

# Ta Skwekwi'íntsuts ta Sxwexwel

## The Valley's Plan

### Family Meetings Report

April 2025



**Skwxwú7mesh  
Úxwumixw**

Squamish Nation



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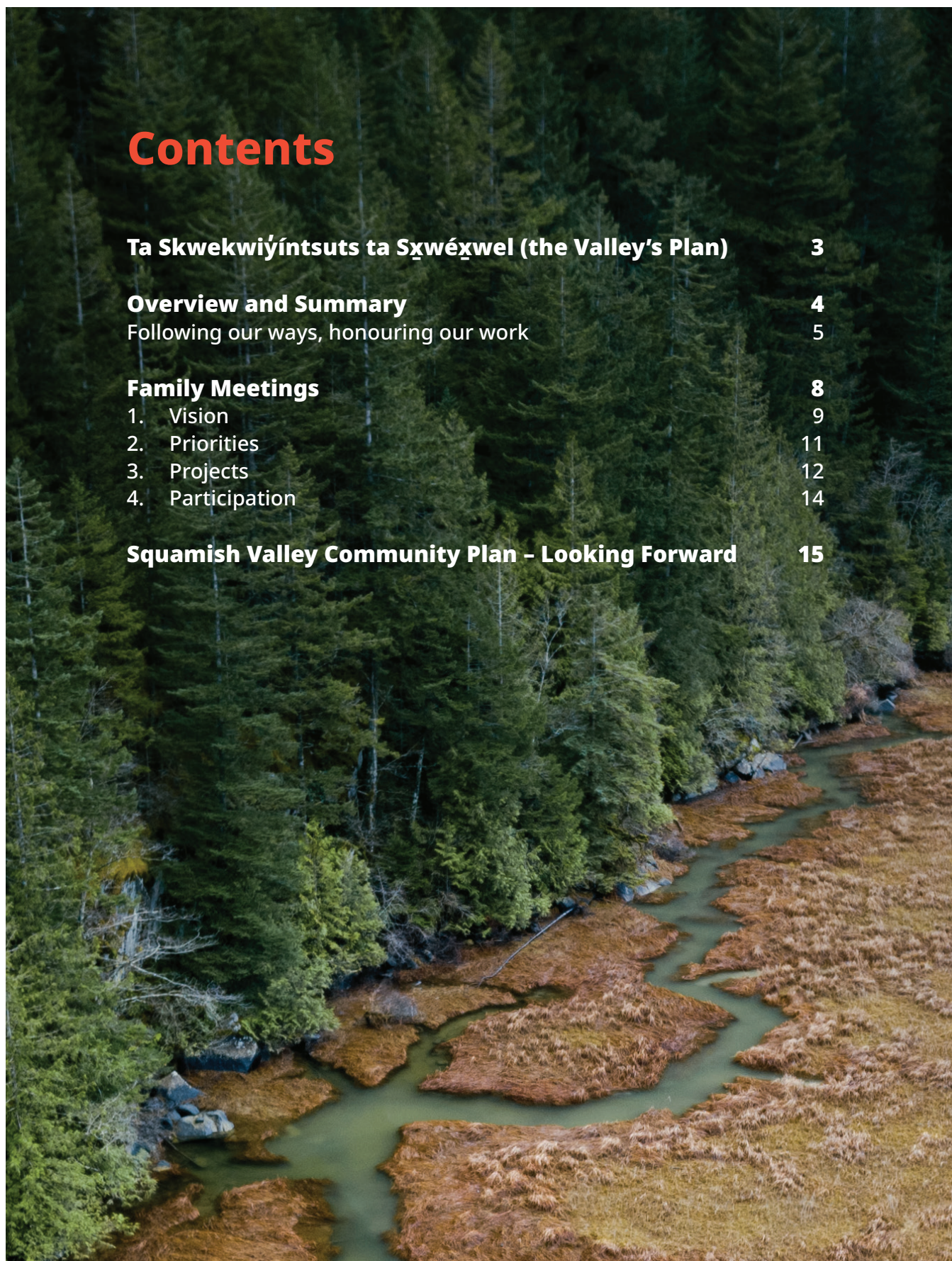
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# Ta Skwekwi'íntsuts ta Sxwéxwel (the Valley's Plan)

Squamish Valley is home to our second largest community and our Valley Skwxwú7mesh Stélmexw are an inseparable, valued part of the Squamish Nation family, its identity, and its soul.

