

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: OCP RESEARCH – SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT
– PROJECT COMPLETION**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled “OCP Research – Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment – Project Completion”, dated February 4, 2026, of the Planning and Development Committee meeting, be received for information.

REPORT

The Planning and Development Committee, at its meeting held on February 4, 2026, received and adopted the attached report providing Council with information on the completed Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment and associated Summary Report.

On behalf of the Planning and
Development Committee,

Councillor P. Calendino
Chair

Councillor J. Wang
Vice Chair

TO: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (PDC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: **OCP RESEARCH – SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT – PROJECT COMPLETION**
PURPOSE: To provide Council with information on the completed Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment and to share the associated Summary Report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report titled “OCP Research – Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment – Project Completion” dated February 4, 2026, be received for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the completed Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment (SINA) research project and conveys the Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment Summary Report (Attachment 1). This work analyzed the current and projected needs and opportunities for different types of social infrastructure (SI), particularly City-owned social infrastructure, in each quadrant of the City. The needs assessment was used to inform the development of *Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan* and, in future, will be used by City staff to inform the development of a long-term amenity framework and implementation strategy for City-owned social infrastructure, as well as serve as a reference document for consideration in the implementation of the Community Benefit Bonus policy, Amenity Cost Charges, master plans, community plans and the development of other City policies.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment aligns with the following Council-adopted policies:

- Social Sustainability Strategy (2011);
- Equity Policy (2020);
- Community Benefit Bonus Policy (2020);
- Burnaby School District Long-range Facilities Plan (2023);
- Burnaby Public Library Strategic Plan, 2024-2027 (2024);
- Burnaby Public Library Strategic Facilities Plan (2025);
- Zoning Bylaw (1965) – Community Benefit Bonus Policy amendments (2025); and
- Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan (2025).

2.0 BACKGROUND

In July 2023, Council authorized staff to proceed with a Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment and associated strategy and to apply to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for a grant to undertake the work. On March 13, 2024, Council received a report titled “OCP Research – Community and Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment – Project Initiation,” which commenced research and analysis on the types of social infrastructure that could be considered to keep pace with projected housing and employment growth.

As noted in the July 24, 2023 Council report, a new long-term amenity framework and implementation strategy will be developed to guide City investments and related development funds towards municipal community amenities. This work will commence in 2026, with the SINA research presented in this report helping to inform the framework.

3.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The SINA Summary Report (Attachment 1) describes the project background, methods, engagement, findings, and recommendations.

Social infrastructure (SI) are facilities and spaces where people may access programs, services or events that contribute to social well-being. The following are the SI types selected for this research: childcare facilities, Community Resource Centres, libraries, arts and culture facilities, recreation facilities, parks, public schools, healthcare facilities and commercial & retail spaces. More detailed analysis was completed for City-led and City-partnered SI types, compared to other government-led social infrastructure projects. While the project looked at the broad range of SI types, the SINA Summary Report attached here does not include analysis for the SI types under the Parks, Recreation and Cultural portfolio. Those infrastructure types will be reported at a later date in the *Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan*.

The purpose of SINA is to provide a high-level city-wide analysis of current and projected needs and recommended priorities to deliver more SI and is organized by facility type and by geographic location. SINA was used to inform the development of the new *Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan*. Going forward, SINA data, maps, and recommendations will be available as a City resource to guide long-term decision-making and coordination of SI development projects and opportunities.

This needs assessment is the first of its kind for Burnaby, helping to better understand the needs of all SI types available in the City in a holistic and consistent way. The UBCM *Complete Communities* grant provided an opportunity to look at social infrastructure through a prescribed methodology that is applicable and replicable for all SI types. The development of SINA was heavily focused on geospatial mapping and population data analysis, complemented by engagement with community partners. While Burnaby Public Libraries, Burnaby School District, Fraser Health, and the Parks, Recreation, and Culture and Planning and Development departments were all involved in the SINA project, each department and organization still undertakes its own separate facilities planning documentation. Therefore, the SINA work should be considered as one input among many when it comes to decision making about future social infrastructure in the City.

