



## The District of North Vancouver REGULAR MEETING REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 22, 2018

File:

**AUTHOR:** Mairi Welman, Manager, Strategic Communications & Community Relations

**SUBJECT:** Results of Reunification Public Engagement

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive for information the report, "*Results of Reunification Public Engagement*," including the attached "*North Vancouver survey on Identity, Joint Services, and Reunification*" by eNRG Research Group.

### REASON FOR REPORT:

At its regular meeting on April 16, 2018, Council directed staff to proceed with:

- Placing advertising in the North Shore News containing an open letter to the public from Mayor and Council regarding reunification of the District and the City of North Vancouver
- Conducting a random-sample, demographically and statistically representative public opinion survey of District and City of North Vancouver residents regarding attitudes about identity, joint service delivery, and reunification

This work has now been completed and staff are providing the results to Council.

### SUMMARY:

This report summarizes the results of the random-sample statistically representative public opinion survey conducted between April 23 and May 1, 2018.

This survey asked a total of 615 residents living in both the City and District of North Vancouver questions related to identity, important community issues and awareness of reunification/amalgamation discussions. Its main purpose was to ascertain whether citizens felt the question of amalgamation warranted further independent study.

Due to a high level of public interest, it was decided to also offer the option to residents to complete the same suite of questions in an on-line, self-selecting survey. Additional advertising raised awareness of this option. The results of the on-line survey are provided separately in this report.

It is of utmost importance that the results from the two surveys not be compared or conflated. The online survey is neither statistically-relevant nor demographically-representative. It is self-selected and therefore must be considered separately.

Appendix A provides the results of the professional survey.

**BACKGROUND:**

District Council has clearly indicated it is in favour of exploring the costs and benefits associated with the reunification of the District and the City of North Vancouver.

The District enabled resident discussion of reunification by establishing and supporting a *Blue Ribbon Committee* of District and City residents, which produced a report in late 2014 that identified the scope of issues associated with amalgamation.

This was followed by various additional background research reports completed by District staff. Included in this research are case study summaries of relevant amalgamation process experiences in BC; namely the Abbotsford-Matsqui merger achieved in 1995, and the Duncan-North Cowichan amalgamation study process, which is still underway.

In April 2018 Council directed staff to engage the public directly on the question of reunification by placing advertising containing an open letter from Council to the public in the local newspaper, and conducting a statistically-relevant, demographically-representative survey of residents in both the City and the District to gauge support for investigating the costs and benefits of amalgamation, discovering top issues of concern, levels of awareness of shared services, and sense of identity.

As per Council's direction, the public engagement on reunification took the form of:

- Public release of all previous staff research materials and the report from the District's *Blue Ribbon Committee* on reunification
- Full page newspaper ads in the North Shore News
- Media relations
- A professionally conducted statistically-relevant and demographically-representative public opinion survey
- Web content
- Social media content

Council invited the City of North Vancouver to partner in the engagement exercise. The invitation was declined.

**ANALYSIS:**

**Professional Survey:**

The professional survey met all best practise standards for methodology in public opinion polling and was statistically-relevant and demographically-representative, with the sample chosen to reflect the age and gender mix of the 2016 census data on population. This survey engaged 615 residents in total, and asked them a suite of questions relating to identity, general issues, and interest in reunification.

- The total sample size of 615 people provides for a sampling error of +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.
- Samples were 304 respondents from the District of North Vancouver and 310 from the City of North Vancouver. One resident did not know which municipality they lived in.
- The margin of error for each area is +/- 5.6%, again at the 95% level of confidence.

Key questions and responses are highlighted below, and the full report is attached as Appendix A.

***Where residents say they live:***

- Most residents say North Vancouver when asked where they live (86%)
  - This proportion is identical for DNV and CNV

***What are the top issues facing your community?***

- Traffic/transportation concerns (63% total, 65% District, 59% City)
- Affordable housing (32% total, 30% District, 35% City)
- Public Transit (25% total, 26% District, 24% City)
- Infrastructure planning (25% total, 25% District, 25% City)

***Awareness of shared services:***

- 55% of North Vancouver residents are not aware of any services that the City and District of North Vancouver deliver jointly.
  - Of those residents who are aware of services delivered jointly, 48% cite recreational and cultural facilities, followed closely by police services at 47%

***Do you think the District and the City should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation?***

- Yes 87% total
  - 91% DNV
  - 82% CNV
- No 9% total
  - 8% DNV
  - 11% CNV

**Online Survey:**

An online survey was available to residents in both municipalities after the formal phone survey closed and was open until May 11. It was comprised of the very same questions included in the professional survey. Its purpose was to provide an input channel for those residents who:

- did not get a call from the survey firm,
- did not have time to take the survey when called, or
- whose demographic quotient had already been reached when they were screened by the survey firm.

Online survey respondents were self-selected and were not asked for demographic information, however they were asked to provide their postal code.

A total of 783 responses to the online survey were received:

- 562 from the District
- 219 from the City

Quite apart from the responses to the survey questions themselves, which generally mirror those received in the professional survey, it is notable that 783 North Vancouver residents felt compelled to take the time to go online, find the survey, and provide their opinion on the matter of reunification.

**Financial Impacts:**

The final cost to implement the engagement tactics was \$24,800, an increase over the original estimate of \$22,750 due to the addition of the online survey option and the supporting newspaper ads.

**Liability/Risk:**

There was no liability associated with this project other than a potential perceived risk relating to the unpredictability of the outcome of the survey.

**Public Input:**

This project provided citizens in the District and the City an opportunity to provide input on the topic of reunification.

**Conclusion:**

This report provides the results of engaging residents in the City and the District to gauge support for investigating the costs and benefits of amalgamation, discovering top issues of concern, levels of awareness of shared services, and sense of identity.

Respectfully submitted,

Mairi Welman  
Manager, Strategic Communications & Community Relations

Appendices:

A: Report from eNRG Research Group

<b>REVIEWED WITH:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Community Dev. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Clerk's Office _____	External Agencies:
<input type="checkbox"/> Development Services _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Board _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Finance _____	<input type="checkbox"/> NS Health _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Operations _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Services _____	<input type="checkbox"/> RCMP _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parks _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ITS _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>NVRC</b> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicitor _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum & Arch. _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Facilities _____	<input type="checkbox"/> GIS _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate _____	



**North Vancouver survey of public opinion on  
Identity, Joint delivery of Services, and Reunification**

May 2018

Prepared by



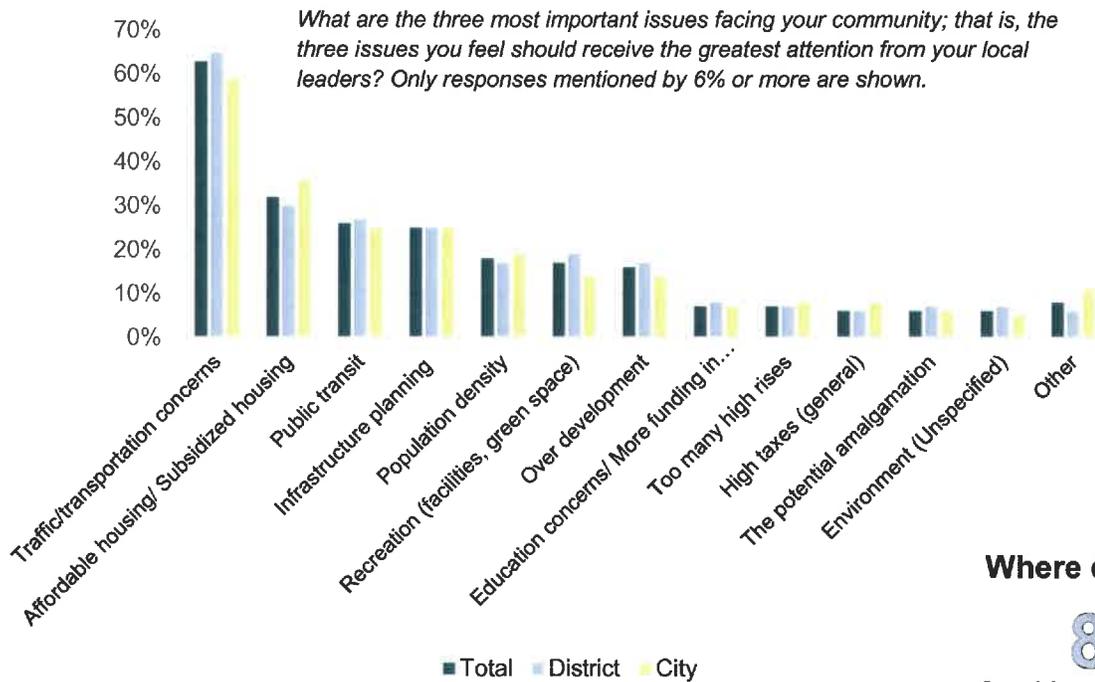
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## Research Objectives and Methodology

- The District of North Vancouver commissioned NRG Research Group to conduct a statistically valid telephone survey (with option to complete online) with residents of the District and City of North Vancouver. The main purpose of the study is to gauge whether residents think the City and District should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation.
- Specific research objectives include:
  - Gauging resident knowledge of the potential to amalgamate the City and District;
  - Gauging whether residents think the City and District should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation;
  - Investigating perceived differences between the City and District;
  - Investigating perceived similarities between the City and District;
  - Gauging resident knowledge of services delivered jointly by the City and District;
  - Capturing resident demographics; and,
  - Assessing whether there are differences in opinion between those in the District of North Vancouver vs. those in the City of North Vancouver.
- The survey was conducted by telephone (both landlines and cellular phones), with a pre-test held on April 20, 2018 and the data collection period from April 23 through May 1, 2018. The results were weighted to reflect the known age, gender and region parameters of the District and City of North Vancouver according to the 2016 Census.
- NRG surveyed District and City of North Vancouver residents 18 years of age or older. The sample was obtained using random digit dialling (RDD) and a next-birthday method of respondent selection. During data collection, quotas were established by age category, gender and region in accordance to their representation in the general population.
- A total of 615 North Vancouver residents completed the survey, composed of 304 from the District of North Vancouver and 310 from the City of North Vancouver. One respondent was unsure which part of North Vancouver they lived in and did not provide a postal code.
- The total sample of 615 completed surveys provides a sampling error of +/- 3.9 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence. For the samples of 304 respondents from the District of North Vancouver and 310 from the City of North Vancouver, the margin of error for each area is +/- 5.6%, again at the 95% level of confidence.
- The target number of completed interviews was 300 from each of the District and the City of North Vancouver. Although there are differences in population size between the District and City, there is no difference in the margin of error for sample sizes of 300 in each of the jurisdictions.