In recent years, we have been largely focused on developing land, facilities, programs, and services in North Vancouver and Seḥákw. Now it is time to turn our attention to a key objective in our Strategic Plan and increase our capacity to deliver more Squamish Valley programs and projects.

There are several initiatives planned and underway in the Valley, but we currently lack a collective plan for how to unify and expand these programs and projects. A guiding community plan for the Squamish Valley is needed to establish a vision for the Valley for the next 10-years and to bring various planning initiatives together under one umbrella.

Our plan will be guided by Squamish Valley people and Squamish values and principles. We will make it together in a good way. It will help us embrace our opportunities, navigate our challenges, and help us make the most of our Valley's future by saying what we want our community to be and how we can make it so.



# Overview and Summary

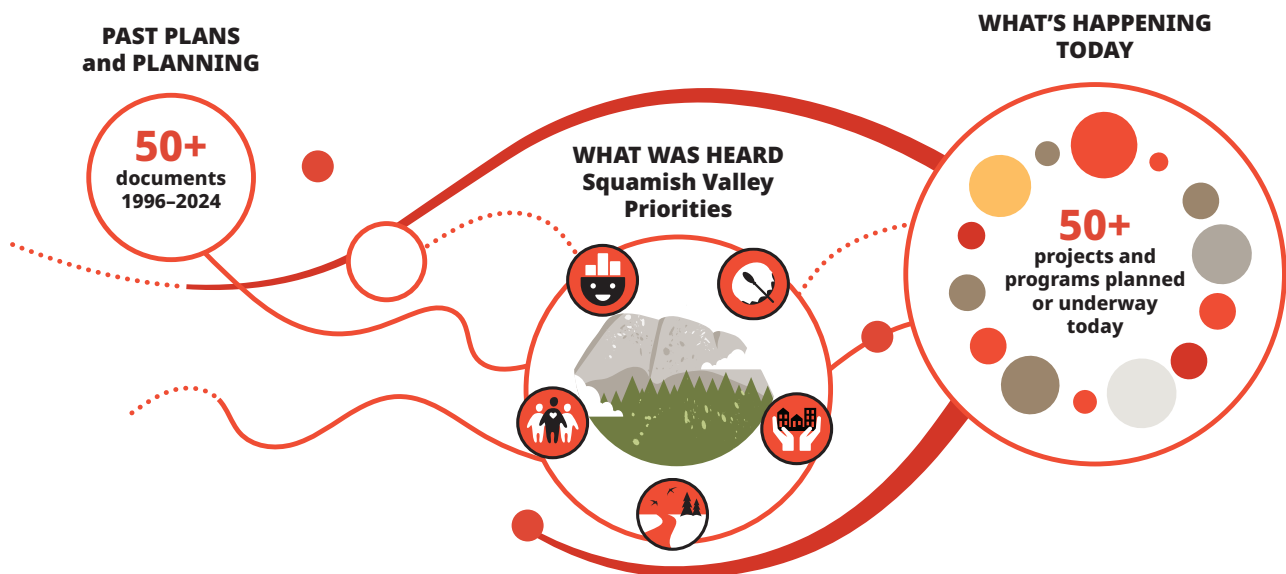
This report presents a summary of seven family meetings, two Squamish Valley staff sessions, and a youth workshop that were carried out between December 17, 2024, and March 13, 2025, as part of the first round of outreach and engagement for the Squamish Valley Community Plan.

The 2022 – 2026 Squamish Nation Strategic Plan identified the need to deliver more programs in the Squamish Valley and increase operational capacity there. With so many projects underway or in the early planning stages in the Valley, the need for a made-in-the-Squamish-Valley Community Plan was also identified.


To be organized as a guiding 10-year vision, the Squamish Valley Community Plan will include clear community goals and phased projects and programs. A high-level summary plan, or Framework will be developed for October 2025 so that Squamish Valley plan actions and priorities can be included in the next Squamish Nation Strategic Plan.

The Framework will be developed with support from a Community Advisory Group that was recruited through the Squamish Valley Community Plan family meetings. A more detailed operational Squamish Valley Community Plan will be developed over the winter/spring 2026. This plan will be carried into Squamish Valley operational plans, Squamish Nation capital plans, and future Squamish Nation Strategic Plans. When completed, all departments who work in the Squamish Valley will also use the plan to inform their work plans.

