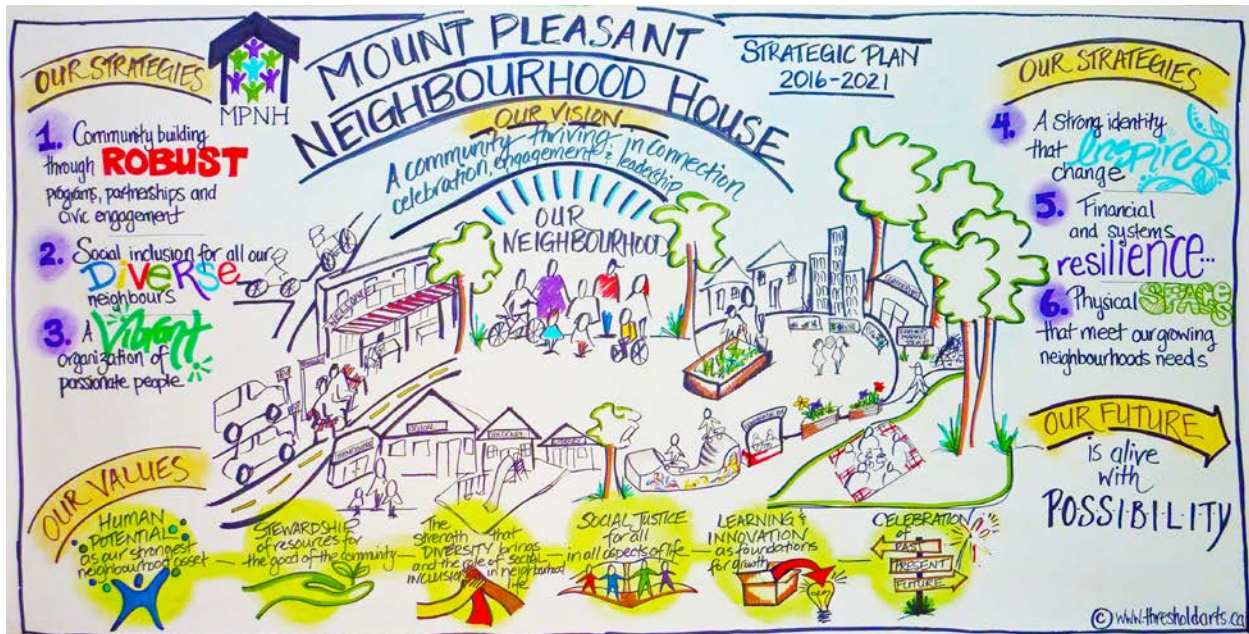


MOUNT PLEASANT NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Connecting, Celebrating, Engaging and Leading



Strategic Plan

2016 – 2021

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A PLAN THAT CONNECTS

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House is a community gathering place in the heart of the Mount Pleasant Community. It is dedicated to creating a neighbourhood where neighbours and visitors alike are connected, engaged and celebrated. The Board, senior management and staff know that “there is a leader in every chair” with each neighbour and program participant contributing to community vitality and resilience in their own way. This plan details how Mountain Pleasant Neighbourhood House will give life to its vision strategically and with clear purpose.

Planning Process

This plan was developed through a comprehensive, nine month consultation process with the Board of Directors senior management, staff, volunteers, program participants, residents, community partners, and funders. The process was guided by the principles of appreciative inquiry. It involved:

- ◆ a planning committee of the Board and staff to guide the process
- ◆ dialogue circle training for interested staff and volunteers
- ◆ an online survey
- ◆ a telephone survey of key partners
- ◆ program circle dialogue sessions
- ◆ senior management circle dialogue
- ◆ a Board of Directors circle dialogue
- ◆ a world café with community partners
- ◆ two Board planning sessions
- ◆ a Director and Management Team review of the business plan; and
- ◆ a document review with the Planning Committee and Board and revisions made.

It also involved a review of other recent plans for the neighbourhood and the creation of a demographic profile.

This Document

The plan begins with an overview of the planning environment. Specifically, it highlights societal trends, neighbourhood changes and neighbourhood house challenges and strengths. Stories are presented as witness to the ways in which the neighbourhood house has made a difference in peoples’ lives. We then articulate our vision and principles and set out key strategic directions for 3-5 years.

THE PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

In order to plan effectively for 3-5 years for an organization that is funded by all levels of government and intends to respond to community needs it is important to consider the overall socio economic climate, the changing face of the neighbourhood and the strengths and challenges of the neighbourhood house itself.

A Rapidly Changing Socio-Economic Climate

Urban neighbourhoods are strongly impacted by national macro-economic change. Specifically, immigration policies affect us immediately. At present there is an influx of refugees, but no jobs, limited capacity in urban schools, and very limited housing. Our population is aging. Where do people go? Who will care for those in need? With raising housing prices, poverty is being suburbanized. And when families leave Vancouver they lose connections with their social networks and resources they have accessed. Access to quality childcare is an increasing issue for low-income families. Development pressure on inner city communities affects housing affordability, impacts the historic sense of place and promotes social exclusion. People who feel isolated in urban areas are most likely to experience health issues; there is also a strong relationship between social isolation and addictions.

The Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood is both a place where people live and a hub of energy, ideas and resources. This plan seeks to think of the neighbourhood in an expansive way: who have we been traditionally and who are we becoming?



Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House serves a core historic area of Vancouver, which includes Mount Pleasant and Olympic Village, Mount Pleasant's newest and emerging sub-area. Additionally, several of Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House's services span the Fairview Slopes neighbourhood across to Granville Street. The map below shows our official boundaries. As we provide an important neighbourhood resource, we also reach out to people living in neighbouring areas and partner with organizations throughout Vancouver.

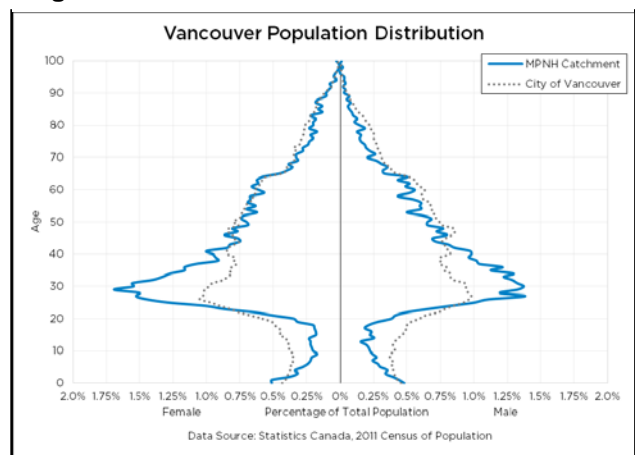


Demographic Overview

Overall, there are 52,040 people living in Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House’s catchment, 6 percent of the population of Vancouver. There are 11,985 families, 8 percent of the families of Vancouver. There is a higher proportion of single parent families than Vancouver as a whole (29% compared to 23%).

There is a significantly higher proportion of people in the 25 – 40 age group than the City as a whole (graph below).

Age Distribution

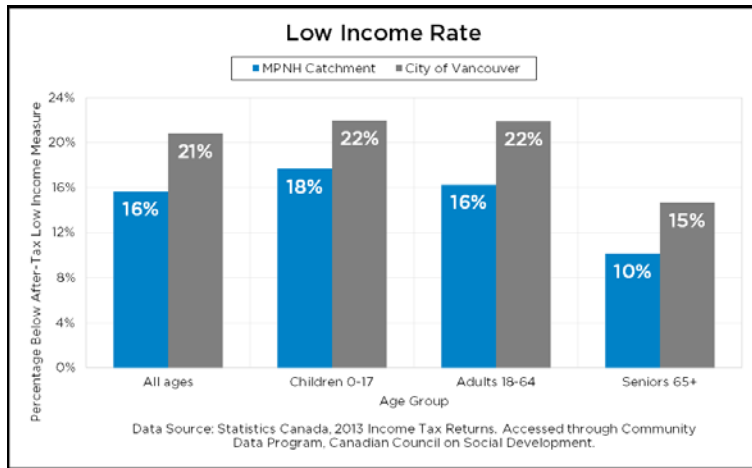


The proportion of people of Aboriginal identity in Mount Pleasant census track areas is twice that of Vancouver as a whole (3% compared to 2%).



The following graph shows the distribution of population by low income rate for areas of the city.

Low Income Rate

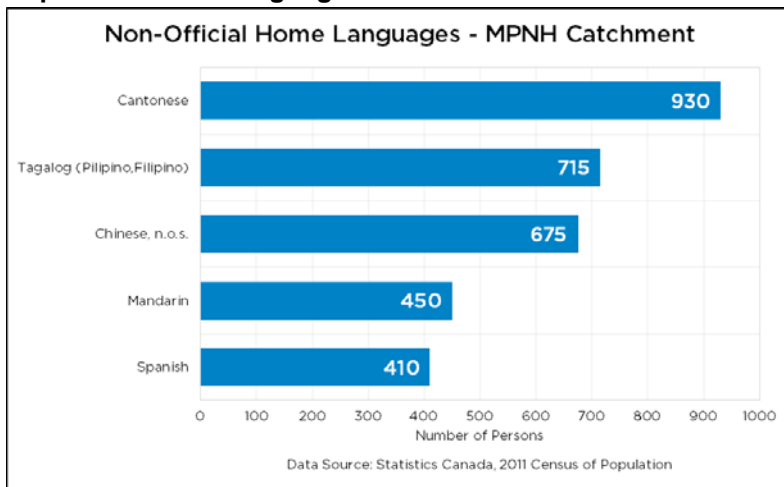


While the low income rate in the SEFC/Fairview Slopes track is significantly lower than the City as a whole, the rate is comparable in other Mount Pleasant census tracks amongst children 0-17 (21% compared to 22 percent) and amongst those over 65 (15 percent in both areas).

Most residents live in apartments in buildings lower than 5 stories. Current data does not indicate proportion of home ownership.

Thirty percent of the population are immigrants, of which the highest proportions come from the Philippines, China, United Kingdom, Vietnam and other places in Asia.

Top Non-Official Languages



Social Characteristics

Mount Pleasant is experienced as a great place to walk, meet neighbours and friends and walk dogs. It has interesting eclectic businesses, a sense of history, and dynamic architecture. It also has many public green spaces and strong neighbourhood commitment to creative use of green spaces. Diversity is honored and celebrated. There are supportive and helpful community agencies and collaboration within community is strong. There is an engaged population with a strong sense of volunteerism. It's a dynamic neighbourhood with a safe feeling to it.

However, as a neighbourhood in transition, there are also many challenges. Foremost amongst these is affordable housing like similar neighbourhoods across Canada. The population is aging and seniors are becoming increasingly isolated, unable to access services and other resources. Transit is not sufficient to meet the needs of the changing demographic. The sidewalk infrastructure is aging, presenting challenges for all ages but particularly seniors. There is insufficient quality childcare spaces to meet the community's needs.

The area where Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House is physically located is referred to in the Mount Pleasant Community Plan (2010) as "Broadway East" is an area peppered with older buildings in need of upgrade, and noted in the plan as area highlighted for revitalization. The anticipated developments in the next few years will bring many changes to the area, and with it more residents and new opportunities for the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House.

Community Voices

Every Thursday means a lot to me having English class at MPNH. I've learned to communicate in simple English and have met new friends. I really appreciate Joy's help and working style who has made me understand more about the Canada government and social benefits to newcomers and immigrants.

Program Participant

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House is one of a network of neighbourhood houses in the Lower Mainland area working to creating healthy vibrant neighbourhoods. Part of the Association of Neighbourhood Houses, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House is legally responsible to and receives financial and human resources services from a central office but it is autonomous in serving and connecting with the neighbourhood it serves. It also links with other Houses in partnerships and other collaborative activities.

Programs and Services

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and its 50 staff and 300 volunteers, provide a huge range of programs and resources that serve, connect and engage residents and program participants.

Approximately 7200 people access the Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House on an annual basis, including the programs and services delivered by Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, by other community partners and by other

groups that rent the facilities for numerous activities and events. Additionally, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House delivers off-site programs in other locations to best

serve the large catchment it serves.



In brief, the Houses offers the following categories of activities:

- ◆ **Capacity building and engagement** providing opportunities for residents and participants to take on leadership and other volunteer roles at all levels.
- ◆ **Neighbourhood connections and place making** that connect neighbours, give residents a voice, and promote social connection
- ◆ **Family supports**, specifically intergenerational and intercultural programs that emphasize parent education, community referrals, family networking and support
- ◆ **Children 0-6** providing quality licensed childcare and early childhood development programs
- ◆ **Children 6-12** providing quality licensed childcare and community programs that connect children to their neighbourhood

Community Voices

Youth voices are heard and valued. We get to attend meetings to share our ideas and opinions.

Youth Circle Participant

- ◆ **Youth** providing youth leadership and social support programs in a safe space to enhance youth involvement in the neighbourhood
- ◆ **Seniors**, providing engagement opportunities that foster health and wellness, social interaction, reciprocity and education.
- ◆ **Newcomer and Aboriginal programs** providing a wealth of culturally-appropriate programs and services specific to newcomer or Aboriginal communities, many in first language.

Strengths

Clearly, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House's greatest asset is its people. Specific strengths noted in the consultation process include:

- ◆ the Executive Director is dynamic and very positive
- ◆ the staff are self-motivated, compassionate, innovative, and
- ◆ the organization is well recognized, diverse and reflective of community.

Our location is also considered a strength. We are strategically located, central in the neighbourhood. We offer a centrally located building, relevant resources, and a very strong capacity for partnership. Our Board, management and staff are well respected and pro-active. We embrace resident-designed programs and are a catalyst in the neighbourhood. On a day to day basis, the house is experienced as welcoming, giving people a feeling of "home" feeling. It is intergenerational, the heart is the kitchen. Being part of the Association of Neighbourhood Houses is also a strength, providing capacity for collaboration and city wide impact.

Challenges

Like many non-profit organizations in this funding climate, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House regularly faces funding challenges. Dependence on project based funding and uncertain funding year to year, limits our capacity for sustainability.

