

## **“Welcome Home - Creating More Welcoming Communities”**

### **RELATIONSHIPS/FRIENDS & FAMILY Tracy interviewer & Arlene supporter**

- Do you find it difficult to meet friends or make meaningful relationships in your community?  
Yes  ✓✓✓ No  ✓
  - We seem to have become disconnected as a result of COVID & because of social media.
  - There are less opportunities for face-to-face gatherings or safe spaces.
  - Social media makes it easy for people to stay home yet at the same time you are never alone, can always reach out.
  
- What would make it easier for you to meet people?
  - Tools for learning
  - Initiation of more events – drop in’s, coffee houses, block parties
  - Utilize church spaces for events
  - We should have something like Welcome Wagon
  - It is difficult when you cannot speak, more sign language or zoom plug ins
  - A place to hang out.

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & INCLUSION Jill interviewer & Arlene supporter**

*Definition: A place where everyone has an equal opportunity to lead a full life, grow up at home with family, be included in school with friends, enjoy a hobby or sport, have a job, travel, find a soulmate, have a home of our own & contribute to your community.*

- How can the city of Mission be more welcoming?
  - Encourage businesses to greet consumers upon entry ✓✓
  - Banner upon entry to city that tells people where to find info
  - Organize a Disability Awareness Day for the City. Have activities and challenges for citizen’s and businesses, e.g., work from a wheelchair for a day, walk with a blind fold, wear earplugs, and see what it is like to be hearing impaired.
  - Clean up untidy areas
  - Make menus in braille or one that is voice activated
  - More signage with symbols & braille
  - Clean up around recycling
  - Community chats online
  - More brochures about services

- Events with a shared interest
  - Library community board not visible
  - Create community bulletin boards in library, business centre, city hall, community services, visitors centre.
  - Visitor's centre could be a fixed point where local events could be posted.
- What does an inclusive community mean or look like to you?
    - A place for all people with the same opportunities to work, play and have a home as most of its citizens
    - Inclusive sports that are non-segregated instead of only Special Olympics ✓✓
    - A community that is caring, compassionate and understanding.
- Is it important for you to give back to your community? Yes  No 
    - Every opportunity to give back/volunteer should be encouraged & supported.
    - Giving back improves self worth – even the homeless should be encouraged to give back in some way and have their skills & contributions valued.
    - Maybe have a free hot drink stand for people.
    - I have lots of time but do not know what I could do, I may need help.
- How can the community create more opportunities for people to be included or give back?
    - Creating a common area within the community where citizens can find postings about opportunities to give back.
    - More donation areas
    - Mission City could create a "Giving Back/Volunteer Award & one for an Employer who hires the most people with disabilities."
    - Some people have time but need transportation to get to the location requiring a volunteer.
    - More effort to rally Mission citizens to give back.
    - Mission News could have a column on giving back.
    - The business centre or perhaps the library could be used to post events/ volunteer opportunities.

## **TRANSPORTATION – ACCESSIBILITY JP interviewer & Michele supporter**

*Definition of Accessibility: Where everyone can get to and use information and spaces and places.*

- Do you feel safe taking public transit? Yes  No  ✓✓✓✓
  - Nightmare because service is orientated north & south. One way system not bi-lateral.
  - Not convenient
  - Some of the drivers are nice and friendly.