## Most Important Issues Facing the Community



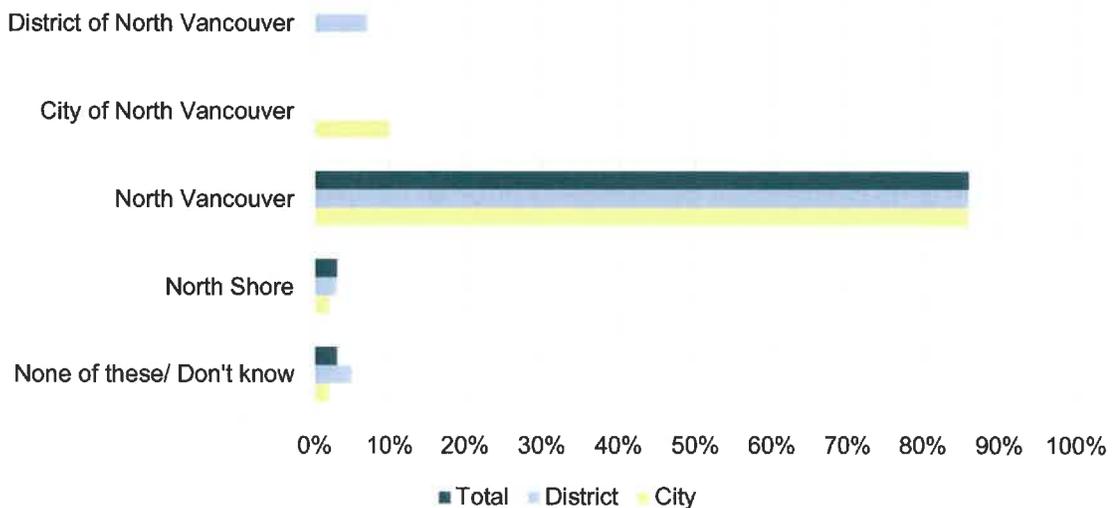
Overall, residents feel the top three issues facing their community are traffic/ transportation concerns (63%, the highest by far), affordable/ subsidized housing (32%) and public transit (26%).

- The proportions are similar\* for residents of DNV and CNV.

## Where do you live?

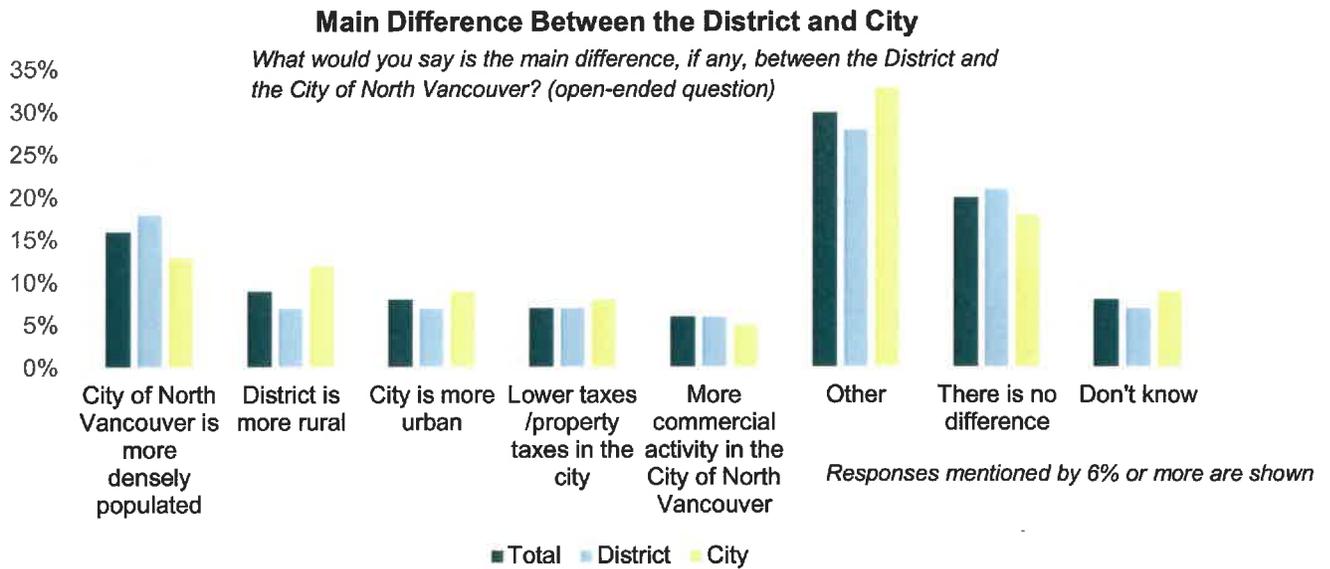
86%

of residents say just "North Vancouver" for where they live; this proportion is identical for residents of DNV and CNV. Only 4% each say "District of North Vancouver" or "City of North Vancouver."