The first step in the planning project was to review the past work and plans. We want to build on past work and honour earlier feedback from Valley People. Over 50 documents, some dating back almost 30 years, were reviewed and summarized in a What Was Heard report. The report found that Squamish Valley's priorities have remained consistent over the years and that the things important to Squamish Valley people in 1996 remain important today.



**FIGURE:** Looking back, looking forward - connecting past Squamish Valley plans, Squamish Valley community priorities, and Squamish Valley plans, programs, and projects underway today



## **FOLLOWING OUR WAYS, HONOURING OUR WORK**

The family meetings honoured the four feelings of feelings of trust, security, purpose, and belonging that came through what our community shared through our guiding Úxwumixw 2050: Sḵwḵ wú7mesh Generational Plan.

Family meetings also incorporated and honoured Squamish Nation guiding principles outlined in our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan which outlined principles to help guide the work we do for and with Sḵwḵ wú7mesh people. We took these principles to heart when organizing the and carry out these family meetings. They are:

- **Tkwáya7n iy Nexwne'wítm (*listen and engage*)**  
It is our job to ensure that we listen to the voices of our Stélmexw (people), Temíxw (land), and Stáḵw (water). These guide the work that we do.
- **Wa nexwniwnen chet ta nexwni'w t'l'a Sḵwḵ wú7mesh (*follow the ways of the Squamish*)**  
We are grateful for who we are, the work done to get here, and the opportunities with where we are going. It's important to us to do things in the right way and to make time for honour and respect.
- **Te ḵwlám Ns7eyḵ (*genuinely care*)**  
We are here for the Sḵwḵ wú7mesh Stélmexw, Temíxw, and Stáḵw. We act with respect and care.
- **Chet wa telnexw tina t'l'a snewiyelh t'l'a Sḵwḵ wú7mesh (*learn the advice of the Squamish*)**  
While the teachings of the Elders and ancestors ground us, finding pathways forward in the 21st century requires constant learning and innovation.
- **Na wa nelhnilhtway ta (*the people go through it together*)**  
We must work together to achieve our goals through collaboration, teamwork, and collective strategies. Strong relationships come first. We do our work together.







A project team led by the Director of Tana wa Ch'awat ta Sxwéxwel - Squamish Valley Operations met with Elders to discuss the project and seek their guidance and input before beginning a series of family meetings that were held from January to March. Approximately 100 people participated in seven family meetings. A youth session was held at Totem Hall, and there was an informal session held at the Elders' lounge. Seven people submitted workbooks individually. Two sessions were also held with Squamish Valley program staff that involved approximately 70 staff.

The family meetings were well-received by participants. The format gave people space, time, and the opportunity to discuss Valley priorities with the Squamish Valley staff, learn more about projects underway and planned, and provide a safe space for honest feedback and input.

While each meeting was unique and tended to highlight one theme over another (e.g., some meetings were more health-focused, while others included more discussions around water stewardship), several common themes were heard across all meetings.

### **Interest in the project and a desire to participate.**

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All the sessions ended with a final question and a discussion about how people felt about the meeting and the Squamish Valley Community Plan project. The responses were consistent and shared – people looking forward to the work ahead and feeling hopeful about the outcomes.

About 50% of participants signed up to be considered for the project's Community Advisory Group. The number of people who signed up underscores the interest and desire to participate and be engaged in the project as it moves forward over the next several months.

### **Build on and leverage past work rather than repeating it.**

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Several family meeting participants spoke about past planning work in the Valley and some similarities with today's project. Some people had been actively involved in past planning and expressed some frustration that they'd been "talking about the same things" for many years in some cases. Despite these discussions, there was also some shared optimism that this work would build on past projects. The need to focus on implementation was also made.

### **Position the plan to support equity.**

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There was a common and shared feeling that the Squamish Valley does not get the same attention (programs, funding, supports) as the North Shore. While people understood that some of Squamish Nation's major projects (e.g., Señákw) were happening in Vancouver, there was also a common feeling that Squamish Valley was not getting the level of support or attention it deserved that was commensurate with its population and the amount of Squamish lands in the Valley. One of the family meeting workbook comments captured some of this sentiment well:

*"Getting Council to see — not just to hear, but to really understand and care — that the Squamish Valley needs to have just as much support as North Vancouver and other areas of the Squamish Nation. Let them understand that people here have often felt like an afterthought, second class citizens, or even outsiders among the Nation, and that we want the division between us and other parts of the Nation to disappear. If we are one nation, we should be able to feel like it."*

*Family meeting participant*

### **Ensure the Squamish Valley Community Plan recognizes the growing focus on the Valley.**

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Participants shared a common observation that with a growing Nation population and a limited land base in Vancouver, over time the focus of development would shift to the Valley. This includes housing for members and new economic opportunities and businesses that could locate in the Squamish Valley. With the Additions-to-Reserve (ATR) process ongoing, there was also awareness of the new opportunities that would come with those lands.

### **Transportation remains a challenge.**

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Transportation in the Valley between communities and from the Valley to the North Shore remains a challenge. Participants were interested to learn about a new transit service linking Squamish with Vancouver and Squamish Nation's Low Carbon Transportation Plan in development. The volume of services and programs in Vancouver and the Nation programs and services on the North Shore make transportation an important consideration for the Squamish Valley Plan. The desire for improved regional transit is also an indication of Squamish Valley people wanting and valuing interconnectedness, both with communities in the valley and the North Shore.



# Family Meetings

The seven family meetings and two Squamish Valley staff sessions were held in Totem Hall and the Stawamus Room between December 17, 2024, and March 13, 2025. The meetings included a meal and were organized around a short presentation, where participants answered a series of questions in a workbook distributed at the beginning of the meal. There were four questions in the workbook.

- 1. VISION**  
*What do you want the Valley to look like in 10 years?*
- 2. PRIORITIES**  
*What community goals are most important to you?*
- 3. PROJECTS**  
*What projects do you think should happen first?*
- 4. PARTICIPATION**  
*How do you want to be involved?*

Meetings and participation are noted below. Staff sessions and a youth workshop are included. An informal workbook session with Elders at the Elder's lounge is also included. While participation ebbed and flowed, the total number of participants in the family sessions (100) represents 24% of the total population of the Valley (417).

**TABLE:** Family meetings attendance

DATE	FAMILY	PARTICIPANTS
17-December 2024	Staff sessions	70
16-January 2025	Billy/Newman	11
30-January	Lewis	34
13-February	Harry	7
20-February	Youth session	13
27-February	Joseph	15
06-March	Baker	11
13-March	Williams	8
20-March	Online session	1
20-March	Elders lounge	5
31-March	Additional workbooks	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>182</b>





# 1. VISION

The first activity asked participants to imagine themselves 10 years into the future as an eagle flying high above the Squamish Valley. Looking down, what did they see? How has the Squamish Valley changed or not changed?

Participants wrote down words and short sentences, while a few even drew pictures. After each session, common words and phrases were noted and added to a word cloud, where the number of times a word or expression appeared, the larger the size of the words.

At each family meeting, an updated word cloud was presented. While it shifted and changed over time as new words appeared or the sizes of others changed, the words that made up the principal vision remained consistent over the meetings.

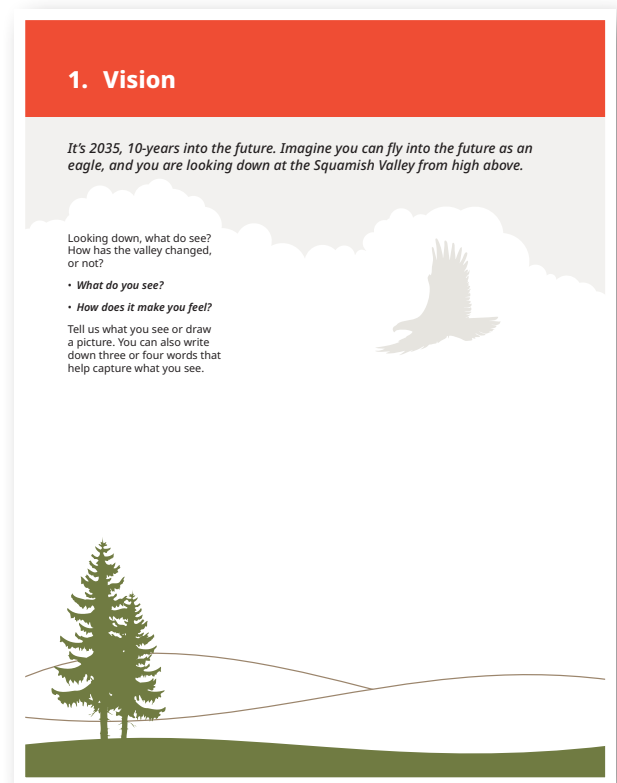


FIGURE: Family meetings workbook – Vision



FIGURE: Vision word cloud

**Some quotes from the family workbooks related to the vision question are provided here.**

*"Makes me happy to know everyone is home and included."*

*"Every person learning to heal oneself — everyone is so powerful."*

*"I can picture our rivers streaming with fish once again, as they once were."*

*"Healing, recovery, equality, thriving as a community & Nation."*

*"I feel happy in that 2035 moment."*

*"I see our own education building — somewhere where all our members can go to learn the language, songs, dances, traditions. And another place to go and learn how to fish, hunt, and grow our own food and make our own medicines."*