- Lack of respect
  - Bus drivers make people feel powerless
  - Bus stops at the shelter does not feel safe
  - Handi-dart service long delays for appointments.
- On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent) how would you rate accessibility in Mission (Examples: streets, sidewalks, crossing signals, signage & parking)
- Circle one: 1 ✓ 2 ✓✓ 3 ✓ 4 ✓✓✓ 5**
- Bus service good to leisure centre routes, 33 & 34 ✓✓
  - People need more knowledge about what to do when the bus is cancelled or the bus just drives by them.
  - More education about what to do when your bullied at a bus stop or on the bus.
- How can transit buses & taxis be improved in Mission?
- Compass card should work for Westcoast
  - Driver's need to make sure there is enough room for ramps to go down flush with the road.
  - City to engage with group on an on-going basis
  - Update bus schedules
  - Be on time ✓✓
  - Drivers need to be aware that lateness causes stress
  - Live time apps for stops
  - Improved transportation to access activities
  - Lougheed & Haig – need audible signal
  - Would like covers at the Egglestone bus stop
  - No light at the stop on Harms
  - Need more illuminated & audible crosswalks ✓✓✓
  - Signals with crosswalks in downtown & timing of crossing not lengthy enough.
  - Dark at Horne & 13<sup>th</sup> Ave.
  - Need better Handi-dart service. Time challenges no timing of service.
  - More hours on Sunday
  - Check that ramps work
  - Ask that drivers wait for customers to be seated before safely driving away.
  - Bus stops be designed for people with disabilities & mobility concerns
  - Create a list of bus stops not set up for wheelchair access .... (e.g., Shopper's Drug Mart)
  - Need more Handi-dart services
  - More taxis needed (Uber may be coming to Mission)
  - Need better routes. Bus only goes east to Dewdney Truck Rd not to Hatzic Island.
  - As city grows need to expand bus service. (e.g., Cedar Valley along Tunbridge & Ferndale)

### **OTHER TRANSPORTATION CONCERN:**

- My doctor is in Maple Ridge, difficult bus route, must arrange a ride, cannot drive.
- Need to paint fluorescent strip along bus stops, crosswalks for higher visibility.  
(Cost effective – safety measure)

### **JOBS *Diane interviewer & James supporter***

- Do you know where to go to find help or get support finding a job?

Yes ✓✓

- Mission Skills Centre✓✓
- Mission Association for Community Living – Bridges to Employment ✓✓
- Community Futures North Fraser
- Invest Triangle – helps with resume writing, discover what your preferences are. I liked this group they helped me get a job with a good employer.
- Work BC Employment Services Office – also helps with resumes & you can talk about your needs. Not as supportive.
- Indeed.ca
- Craig's list
- LinkedIn
- Non-profit Charity Village – cost a bit, higher position roles
- Upload resume to Indeed.ca
- Mission Community Services – get paid to do training (WHIMIS, Foodsafe, First Aid, Indigenous Program)
- Look at on call lists to fill in for someone when they are sick. Lots of places are short staffed.

### **OTHER:**

- How did you get a job?
  - I was determined & said I was not leaving until I get a job.
  - You need to be computer savvy
  - I went in person, met people, created relationships & got to build trust and then was offered a job.
  - Be open, curious, learn and advocate.
- Need to find ways to help people buy and gain computer skills.
- Challenges with youth's expectations, sense of entitlement
- Social media has tainted how youth look for jobs.
- People need help to navigate the first contacts to help you.
- Needs more information in plain language to help understand job expectations

- Need more navigators to help with areas like reading and writing. Having a buddy is good. A community volunteer who could help.
  - Invite Work BC to Mission Self Advocate meeting.
  - Hiring people from visible minority groups. Need a multi-cultural group in employment. Needs to be inclusive. Talk to people who have lived with a visible disability and bring a lived experience.
  - Give people a chance to try a wheelchair and see if they can work.
- Have you hired a person with a disability, who is indigenous, a senior or a youth or a person from a minority group before? Yes  ✓✓ No 
    - My partner has hired people who need a second chance.
    - A welcoming community gives people a chance.
- What was the reason why?
    - Hired through Mission Association for Community Livings employment program.
    - Canada Youth – ESATTA has good experience
    - Lots of job opportunities for minorities
    - ESATTA – hired individuals to do training
    - Hire folks with skills
    - For certain jobs you can train yourself and do without the problems that could happen in a public setting.
- How can employers improve supports to minority groups, like persons with disabilities, those who are outnumbered?
    - Employers need to have compassion & be a respectful place with policies in place
    - Good leadership skills, trickle down effect. Lead by example.
    - Workshops on creating a compassionate workplace
    - Big Box stores are being more inclusive.