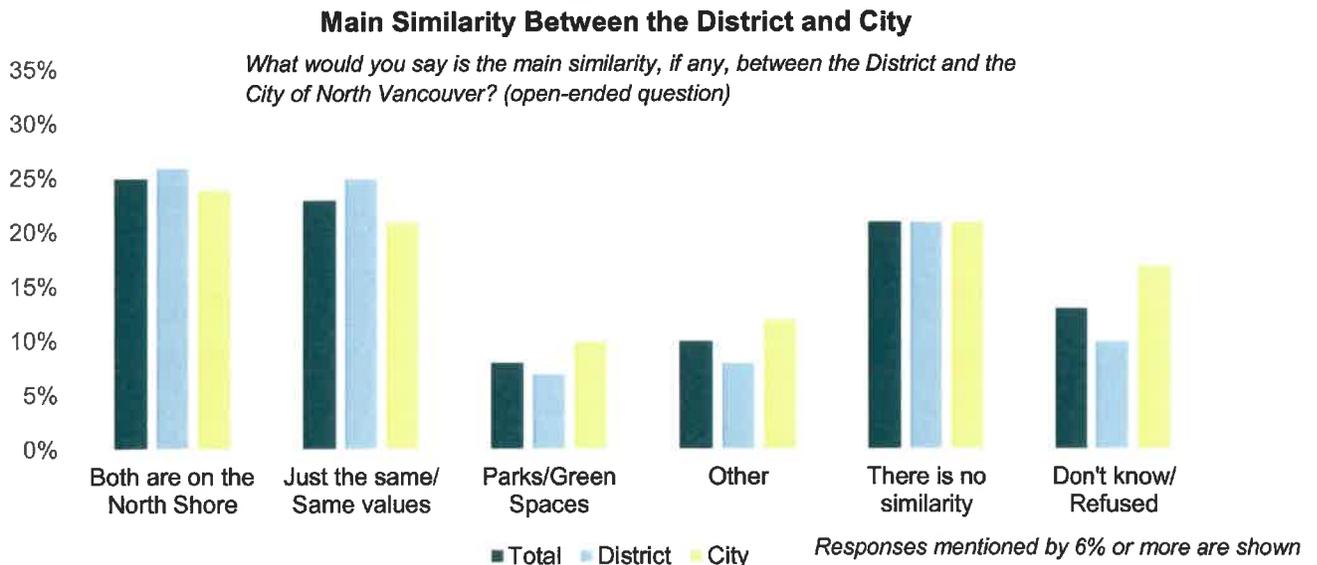
\*Proportions that are called similar may not be identical, but are within the margin of error and not statistically different.

## Perceived Differences and Similarities



**DNV and CNV are more in agreement with the similarities between the two areas than the differences.**

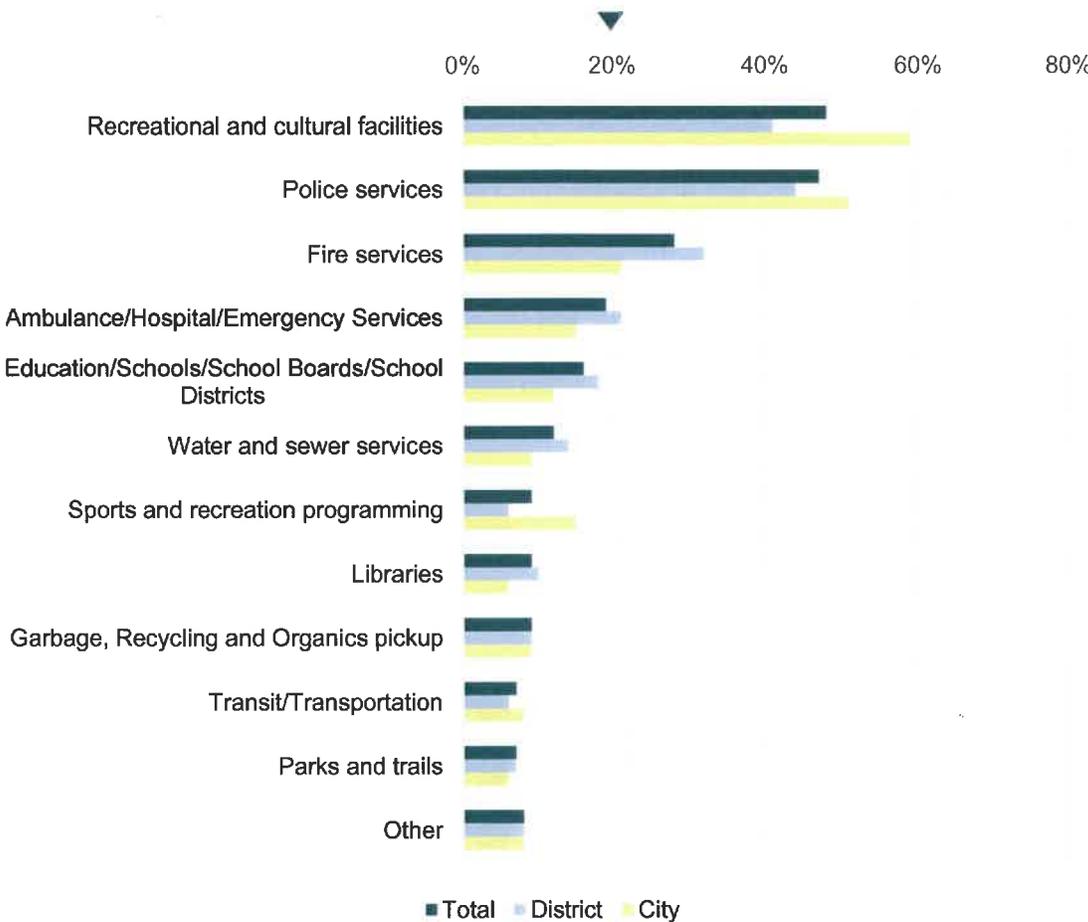
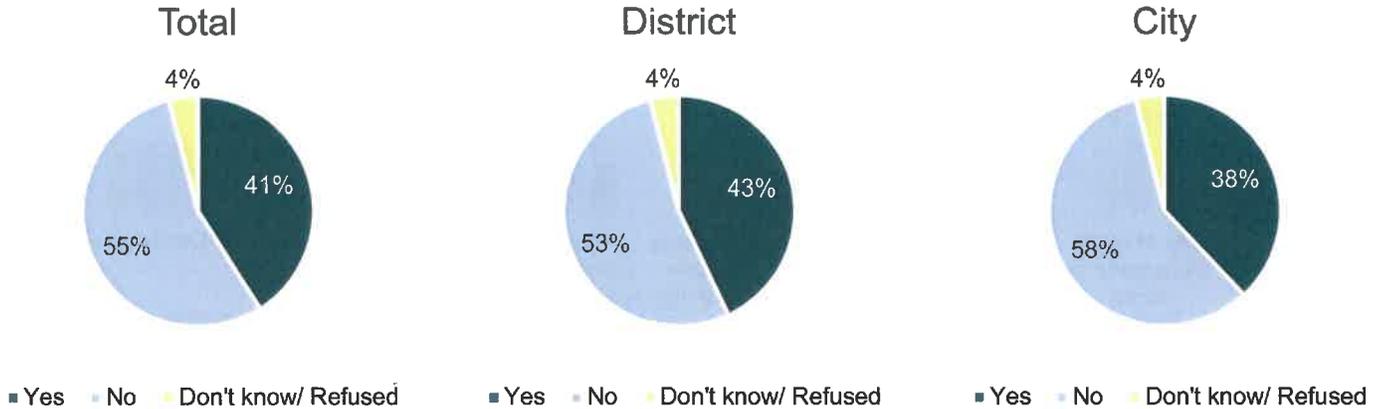
- **Main perceived difference** is "CNV is more densely populated" (16% overall).
- Other differences include "District is more Rural/Larger/Suburban/Quieter" (9%), "City is more Urban/Smaller/Exciting" (8%) and "Lower taxes /property taxes in the City" (7%).
- **Top two main perceived similarities** by far are "both are on the North Shore" (25% overall) and "just the same/ Same people/Same values/Shared services/Both Safe" (23%).
- Other similarities include "Parks/Green Spaces/Scenery/Beauty/Nature" (8%) and "have to cross a bridge/ride the SeaBus to get to both communities" (5%).
- There are no significant differences in responses between CNV and DNV.
- Responses categorized as "Other" are a collection of mentions given by 4% or less of all respondents. The majority of responses to the question on the main difference between the District and City fell into "Other." This suggests that North Vancouver residents have little agreement on what makes the District and City different.



## Awareness of Services Delivered Jointly

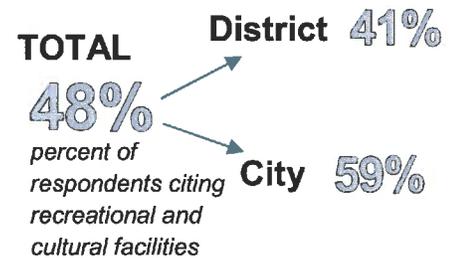
Over one-half (55%) of North Vancouver residents are not aware of any services that the City and District of North Vancouver deliver jointly. There is no significant difference between the District and the City in the awareness of services delivered jointly.

Are you aware of any services that the City and District of North Vancouver deliver jointly?



Of those North Vancouver residents aware of services delivered jointly by the City and District (41% of the total), 48% cite recreational and cultural facilities as a jointly delivered service followed closely by police services (47%).

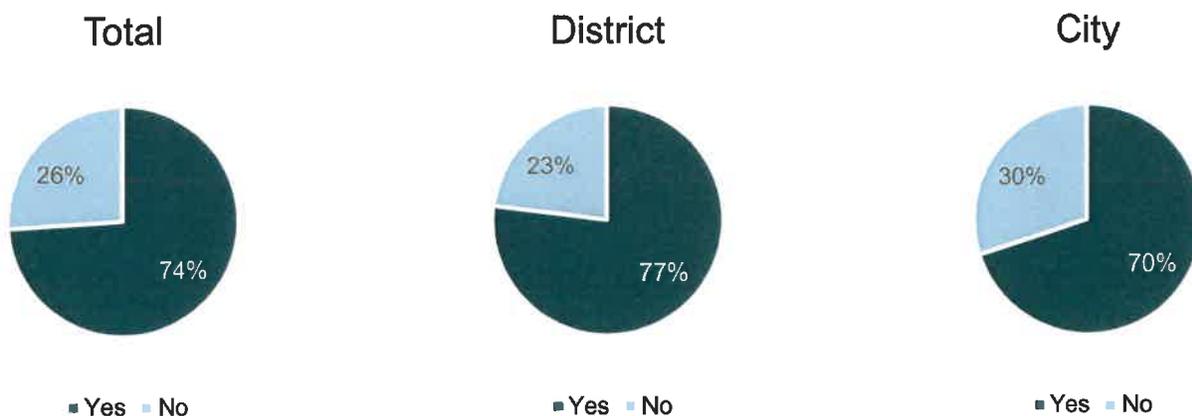
Those in the City of North Vancouver are significantly more likely\* than those in the District to mention recreational and cultural facilities, and sport and recreation as jointly delivered services.



Question was asked of those indicating awareness of services the City and the District of North Vancouver deliver jointly (n=267). Responses given by 6% or more are shown.

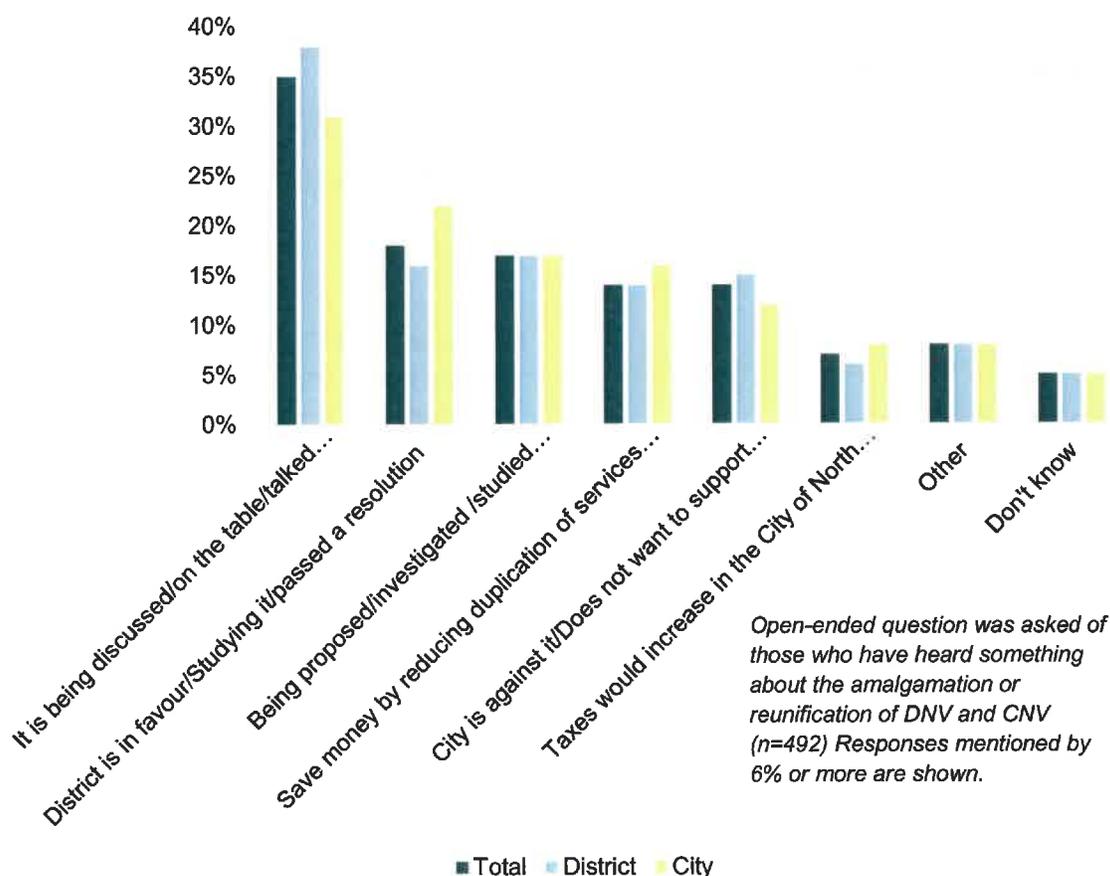
\*\*Significantly more likely\* means there is a statistically significant difference and the difference is unlikely to be due to chance.

## Awareness of Potential Amalgamation



### Heard anything about amalgamating/ reuniting DNV and CNV:

- Around three-quarters (74%) of North Vancouver residents have heard anything about amalgamating or reuniting DNV and CNV.
  - There is no statistically significant difference\* between DNV and CNV residents.



Those who have heard something about amalgamating or reunifying the City and District were asked the follow-up open-ended question: *What have you heard about amalgamating or reunifying the City and District of North Vancouver?*

Residents overall are most likely to say they have heard that amalgamation is being discussed and studied (35%), followed by hearing that the District is in favour of the amalgamation/ studying it/ passed a resolution (18%)

Responses categorized as "Other" are a collection of various mentions each given by less than 1% of respondents.

\*While the proportions are not identical, they are within the margin of error and not statistically different.

# Investigating Amalgamation

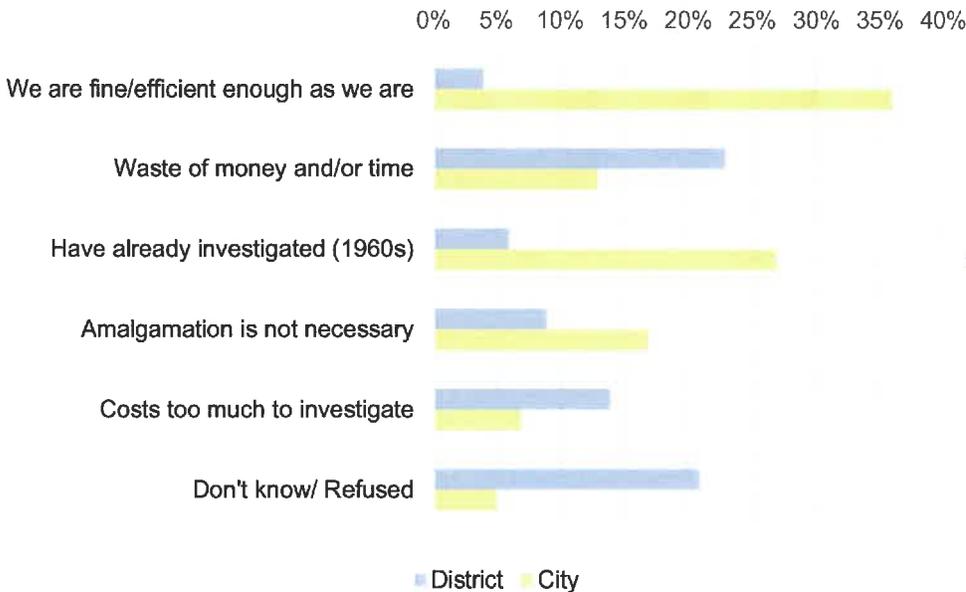
Do you think the City and the District of North Vancouver should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation?

Residents are overwhelmingly in favour of the City and the District jointly investigating the true costs and benefits of amalgamation:

▶ **87%** of residents say "yes" to this question, while 9% say "no."



- There is significantly\* more "yes" support in DNV than CNV, though residents of both jurisdictions are highly in favour: **91% say yes in DNV, while 82% say yes in CNV.**
- Those who have already heard about amalgamation are significantly\* more likely to say yes, 90%, versus 79% who had not previously heard about it.
- There are no statistically relevant differences between age groups or gender in North Vancouver.



### Reasons for NOT jointly investigating the true costs and benefits of amalgamation?

▶ The 9% who responded with "no" to having DNV and CNV jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation were asked why via a follow-up open-ended question.

The top reason given is "We are fine/efficient enough as we are." However, this is mentioned significantly\* more by those living in the CNV than the DNV.

Responses mentioned by 10% or more are shown (n=60)

\*"Significantly" means there is a statistically significant difference and the difference is unlikely to be due to chance.

## Appendix: Demographics

Age Categories (weighted)	Total	District	City
18-34	24%	22%	28%
35-54	37%	37%	36%
55+	39%	41%	36%

Gender (weighted)	Total	District	City
Male	47%	48%	47%
Female	53%	52%	53%

Number in Household	Total	District	City
1	16%	14%	20%
2	27%	25%	30%
3	19%	18%	20%
4	29%	32%	23%
5	6%	8%	4%
6+	3%	3%	3%

Own or Rent	Total	District	City
Own	81%	86%	73%
Rent	16%	11%	23%
Other	2%	2%	3%

Tenure in North Vancouver	Total	District	City
Less than 1 to 5 years	7%	5%	10%
6 to 10 years	10%	9%	12%
11 to 20 years	25%	25%	26%
21 to 30 years	22%	21%	23%
31 to 40 years	14%	15%	12%
41+ years	21%	24%	16%

## Appendix: Calculating Weights by Region, Age, and Gender

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- Weight parameters were developed for the entire dataset of completed surveys.
- Using 2016 census data for each of the District and City of North Vancouver, the appropriate proportions of sex (male and female) and age (18-34, 35-54, 55+) groups were determined for each region.
- This results in a 6 (sex-age groups) by 2 (regions) matrix of proportions that add up to 100% (see Census Proportions table below).
- The obtained proportions for those same matrix cells were then calculated based on the survey results (see Survey Obtained Proportions table below).
- By dividing the Survey Obtained Proportions into the Census Proportions, weights for each group were obtained. Each case was up- or down-weighted (i.e. multiplied by the weight) in accordance with its under- or over-representation in the sample so that the total weighted counts match the Census data.

### Census Proportions

	<b>M 18-34</b>	<b>M 35-54</b>	<b>M 55+</b>	<b>F 18-34</b>	<b>F 35-54</b>	<b>F 55+</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>District</b>	6.7%	10.5%	11.7%	6.5%	12.0%	13.1%	60.5%
<b>City</b>	5.4%	6.8%	6.3%	5.5%	7.6%	7.9%	39.5%
<b>Total</b>	12.1%	17.3%	18.0%	12.0%	19.6%	21.0%	100%

### Survey Obtained Proportions

	<b>M 18-34</b>	<b>M 35-54</b>	<b>M 55+</b>	<b>F 18-34</b>	<b>F 35-54</b>	<b>F 55+</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>District</b>	1.6%	6.5%	11.4%	1.8%	12.2%	15.9%	49.4%
<b>City</b>	3.1%	5.2%	10.2%	1.6%	11.4%	18.9%	50.4%
<b>Total</b>	4.7%	11.7%	21.6%	3.4%	23.6%	34.8%	99.8%*

### Weights

	<b>M 18-34</b>	<b>M 35-54</b>	<b>M 55+</b>	<b>F 18-34</b>	<b>F 35-54</b>	<b>F 55+</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>District</b>	4.11	1.61	1.03	3.63	0.98	0.82	--
<b>City</b>	1.75	1.30	0.61	3.38	0.67	0.42	--

*\*Total is 0.2% short of 100% as one person was unsure whether they reside in the District or City of North Vancouver and did not provide their postal code.*



## Public Engagement Approach

- Provide City of North Vancouver Council with all previous research.
- Invite the City to participate in the public engagement
- Publicly release all previous research
- Publish open letter to the public from District Council
- Conduct professional opinion survey of District and City residents
- Create and publish web & social media content

## Professional Survey Objectives

- to ask residents of both municipalities a set of questions regarding attitudes about identity, joint service delivery, and reunification
- to determine public support for investigating the true costs and benefits of reunification of the City and the District of North Vancouver
- to obtain statistically relevant and demographically representative results that could be accurately extrapolated to represent the total adult population of both municipalities



## Professional Survey Methodology

Statistically relevant and demographically representative

Quotas for each demographic established to mirror latest census data for population

Conducted by phone – landline and mobile

Random digit dialing and next birthday in household respondent selection method

Screened for demographics of age, gender and municipality

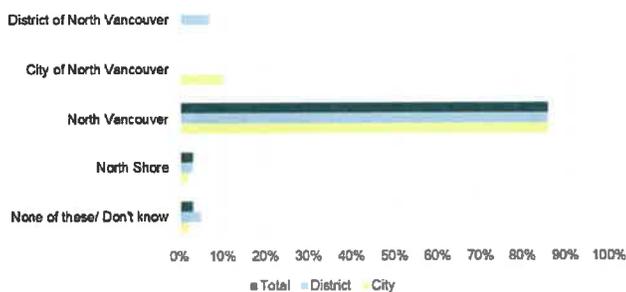
Total 615 residents participated in survey

Sampling error of +/- 3.9% at the 95% confidence level



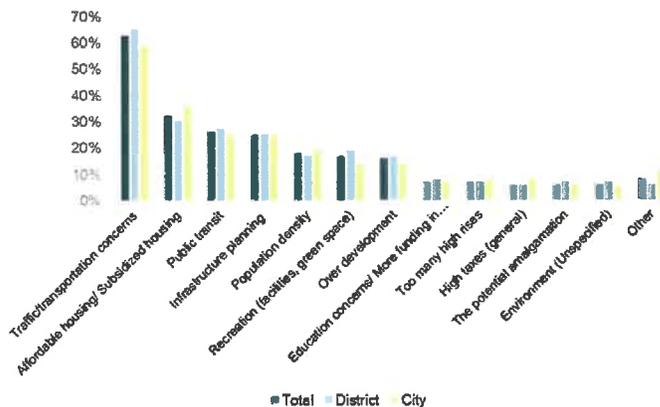
## Professional survey highlights

When people ask you where you live, what do you say?



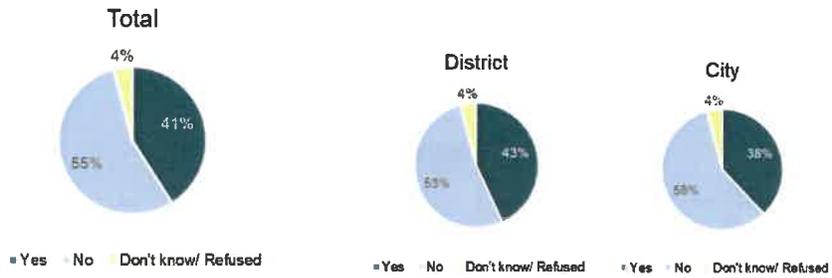
## Professional survey highlights

What are the most important issues facing your community?



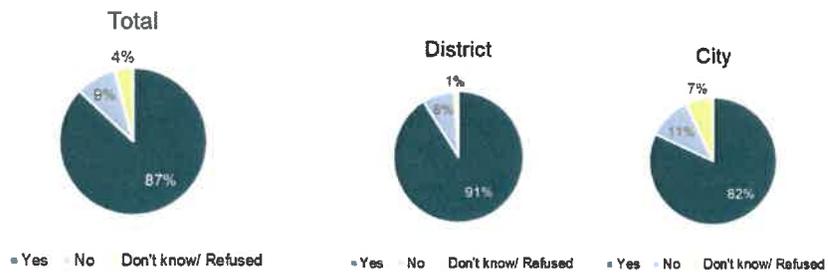
## Professional survey highlights

Are you aware of any services delivered jointly by the City and District?



## Professional survey highlights

Do you think the City and the District should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation?



## Online Survey Objectives

- To provide residents who **did not have time** to take the phone survey, when called, with an alternative channel for input
- To provide residents who were **not called** during the professional survey with an opportunity for input
- To ensure that those who were called but whose **demographic quota had already been fulfilled** that we were interested in their input



## Professional and Online Survey Differences

- Results should not be compared or conflated
- Different methodologies
- No demographics in online version, just postal codes
- Online results cannot be extrapolated to total population



## Online Survey

- X Not random, self –selected.
- X Not statistically relevant or demographically representative.
- X Does not mirror census data.

- ✓ Does demonstrate level of public interest in topic

Do you think the City and the District of North Vancouver should jointly investigate the true costs and benefits of amalgamation?

### 783 responses:

87%	Yes
12%	No
1%	Don't know



## Public Engagement Objectives

- ✓ To ask residents of both municipalities a set of questions regarding attitudes about identity, joint service delivery, and reunification
- ✓ To determine whether there is public support for investigating the true costs and benefits of reunification of the City and the District of North Vancouver



