matters addressed in the CSS. Summaries of what we heard in these meetings are available at [Appendix B9 – Family, Individual, and Group Meeting Summary of Input](#).

● September 2025 – Legislative Assembly Workshop

In September 2025, the Panel hosted a session for Tsawwassen Legislators at the Legislative Assembly’s 2025 Strategic Priorities Workshop. The workshop focused on a wisdom gathering exercise to consider measures short of banishment that Legislators could think about for responding to individuals acting in ways that may cause harm to community safety. Panelists led Legislators through discussions on the practical, legal, social, cultural, community safety, financial, and public notice considerations required for such measures. Details from this session are available at [Appendix B10 – Legislative Assembly Workshop Summary of Input](#).

Engagement with Leadership

We engaged leadership through the participation of members of government in the activities described above, by meeting with the Executive Council at various stages of developing our recommendations, by presenting to the Legislature, and through regular meetings with the Chief Administrative Officer, who sits on both the Panel and the CSS Steering Committee.

Methodology – Cont.

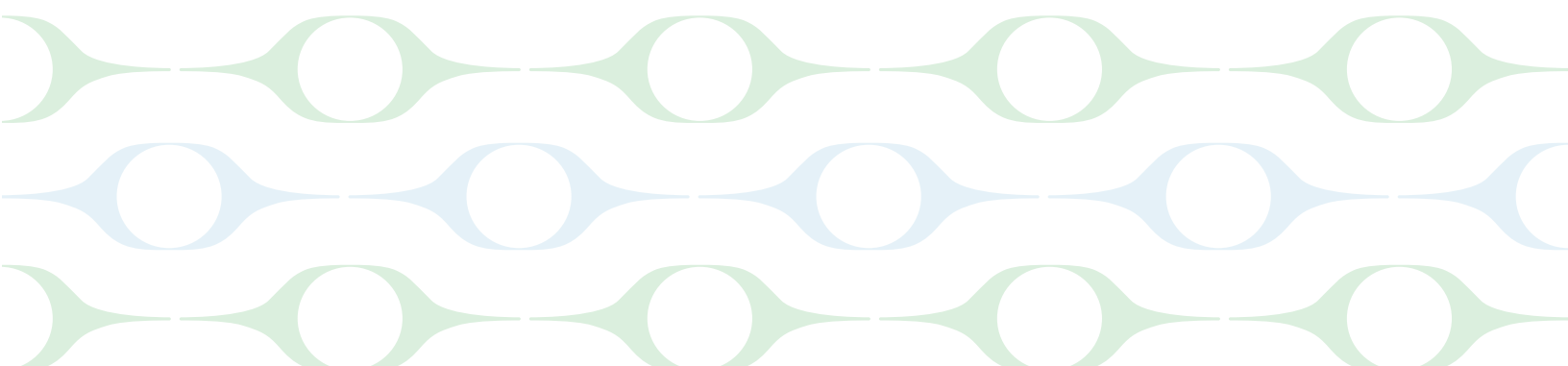
Engagement with Staff

Finally, the Panel engaged with staff through workshops with key staff members and direct engagement between staff and individual Panel members. The Panel's work was guided by the CSS Steering Committee, which was made up of key personnel, including the Chief Administrative Officer and general counsel.

Secondary Research

We conducted significant secondary source research in respect of several aspects of the Panel's work, with the help of Research Assistants from the University of Victoria's JD/JID Indigenous Laws Program, TFN staff, and articulated students from Ratcliff LLP. Collectively, we reviewed the academic literature (see [Appendix C – Literature Review](#) for our list of academic sources reviewed), engaged with other First Nations' experiences grappling with similar issues, including Squamish Nation, Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and Tseshaht First Nation, and reviewed case studies from other First Nations (see [Appendix D – Case Studies from Other First Nations](#)).

Areas of research we considered include: community-based First Nations policing models, banishment, problematic substance use and treatment, harm reduction, enforcement, safe-consumption, and culturally safe care. We looked at best practices and considered case studies that address the health and safety issues raised by the community.



Guiding Principles

To succeed, a Tsawwassen CSS must be guided by the snəwey̓əł (teachings) of the Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ and reflect the culture, values, beliefs, and customary practices of Tsawwassen community. Many snəwey̓əł could be reflected in the CSS, but for the purposes of this work we have focused on the following Guiding Principles, each of which is discussed in greater detail below.

1. Respect – siʔémstəxʷ

2. Help One Another – čəčəwítəl

3. Gratitude – θəʔit teḡənt

4. Love – ʔi

5. Healing – ʔatəwəθət

6. Working Together as One – nəčaʔmat

7. Accountability – xʷtetəlq̓t

1. Respect – siʔémstəxʷ

Every Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ is respected because every person is important to the health and well-being of the community, and as such, every person deserves to be treated with respect. Showing respect for one another means ensuring that people's basic needs are met and that, in doing so, they are treated with dignity. Those shown respect, must also give respect – respect for themselves, their family, their community, and their ancestors. Respect helps Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ live a good life and follow the syəθəs (teachings/traditions), including in interactions with one another.

2. Help One Another – čəčəwítəl

Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ are the caretakers of all their relations, and must support each other to protect and preserve Tsawwassen families, community, and future generations. What one has is not as important as what one shares with their relations, and how one selflessly reaches out to help other families within the community. This is evidenced by Tsawwassen ceremonies, which are a means of being generous, of celebrating and helping each other, and of creating stronger relations with one another. But, in helping one another, one must also help by working to accept support when offered.

Guiding Principles – Cont.

3. Gratitude – ʔəʔit teḵənt

Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ have a rich history that teaches about the value of being Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ. TFN lands, language, and ceremonies make Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ strong and teach about the importance of gratitude and humility. Gratitude for the things that are shared with us, both the intangible and tangible gifts, must always be shown, recognizing that Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ are ʔəʔit teḵənt (truly blessed).

4. Love – ʔi

Everyone is connected. Being in relation with one another means showing ʔi (love) to one another. When individuals and families are struggling and need care and support, the way that Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ love them is by showing compassion and refraining from judgment.

5. Healing – ʔəʔəwəθət

Because of colonialism and resulting intergenerational trauma, Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ all share struggles. The imposition of Western law and legal processes have weakened Tsawwassen family structures and the community's ability to look after one another. This must be recognized in developing strategies to address community safety, and the CSS must be based on holistic practices and view Tsawwassen community members as both individuals and as relations on a path to healing. ʔəʔəwəθət means healing backward (current community) and also healing forward (future generations).

6. Working Together as One – nəʔaʔmat

The syəθəs teach Tsawwassen about the importance of working together. Working together as one for current and future generations helps the Tsawwassen community develop the strengths of Tsawwassen məsteyəxʷ and families. Collaborative processes help the community build sustainable outcomes and sustainable relationships. It will help Tsawwassen work past the challenges the community is facing and rebuild relationships and responsibilities to one another.

7. Accountability – xʷtetəʔqt

According to Coast Salish teachings, it is important to build and maintain good relations. Coast Salish people recognize that there is a strength in being connected – to kin and community, to the land, and to Coast Salish ancestors. To build and maintain good relations, everyone must fulfill their obligations to one another. This means being accountable for one's own actions and supporting those who are struggling or in need. xʷtetəʔqt is in keeping with the teaching of nəʔaʔmat, recognizing that Tsawwassen are all related and must all work together to “live a good life” and create a healthy and safe environment for all relations.

Obligations of Individuals and Families

Within Coast Salish legal traditions, safe and strong communities are the responsibility of everyone. Individuals and families have obligations to create and maintain safe environments and to take care of their relations when their kin pose a risk to the safety and well-being of the community. At the 2023 Members' Gathering, community members spoke about the need for accountability and both individual and familial responsibilities when addressing community safety on TFN lands. As such, some of the recommendations may reflect the need for individuals to help themselves and for families to provide supports for their relations; creating and maintaining safety is not just a responsibility of the government, but of every community member.

Obligations of TFN to Support Families

Under Coast Salish laws, *siḡém* (respected leaders) have additional obligations to support their community members because of the position of power and privilege they hold. These obligations could be met by providing direct support to a struggling individual, but it could also be met by providing supports to the families of those struggling individuals. Strengthening a family enables that family (who is often positioned to understand the needs of their relative) to support the community member who is facing challenges. Furthermore, supporting the relations of those struggling also serves a preventive function.

House Posts – sǰéǰtǰkʷ

Historically, sǰéǰtǰkʷ (house posts) were typically part of the interior structure of Tsawwassen and other Coast Salish communities' longhouses, used to support often-massive crossbeams. In some instances, a carved house board would be affixed to a sturdier house post or a wall, memorializing or depicting mythical creatures associated with family history, notable ancestors, events which displaced ancestors' spirit powers, or inherited privileges of the family. According to James Point, the late Musqueam Elder and historian, "they showed what kind of person you were."

The Panel has identified four house posts to guide and help us articulate the foundation of community safety for the Tsawwassen Nation. In essence, to "show what kind of community" Tsawwassen aspires to be.