**AFFORDABLE & ACCESSIBLE HOUSING Bryce interviewer & Amber supporter**

- What would an affordable & accessible housing unit need to include?
  - Blind spot accessibility
  - Multi pricing not all low income
  - Safety valves on showers
  - Accessible lights switches
  - 36 “ doorways

- Sufficient turning radius in bathrooms for wheelchairs
  - Wheelchair accessible
  - Snow clearing and handy-dart accessible
  - Safety signage & brail signage
  - Railings at appropriate height
  - Low counters
  - Safety warnings, (flashing lights for smoke alarms, etc.)
  - More density to the downtown core
  - Input from the disability community (disability community members in boards making the decisions, having a say in what is being decided)
  - Access to bus stops
  - Access to services (grocery doctor, dentist, etc.)
  - A partnership with a non-profit agency to be the go-between with the city
  - Increasing the range of bus routes and times (make fewer un-desirable locations more feasible for accessibility to urban
- Are you aware of affordable housing in Mission?
    - Yes  ✓✓✓✓ No
    - There is some but not enough ✓✓
- Do you understand who affordable housing is meant for?
    - No ✓
- How can the community work with government to increase accessible and affordable housing?
    - Partnering with builders & agencies (more permits being granted if a certain percentage is guaranteed to be affordable). Where something is zoned for 3 floors, they might get approval for 5 floors if they guarantee a percentage to affordable units, the money they make on the extra units they would not have otherwise had, would off-set the cost of the discounted affordable units.
    - What about landlords?? It was suggested that there is a homeowners grant from the province but what about an incentive to the landlords from the city?? A rebate on utilities or something. What incentive can we offer homeowners to offer their suites at below-market rent? Landlords need to make enough for their bills but how can we entice them to take a chance on a lower income individual?
    - What can we do to change the perception of what a person with disabilities is like? There is a misconception that they will be more work or cause problems and that it is not worth the landlord's time. How can we change this thought process?
    - The land the city owns that is outside the bus routes, making it non-accessible to services, what about calling on the province and having them use their budget to increase bus service?
    - Have people with disabilities on planning committees.
    - Offer cash back to landlords who rent to low income
- Is your current housing close to a bus stops? Yes  No

Majority said yes or were not sure, but most do not utilize this service. Family or home share is the primary method of travel (just the outcome with this group, the answer would possibly be different with different individuals)

## **SERVICES & SUPPORTS *Jay interviewer & Ryan supporter***

- Do you know where to get supports/help and services, if you need them?  
Yes  ✓✓✓ No 
  - Some do
  - Individuals do know they can get help from Mission Association for Community Living.
  
- Are services easy to access? Example: Services for people with disabilities, support groups, mental health?
  - I know where to get supports
  - Mental health services difficult to access
  - Mental health services are slow & long waits
  - Schools need more support for people with disabilities- more E.A.'s
  - Food bank – if you have no ID they turn you away
  - Need 24/7 service
  - Need photo ID to verify
  
- Are there any service(s) that you feel are missing in Mission?
  - Home support Hours too short
  - Mission needs a psychiatric unit
  - More leisure activities – e.g., club house
  - Mission needs a hobby store
  - Drop-in centre downtown, e.g., games
  - A location for interacting & meeting new people. (Presently always hanging out at Trim Horton's)
  - All weather running/walking track that is illuminated at night ✓✓
  - More coaches for Special Olympics with training.
  - Parks need more lights.
  - Home Share is taking peoples rights away.
  - Leisure centre - some youths are threatening
  
- How could we attract these services to come to Mission?
  - Need to attract more Home Share providers, supports & services & the scope of service they provide. (CLBC & MACL)
  - More club houses.

- Do you have a passion that you would love to be involved with to make Mission a better place?
  - Make places for gathering
  - Helping the world in general
  - Building community
  - Create more smaller places for recreation & gathering
  - New schools (Heritage Park Middle Grade 7 – 700 students)
  - Need for more community support workers.
  - Aides for visually impaired

**RIGHTS *Laura interviewer & Shea supporter***

- Are you aware of the United Nations Rights for Person’s with Disabilities which Canada signed?
 