*"I see water park cabins by the river and longhouses — our people learning to survive off the land."*

*"Same services as in North Vancouver being offered in Squamish Valley."*

*"It makes me feel safe and happy to call this home."*

*"Thriving language and culture."*

*"This would make me feel proud, happy, and hopeful our people can heal."*

*"This leaves me feeling encouraged. I love the proverb, 'Be the change that you hope to see in the world.' Seeing this vision for the future doesn't feel to me like a wish, as much as the sight of a destination, and the beginning of a map to get us there. That gives me hope."*

The table presents a summary of word counts. While participants may not have used the exact wording, the top three themes – culturally thriving, sustainable and green, and healthy – are clear. A second tier of words and phrases is also clear: great facilities, inclusive and safe, good housing for all, strong and resilient, vibrant and active.

There is also a crossover between themes. Many of the comments around self-sufficiency related to the larger category of sustainability. There were also additional details that were not captured in the word cloud. A good example here would be comments around an Elders Centre. Many people included comments on a centre being developed in the Valley but spoke to the cultural value of such a centre, which led to it being included in the culturally thriving category.

**TABLE:** Vision words and themes

WORDS AND THEMES	COUNT
Culturally Thriving	51
Sustainable and Green	44
Healthy	38
Great facilities – school, cultural centre	29
Inclusive and Safe	24
Good Housing for All	23
Strong & Resilient	20
Vibrant & Active	20
Hopeful & Happy	16
Community-focussed	15
Equity & Equality	11
Self-sufficient	9
More Squamish Land	7
Clean	7
Safe Water Supply	6
Proud	6
Accessible & Connected	5
Decolonized	5
More programs and services	5
Jobs & Employment	5



# 2. PRIORITIES

The second activity asked participants to review the community priorities or community goals and indicate which ones mattered most to them. The goals were arranged by overall importance to the Valley, based on documents reviewed and feedback collected from Squamish Valley residents over the years. Participants were asked to rank the following goals from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important to them and their family.

-  **Improve housing and infrastructure**
-  **Support and celebrate our culture and language**
-  **Support and improve our health and wellbeing**
-  **Care for our lands and waters**
-  **Support education, training and employment**

## 2. Priorities

**A** Which of the following community goals matter most to you? They are arranged by overall importance to the Valley, based on documents reviewed and feedback collected from Squamish Valley people over the years. Please rank them from 1 to 5, with 1 being most important to you and your family.

- ☐ Improve housing and infrastructure
- ☐ Support and celebrate our culture and language
- ☐ Support and improve our health and wellbeing
- ☐ Care for our lands and waters
- ☐ Support education, training and employment

**B** Are there any community goals missing? If there are, please write them down here.

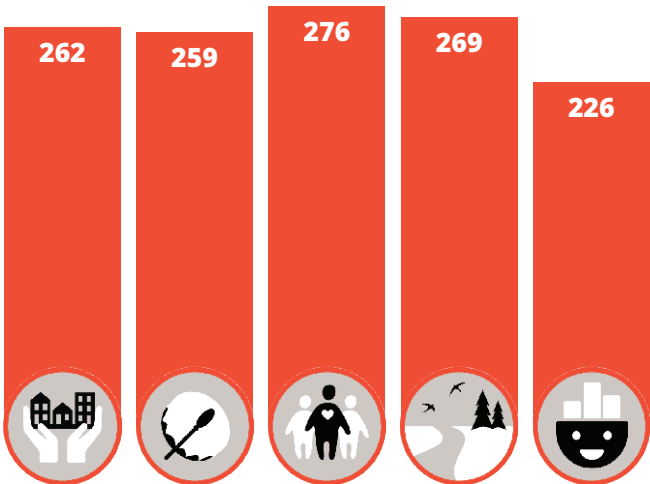
**FIGURE:** Family meetings workbook – Priorities

The table shows how the priorities were ranked at the family meetings. As illustrated, there was not much separating the number one goal – Support and improve our health and wellbeing – from the lowest scoring goal – Support education, training, and employment. When staff sessions were included, the top three shifted slightly, with only Education, Training and Employment not moving.

**TABLE:** Community priorities and goals

FAMILY MEETINGS		FAMILY MEETINGS/STAFF SESSION COMBINED
Health and Wellbeing	1	Housing and Infrastructure
Lands and Waters	2	Language and Culture
Housing and Infrastructure	3	Health and Wellbeing
Language and Culture	4	Lands and Waters
Education, Training, Employment	5	Education, Training, Employment

**FIGURE:** Family meeting priorities



# 3. PROJECTS

There are almost 50 projects planned or underway in the Squamish Valley. The graphic below was developed for the family meeting presentations and shows the approximate number of projects planned or underway organized under Squamish Valley priorities. Many projects fit under multiple themes, and not all projects are illustrated.

During the family meetings, 21 current projects were highlighted, and participants were given the opportunity to ask questions about them. The third activity asked participants to prioritize the projects by noting the ones they and their family were most interested in or excited about. Participants could also identify projects that they thought were missing from the list that they would like to see prioritized. The table on the following page summarizes the top-ranked projects.

### 3. Projects

There are almost 50 projects planned or underway in the Squamish Valley. We want to prioritize them based on community interest and need.

**A** We've highlighted a few high priority projects below. Put a checkmark (✓) next to the projects you and your family are most interested in or excited about. If it's something you're *really* excited about or interested in you can put down more ✓s.

**B** Any project missing that you think we should be doing in the Squamish Valley? Tell us.

<b>Improve housing and infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Elders Centre</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing - multi-family, Elders, single-family, supportive</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> St37mes utility upgrade</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ch'yákmesh water and sewer system</li> </ul>	
<b>Support and celebrate our culture and language</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Longhouse</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community Smoke House @ Teen Centre</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Language and Culture Centre</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery expansion</li> </ul>	
<b>Support and improve our health and wellbeing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sli7ch'em Modular Health Facilities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Daycare spaces</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ayás Méhmen expansion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety offices</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wai W'kem shelter space at Teen Centre</li> </ul>	
<b>Care for our lands and waters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additions-to-Reserve</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Monitors and Land Guardians</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Low Carbon Transportation Plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Support education, training and employment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> K-12 school feasibility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Eshha7han equivalent (Learning Centre)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Education services in schools</li> </ul>	

FIGURE: Family meetings workbook – Projects

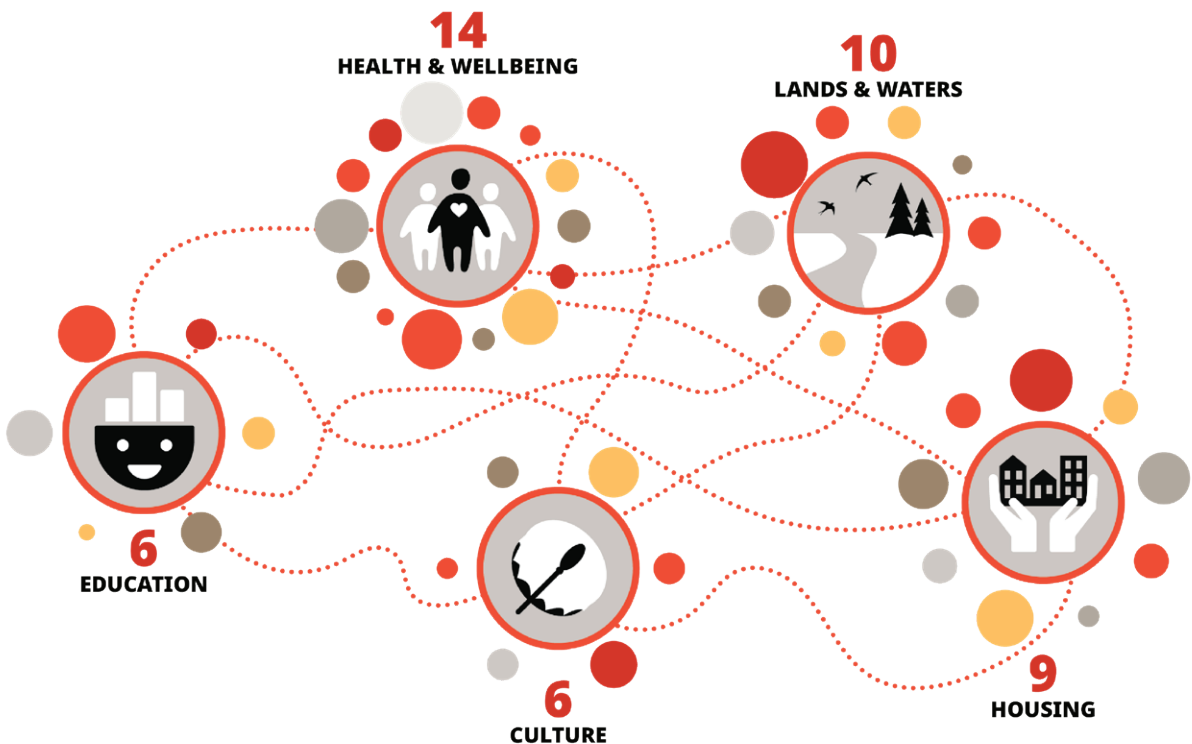


FIGURE: Squamish Valley community priority projects and programs underway and in planning stages



**TABLE:** Top-ranked Projects

PROJECTS	COUNT
Housing - multi-family, Elders, single-family, supportive	96
Additions-to-Reserve	93
Language and Cultural Centre	82
Education services in schools	82
Elders Centre	81
Longhouse	78
Learning Centre (Eslha7ań equivalent)	72
Ch'iyákmesb water and sewer system	70
Additional Daycare Spaces	68
Indigenous Monitors and Land Guardians	67
K-12 School Feasibility	65
Siyí7ch'em Modular Health Facilities	61
Wai W'kem shelter space at Teen Centre	52
St'a'7mes utility upgrade	51
Public Safety offices	43
Cemetery expansion	40
Community Smoke House-Teen Centre	40
Low Carbon Transportation Plan	34
Ayás Ménmen expansion	32

**Other projects identified by family meeting participants included the following.**

- Electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure
- Sustainable housing — solar panels, water-collecting
- Housing for single people; an apartment complex
- Treatment Centre
- Hotel
- Community Centre for adults, for sober, proactive activities
- Life skills programs — canning, trades, fish cutting, etc.
- Regular community clean-up days and facilities
- Home maintenance program
- Soccer field
- Lacrosse box
- Swimming pool
- Trades Centre
- Business park for Squamish entrepreneurs
- Food pantry



## 4. PARTICIPATION

The final activity in the family meeting workbook asked participants about the best ways of keeping them informed and engaged in the Squamish Valley Community Plan.

Participants were also asked if they wanted to be considered for the project's Community Advisory Group.

For communications and outreach, participants had the choice of the newsletter, Squamish webpage, Facebook, community and family meetings, and other. Responses were similar across all meetings, and community and family meetings, Facebook, and the newsletter were the clear top three choices.

The Squamish webpage and direct emails also received a fair amount of support, underscoring the fact that future Squamish Valley Community Plan communications and outreach should use all methods.

It should be noted that a 2020 Members Communication Survey Report and the 2024 Generational Plan both provided similar feedback on communications and outreach, including:

- More in-person meetings and family dinners
- More communications sent out, including newsletters, mailouts, and social media

Over 50% of participants also expressed interest in participating on the Community Advisory Group. This is a very high interest rate and raises the consideration for enlarging the final group size, given the project's short timeline.

### 4. Participation

**A** Do you want to be a part of the Squamish Valley Community Plan Advisory Group? When organized, the group will meet regularly to provide input and guidance on the plan as we develop it.

If you are interested, please provide your name, email, and phone number below and we will follow up.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**B** What's the best way to keep you and your family up to date on project?

☐ Newsletter

☐ Squamish webpage

☐ Facebook

☐ Community and family meetings

☐ Other. Please tell us: \_\_\_\_\_

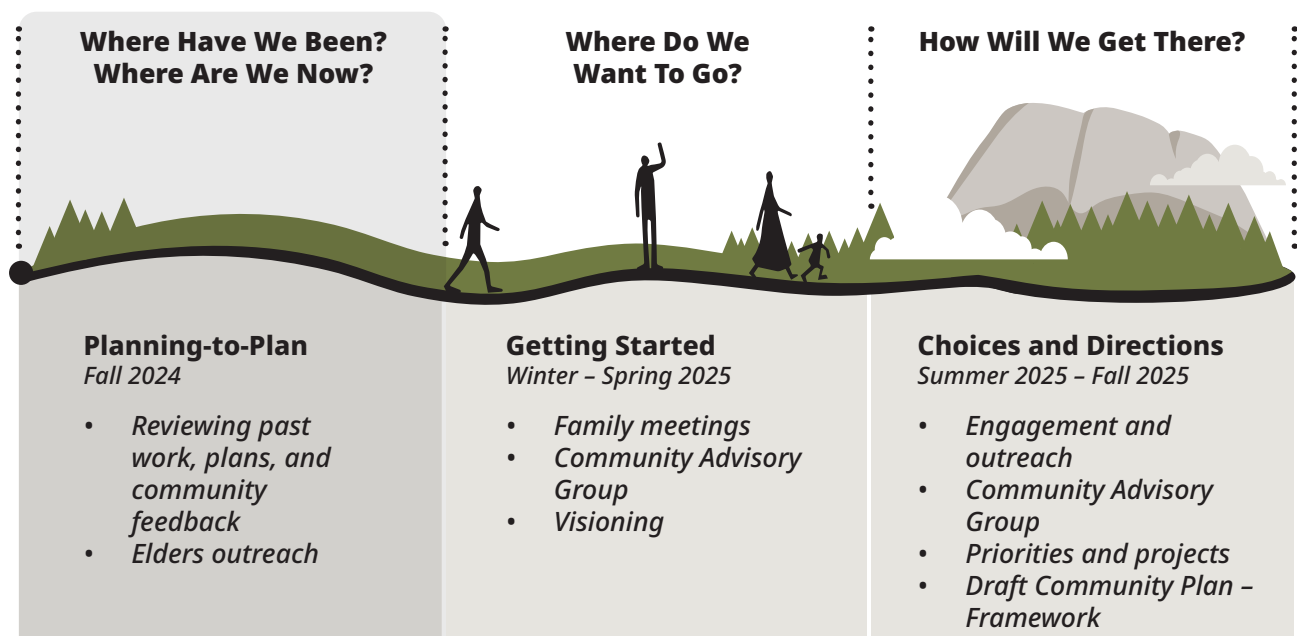


**FIGURE:** Family meetings workbook – Participation



# Squamish Valley Community Plan – Looking Forward

The timeline shows the steps and work ahead to develop the Squamish Valley Community Plan. A high-level summary plan, or Framework will be developed for October 2025 so that Squamish Valley plan actions and priorities can be considered in the next Squamish Nation Strategic Plan. A more detailed operational plan will be developed over the winter/spring 2026.



**FIGURE:** Squamish Valley Community Plan project timeline

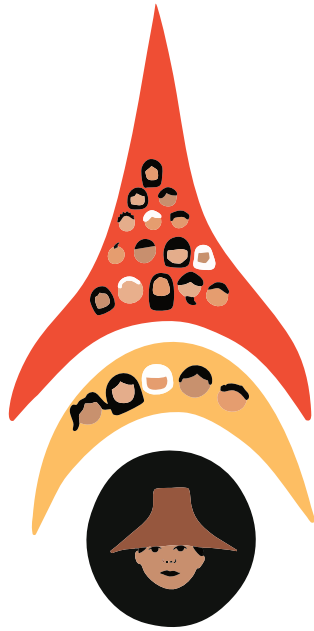
The next piece of work will be establishing the Community Advisory Group. The group will provide a forum for feedback, guidance, and advice for the Squamish Valley Community Plan project team at key milestones. Specifically, they will support the development of the framework community plan by:

- Representing the community's interests and concerns and suggesting how these might be addressed through the Community Plan.
- Providing input and guidance on the development of a Squamish Valley vision, priorities, and projects.
- Supporting community engagement and outreach and encouraging family members and friends to participate.

- Advising on the integration of culture into the Community Plan
- Reviewing Plan materials and documentation, with an eye to accessibility for all community members.

The Community Advisory Group is expected to meet several times between April and October 2025. During the time, there will be Elders presentations on the Advisory Group's work and the community plan.

After the completion of the Framework, work will continue on developing the more comprehensive Squamish Valley Community Plan. This plan will provide service level guidance to Squamish Valley operations and will be developed over the winter/spring of 2026.



**Skwxwú7mesh**  
**Úxwumixw**

Squamish Nation