Based on engagement with Tsawwassen Members and leadership, and with assistance from language keepers, we have identified the following four sǰéǰtǰkʷ:



I. Health and Wellness – ǰǰǰǰǰǰǰ;



II. Safe Housing – ǰǰǰǰ;



III. Physical Infrastructure – ǰǰǰǰǰǰ; and



IV. Public Order and Safety – ǰǰǰǰǰǰǰǰǰ.

House Post I - Health and Wellness - ǰǰǰǰǰǰǰ

The healthiest communities are the safest communities. When a community is well, it can be a powerful influence against both criminal and harmful behaviours. Well-being means people are living in conditions that promote mental, physical, and spiritual health, connectedness, and resilience. They have dignity and the resources to reach their full potential and thrive.

A lot of the feedback we received from Members recognized that safety is significantly improved when individuals have access to treatment for their health needs, particularly for those struggling with their mental wellness and/or with problematic substance use and trauma. For the results to be successful, services must be culturally relevant, trauma-responsive, and holistic. There was also a recognition of the importance of prevention. It is much safer and less costly to make scaled investments in treating health needs at the earliest possible stage than waiting until someone's symptoms have worsened or overlapping health and social difficulties emerge. These difficulties may include compounding health and safety issues such as those related to substance use, homelessness, and involvement in the criminal justice system.

House Posts – sǰéǰtǰkʷ – Cont.

House Post II - Safe Housing - laʔθǰt

It is well known that housing is essential for people's health, well-being, and safety. When community members don't have stable housing, they can't participate fully in the community. That is why it is so important that all Members have access to homes they can afford and that suit their needs, recognizing that those needs may change over time and ongoing community input is required.

House Post III - Physical Infrastructure - ǰǰqʷmǰt

In all our engagements, Tsawwassen Members, especially Tsawwassen youth, have spoken of the need to feel physically safe on and off TFN lands. Physical infrastructure needs cover a wide array of concerns, ranging from the need to monitor and control speed limits on TFN lands to the need for sufficient street lighting, to the need for clear signage in parking and loading zones.

House Post IV - Public Order and Safety - ǰxʷkʷecxǰnǰm

Indigenous communities, such as Tsawwassen First Nation, have always had laws that could prevent, or at least minimize, the conflict that can arise when human beings live together. Moreover, communities have also always needed to be able to address the conflict and pain after an incident occurred. These laws and legal processes were not necessarily punitive, since they were also influenced by legal principles about healing, reconciliation, and reintegration. Accordingly, Indigenous legal systems, like Coast Salish legal traditions, are sources of complex proactive and reactive mechanisms that attempt to produce and maintain public order and safety (a stable and predictable social world) for Indigenous communities. This need remains today for the Tsawwassen community, as evidenced by community discussions about responses to serious incidents and banishment.

For each of the sǰéǰtǰkʷ: that set the foundation of the CSS, in the pages that follow we set out:

- what we learned from community members;
- the current state of services and programs, as informed by staff;
- a discussion and analysis of our research findings; and
- our recommendations for the new CSS.

While the Panel has organized the recommended CSS and this report around these four sǰéǰtǰkʷ:, it's important to recognize that they are interconnected and depended on each other. If you remove one, the house will fall. We have grouped recommendations under the sǰéǰtǰkʷ: with which they align most closely, but in many instances particular recommendations could also fit under one or more other sǰéǰtǰkʷ: as well.



House Post I

Health and Wellness – łatəwəθət

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What we Learned from the Community

Members spoke about the importance for programs and services to be tailored to the different sectors of the community, for example, youth, Elders, young parents, those struggling with problematic substance use and or maintaining their mental wellness, and the families of those struggling with problematic substance use. Others emphasized the importance of programs and events aimed at bringing diverse sectors of the community together, for example events bringing youth and Elders together.

Education and Skills Training

A large part of preventing harm is public education. Members identified the need for educational or training programs covering a wide variety of topics, from financial literacy to cooking, to self-defence, to nutrition.

Education programs aimed at de-stigmatizing substance use and mental health so that more Members feel safe to seek support were also identified as a priority.

Members further emphasized the importance of education within the community about what educational and training programs are offered.

Healthy Family Programs

Supporting healthy, strong families is important. Members asked that programs aimed at enabling families to gather, play, and learn together, such as swim nights, movie nights, and sports nights, be open to all Members. Members would also like more community gathering spaces for families to connect.

Physical Health

Members recognize the importance of physical health to creating safe and healthy communities. Members identified desires for programs aimed at health and wellness for all Members, such as walking groups, cycling, group fitness classes, incentives, and community challenges. We heard a desire for more naloxone training for Members to empower them to respond to overdoses; they also wanted access to other harm reduction measures.

Mental Health

Oftentimes the struggles Members face are a result of trauma and intergenerational trauma. As a result, more counselors and support people are needed on TFN lands. Members identified the importance of having these services available during after-hours, as well as during work hours.



In addition to individualized services, Members also asked for more group programs, such as culturally appropriate in-community group therapy sessions and support for family members of those struggling with problematic substance use.

Cultural Well-Being

Strong connections to culture are vital to safety and well-being in Indigenous communities. Members expressed an appetite for programs related to harvesting and preparing traditional medicines, fishing and shellfish gathering, longhouse practices, sweats, weaving, and dancing, for Members living both on and off TFN lands.

Current Status of Programs and Services

Nurse Practitioner and Community Nursing

Nurse Practitioner: TFN has one nurse practitioner (NP) to oversee the primary care of the community through diagnostics, medication, health promotion and illness prevention, physical assessments, and referrals. At the time of writing this report, the NP position is filled by a general practitioner (GP), whose case load is full. The objective of this position is to provide timely, low-barrier, and accessible healthcare to Tsawwassen Members. The service is intended to be available to all Members, including all Members living off TFN lands who are willing and able to travel to TFN lands. However, the demand currently exceeds one NP/GP’s capacity.

Community Nursing: TFN has one registered nurse (RN) and two licensed practical nurses (LPNs) who provide a host of continuing care services such as medication management, complex treatment navigation, medical transportation, wound care, education on diagnoses and treatment plans, and referrals to specialized supports.

Recognized Needs:

- Nurses lack support for providing non-medical assistance to patients with needs such as case management, appointment accompaniment, and advocacy; this is a growing concern as community members’ needs become more complex. Health navigators are needed to support nursing staff.
- Staff expressed a need for a clear policy on rides and accompaniments to medical appointments.



- Members need to understand what transportation services are available for attending medical appointments, and the parameters and limitations of this service.
- The current system is reactive rather than proactive. Increased resources are needed to focus more on prevention of health issues such as overdoses, communicable may be diseases, and skin and soft tissue infections, and early intervention for mental health concerns.
- There is no clear direction or policy on harm reduction, including nurses' ability to provide harm reduction supplies to Members on TFN lands.
- Education and support to engage in harm reduction practices would assist with health promotion, risk mitigation, and preventive strategies.
- TFN does not have a clinical de-escalation crisis team who can intervene in the event of an emergency where police involvement may not be necessary. TFN is participating in conversation with the Canadian Mental Health Association's Crisis Response, Community Led team and the Delta Police Department to address this need.
- Nurses are not required at this time to undergo decolonized Mental Health Act education to allow them to assess for and recommend involuntary admissions, recognizing involuntary admissions are a last resort.

Psychiatry, Psychology, and Counselling

Counsellors and Therapists: Tsawwassen Health and Family Services (HFS) has contracts with a registered clinical counsellor, a substance use/recovery counsellor, and an equine therapy provider and employs an art therapist. Services can be provided via multiple modes of communication or in multiple locations. Services are intended to be low-barrier, culturally safe, trauma-responsive, and supportive.

Physicians and Psychologists: HFS currently has a GP, a psychiatrist, and two psychologists. The psychologists focus on assessments and treatment plans, as well as referrals for children and youth and support for parents. They are closely linked with the education system.

Recognized Needs:

- Support groups for family of Members experiencing complex substance use and mental health concerns.
- Prompt supports available to victims of sexual violence and domestic violence on TFN lands.



Traditional Healers

Traditional healers are contracted to provide traditional healing services including brushing off, healing circles, and other traditional practices.

Recognized Need: There are not enough traditional healers at present, though the HFS team is looking to add more.

Treatment for People Struggling with Problematic Substance Use

Treatment Programs: Treatment programs for people struggling with problematic substance use are exclusively provided through referrals to private treatment programs. At present, access to treatment beds has not been raised as an issue.

Treatment Support Groups: Groups are currently being offered such as Wellbriety and SMART Recovery. When the new church opens and more space becomes available, more groups will be offered.

Recognized Needs:

- There is no known private treatment program specifically designed for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people.
- Lack of post-treatment stabilization beds, also known as second stage programming or after-care, to provide structure and stability upon a Member's return from treatment, including supports to re-enter the community.
- Home detox is not currently an option being supported by TFN and would likely require increased HFS staffing.
- No local contingency management program for stimulant use disorder exists at TFN.

Community Family Empowerment

A family empowerment worker works with families as an advocate and provides access to resources such as counselling referrals, supervised visitations, ceremonies, treatment, community kitchen access, transportation needs, and programs navigation support. This program is partially funded through the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD).



Recognized Needs:

- Staff identified the need for life skills programs.
- Staff suggest that outreach during evenings and weekends would be beneficial.
- Increased transportation options are a recognized need.

Justice Supports

Justice support services currently being offered include youth and adult diversion programs, community reintegration planning, and probation plans.

Recognized Needs:

- TFN does not facilitate supports for people coming out of jail to continue with opioid agonist therapy (OAT), unless the person attends a treatment clinic outside of the community. This creates a very high risk of overdose.
- Staff report that there is a lack of support available for people who commit crimes as a means of survival (such as minor theft). Such support is needed to address safety needs, food security, and housing.
- People in the community who are on probation may require support to attend probation appointments and court-mandated appearances.

Outreach Program

There are currently four outreach workers, two of whom work in family services and two in community wellness. They facilitate school programs, organize employment and training opportunities, and support individuals with medical appointments, counselling, and mental health services. Outreach workers play an important role in access to harm reduction and mental health services for Members.

Recognized Need: Staff find that there is a limited number of harm reduction and mental health services to connect people to.



Harm Reduction

Harm reduction services currently offered include training and distribution of Take-Home Naloxone kits. TFN's Substance Use Support Supervisor and Substance Use Support Coordinator have been trained by FNHA to teach other HFS staff how to use naloxone. HFS also hosts quarterly community naloxone training workshops and plans to offer them more frequently as the staff grows.

Recognized Needs:

- HFS has no official policy on harm reduction. Where harm reduction supplies and education are provided, it is done so quietly, thus access is irregular and unreliable for people needing these supplies.
- No Supervised Consumption Site or Overdose Prevention Site exists on TFN lands for people who use drugs, whether by smoking or injecting. These sites can be peer run or staffed by a healthcare team.
- There is a minimal amount of harm reduction education for community, which contributes to stigma.
- For drug testing, currently there is access to fentanyl and benzo test strips, which have limitations particularly as the toxic drug supply rapidly changes. Plans are in progress to make a video demonstrating how to effectively use testing, and to promote it within the community. FTIR spectrometer (drug checking machine) is the best option as it provides the most accurate results. There is currently no FTIR in the region. Surrey or Vancouver are the closest options.
- There is a lack of drug paraphernalia disposal services, increasing the risk of unsafe disposal practices.
- There is no harm reduction programming for drinkers, such as a Managed Alcohol Program.
- Pharmacological alternatives to street supply of stimulants are not available for those at risk from illegal drug supply.
- There is no injectable OAT program available.
- There are concerns about how to keep supply distribution anonymous so that people are not accessing new and clean supplies due to not wanting others to know about their substance use. At the same time, availability of these supplies should be normalized because the more hidden the distribution is, the more the stigma there is.

- There are no peer work opportunities and peer support programming for people who use drugs.
- Access to routine Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections clinics is not currently available.
- There is a need for safe sex harm reduction practices and education.
- Because TFN Members receive a large amount of money when they turn 18, financial literacy education and support around money management is needed as a form of harm reduction to protect vulnerable youth from being preyed on by others.

Across All Programs and Services

Programs and services have grown rapidly. However, there is significantly more demand than capacity to provide all the needed programs and services.

Recognized Need: Tools to promote staff wellness, balance, and resilience, while reducing stress and fatigue.

Discussion

TFN's vision for health, wellness, and safety, as stated in the 2026-2031 Strategic Plan, is "a holistic approach to community well-being, prioritizing physical, social, mental, and emotional health [that] integrates traditional practices with modern healthcare, ensuring a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all members." To ensure the Tsawwassen Government is exercising best efforts to actualize this vision for Tsawwassen Members, TFN must consider, create, and evaluate programs and services that strive to meet the needs of Members at the earliest possible stage. As Frederick Douglass said: *It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken [people].*

An increasing Member population on TFN lands, coupled with greater service needs following the COVID-19 pandemic, has created significant pressures for HFS staff, including stress, fatigue, and higher turnover rates. The Panel recognizes these challenges and seeks to provide health and wellness recommendations for Tsawwassen Members, while also addressing the wellbeing and sustainability of front-line staff.

Health and wellness recommendations are organized into targeted sections, each designed to address crucial aspects of community health and safety, reflecting a holistic approach to fostering well-being among Members. They ensure that TFN's health and family service needs are thoroughly developed and aligned with the community's needs and values.

Some recommendations reflect the need for additional policy amendments and for greater development of roles and responsibilities of individuals, families, and community in maintaining and



enhancing the health and wellness of all TFN Members, regardless of residence. It is important to recognize that the goals and potential solutions come from the community itself. The role of the HFS team is to act in support of those goals, and to determine the intent of their work as well as measure its impacts.

These recommendations reflect a comprehensive and inclusive approach to enhancing community health and safety for Tsawwassen Members. By addressing a wide range of needs and emphasizing culturally appropriate methods, these initiatives can contribute to a significant improvement in quality of life and community safety. Each recommendation integrates a holistic understanding of health that is culturally aligned, adaptable to feedback, and responsive to TFN’s community values.

Addressing complex health issues through clear policies, resource allocation, harm reduction education, and culturally informed training is vital for improving health outcomes and supporting community well-being.

Recommendations

1. Responsive and Adaptive Healthcare System

Physical and mental health are interconnected areas essential for overall community well-being. An effective and enduring healthcare system is responsive to the community’s current and future needs. Understanding and adapting to the community’s health and wellness needs requires regular, ongoing engagement with service-users and service-providers, as well as broader community input.

Recommended Strategies:

- 1.1 Undertake a detailed study to understand and plan for current and future healthcare needs.
- 1.2 Implement feedback mechanisms to gather patient experiences and refine service delivery, keeping it responsive and relevant to assure that needs are being met in a culturally safe manner.
- 1.3 Host regular community health fairs or wellness events to raise awareness about available services, encourage preventive and supportive care, and foster community engagement.

2. Coordinated Service Delivery

Using available resources to meet defined needs requires a coordinated approach across physical and mental healthcare services, both internally at TFN and externally through partnerships with other healthcare providers. Clearly communicating about available services enables both effective use of staff expertise and accessibility for patients.



Recommended Strategies:

- 2.1 Partner with Fraser Health Authority, BC Emergency Health Services, and First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) to leverage resources, share expertise, and create efficiencies that enhance service provision.
- 2.2 Work to better analyze the urgency of responses for services at intake and to develop appropriate triage mechanisms (emergent, urgent, and non-urgent).
- 2.3 Establish clear guidelines for transportation services to facilitate healthcare access, ensuring proper licensure, insurance, and communication of availability and emergency processes.
- 2.4 Define and communicate available patient navigation and case management services, enabling healthcare professionals to fully use their clinical licenses and to facilitate patient access to the right resources.
- 2.5 Set up formal feedback mechanisms with partners to ensure that collaborations continue to meet TFN's needs and adapt to changing circumstances.
- 2.6 Appoint a liaison officer to manage partnerships and ensure alignment with community objectives, providing ongoing oversight to enhance the effectiveness of joint efforts.

3. Staff Wellness and Training

Healthy and supportive work environments contribute to higher employee retention and less stress and fatigue, in turn leading to better patient care, greater continuity of care, and enhanced staff skills and expertise.

Recommended Strategies:

- 3.1 Support staff to care for themselves while caring for others, and to model work/life balance.
- 3.2 Establish and reinforce clear job roles, boundaries, and accountabilities for HFS staff, with a system for regular role assessments and feedback to ensure responsibilities align with evolving community demands and adequate staffing levels.
- 3.3 Provide ongoing training for HFS staff to maintain licensure, develop skills, and ensure up-to-date, high-quality service.



4. Cultural Safety and Trauma-Responsive Care

Cultural safety, as defined by the FNHA, is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the health care system. TFN health programs strive to be provided in a culturally safe manner, from a trauma-responsive lens, which includes supporting access to Coast Salish health and wellness practices.

Recommended Strategies:

- 4.1 Integrate trauma-responsive, culturally safe practices across all health services to respect the unique cultural and historical context of TFN Members, making services more effective and sensitive to community needs.
- 4.2 Embed trauma-responsive, culturally safe practices in regular staff training at all levels to strengthen the cultural sensitivity of service delivery, including administrative roles.
- 4.3 Integrate Coast Salish healing practices alongside conventional models of care to reinforce community values and build Members' trust in the health services provided.

5. Problematic Substance Use, Toxic Drug Supply, and Harm Reduction

Existing supports and access to treatment for individuals using criminalized, unregulated, and toxic drugs have been inadequate to prevent continued damage and losses—especially among First Nations people in BC. Between January and June of 2024, the latest available statistics, over 200 First Nations people in BC have died from toxic drug poisonings—a rate at 6.7 times that of non-First Nations people (Data from the First Nations Health Authority, “First Nations and the Toxic Drug Poisoning Crisis in BC, January – June 2024” infographic). TFN has been directly affected by these tragic losses.

More than 1800 First Nations people have experienced toxic drug poisoning events in the same period. People who have survived an overdose event often suffer permanent brain damage and other lifelong aftereffects and health complications.

Every effort must be made to reduce these types of tragedies and the related harms. It is imperative to ensure people who are using drugs can reach out for services and treatment.

The impacts of criminalized drug use are not just suffered by the individual user—families, friends, and community members are also impacted. Many children have suffered the loss of a parent, grandparent, teacher, or mentor. Other family members have ended up in the correctional system as a result of their problematic substance use. Community safety can also be negatively impacted by related behaviour such as thefts, violence, or drug dealing.

In this context, the concept of harm reduction includes a spectrum of choices and practices that minimize the negative health, social, and legal aspects associated with substance use. This can range from providing adequate information to Members about the toxic drug crisis to providing a safe supply.



Problematic substance use—including of alcohol and of legal and illegal drugs—is fundamentally a health issue, not a moral failing. TFN’s health systems have a responsibility to support Members on their healing journeys with a wellness-focused, compassionate, and non-judgmental approach. All Members deserve access to a comprehensive range of health services, including harm reduction.

People who are healing from problematic relationships to substance use deserve access to culturally safe and trauma-responsive options for detox, treatment, and after-care or post-stabilization resources.

Families may also wish to support their loved one through home-based after-care post-treatment. Supports that families may need to do so include resources such as consultations and ongoing support from TFN’s health and social services professionals, as well as grants to adapt homes with necessary modifications for stabilization support. Financial support can also be offered to help cover additional needs such as extra or respite care, medication, and counseling, allowing families to foster recovery within a safe and familiar home environment.

Recommended Strategies:

- 5.1 Develop a clear policy on harm reduction.
- 5.2 Adopt a compassionate, public health-oriented approach to problematic substance use by treating it as a health issue and prioritizing life preservation and dignity. This includes the provision of a range of accessible harm reduction services, and mobile outreach programs, to support those who use substances - without stigma.
- 5.3 Integrate peer support workers (i.e. people with lived experience with drug use and healing from problematic substance use) into substance use programs to build trust, foster engagement, and create supportive relationships between community members and health service providers.
- 5.4 Develop public health education initiatives, such as community workshops and seminars, to destigmatize problematic substance use and build broader community support for harm reduction measures.
- 5.5 Make harm reduction supplies available in a low-barrier way to all who may need/want them. Make training on the use of materials like naloxone kits and substance detection strips frequently available.
- 5.6 Expand access to clinical medicine and research the utilization of home detoxification support, with a focus on family and clinical assistance. Consider contracting with a recovery support medicine specialist to provide service on TFN lands.
- 5.7 Continue to support private treatment options for Members and explore the potential for a local culturally based treatment center.

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- 5.8 Improve access to after-care services for individuals who have completed treatment. Consider the availability of sober-living accommodations and regular support programs (for example, Wellbriety, Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous, DUDES Club) and ones that include family (Alanon and other models).
 - 5.9 Consider the example of Nations who use cultural ceremony to welcome Members home from treatment, such as blanketing/feasting.
 - 5.10 Provide supports for home-based treatment options where possible.
 - 5.11 Allocate comprehensive financial, health, and social support to families opting to facilitate non-medical detox at home.
 - 5.12 Offer comprehensive support for families providing stabilization care at home, enabling them to assist family Members transitioning back into the community after treatment.

6. Family and Community Engagement

As with every other population impacted by the legacy of colonization and its dehumanizing and traumatic effects, Indigenous communities face health and family wellness struggles that can be traced back to repressive colonial experiences:

Colonial Trauma is described as a complex, continuous, collective, cumulative and compounding interaction of impacts related to the imposition of colonial policies and practices which continue to separate Indigenous Peoples from their land, languages, cultural practices, and one another (Mitchell, T, Arseneau, C, & Thomas, D. (2019) Colonial Trauma: Complex, continuous, collective, cumulative and compounding effects on the health of Indigenous peoples in Canada and beyond, *International Journal of Indigenous Health*, 14(2), 74-94.).

Despite significant efforts TFN has undertaken to reclaim their inherent rights, exercising self-determination, and providing ongoing commitment to the wellness of its Members, some negative impacts of colonial history have remained pervasive. Destructive intergenerational impacts on individuals and families can result in division, problematic substance use, abandonment of sacred responsibilities, and pervasive family violence and abuse. Every effort must be made to heal from these harms.

Recommended Strategies:

- 6.1 Emphasize family and community responsibility in health and wellness programs, supporting wellness through communication campaigns that reinforce shared obligations and provide pathways to healing.
- 6.2 Develop intergenerational programs to strengthen family and community bonds and to



promote cultural sharing between the generations, supporting wellness and connection.

- 6.3 Specific and easily accessible supports should be provided for young parents, especially those parenting without a partner.
- 6.4 Support food security programs with active community involvement, addressing food access as a foundational aspect of wellness.
- 6.5 Address family violence, interpersonal violence, and lateral violence openly with appropriate responses, emphasizing safe and supportive community environments. Support the development of a “tell someone” communications campaign.
- 6.6 Expand programming for men’s wellness, cultural engagement, maternal/child wellness, and LGBTQ+ youth, enhancing support for family wellness, child development, and diverse community needs.
- 6.7 Adopt a relational confidentiality approach supported by staff training, to ensure respectful information-sharing that prevents harm while supporting collaborative care for individuals, families, and the community.

7. Vulnerable Populations

Some parts of the community may require tailored supports to meet distinct health and wellness needs. Programs and services built specifically for vulnerable or marginalized populations will help ensure TFN’s services are relevant and accessible to everyone.

Recommended Strategies:

- 7.1 Provide targeted support for vulnerable groups, such as youth and Elders, individuals with disabilities and those suffering impacts of poverty through dedicated programming and facilities that address their specific needs and include them fully into community life.
- 7.2 Create intergenerational initiatives that bring youth and Elders together, fostering mutual respect, cultural continuity and community cohesion while sharing wisdom and perspectives.
- 7.3 Expand mental health support for youth by offering peer-led support groups and mentorship opportunities for youth, including programming specifically for LGBTQ+ youth, enhancing their support network and sense of belonging within the community.



House Post II

Safe Housing – laʔθəʔ

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What we Learned from the Community

Members have identified a variety of safe housing needs : (1) affordable housing for all Members (on and off TFN lands; current and future generations); (2) supported housing; and (3) emergency housing.

Affordable Housing for Members

Like elsewhere in BC, there is a need for safe, affordable housing in Tsawwassen, not just for Members currently living on TFN lands, but also for Members living off lands and future generations. The need to secure more land for Member housing, including future generations, was seen to be a priority for the community. In addition, Members identified a variety of programs and services that they feel could help them access safe housing:

- more rent-to-own housing opportunities;
- more rental housing (owned by TFN);
- support with financing/co-signing mortgages;
- more detached housing opportunities;
- smaller living units for single Members, youth, and Elders;
- more workshops on the process to build a house/obtain mortgage on TFN lands; and
- more support for maintenance of homes.

Supported Housing

There is a recognition that some Members require supported housing to ensure their own safety and wellbeing and the safety and wellbeing of their community and relations. Many different types of supported housing programs were identified:

- treatment centre (for problematic substance use);
- adult recovery (from problematic substance use);
- sober-living;
- young adult recovery (from problematic substance use);
- supportive living for young mothers;
- independent and assisted living facilities for Elders; and
- Elders care home.

These kinds of supported housing opportunities are in keeping with many of the teachings identified by Tsawwassen Elders and Members. As we work together to provide care and support to those we love, we are following the teachings of *siʔémstəxʷ* (respect), *łi* (love), *łəłəwəθət* (healing), and *ćəćəwítəl* (help one another).



Emergency Housing

The principle of *ćăćăwítăĭ* (help one another) reminds us that at certain times of our life, we may require more help and support from our relations than other times. During our community engagements, Members recognized that emergency housing should be made available for women and children fleeing violence and abuse, and individuals who are episodically or chronically unhoused.

Current Status of Programs and Services

General Housing Stock, Supportive Housing, and Financial Supports

Housing Stock: In fall 2023, 36 new townhomes were opened. Six duplexes (twelve units) opened in 2024 and are currently occupied. An additional six duplexes (twelve units) will be completed in 2026. TFN continues to work with Members on Member Lands Development. Member Housing builds infrastructure extensions on Member lands for new homes, allocates lots, and helps Members navigate the regulatory process for building homes. At present we are not aware of any urgent need for subsidized rental units.

Supportive Housing: Tsawwassen has built and will open a 6-bed supportive housing program for men on TFN lands. TFN has a child and youth respite house, which also has an emergency two-bedroom space for women who may need support for a short period of time.

Financial Supports: TFN provides support through grants for new homes, infrastructure extensions, and renovations; support includes assisting Members with the grant application process. TFN also provides Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) funding, with more and more Members reaching out for these supports. HPP funding can, for example, take the form of rent supplements in an effort to prevent Members from being unhoused both on and off TFN lands.

Recognized Needs:

- Due to continued difficulties faced by Members building their own homes with independent builders, there is a need to consider developing a partnership with a development partner to deliver turnkey homes (ready-to-move-in homes).
- There is a need for smaller housing units for youth and Elders, as well as other Members. HPP funding is currently used for this type of housing off TFN lands.



Transitional Housing for Women and Children Fleeing Violence

Creating safe spaces is a critical step in supporting survivors of relationship violence. Transitional housing provides a place for women and children to rebuild their lives while accessing essential resources and support.

There are different perspectives on whether this housing should be on TFN lands. On the one hand, transitional housing located on TFN lands could offer a culturally safe environment for TFN women and children, with proximity to community supports and services. It could strengthen ties to community resources and provide a sense of belonging and security. It also poses a concern about maintaining the necessary confidentiality and privacy in a close-knit community, here anonymity cannot be guaranteed. On the other hand, an off TFN lands location may provide greater anonymity and a confidential location to better ensure the safety of residents fleeing violence. It may also allow easier access to specialized services not offered on TFN lands, as well as more ready access to emergency services including law enforcement, and the proximity of neighbours who may call for supports in the event of crises.

Balancing safety, accessibility, and cultural considerations is critical in determining the most appropriate location for transitional housing.

- **Recognized Need:** There is a need for safe transitional housing for women and children fleeing violence, with consideration for whether it is on or off TFN lands.

Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Care Homes for Elders

Many Elders require additional supports as they age and must currently seek housing such as independent or assisted living facilities or care homes off TFN lands, unless family and/or other community members are able and willing to provide needed supports.

Recognized Needs:

- There are no independent or assisted living options or care homes on TFN lands for Tsawwassen Elders, requiring Elders who need additional support to leave their community.
- There are inadequate resources available for Elders and families seeking supports for aging-in-place options for Elders, either in their own homes, or in a family home.



Residential Programs and Facilities for Recovery

Detox: TFN currently financially supports Members to attend private detox programs or facilities off TFN lands.

Treatment: TFN also funds Members to attend private, treatment facilities off TFN lands.

Pre- and Post-Treatment Stabilization: TFN currently pays for post-treatment stabilization, off TFN lands. On TFN lands, there is the previously mentioned 6-bed supportive housing program for men, for both pre- and post-treatment stabilization.

Recognized Needs:

- TFN does not have any detox or treatment programs or facilities on TFN lands.
- Soon the pre- and post-treatment program/housing option for men on TFN lands will become available; however, there are no options for women, LGBTQ+, or youth.
- TFN does not provide financial, health, and social wrap-around supports for families who are able and want to provide non-medical detox for their family member(s) at home (where the family member undergoing detox does not require a supervised medical detox).
- TFN does not provide financial, health, and social wrap-around supports for families who are able and want to provide pre- and/or post-treatment stabilization support to their family members.
- There is no residential Managed Alcohol Program available on TFN lands.

Incoming TFN Housing Authority – Hələlām Collective

The Hələlām Collective is currently in the implementation phase, building on the momentum gained in 2024. The Collective, which serves as the new housing “authority” for the TFN, has made significant strides in solidifying its mission and mandate, governance structure, staffing model, and long-term vision. An interim Executive Director and the inaugural Board of Directors have been appointed.



Discussion

The housing recommendations set out below reflect a comprehensive, culturally grounded approach to housing that meets the evolving needs of community members while preserving cultural values. Preventing housing shortages and supporting diverse housing needs is critical for TFN as it enables community members to live in alignment with their cultural values, maintain connections to their land, and enhance social stability. TFN's goal to have Members return home to TFN lands, especially as they see the improvements to community infrastructure (for example, youth and Elders' centres), is driven by a profound connection to community and culture. Meeting this demand is essential for fostering community resilience and ensuring that all Members can fully participate in TFN life.

Colonization caused deep divisions within TFN families and the community, separating Members from their land, culture, and each other. The ultimate triumph over colonization is bringing people home.

These recommendations integrate solutions for youth, Elders, families, women and children fleeing violence, and those experiencing or recovering from problematic relationships with substances, with specific recommendations for different stages of life and health support.

In alignment with TFN's ongoing commitment to creating livable, thriving communities, these recommendations also emphasize community planning standards that promote safety, sustainability, and inclusivity.

Housing is more than a physical necessity; it serves as the foundation for stability, well-being, and cultural continuity. In Indigenous communities, housing also reinforces cultural values, land stewardship, and self-governance. For TFN, enhancing housing variety, density, and accessibility strengthens the community's capacity to keep pace with the growing population, increasing demand for Members seeking to return home, and the evolving needs of current residents. By supporting autonomy, health, and family cohesion, housing initiatives encourage a sense of belonging and community resilience—crucial for the health and sustainability of TFN.



Recommendations

8. Housing Variety and Density

Adapting to increasing demand from a growing population and Members returning home will require TFN to proactively anticipate Members' housing needs and expand higher density housing options. This includes developing duplexes, townhouses, and low-rise rental or strata buildings. Factoring mixed-use spaces in building designs can allow for health care, daycare, adult daycare, and small business opportunities that support both Nation- and Member-owned enterprises, which can contribute to fostering a dynamic community environment.

Recommended Strategies:

- 8.1 Expand higher density housing options, including options with mixed-use spaces for dynamic community use.
- 8.2 Engage community members in planning these developments to align with their needs and preferences, incorporating sustainable building practices and cultural aesthetics.
- 8.3 Engage in strategic planning and partnerships to secure additional land for Member housing, prioritizing both current and future generational needs led by the Hålelēm Collective and in collaboration with government agencies, private sector partners, and community stakeholders to identify and acquire suitable land, ensuring that housing developments align with TFN values and cultural practices.

9. Smaller Living Units for Youth and Elders

Smaller living units can allow youth and Elders to live independently, while staying connected to their culture and community. Furthermore, small homes for youth and Elders in multi-unit buildings can facilitate reintegration for Members returning to TFN lands, helping them re-establish and maintain connections in a supportive environment.

Examples like Kikekyelc: A Place of Belonging in Kamloops and Salish Lelum in Nanaimo provide inspiration for creating culturally aligned, sustainable living spaces that respect tradition. Kikekyelc offers housing that supports First Nations and Metis youth and Elders in building life skills and connections within a supportive, culturally relevant environment. Youth are teamed with Elders to promote natural opportunities for mentorship. Similarly, Salish Lelum provides safe, affordable housing for youth and Elders, fostering community while respecting First Nations traditions and values.

Recommended Strategy: Build smaller living units, including studios and one-to-two-bedroom homes, tailored to the needs of youth and Elders and reflective of TFN's cultural values.



10. Elder Autonomy and Community-Based Assisted Living

Supporting options for Elders to age in place helps maintain Elders' connections with family, community, and traditions, at the same time increasing options for Elder autonomy. For example, such supports may include accessibility modifications (such as ramps, railings, bathroom adjustments) and specialized home equipment. These modifications can help ensure that homes evolve alongside the needs of Elders, promoting dignity, safety, and continuity in their community lives.

Some Elders may have needs that require more advanced care and could benefit from an on TFN lands assisted living facility, both enabling them to remain within their community and receive the care they need. This facility should be culturally tailored and community-operated to honor traditional practices and values.

By supporting Elders' autonomy, TFN promotes family cohesion, cultural continuity, and community resilience.

Recommended Strategies:

- 10.1 Strengthen supports for Elders to live comfortably in their own homes and for families to welcome aging family members into their homes.
- 10.2 Establish a grant program that helps families adapt homes to the changing physical and mental needs of Elders.
- 10.3 Ensure support is available from TFN's HFS department, including respite support.
- 10.4 Develop a culturally tailored and community-operated assisted living facility that enables Elders to remain within their community while receiving the care they need.

11. Members Building and Maintaining their Own Homes

While some Members may choose turnkey solutions from developer partners, others may prefer to build their own homes. To support these Members, the Hålelām Collective can establish a list of preferred professionals, including architects, contractors, and builders, who are experienced in culturally resonant and sustainable construction. Additionally, the Hålelām Collective could offer project management assistance, helping Members navigate permitting processes, access funding options, and ensure projects align with TFN's standards and values. This approach respects individual autonomy, can simplify the building process, and meets the growing demand for housing among returning Members.

Members may also be interested in assistance in maintaining their homes, which could be supported by a Hålelām Collective home maintenance support program that includes educational workshops, resource guides, and partnerships with local contractors or volunteer networks. By providing Members with the knowledge and tools to properly maintain their homes, the community can ensure safer, more sustainable living environments for everyone on TFN lands.



Recommended Strategies:

- 11.1 Transfer development of single-family homes to the Hålelām Collective.
- 11.2 Collaborate with the Hålelām Collective to offer more frequent, accessible workshops on the process of building a house and obtaining a mortgage on TFN lands.
- 11.3 Work with the Hålelām Collective to implement a comprehensive home maintenance support program to assist TFN homeowners with routine upkeep and repairs.

12. Culturally Safe Treatment and Detox Options

While TFN funds Members seeking treatment for problematic substance use to attend private detox and treatment facilities off TFN lands, some Members may prefer home-based detox and/or treatment options. Providing support for families who wish to care for loved ones undergoing detox or treatment at home can be an effective way to support Members who may benefit from such an option. Supports include health and social support from TFN's team of professionals, financial assistance to cover additional care costs and necessary medications, and grants to adapt homes with modifications that meet the needs of family care (such as installing medical equipment, improving accessibility). By empowering families to provide culturally supportive care within their homes, TFN can offer a holistic approach that respects community traditions and reinforces family bonds.

Members accessing off TFN lands detox and treatment facilities deserve to do so in a culturally safe environment. TFN could consider creating a culturally safe treatment facility off TFN lands that respects and incorporates Indigenous cultural practices, in partnership with neighbouring Nations, non-profit organizations, and the Fraser Health or First Nations Health Authority. This facility could provide a structured treatment environment and can operate on a fee-for-service model, extending services to other Indigenous people and helping fill a gap in culturally relevant treatment options. The facility could also consider incorporating elements of Indigenous-led programs, such as Tea Creek and Mikaaming Mino Pimatiziwin Healing Lodge, which emphasize land-based healing practices. A similar process and model could be pursued for detox options.

Recommended Strategies:

- 12.1 Collaborate with neighboring Nations, non-profit organizations, and the Fraser Health or FNHA to establish a culturally safe treatment and detox facilities.



13. Supportive Housing

For supportive housing to accommodate diverse recovery needs, whether for active treatment, abstinence-based recovery, or transitional rehabilitation, clear policies are needed. Where this type of housing is available, information about its operational model, including whether it will accommodate active substance use or adhere to abstinence-based policies, is necessary to allow Members to make informed decisions based on their personal recovery needs and goals.

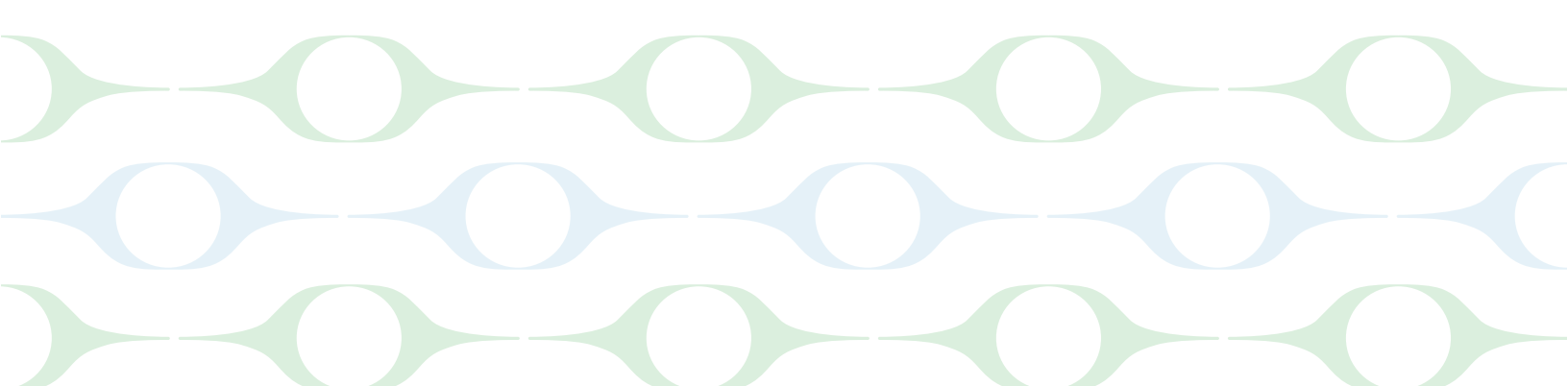
Recommended Strategies:

- 13.1 Establish clear supportive housing policies.
- 13.2 Ensure the new facility is ready for occupancy as scheduled and provide clear information about its operational model.

14. Safeguard Transitional Housing for Women and Children

Recommended Strategies:

- 14.1 Provide safe, culturally supportive transitional housing for women and children escaping violence, off TFN lands.
- 14.2 Continue to acquire rental housing for women and children escaping violence, ensuring immediate and secure options are available when needed.
- 14.3 Explore partnerships with neighboring communities to expand support networks and address the long-term goal of helping Members return to a safe, culturally affirming home in the TFN community.





House Post III

Physical Infrastructure – Ἰατρική

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What we Learned from the Community

In all our engagements, Tsawwassen Members, especially Tsawwassen youth, have spoken of the need to feel physically safe on and off TFN lands. This House Post addresses public, physical infrastructure needs that were raised by community that can contribute to creating a safe environment.

Sidewalks, Roads, and Traffic Control

Investments into streetlights, more sidewalks and parking, speed or stop sign cameras, reduction of shrubs near walkways/paths, and an overpass walkway between the PetroCan and Tsawwassen Mills were some of the major physical infrastructure wants from our engagements with community.

Transportation

In community engagements, a need for increased frequency of transit at night was identified. TFN is working with Translink to expand service delivery on key bus routes.

Current Status of Programs and Services

Sidewalks, Roads, and Traffic Control

The Public Works department addresses public safety issues related to road maintenance (for example, street lighting and snow removal), garbage and recycling collection, grounds and lawn maintenance (including drainage ditches, fire hydrants, vehicles, and other equipment), community and staff event set up, clean up, and security, and operation of the TFN Sewage Treatment Plant.

Sidewalks: There are no sidewalks along the Falcon Way and Tsawwassen Drive Corridors, while the developed leasehold areas have sidewalks and multi-use paths. Falcon Way is already designed with sidewalks and the road upgrade construction is set to begin in the next fiscal year. Work on a road upgrade of Tsawwassen Drive is in the planning stages.

Roads: There are some speedbumps and streetlights in the community, Tsawwassen is in the process of increasing further safety calming measures (for example, through additional speed bumps), traffic control signals, and streetlights throughout the community.

Speeding: Speed traps are located at problem areas, which are identified with police in part through monitoring public complaints and collecting data from speed reader boards. Staff report that Tsawwassen speed limits are lower than in most communities in both residential and commercial areas. Additional monitoring in collaboration between the police, Bylaw Enforcement Officers, and volunteers is undertaken periodically, along with radar check stations, in areas with frequent speeding issues.

Parking and Loading Zones: Tsawwassen is working on a signage project to make parking and loading zones clearer.



Recognized Needs:

- There are community concerns related to the lack of sidewalks in the two main corridors. Planning is underway to address this, including a road upgrade of Tsawwassen Drive and potentially closing access from the north side of Tsawwassen Drive to the highway. Community consultation is ongoing.
- Speeding continues to be a key issue of concern for the community.
- There is a need for clear signage in parking and loading zones to ensure safe access for individuals and people operating service vehicles.

Transportation

Tsawwassen conducts traffic studies and analysis to monitor road capacities and transit availability. The planning and engineering teams work to ensure that all residents have appropriate access to transit systems. TFN is working with TransLink to expand service delivery on key bus routes and, in summer 2024, successfully advocated for the expansion of the 609 route to Ladner including additional operating hours to midnight. This has largely resolved safety concerns related to lack of late-night transit.

An Active Transportation Plan is being developed that focuses on pedestrian safety and encourages non-motorized ways of travel by creating permanent sidewalks and multi-use paths.

Recognized need: Continued work to expand transit options.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Executive Council has approved a detailed CPTED Plan, which will be advanced through the Tsawwassen Drive Streetscape Design project. Multiple community consultations have been conducted and identified the need for specific elements to enhance safety and livability in the public realm. The CPTED Plan includes adding raised pedestrian crossings at each intersection, enhancing speed bump visibility, adding sidewalks and multi-use paths, replacing streetlights, and identifying additional locations for speed cameras.



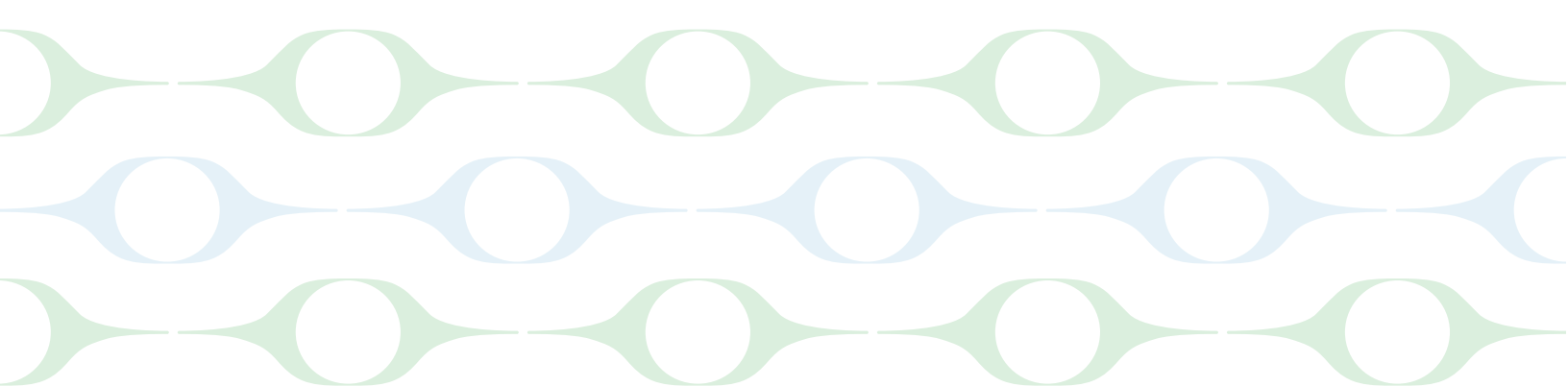
Discussion

Physical infrastructure related to road safety was identified by community members and staff as a significant area where improvements could impact community safety. Work is currently underway with respect to both road safety and CPTED, which was a main element of the existing CSS and continues to be a priority.

Recommendation

15. Community Concerns in Addressing Road Safety and Implementing CPTED

15.1 Recommended Strategy: As the government works to improve physical infrastructure to address issues related to both road safety and crime prevention, consider exploring and implementing measures to mitigate the significant concerns in the community about the safety of pedestrians and the dangers of speeding.





House Post IV

Public Order and Safety – šx^wk^wecxənəm

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What we Learned from the Community

In community engagements, it was identified that individuals conducting illegal activities on TFN lands was a concern, and also more and more strangers are present on TFN lands. Concerns were raised about the behaviour of individuals in the community, both Members and non-Members, while under the influence of intoxicants. In addition to crime prevention and law enforcement, effective emergency services also came up as key components to ensuring public safety.

Police and Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement

There were two main approaches identified as possible solutions to address public order and safety concerns: (1) increased enforcement by Delta Police and (2) Tsawwassen community policing.

Many options for a community policing initiative were identified, from hiring security staff to a neighbourhood watch program to trained Tsawwassen support for Delta Police to a Tsawwassen community police force. In all instances, the importance of a strong relationship between the enforcement officers and the community based on *siʔémstəxʷ* (respect) and *łi* (love) is imperative.

Fire Prevention

Tsawwassen Members also raised concerns about fire safety on TFN lands. One suggestion was to provide fire extinguishers and fire suppression equipment to all Members. Another was to provide community fire training.

Crime Prevention

Members have identified crime prevention as an important priority. There is a recognition that the best way to create safety for the Tsawwassen Nation is to strengthen the health and wellness of Tsawwassen Members and families. In doing so, we draw on the teaching of *čəčəwítəl* (help one another). Initiatives such as first aid training for Members and awareness and safety presentations for children and youth were identified as possible ways Tsawwassen Members could help one another.

Although fear can oftentimes prevent us from helping one another, it is the hope that the recommended CSS will help to create changes that diminish that fear within the community.

Emergency Communications

Stronger emergency communications, both during and post-emergency, would help reduce Members' anxieties and help them to feel safe.



Banishment and Fencing

Balancing the Safety and Needs of those Struggling with the Safety Needs of those that are Well

Under Coast Salish law, it is recognized that it is not always possible to work together in a good way and sometimes leaders must make hard decisions when trying to balance the safety and needs of those individuals posing a risk to the safety and well-being of the community. In discussions with community members, staff, and leadership, the traditional practice of banishment was raised as a potential mechanism that could be used to address this balancing in extreme circumstances. Although banishment is currently being practiced vis-à-vis non-Members, it was suggested that the Panel also consider the effectiveness of banishing Members as a means of increasing community safety on TFN lands.

Current Status of Programs and Services

Police and Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement

Police: The Delta Police Department (DPD) has office space at the TFN administration hub. There is a Sergeant and six TFN Service Team Constables, one of whom is a non-uniformed Community Liaison Officer and all of whom work out of the TFN administration hub. They conduct proactive patrols targeting areas viewed as higher crime areas and respond to concerns related to violence, criminal activity, and individual or public safety, including drug activity, robbery, trespass, sexual harassment and assault, speeding infractions, domestic disputes, and impaired driving.

Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement: TFN has a Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement team whose primary role is to ensure Tsawwassen laws are adhered to on TFN lands. The team is made up of three Bylaw Enforcement Officers and a supervisor. The Team conducts daily patrols and responds to safety issues such as parking concerns, speeding and other traffic offences, daytime noise complaints, graffiti or vandalism, soil dumping and other dumping issues, unsightly properties, unauthorized tree removal, damage to TFN lands, suspicious people or vehicles, contaminated soil, seizing illegal signs, and assisting DPD with criminal matters.

Recognized Needs:

- Staff report apparent confusion about the different roles of DPD's TFN Service Team and the Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement Team. Specifically, there seems to be a lack of clarity regarding the powers of the officers on each team and what issues they can respond to. Staff suggested public education in relation to these different services may help to address this concern.

- The high rate of officer turnover gives rise to a lack of continuity with the TFN Service Team .
- Cultural sensitivity training for DPD has been recognized as a need previously; it is important that it be of continued focus.
- It was reported that there has, at times, been a lack of effective communication from DPD following major incidents that have impacted the community. Police responses to major incidents are disruptive to the community and cause anxiety and concern; it is challenging when follow-up information is not provided promptly and clearly.
- Staff reported that Members have raised concerns about the sufficiency of current bylaw enforcement, in relation to matters such as noise complaints, excessive residential occupancy levels, water usage during droughts, and traffic bylaws.
- Staff report interest in exploring alternative policing options such as community-based policing models.

Emergency Services

Fire: TFN has service agreements with the City of Delta for the provision of emergency services through the Delta Fire Department (DFD) in addition to policing through DPD. Fire protection measures available to Members include a fire extinguisher program, which provides all Member housing with extinguishers and updates them upon expiry. The DFD is engaged as part of the application process for new Land Developments and events on TFN lands to ensure fire prevention and safety measures are in place. The Fire Chief is proactive in maintaining a positive relationship with the community and providing quality services.

Ambulance: The TFN community is served by BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS or BC Ambulance). BCEHS is a part of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) and all paramedics undergo the strong PHSA cultural safety training process. There have been issues in the past regarding BC Ambulance locating addresses on TFN lands, but this issue has been addressed.

Emergency Management: TFN has worked with an Emergency Management consultant to develop an Emergency Management Strategic Plan to provide a clear vision and establish specific goals and objectives for the Nation. TFN is also starting a collaborative effort to develop a joint Emergency Communications Plan with the City of Delta. Other objectives for the coming year include; filling the open Emergency Response and Safety Coordinator position, refining Emergency Support Services, building better relationships with the City of Delta on Emergency Management matters, continue to implement TFN Emergency Management Program elements such as staff training, leadership awareness, and building out TFN's Emergency Operation Centre procedures.



Recognized Needs:

- The community seems well served by the emergency services in place, with no significant needs being pointed to by staff.
- Staff noted that a crisis response protocol with associated public education could be developed.

Criminalized Drug Dealing and Associated Activity in the Community

As provided for in the existing CSS, Tsawwassen currently implements the following two-fold strategy to address “drug houses” in the community: (1) once identified, drug houses may have fences erected around them, CCTV cameras pointed at them and signs erected indicating that they are being monitored and that entry by non-Members is prohibited; and (2) non-Members who are found to be dealing drugs or otherwise posing a threat to the community are subject to permanent banishment orders, which are enforced by the DPD. The Community Safety and Security Act also allows for drug houses to be seized by the Tsawwassen government, although this has not occurred.

Recognized Needs:

- There are concerns about the potential danger posed by the actions of intoxicated individuals and about people selling criminalized drugs, the existence of drug houses, and other drug-related crimes on TFN lands. Staff reports that community members (sometimes even including the residents in the homes subject to the order) are generally happy when the measures described above are taken, but that these measures are not always viewed as sufficient. Community members often do not understand what the fencing means and how the program works.
- There is a desire to have processes in place for dealing with violent individuals, or people who have otherwise caused harm or made others feel unsafe, on TFN lands. It has been suggested that a) the fencing process be expanded to properties implicated not just in drug sales but also in human trafficking and in harbouring violent individuals, b) that the reasons for banishment of non-Members be expanded to include other dangerous offences, including human trafficking and violent offences, and c) the potential for banishing Members be considered.



Discussion

The existing CSS sets out a two-fold approach to “control and manage negative behaviour on Tsawwassen Lands, including efforts to discourage drug trafficking and drug use.” This approach involves: (1) taking action in respect of property on TFN lands that is implicated in drug activity—more specifically, “drug houses” have fences erected around them, CCTV cameras pointed at them and signs erected indicating that they are being monitored and that entry by non-Members is prohibited; and (2) prohibiting unwanted non-Members from entering TFN lands.

The existing CSS relies largely on TFN laws enacted pursuant to jurisdiction recognized in the Treaty, orders made by Executive Council, and enforcement by DPD through the TFN Service Team.

Members and non-Members who are charged with or convicted of criminal offences may also be precluded from entering TFN lands through conditions of release (which are issued pre-conviction and are often referred to as bail conditions) or post-conviction probation orders. Crown counsel and the court will often take into account the views of a First Nation in determining whether bail or probation conditions should include a “no-go” order for their community. This has been used by TFN to keep potentially dangerous individuals away from TFN lands; however, it is important to understand that these orders are made by the courts and, as such, are not directly within the Executive Council’s control.

The Panel has been asked to make recommendations in respect of the existing CSS, including the elements described above, and to consider whether the ability to banish non-Members should be extended to banishing Members in certain circumstances.

In this section, we start with recommendations in relation to policing on TFN lands and then provide a detailed discussion regarding considerations related to banishment, and in particular the potential banishment of Members from TFN lands.

Recommendations

16. Point of Contact for Enforcement Services

It is important that those empowered to enforce TFN, federal and provincial laws be the ones who are called upon to do this work. When TFN departments or individuals within the administration or government who don’t have these enforcement powers are the first line of contact, this can create delays and inefficiencies in the provision of services. Another important consideration is that in the case of regulatory enforcement, both the DPD TFN Service Team and TFN’s Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement team are empowered to enforce TFN laws. Which team is appropriate may change depending on factors such as time of day and workload.



A single number that residents can call for non-emergency enforcement matters, through which residents would be put in touch with the appropriate entity (the DPD TFN Service Team, the TFN Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement team or another TFN department) to address their issue, could ensure the appropriate departments or individuals are alerted. This number should be well publicized and included in the Members Services Guide. If calls relating to enforcement are made to departments or individuals other than the DPD/Regulatory Compliance and Enforcement team, they should be directed to this number.

16.1 Recommended Strategy: Provide a clear, single point of contact for those seeking enforcement of laws; ensure that it is consistently and widely publicized.

17. Major Incident Communications

The response to major incidents can cause fear and confusion in community members. If after any potential threat has passed, people aren't aware that the situation has come to an end they will continue to feel at risk. While it is often not possible due for various reasons to provide detailed information about major incidents, community members should at a minimum be informed that the matter has been resolved.

17.1 Recommended Strategy: Put in place a system (such as Everbridge or Catalis) that allows for mass texting to residents to provide updates about major incidents and other emergencies in the community. This system could perhaps also be leveraged for other important communications.

18. DPD Knowledge of TFN Community

Because the TFN Service Team is relatively small and there is mobility within DPD, the good working relationship between the Team and the TFN administration can be disrupted by personnel changes, as can the Team's knowledge of the community. More generally, because the broader DPD may be called upon to attend calls on TFN lands and will encounter TFN Members off TFN lands, it is important that new DPD members be familiar with Tsawwassen culture.

Recommended Strategies:

- 18.1** Work with DPD to ensure that decisions about moving officers on and off the TFN Service Team are made purposefully and implemented in a way that maintains continuity on the Team as much as possible (ie. staggering departures of experienced members and ensuring adequate time for onboarding new members).
- 18.2** Make arrangements for TFN to provide cultural training on an ongoing basis (every 1-2 years) to new DPD members.



19. Mental Health Workers to Support DPD TFN Service Team

There have been numerous examples of positive interactions and outcomes when TFN social workers have attended with the Service Team on calls where mental health issues were implicated.

However, there are no formal protocols to ensure that TFN social workers attend in all such situations. Creation of such a protocol would require research to determine the most appropriate model to meet the needs of TFN citizens and community, including training, methods of risk assessment, and the capacity needed to ensure success. One model could be developing a protocol for involving a TFN social worker where a DPD TFN Service Team call appears to involve mental health issues. Another model could draw inspiration from Car 87, a program that provides emergency response to crisis calls in the city of Vancouver for mental health situations or crisis concerns. In that model, a police officer and psychiatric nurse work together to help de-escalate situations, provide crisis intervention and connect people to community services and supports.

19.1 Recommended Strategy: Develop a policy, in partnership with DPD, which would allow TFN to be involved in de-escalating responses to calls involving mental health crises.

20. Actions in Respect of Properties Detracting from Community Safety

The practice of fencing properties that are involved in the drug trade and disallowing entry by non-Members is fairly uncommon and not well understood by most Members. It is important that such a practice encourages not only increased safety, but also the perception of safety in the community.

Recommended Strategies:

- 20.1 Expand the basis for activities that give rise to fencing to include other serious offences such as trafficking in vulnerable persons, violent crimes and weapons offences.
- 20.2 Provide public education explaining the fencing program to community members.
- 20.3 Provide communications materials to neighbours of properties that are the subject of a fencing order explaining the nature of the order and the prohibitions that have been put in place in respect of the property.



21. Exclusion of Members who pose a Threat to Community Safety

Banishment, the practice of expelling an individual from a community (either for a defined period of time or indefinitely), has been used as a means of maintaining order and safety by Indigenous communities, including Coast Salish communities, since time immemorial. This practice was not only retributive, but also aimed at healing, reconciliation, and reintegration. Although practices varied between communities and depending on the circumstances giving rise to the sanction, the principles of čəcəwítəl (help one another), ʔl (love), ʔəʔəwəθət (healing), and xʷtətəlqt (accountability) all guide the various processes.

A question put before the Panel was whether the banishment of Members could be a suitable and effective legal mechanism in the context of the Tsawwassen community today. For a detailed analysis underlying the Panel's recommendations in respect of banishment, see [Appendix E – Panel's Analysis of Banishment](#). Underlying this analysis is academic and popular discourse on this topic as well as legal research. Banishment from First Nations communities and related matters have been the subject of media attention since the Panel began its work. We have also considered this information, and it has not changed the Panel's conclusions.

The outcome of the Panel's analysis is that it is not at all clear that banishment of a Member from TFN lands would have the effect of increasing community safety, either in the short term or through its deterrent effect. Moreover, implementing such a law may also have negative impacts on community cohesion and would be at cross purposes with some of the other measures recommended by the Panel that are focussed on offering supports to individuals within the community. If the criminal justice system is functioning properly and appropriate resources and supports for community members are in place, banishment should not be necessary. The need to banish a Member from the community will only arise as the result of failures in both the criminal justice system and the system of supports offered by the Nation to its Members.

However, the TFN government could use measures short of banishment to decrease the potential dangers posed to the community by problematic behaviour by Members, such as restricting access to certain events or locations. For example, if a Member is causing disruption in the administrative offices that is creating an unsafe environment for staff or others, they could be banned from accessing those spaces for a certain period. Or if a Member has engaged in behaviour towards another Member that makes that Member feel unsafe in their presence, they could be excluded from public events for a period.

It is essential that a legal framework that allows for banishment of Members, or for their exclusion from certain spaces, services or events attends to principles of fundamental justice and procedural fairness. If it does not, community cohesion is put at risk and measures taken under the framework will be subject to successful challenge by individuals affected by actions taken under it. This requires that such a framework:

- Be clearly and directly connected to protecting public order, peace or safety of the Tsawwassen community;
- Clearly articulate the circumstances in which an individual will be subject to exclusion;

- Ensures that appropriate procedural fairness measures are in place, including: a) an impartial decision-maker, b) a process that allows the decision-maker to make informed findings of fact, c) allowing an individual against whom an order is contemplated to know and respond to the case against them, and d) providing written reasons for any decision;
- Allow for the tailoring of any exclusion order to specific circumstances so that it protects community safety while the subject's ability to do things like work, live in their preferred residence, access services to which citizens are entitled, exercise treaty rights and engage with their family and community is impacted as little as possible; and
- Require that any exclusion orders be time limited and that they be subject to periodic review.

See discussion in [Appendix E – Panel's Analysis of Banishment](#) for further details.

Recommended Strategies:

21.1 The Panel does not recommend banishment of Members as an effective and necessary community safety measure. That said, if banishment of Members is to occur, it should be only as a last resort in circumstances where the individual's presence in the community has been found to pose an unreasonable risk to public safety and it has been shown that all measures that could reasonably allow the person to stay in the community have been attempted and have failed. More specifically, if Tsawwassen wishes to enact a regulatory framework that would allow for banishment of Members in certain circumstances, such a law should: 1) accord with principles of fundamental justice and procedural fairness; 2) require that all other measures be exhausted before banishment occurs; 3) enshrine an approach that strives to reintegrate banished individuals into the community, 4) protect the rights of banished individuals, and 5) strive to ensure community cohesion, including by requiring community approval before such a law is enacted.*

21.2 Consider measures short of banishment (such as banning a Member from attending particular locations or events for a period of time) that could be implemented in respect of a Member engaging in behaviour that is putting the safety of others at risk. This must be done in a legal framework that appropriately protects the rights of all involved. *

*See [Appendix E - Panel's Analysis of Banishment](#) for a discussion of these requirements.

22. Exclusion of Non-Members

The Panel's examination of the processes related to banishment revealed that the existing legal processes related to banishment of non-Members from the community should be updated to ensure alignment with an appropriate legal framework in order to ensure that such orders are not subject to a successful legal challenge and are enforceable by DPD. While somewhat different considerations exist than those discussed above that apply to a framework that would allow for the banishment of Members, basic procedural fairness and Charter rights should be given due consideration in this context as well, particularly if the activities giving rise to potential banishment are expanded.



Recommended Strategies:

- 22.1 Expand the basis for activities that give rise to banishment to include other serious offences such as trafficking in vulnerable persons, violent crimes, and weapons offences.
- 22.2 Consider measures short of banishment (such as banning an individual from attending particular locations or events for a period of time) that could be implemented in respect of a non-Member engaging in behaviour that is putting the safety of others at risk.
- 22.3 Ensure principles of fundamental justice and procedural fairness are provided for in the legal process for exclusion of non-Members.



Appendices

Appendix A – Panelist Biographies

Appendix B – Community Engagement

- B1 – Initial Workshop and Visioning Exercise Summary of Input
- B2 – Health Fair Summary of Input
- B3 – Harm Reduction Workshop Slides
- B4 – Narrative Analysis Method Slides
- B5 – Housing Workshop Slides
- B6 – CSS Update and Ground Truthing
- B7 – Community Responses from House Post Exercise
- B8 – Members’ Gathering Summary of Input
- B9 – Family, Individual, and Group Meeting Summary of Input
- B10 – Legislative Assembly Workshop Summary of Input

Appendix C – Literature Review

Appendix D – Case Studies from other First Nations

Appendix E – Panel’s Analysis of Banishment



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