

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"** <[Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)>

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 4/26/2022 1:05:35 PM

Subject: **Council Memo - Renter Services Centre Update - RTS 14762**

Attachments: **ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) - Renter Office - Renter Centre (2022-04-25)\_with appendices.pdf**

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find attached a memo from the General Manager of ACCS Sandra Singh updating Council on staff actions to explore the creation of a Renter Services Centre in Vancouver (RTS 14762).

- ☐ In June 2019 (RTS 13180), Council approved a suite of Renter Office actions, including directing staff to explore the creation of a community-based Renter Services Centre (RSC) as a single point of entry and assistance for renters and that can co-locate non-profit renter services, City services and potentially Provincial services onsite. \$1.46M was allocated from the Empty Homes revenue reserve to fund the development of the RSC.
- ☐ This memo with supporting appendices provides an update on the results of staff activities conducted to determine the financial and service-delivery feasibility of implementing a Renter Services Centre, including community engagement results, an analysis of options, and identification of a preferred option.
- ☐ The memo also lays out next steps that are critical to the feasibility of implementing the preferred option. Staff will provide a further update to Council on implementation of next steps on July 5, 2022 (RTS 14850).

If you have any questions, please email Sandra directly and she will ensure questions are responded to through the weekly Q&A.

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver  
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓xw̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## MEMORANDUM

April 25, 2022

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office  
Patrice Impey, GM Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Renter Services Centre Update

RTS #: 14762

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to update Mayor and Council on staff actions to explore the creation of a Renter Services Centre in Vancouver, as directed by Council in June 2019 (RTS 13180). The memo includes the results of activities conducted to determine the financial and service-delivery feasibility of implementing a Renter Services Centre, including community engagement results, options analysis, and next steps.

### BACKGROUND

In November 2018, Council approved *Motion B.2: Creating a Renter Office at the City of Vancouver* that can support and advocate for renters and ensure coordinated and timely action by City departments to assist renters at risk of displacement.

In June 2019 (RTS 13180), Council approved a suite of Renter Office actions, including directing staff to explore the creation of a community-based Renter Services Centre ("RSC") as a single point of entry and assistance for renters and that can co-locate non-profit renter services, City services and potentially Provincial services onsite. The goal of the RSC would be to improve access to legal advocacy, support services and education for renters in Vancouver.

\$1.46M was allocated from the Empty Homes Tax revenue reserve to fund the development of the RSC, including tenant improvements (RTS 13180; see Appendix B for Budget Table). Additionally, an amenity-bonus facility at 900 Howe Street was identified as a potential site for the RSC, with approximately 5,200 square feet, street-front access and proximity to transit downtown. The facility can be provided as a grant of space through a lease to a non-profit organization at nominal rent, with an estimated value of \$133,000 (2019). No additional funds have been allocated by the City for ongoing operations of the RSC (RTS 13180).

Planning for the RSC was put on hold in March 2020 because of the pandemic. In early 2021, staff initiated community engagement activities to explore the feasibility of implementing an RSC. A consultant was engaged in November 2021 to prepare a Feasibility Study Report that includes analysis based on community engagement as well as identification and evaluation of RSC implementation options including financial analysis.

## DISCUSSION

### Community Engagement

#### *Community Engagement Activities*

Between April and December 2021, City staff conducted a variety of engagement activities in order to identify renters' service needs, collect feedback on the value of and need for the RSC, and assess interest from non-profits in co-locating at a potential RSC. Additionally, an external consultant interviewed existing co-located spaces in the region to identify lessons learned, including the 'enabling factors' that are essential to the successful and sustainable operations of co-located spaces. Table 1 outlines all engagement activities.

*Table 1: Summary of Community Engagement Activities, April – December, 2021*

Engagement Method	Audience	Details
Survey	Vancouver renters	587 respondents
Focus groups	Vancouver renters disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities in renting and accessing services	14 focus groups with total of 96 renter participants, held in partnership with non-profit organizations
Interviews and workshops	Non-profit organizations serving renters	21 interviews with non-profit organizations 2 sector workshops with 35 organizations
Workshops	City Advisory Committee members	1 workshop with the Renter Advisory Committee 1 workshop with Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee 2 workshops open broadly to members of Advisory Committees
Request for Expressions of Interest	Non-Profit organizations interested in co-locating	9 organizations submitted Expressions of Interest
Interviews	Existing co-located spaces	5 interviews total, one with each of: ISS Welcome Centre, Broadway Youth

Engagement Method	Audience	Details
		Resource Centre, 312 Main, Abbotsford Community Hub, and Richmond Caring Place.
Project Advisory Committee	Non-profit organizations serving renters and renters with a diversity of lived experiences	The PAC met at 3 key milestones to give feedback during the preparation of the Feasibility Study Report.