Yes  ✓ No  ✓✓

  - I have read it before
  - Inclusion, diversity, equality & full enjoyment without discrimination are in UN ✓Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities
  
- Do you understand your rights as a Canadian Citizen?
 

Yes  ✓✓ No

  - Equality & protection under the law for everyone.
  - Having your voice heard.
  - Should be posted in public places, need government to put the charter of rights up to.
  
- Would you need help to exercise your rights or have your voice heard?
 

Yes  ✓✓ ✓✓✓ No

  - Everyone needs help to have their voice heard.
  - Individuals need education on how to speak up about their disability
  - More education in school system/ for support workers & employers regarding rights, freedom of speech & disability.
  - Sometimes people are too tired to speak up
  - Getting information that is in plain language that we can understand, e.g., visual info, verbal & assistance to read it out for you so you won’t feel overwhelmed
  - Support & education for people with disabilities and their parents about their rights as adults.
  - Medical advocacy for people with disabilities or mental health issues within the hospitals/psychiatric wards.
  - Easier access to help and resources
  - We need a louder voice



- Easier path for people to get information sometimes we need help like for information on assistance, mobility equipment and care.
- More streamline, where to get help in exercising my rights
- Sometimes we need help to have our voice heard
- All to often ignored.
- Always seem to be waiting

**HEALTH & SAFETY *Angela interviewer & Jalleh supporter.***

- Do you have a local family doctor and dentist? Yes  No 
  - Do not have a dentist, include first responders to list.

**OTHER HEALTH & SAFETY CONCERNS:**

- Shortage of doctors in Mission, city is aware, of the problem. May go to walk-in clinics.
  - Vapping triggers anxieties – need more supervision.
  - Need for a video doctor for home consultations
  - Medical staff who choose not to get vaccinated...have been stopped from practicing.
  - Ambulances serve region & fire is municipal so they arrive first and cannot give medical support.
  - Virtual medical appointments are good when Dr. is outside of Mission.
  - 911 dispatches when an incident happens, fire, ambulance, and police are dispatched ...could the protocols be improved in how resources are utilized.
  - City of Mission is working with Division of Family Doctors however most want to live in large cities. International doctors have a difficult time getting their credentials accepted. Need to lobby government. Ease international restrictions.
- Does your doctor speak to you in plain language that you understand?  
Yes  No 
    - Dr. speaks to me like I am 5 years old.
    - Important for medical specialist to provide clear information that is understandable & with explanations.
- Do the local police communicate with community members in a friendly manner?  
Yes  No 
    - Many officers are new recruits in Mission.
    - RCMP are more open with residents
    - More approachable than isolated.
    - Depends on the officer

- In all settings the firemen, emergency medical team should support people with disabilities with a higher awareness.
- Do you think the courts, police, doctors, and nurses need more training on how to understand and support people who have been excluded or isolated by society?  
Yes  No 
  - More training needed in dealing with persons with mental illness.
  - Police should have better training in assessing mental health issues in a person when responding to a call.
  - Sometimes it is not about training.... Rather taking the time to understand the person or the situation.
  - Would be nice to see the police attend more community events, go to schools, engage with new immigrants to build rapport.
  - Ongoing eventual learning for all people.

### EMERGING THEME OF EVENT

- Relationships are key
- A welcoming community gives people a chance. Sometimes more than one!
- Do not assume
- Respect & kindness for all
- Citizens need information in different ways
- All voices need to be heard – create opportunities for participation
- Value citizens with a lived experience
- Ask what it is people need- what works for them
- One fixed point in community where all resources, events can be posted in more than one format. Some examples where the business centre, library, community services.
- A free safe space for people to gather. (Coffee houses, churches.

### RESOURCES:

- Self Advocates
- Centennial Place
- Game Changers
- Cedar Valley Church
- Boswyk Seniors Activity Centre

- Friendship Centre
- Mental Health Centre
- What's On in Mission

*THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING*