

FOR: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: February 11, 2026

DEPARTMENT: LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

SUBJECT: **2025 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE SURVEY RESULTS**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To present aggregated results of the 2025 Public Safety Committee Survey for the Committee's information.

## **BACKGROUND**

City of Nanaimo Council established the Public Safety Committee (the Committee) in November of 2023. The Committee consists of nine at-large members and two Council members who serve as the Co-Chairs. The Committee is intended to operate in accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Committee Operating Guidelines and the Committee's Work Plan (Attachments A, B and C) with guidance and support from the Co-Chairs and Staff.

At the 2025-APR-07 In Camera Council Meeting, Council directed Staff to survey the Committee members regarding their experience on the Committee and potential Terms of Reference amendments that better suit the desires of the whole of the Committee. At the 2026-FEB-02 In Camera Council Meeting, Council authorized Staff to release the aggregated data of the survey. This report presents the survey results for the Committee's reference.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Survey Design, Methodology and Participation**

Staff prepared the 2025 Public Safety Committee Survey in consultation with the Committee Co-Chairs. The survey consisted of 11 main questions, including a combination of quantitative and qualitative formats. Efforts were made to balance out the number and type of questions to provide the Committee members with meaningful opportunities to offer feedback.

The survey was fully anonymous – names, email addresses or IP addresses were not collected. The survey was administered using Microsoft Forms over a two-week period from 2025-MAY-22 to 2025-JUN-05. The survey link was sent via email to all 11 Committee members, and a reminder email was sent two days prior to the submission deadline.

Overall, 64% of the Committee (seven out of 11 members) responded to the survey. This is generally considered a good response rate for surveys. Respondents spent an average of 25 minutes to complete the survey.

## Survey Results

This report focuses on the aggregated data received from the survey, including identified themes. To protect the respondent's anonymity and privacy, details from qualitative questions are not provided.

### Work Plan Themes and Guiding Principles

Of the six themes in the Committee's work plan, the survey respondents placed greatest value on the following three themes:

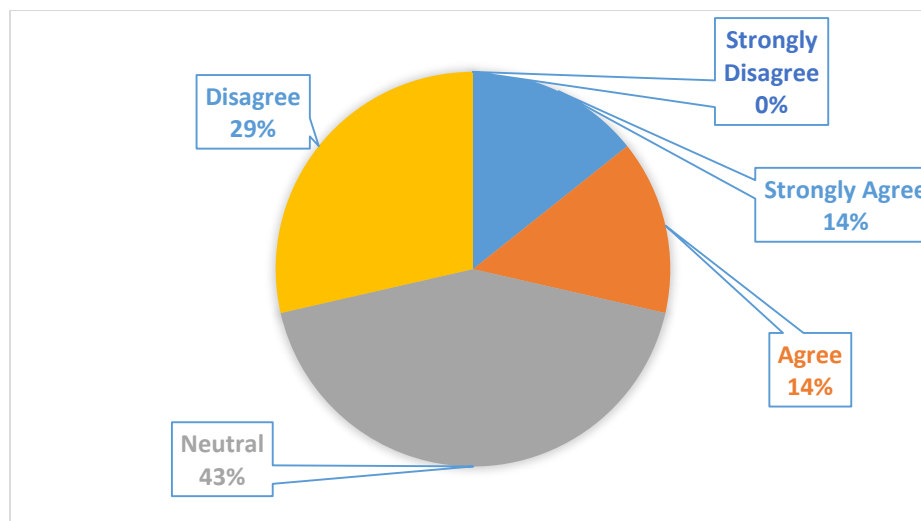
- Homelessness, Addiction and Community Impacts
- Crime Prevention
- Advocacy

*Homelessness, Addiction and Community Impacts* was ranked the highest. *Crime Prevention* and *Advocacy* themes were ranked equally as being important. These findings mirror ongoing concerns expressed by the community and the Committee members, including issues such as the operation of the Drop-in Hub at 55 Victoria Road.

There was less consensus on how the Committee's meetings and discussions should be guided. Nearly one third of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the adopted work plan should guide the Committee's work, approximately another third disagreed, and the remaining respondents were neutral.

It is worth noting that the work plan was developed with the Committee's input in the fall of 2024; and subsequently endorsed by the Committee and Council.