### *Community Engagement Findings: Opportunities and Challenges*

Key findings from the community engagement highlight a number of key opportunities and challenges:

#### *Opportunities associated with developing an RSC:*

- Overall there is strong community interest and support from both renters and service providers for a future RSC.
- There is significant community agreement regarding the vision of a future RSC as a renter-centred, welcoming, non-judgmental space for Vancouver renters to access information and services related to tenancy.
- An RSC has the potential to improve access to services for renters if it is designed and programmed to address the key barriers and achieve the aspirations identified through engagement (see Appendix A).
- Existing co-located spaces/service hubs report that co-location has a positive impact for clients by improving the coordination of services.
- Two renter-serving non-profit organizations, the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC) (8-10 staff) and the Vancouver Rent Bank (VRB) (2-3 staff), are interested in locating full-time at the RSC. Additionally, TRAC has expressed interest in being the anchor tenant and operator of the RSC, and discussions are underway with City staff.
- Seven organizations that provide supports to specific populations of renters are interested in part-time desks or offices at the RSC as 'satellite desks' to their main operations.
- Many other organizations expressed interest in being part of a referral network connected to the RSC.

#### *Challenges associated with developing an RSC:*

- Renter-serving non-profit organizations are struggling to meet current service demands. These existing capacity challenges directly impact the ability and interest of organizations to participate in an RSC.
- There is limited revenue potential from non-profits interested in co-location. Only two organizations interested in full-time office space at the RSC have identified that they would be able to contribute to cover operating costs (totalling approximately \$4,500 per month).
- Organizations interested in part-time space appear to be able to participate only if access (i.e. rent) is free. Business models with part-time 'hot desk' or office spaces have greater levels of volatility and financial risk.
- Operating a multi-service centre is a complex task that requires funding for ongoing operating costs, including staffing. Many co-located service hubs rely on grants to pay for operations. Current funding for the RSC provided by the City addresses costs required to develop the Centre but does not include ongoing operating costs.

- Systemic issues, such as the high cost of housing, low rental supply, racism and discrimination in the rental market, and other factors, will continue to impact renters' service needs.

In summary: Community engagement activities revealed that important opportunities could be realized through developing an RSC, including strong community support for an RSC and the opportunity to improve access to services for renters. However, significant questions emerged during engagement, particularly concerns regarding the financial feasibility of an RSC. These findings provided the foundation for the development and evaluation of three options for implementing an RSC. Detailed information on engagement key findings can be found in Appendix A.

### Options Analysis

#### *Options for a Renter Services Centre at 900 Howe Street*

Three options were identified for an RSC at 900 Howe Street. The options were then evaluated, considering the operating costs, potential to implement, benefits (including ability to achieve vision, aspirations and Council direction), challenges, and risks.

Evaluation of the options concluded that Options 1 and 3 (Table 2) would achieve the vision, aspirations and scope for an RSC identified through community engagement and meet Council direction to develop an RSC at 900 Howe Street. Option 2, while less costly, does not achieve these goals.

Table 2 provides a summary of the three options including a description of each, estimates of annual operating costs and an evaluation summary. Estimated operating costs are based on the assumption of nominal rent at 900 Howe St., provided by the City as a grant valued at approximately \$133,000 / year.

Table 2: Summary of Options for Renter Service Centre at 900 Howe Street

	Option 1: Basic RSC	Option 2: Non-Profit Admin Office	Option 3: Enhanced RSC
<b>Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic service model for renters to find information about renter services in Vancouver and get connected to the services that they need</li> <li>• Meets minimum threshold of services to be an RSC with potential to grow service offerings over time</li> <li>• Iterative approach to service integration and referral system among participating organizations that is developed over time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renter-serving and/or other non-profit organization(s) rent office space at 900 Howe St.</li> <li>• Not defined or advertised as a Renter Services Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “One-stop shop” for renters where most renter-related services can be accessed under one roof</li> <li>• Comprehensive internal and external referral process</li> <li>• High level of integration in service delivery among participating organizations</li> <li>• Full array of supports to address barriers, including translation, evening hours, peer supports and more</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Operating Cost Estimate (order of magnitude)</b>	\$490,000 per year (not including the City grant of approximately \$133,000 to cover rent)	\$172,000 per year (not including the City grant of approximately \$133,000 to cover rent)	>\$676,000 per year <sup>1</sup> (not including the City grant of approximately \$133,000 to cover rent)
<b>Breakdown of Operating Costs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building operating costs</li> <li>• Operating cost for shared services and serving renters</li> <li>• Staffing (3 positions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building operating costs</li> <li>• Standard admin costs (internet, phone, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building operating costs</li> <li>• Operating cost for shared services and serving renters</li> <li>• Staffing (6 positions)</li> <li>• Additional services to address barriers</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The true cost of this option will be higher as it will come with additional costs related to creating new services and increasing staff capacity among service providers. These costs have not yet been estimated. This creates significant uncertainty about the true cost of this option.