3.1 Process

The City formed a cross-departmental project team to scope and guide the development of SINA. A consultant team funded by the UBCM grant was responsible for collecting data, providing geospatial analysis, as well as conducting engagement with social infrastructure providers and users. City staff provided supplementary analysis and refined findings further by adding City context and background to complete the project.

3.2 Methodology

Data Inputs

A mix of methods was used to develop SINA, including a background review, a best practice scan, geospatial mapping analysis, population data analysis, and community engagement. SINA used City and publicly available data, collected over the period between January 2024 to September 2025. In particular, the same population growth projection data was used for the development of the *Burnaby 2050* and this needs assessment. Some data was newly created for the purposes of this research, such as the walksheds for City-owned SI as well as aggregated data that are summations of multiple data points.

Gap Analysis

SINA uses the framework prescribed in the UBCM *Complete Communities* grant guidebook, which uses key indicators to identify geospatial gaps and population needs in the context of creating more complete communities. The key indicator categories selected for the assessment are Infrastructure, Population, Daily Needs and Transportation. Within these categories are a range of data or “indicators” that help assess and identify where there are current and future gaps or opportunities for more social infrastructure. A mix of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as well as current and projected population data were used to conduct the analysis.

Prioritization

For each SI type, the gap analysis data was used to rank the four City quadrants from highest to lowest on their current and projected need for SI investment. This produced a matrix showing which quadrants should be prioritized for each SI type. However, this prioritization is based on a relative ranking, meaning that a quadrant may still have needs and gaps, even though its ranking may be lower than other quadrants.

These relative prioritizations are meant to provide a holistic and high-level scan of SI needs by type and geography to facilitate discussion of new infrastructure delivery, in conjunction with other information sources.

Service Provision Analysis

SINA referred to existing City policies and strategic plans to conduct the service provision analysis. For the assessment, service provision refers to the use of existing benchmarks or aspirational targets to understand the level of services provided to a given population, and what additional facility space would be needed to meet that particular service provision level as the population grows. Maintaining an existing service provision level is called a “benchmark,” whereas an aspirational service provision level is called a “target.” SINA selected and calculated the additional facility space needed for each SI type to maintain or

meet its service provision benchmark or target by 2050. Each SI type has a different service provision metric, which is described in departmental strategic plans or best practices. This means service provision benchmarks or targets may be subject to change, especially through the creation of new policies or strategic plans over time.

Strategic Recommendations

SINA also includes strategic recommendations for consideration in the delivery of social infrastructure. Recommendations were derived from a range of sources including the key indicator findings, community engagement and the best practices review.

3.3 Community Engagement

The engagement period for SINA ran from May to July 2024. The project connected with over 190 people from approximately 96 unique organizations through surveys, interviews, focus groups, meetings, events, outreach and site visits. Engagement participants included representatives from City departments, public institutions (Burnaby School District and Fraser Health), as well as social, recreational and arts & culture organizations that provide services or programming to Burnaby communities.

3.4 Findings

SINA research produced findings on the following, organized into profiles for each SI type:

- Existing infrastructure baseline, needs and gaps based on four key indicator categories (Infrastructure, Population, Daily Needs, and Transportation);
- Service provision analysis;
- Quadrant prioritization; and
- Strategic recommendations (related to facility efficiencies, design, partnerships and opportunities to improve SI use and access).

In addition to the infrastructure type profiles, the prioritization and service provision analysis for all SI types are organized in a comprehensive table matrix for each City quadrant.

In addition to the social infrastructure profiles, this project produced city-wide analysis for all the SI types, including:

- Recommendations on which SI types would best complement the different Urban Centre types described in *Burnaby 2050's* land use framework; and
- Analysis of municipal finance tools complementary to SI types.

3.4.1 Engagement Findings

The following is a summary of the engagement findings:

Challenges: Participants noted the following key social infrastructure challenges like affordability, suitability and the need for more dedicated space and rental space.

Opportunities: Participants noted the following opportunities like locating new SI in places that are convenient to access by transit, fostering co-location of new SI, and having more passive spaces for informal gatherings and social connections.

Design considerations: Participants described the need for more multi-purpose spaces, space for storage in the context of co-location, informal design features in existing or

new spaces that do not require administration or bookings (e.g., picnic tables or amphitheatres) and more dedicated spaces for youth within a facility.

3.4.2 Summary of Strategic Recommendations

The following are some of the strategic recommendations developed for this project. The City may consider the following alongside applicable strategic plans:

- Pursue on-site delivery of SI that has less intensive land use requirements and which complements mixed-use developments.
- Foster more co-location of social amenities and infrastructure.
- Develop and confirm the minimum site and functional sizes for various SI types to provide clarity and improve the likelihood that on-site amenities are delivered.
- Develop and confirm a service provision ratio for various SI types.
- Prioritize siting destination-serving SI (e.g. Community Resource Centres) close to SkyTrain stations and the Frequent Transit Network.
- Distribute local-serving SI throughout the city.
- Explore City-owned amenity design standards. These standards could cover topics such as dedicated entrances, elevators and parking as part of the amenity to foster efficient design and neighbourliness between users.
- Pursue the ongoing coordination and tracking of development project data between different City departments to better coordinate City-owned SI delivery.
- Continue the development or updates to facility plans or strategies for all types of SI to inform long-term planning, amenity delivery, financial planning, and development opportunities.
- Explore updating SINA periodically, after the release of the Census data and City of Burnaby population growth projections. SINA should also inform future Official Community Plan (OCP) updates.
- Consider incorporating key indicators from SINA into the forthcoming OCP Implementation Action Plan and continuing to monitor changes to SI needs as part of ongoing OCP monitoring.

3.5 Potential Applications of SINA Findings

SINA was initiated in 2023 to help inform the development of the Official Community Plan and a forthcoming amenity framework and implementation strategy. In the future, in conjunction with other inputs, SINA findings are anticipated to help inform decision-making for City-led and City-partnered social infrastructure in Burnaby. In the context of a community benefit bonus opportunity, the SINA research may help decision-makers determine the social infrastructure that would best suit the site and best address the priority needs in each quadrant. The SINA is a higher-level document that provides recommendations on gaps, needs and strategies to address them, but it may be limited in specific contexts, and as such, should be one input into future capital plans or facilities plans of specific departments.

3.6 Implementation and Next Steps

SINA will directly inform the City of Burnaby's amenity framework and implementation strategy to guide City investments and related development funds towards municipal community amenities. SINA is a research-based resource that supports coordination,

discussion and decision making for community amenities. This includes opportunities through the Community Benefit Bonus (CBB) policy, Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs), master plans and community plans. SINA acts as a “snapshot” of 2025 needs to help facilitate discussions about amenities in a consistent manner. It also projects to 2050 what additional facilities or spaces are needed to meet or maintain service provision levels for future population.

Staff will begin work on the amenity framework and implementation strategy in 2026.

The key indicators used in the SINA may be incorporated into the *Burnaby 2050* monitoring dashboard (a 2026 OCP implementation project) which will be used to report out on key metrics associated with the goals in the Official Community Plan. This would allow City staff to monitor how the needs for social infrastructure change over time.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report will be forwarded to community engagement participants notifying them of the results of the study. No further external communications or engagement is anticipated.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In September 2023, the City received a UBCM *Complete Communities* grant for \$150,000, with a final expenditure of \$127,456.16. The entirety of the project, including the consultant fees and engagement resources, was funded through the grant.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development, on behalf of
E.W. Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment Summary Report

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Vivian Wong, Planner 2 and reviewed by Erin Rennie, Planner 3 and Wendy Tse, Director Community Planning.