Chart 1: Responses to the question "Do you agree that the Committee's meetings and discussions should be primarily guided by the work plan adopted by the Committee and endorsed by Council?"



Survey respondents identified several challenges, including the Committee's role being primarily limited to receiving information rather than providing recommendations, Council having already undertaken

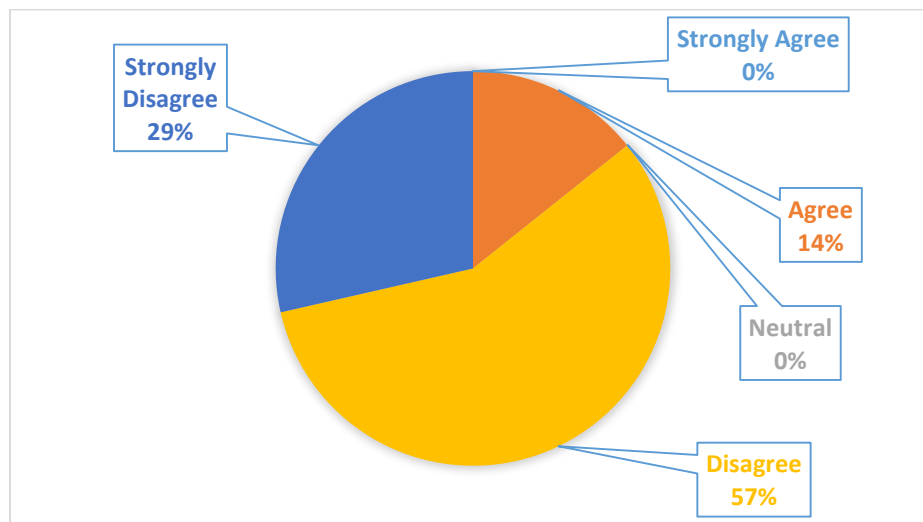
work in areas identified in the Committee’s work plan, and the importance of the Committee being able to raise and address emerging issues in a timely manner.

While the majority of items brought before the Committee were informational in nature, a few agenda topics provided opportunities for the Committee to offer recommendations or input. These topics included Lost Lake Road Traffic Calming, Pedestrian Infrastructure Upgrade Priorities, RCMP Nanaimo Detachment annual priorities, City of Nanaimo Liquor Control Strategy, speed limits near elementary schools, and the Committee’s work plan. The Committee members may express interest in discussing items on the Committee’s Work Plan either at a meeting or by notifying the Committee Chair in between meetings. The Chair reviews suggestions with Staff and determines whether an item can be placed on the upcoming agenda, taking into account municipal jurisdiction, alignment with the Committee’s work plan and Terms of Reference, Council direction, and any related work being undertaken. For items that are not in the Committee’s work plan, the Committee would need to recommend that Council direct Staff to bring forward the item.

### Committee’s Efficacy

Approximately 85% of the survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Committee has been successful in exercising its purpose. Respondents provided a range of reasons for their views, reflecting the complexity of the issues the Committee is tasked with addressing.

Chart 2: Responses to the question “In your opinion, has the Committee been successful in exercising its purpose?”



### The Committee’s Focus and Council’s Advocacy

Survey respondents provided very limited feedback when asked about additional areas within municipal jurisdiction that the Committee should focus on. This may reflect the complex nature of the public safety issues which have local impact yet require action and response from senior levels of government.

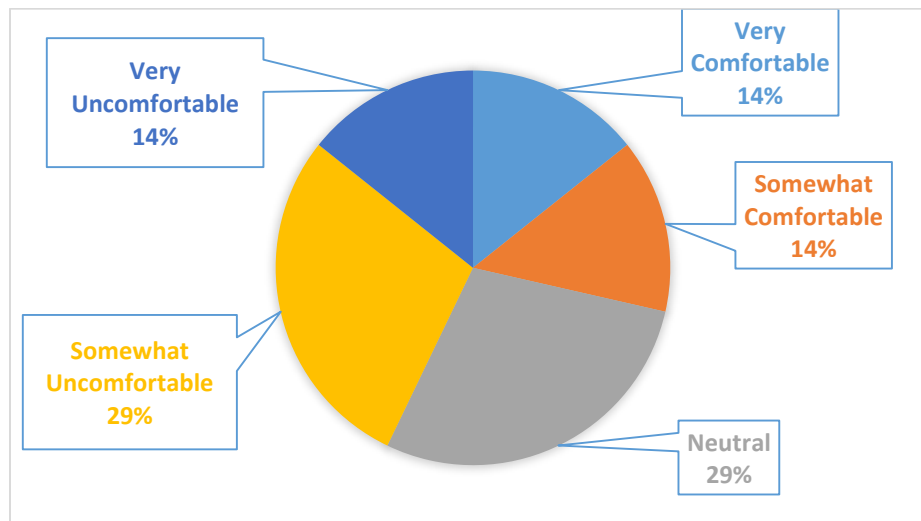
In contrast, almost all respondents identified issues they would like Council to advocate on. Council’s advocacy work to date have addressed several related priorities including the need for increased

resources for complex care, detox and recovery spaces, provincial funding for Mental Health Liaison Officers, changes to the justice system and addressing prolific offenders, mitigating downstream impacts on the community, and advancing housing needs across the spectrum. It is possible that some Committee members may not be aware of the efforts already undertaken by Council. As the level of government closest to residents, local governments often face an expectation that they will promptly resolve the complex issues in the community, many of which extend beyond the municipal authority and funding capacity.

### Experience Serving on the Committee

In response to the question about how comfortable Committee members feel asking questions or openly sharing thoughts, ideas and suggestions during the meetings, 43% indicated they are either somewhat or very uncomfortable. Nearly one third reported feeling somewhat or very comfortable and the remaining approximately one third were neutral. The respondents recognized the existence of diverse perspectives, a lack of alignment on the root causes of the public safety issues and the structure of Committee meetings. Results indicate barriers and opportunities for building consensus. Respondents also expressed a desire for the Committee to be involved earlier in discussions, prior to finalization of projects.

Chart 3: Responses to the question “How comfortable have you felt in asking questions or openly sharing your thoughts, ideas and suggestions during Committee meetings?”



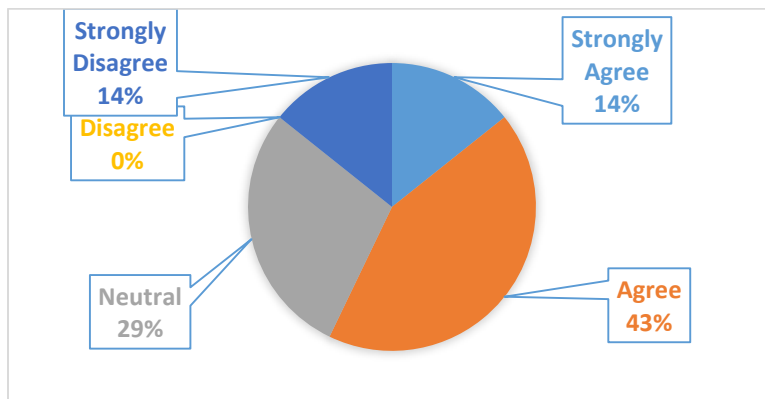
Survey respondents also described both challenges and rewarding aspects of serving the Committee. Reported challenges included the personal impacts and requirements of volunteer service on the Committee members, the limited referral of issues from Council, and meeting and Committee dynamics. Rewarding aspects included appreciation for Staff's work, respondents' greater awareness of Council's initiatives, and sharing of information and establishing connections with the community.

### Meeting Frequency

Majority of the Committee members who responded either agreed or strongly agreed that the Committee met frequently enough. Approximately one third were neutral in this regard and the

remaining 14% strongly disagreed, believing that the Committee should meet more frequently. It is worth noting that other similar bodies do not meet on more frequently, and supporting a higher frequency meeting schedule would be operationally challenging while Staff continue to deliver on other services to the community. While two Committee meetings were cancelled in 2025, the Committee met six times during the 2024 calendar year. The 2026 meeting schedule is affected by the 2026 Local Government Election, with the Committee scheduled to meet three times prior to the fall election, in accordance with the standard meeting schedule.

