

LANGLEY CITY DIALOGUE SERIES

## Creating a Healthy and Resilient Community

**B**uilding a vibrant and resilient community means engaging everyone in it to address issues affecting it. Langley City faces a number of critical issues involving homelessness, health, social issues, community safety and well-being. A resilient community is one that thrives from community connections and involvement. That's why Langley City is hosting a series of four collaborative dialogues to focus on critical community issues that are affecting us now.

These discussions will gather us together to examine the issues, recognize local initiatives already underway that are addressing some of these issues, and identify best practices arising from these initiatives. Through these conversations, we can help our community and our City Council to deal effectively with these issues.

### What We Hope to Achieve

Out of these community conversations we hope to **generate solutions** to address these issues that affect not only Langley City but also surrounding communities. We believe that through these community discussions we can build greater community resiliency and well-being.

These dialogues will involve **people already actively engaged** in addressing issues facing Langley City. To start we will focus on health and social needs, housing and homelessness and community safety. These are not 'chiseled in stone'; we are not limited to focussing only on them.

Out of these discussions — **think of them as discussions around a neighbours' kitchen table** — we hope to assist our city and City Council to **shape strategic goals and objectives** that will meet the diverse needs and interests of residents, businesses, and community members. The overarching goals are simply to bring about greater social justice and community well-being.



### **Dialogue Events: Shaping our Discussions**

The series of **four dialogue events** that will engage local and regional people already involved and aware of these issues. It will afford an opportunity for these participants to learn from each other and out of the discussion put forward potential ways to address these issues.

The process will draw on insights from the practice of **restorative justice** in dealing with issues such as those now affecting our community. It will ask: how are people ‘hurting’ and how can we make it better for everyone. Its focus is to address the damage done to community relationships and then move toward greater accountability, healing, and growth.

Through a series of questions, these community conversations will reflect on what impact these issues have had on you; what is important to address **now**; what other information would be helpful; and, who else in the community needs to be involved in the discussion?

### **Who Are the Participants**

These community conversations will **engage community members and organizational reps** from various sectors of our city. Drawing on their lived experience and hands-on knowledge, they will take a close look at all the issues confronting people in our community. These conversations will ensure that the diversity of our community is reflected in ample opportunities to engage and hear its varied voices. It is essential that there is space for diverse perspectives.

These discussions will build on the work that’s already being done on behalf of the city to foster informed civic engagement, collaboration and mobilization especially addressing health,

housing, community safety and community development needs. All discussions will include reps from our Indigenous community partners and the non-profit sector.

The outcome of these four **community conversations would form the basis of a report** to be presented to the City to assist in the development of a community action framework and part of the City’s Strategic Plan. These dialogues should lay the groundwork for a vibrant community framework through which we can have regular discussions involving local groups as well as people with specific levels of expertise.

### **An On-Going Conversation**

Through these community conversations, we can help our city **develop a community action plan** that addresses the issues and assists our City Council in its community planning decisions.

They can also inform the wide-ranging community surveys initiated by the City every three years to get feedback from community members about municipal initiatives, community concerns, and general well-being. These conversations can help inform our City about what community members believe should be public priorities to ensure that city programs and services connect with real community needs.

These conversations should **foster more civic engagement and engage more people** in addressing the issues that we face, while at the same time contributing to the safety and well-being of everyone in Langley City.

### **Information Please**

The dates, times, and locations of the dialogue series will be announced soon. ♦