As the needs in our community are changing and there is increased demand on our services, we have expanded the scope of reach and offer a broader range of services to

Community Voices

When I first came here 4 years ago, this house opened its doors for me without knowing who I was. I found very friendly people in charge of the volunteer program group. They helped me find a place and returned my confidence. In this program I saw the best of me and I still do. I met a lot of very kind people; even more, my whole family is a part of this house and we are very happy.

Program Participant

a larger geographic area. To continue to expand in this way, we need additional programming space, staff and program resources.

However, although we are a very active community partner, our visibility is still quite low. We have very limited outdoor space and are not readily accessible to some parts of the community. And although Mount Pleasant is a neighbourhood that attracts young people, the House itself has experienced challenges engaging young adults in the 20 to 30 year-old range.

Community Voices

I was nominated to be Santa for one of the Christmas dinners. The elves proceeded into the hall after dinner and handed out candy canes and oranges. Then the kids swarmed me. Between the kids emerged a young girl, about 4 or 5. She approached slowly, speaking to her mother in Spanish, and nervously leaned forward to kiss the beard I was wearing. My heart melted. Sign me up for next year.

Board Member

CONNECTING VISION TO STRATEGY

In this planning process, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House set out to strategically create a neighbourhood future, a neighbourhood that reflects the values of the people who live there. The following plan introduces a vision which will serve as our guiding beacon for role in the neighbourhood. Our mission aligns us with our parent organization, the Association of Neighbourhood Houses. Our values highlight how we intend to express our mission in a way that is relevant specifically to our neighbourhood. The strategies provide detail of how we will fulfill these values on a day-to-day, month-to-month, and year-to-year basis recognizing the environment in which we are working to achieve our vision.

Vision:

A community thriving in connection, celebration, engagement and leadership.

Mission:

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House plays a leadership role in building a healthy and engaged neighbourhood by connecting people and strengthening their capacity to create change.

Values:

- **human potential** as our strongest neighbourhood asset
- **stewardship** of resources for the good of the community
- the strength that **diversity** brings and the role of **social inclusion** in neighbourhood life
- **social justice** for all in all aspects of life
- **learning and innovation** as the foundation for growth
- **celebration** of past, present and future.

Strategic Plan

Our plan for the next five years leads our neighbourhood to a future that is alive with possibility.



Strategic Direction 1: Community building through robust programs, partnerships and civic engagement

Strategic Goal 1.1: To be a hub that fosters/convenes community dialogues and supports local leadership development.

Strategic Goal 1.2: to ensure families have access to affordable quality childcare and early childhood development opportunities.

Strategic Goal 1.3: to foster food justice in our community, recognizing everyone's right to accessible, culturally appropriate and nutritious food.

Strategic Goal 1.4: to promote connection and opportunities between people, partners and local businesses.

Strategic Direction 2: Social inclusion for all our diverse neighbours

Strategic Goal 2.1: Work with our Aboriginal neighbours to learn more about today's First Peoples together, acknowledge the past, and seek to promote healing.

Strategic Goal 2.2: to address the needs of all socially isolated seniors.

Strategic Goal 2.3: to foster inclusive environments for the LGBTQ community.

Strategic Goal 2.4: to ensure all newcomers all welcome.

Strategic Goal 2.5: to support vulnerable women to know their own capacities.

Strategic Goal 2.6: to promote best practices in placed based community development.

Strategic Direction 3: A vibrant organization of passionate people.

Strategic Goal 3.1: to ensure a healthy success and development process that is empowering to all staff and volunteers.

Strategic Goal 3.2: to implement systems that recognize staff and volunteer contributions and support collegial communication.

Strategic Direction 4: A Strong Identity that inspires change.

Strategic Goal 4.1: to ensure all neighbours and stakeholders are aware of Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and its role in community building.

Strategic Goal 4.2: to ensure our identity is recognized with a broad range of stakeholders.

Strategic Direction 5: Financial and Systems resilience.

Strategic Goal 5.1: To increase capacity for monitoring and reporting.

Strategic Goal 5.2: To support optimum technology capacity.

Community Voices

The first image that popped into my mind was Shirley hitting the dance floor at the staff appreciation event! She was in some way, a vision of MPNH, warm, inviting, not pressuring, building fun and encouraging others to be a part of it. The sense was, "come and dance with us, you don't have to, but we're doing it, and we're having fun and you can too if you want." With that mischievous glint in her eyes. Like the house.

Board Member

Strategic Direction 6: Physical spaces that meet our growing neighbourhood's needs.

Strategic Goal 6.1: To improve access through a stronger physical presence in Mount Pleasant and emerging neighbourhoods.

Strategic Goal 6.2: To secure capital required to expand physical space.