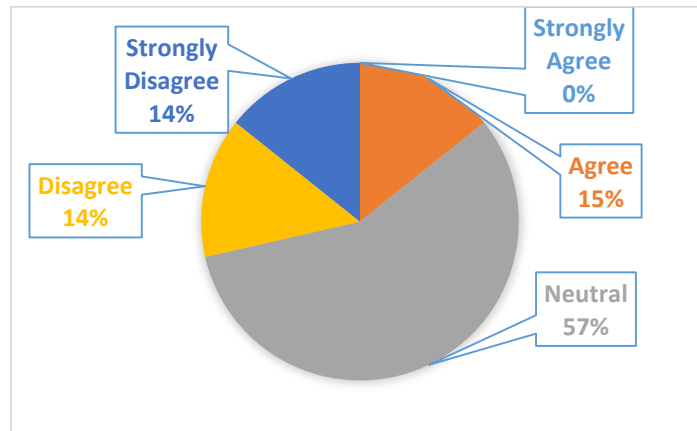
Chart 4: Responses to the question “In your opinion, does the Committee meet with sufficient frequency?”



### Committee’s Future

Majority of the survey respondents indicated that they felt neutral about the future of the Committee. Nearly one third disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Committee has value. Only 15% of the respondents believed it would be valuable for the Committee to continue. These results support feedback provided elsewhere in the survey. The Committee members were appointed by Council for the 2022-2026 Council term, and the Committee remains in place for the final year of its current term. The majority of Committee members continue to regularly attend the meetings.

Chart 5: Responses to the question “Do you think it would be valuable for the Committee to continue to exist?”



## Other Feedback

The final question in the survey invited Committee members to provide any additional feedback reflecting on the Committee's operation over the past 16 months. The responses expressed frustration with the lack of visible public safety improvements and perceived inaction by the City, the need to make better use of the Committee's role, the importance of communicating positive actions the City is taking to enhance public safety, and the desire to seek broader input from the community.

The intent of the Committee, with membership comprised primarily of residents, is to provide input on behalf of the community. This input can be provided through consensus-building discussion of items presented by Staff, by bringing forward recommendations to Council on identified agenda topics and by developing and working towards the objectives of the Committee's work plan created at the beginning of the term.

## Conclusion on Survey Findings

The survey results provide valuable insight into the Committee's members perspectives in 2025. While several common themes emerged, the results do not present a full picture, as only seven of the 11 committee members responded to the survey, with fewer respondents for some individual questions. Therefore, conclusions drawn from the findings need to be carefully considered with an understanding of these limitations.

## **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

There are no requirements for statutory notification or community engagement initiatives regarding the survey results. Overview of the results is provided to the Committee at the beginning of its final year of the current term for information and to help guide the Committee's work in 2026. |

## **ALIGNMENT WITH CITY PLAN**

The report is aligned with the following City goals:

- A Green Nanaimo: Resilient and Regenerative Ecosystems
- A Connected Nanaimo: Equitable Access and Mobility
- A Healthy Nanaimo: Community Wellbeing and Livability
  - C3.1 Community Safety & Security
- An Empowered Nanaimo: Reconciliation, Representation and Inclusion
  - C4.4 Political Voice & Engagement
- A Prosperous Nanaimo: Thriving and Resilient Economy |

## **ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The report is aligned with the following Council Strategic Framework priorities:

- Implementing City Plan Action Plans and Key City Management Plans
- Social, Health and Public Safety Challenges
- Maintaining and Growing Current Services

- Capital Projects
- Communicating with the Community
- Governance and Corporate Excellence

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff are providing information in this report for the Committee's reference as it enters its final year of the 2022-2026 term. This offers Committee members an opportunity to reflect on the Committee's operations and to work collaboratively during remaining meetings to review information presented, engage in respectful discussions, and provide potential recommendations to Council in alignment with the Committee's Terms of Reference. |

### **KEY MESSAGES**

- A survey of the Public Safety Committee members was conducted in 2025.
- This report presents aggregated findings from that survey.
- Survey results indicate public safety issues remain complex and extend beyond municipal authority; and improvements are needed in communication, awareness, and alignment within the Committee.
- The survey results may help guide the Committee's work during its final year of the current four-year term.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT A: Public Safety Committee Terms of Reference

ATTACHMENT B: Committee Operating Guidelines

ATTACHMENT C: Public Safety Committee Work Plan 2024 - 2026 |

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