	<b>Option 1: Basic RSC</b>	<b>Option 2: Non-Profit Admin Office</b>	<b>Option 3: Enhanced RSC</b>
<b>Evaluation Summary</b>	<p>The Basic RSC was identified as the best option for further exploration by staff.</p> <p>The Basic RSC is more feasible than the Enhanced option, provided that ongoing operational funding can be secured.</p> <p>This option allows the identified vision and aspirations to be achieved over time with fewer risks.</p> <p>The Basic RSC would require fewer resources than the Enhanced RSC to get the initiative off the ground, while allowing for service offerings to grow over time based on lessons learned and renter needs.</p>	<p>While this option is the easiest to implement and would carry minimal risk due to the lower operating costs, it would meet neither Council objectives as staff understood them nor the vision and aspirations identified through community engagement for an RSC.</p> <p>The impact on improving access to services for renters would be limited, recognizing there are some benefits to a simple co-location and that proximity often results in innovation over the long run.</p> <p>There is uncertainty regarding non-profit interest in co-location if the primary function of the space is administrative.</p>	<p>The Enhanced option would achieve the vision and aspirations if the resources were secured.</p> <p>However, this option is not feasible due to challenges with capacity in existing service agencies and the need to create new services.</p> <p>The Enhanced option is ambitious and comes with significant risks of negatively impacting community expectations and trust in City initiatives if the vision was not able to be achieved.</p>

### *Alternatives to a Renter Services Centre at 900 Howe Street*

While the focus of the Feasibility Study was to assess the feasibility of a physical RSC at 900 Howe Street, two alternative options that do not require a physical centre were identified:

#### *A. Increase grants to renter-serving organizations*

During the community engagement process, renter-serving organizations identified that they face high levels of demand and are not able to meet all service needs in the community because of resource constraints. Instead of developing a physical centre, the funding designated for 900 Howe Street renovations could be allocated to the City's Renter Services Grants program and used to increase grant funding to renter-serving organizations. This funding would help increase capacity within existing service providers, including the opportunity to address some of the aspirations identified for an

RSC. However, the funding currently designated for the RSC is limited and would only provide a short-term boost to available grants.

#### *B. Pilot a decentralized RSC model*

A second alternative approach identified during community engagement would be to make services for renters more accessible across Vancouver neighbourhoods. This could include creating renter services “navigator” positions who work out of various locations throughout the city, for example, neighbourhood houses and community centres. Through this model, a renter in need of assistance could visit a navigator at a location close to home to find out about available renter services and be referred to the appropriate service provider. As with the options identified for 900 Howe Street, this option would require ongoing operating funding. Additionally, a decentralized RSC model would not offer the benefits achieved with co-locating renter services.

While these alternative options would not achieve Council’s objective of creating a place-based hub of co-located renter services, they could serve to enhance renter service capacity and access to renter services in the community should the proposed RSC not go ahead. Staff note that the source of current funding for the RSC is EHT funds. If either of these two options are pursued, any reallocation of funds would need to meet the eligibility criteria for allocation of EHT funding as outlined in the Vancouver Charter.

Additionally, there may be other options for meeting the vision and aspirations of the community that do not require a physical centre. Additional options could be identified through further conversations with renter-serving organizations.

#### Recommended Option: Explore Potential to Pilot a Basic Renter Services Centre at 900 Howe Street

The Feasibility Study evaluation of the identified options concluded that *Option 1: The Basic RSC* is a more feasible option than the Enhanced RSC (Table 2) and one that would allow for the vision and aspirations of the RSC to be achieved over time with fewer risks. The Basic RSC would require fewer resources to initiate than the Enhanced RSC, while allowing for service offerings to grow over time based on lessons learned and renter needs. The key challenge will be to secure ongoing operational funding for the Basic RSC.

The Report further proposes the approach of piloting the Basic RSC over a set number of years with an evaluation framework in place to assess the value of an ongoing investment.

#### Next Steps: Scoping a Basic RSC Pilot

The Basic RSC would be a basic service model that would offer Vancouver renters access to the most commonly needed renter services. Broad and strategic marketing would aim to raise renter awareness of service availability and raise the visibility of the RSC.

#### *Vision Statement:*

A vision statement for the Basic RSC was generated by the Project Advisory Committee of renters and staff of renter-serving agencies:

*“A renter-centered, welcoming, non-judgmental space for Vancouver renters to access information and services related to tenancy.”*



*The RSC will aim to serve renters who:*

- Are at risk of losing their housing;
- Have tenancy issues, including standards of maintenance, tenant relocation, renovations; and
- Are struggling to retain their housing (e.g., seniors, people who need access to rent subsidies).

### *Core Services*

The Basic RSC is conceived to have a very clearly defined scope with a focus on the most commonly needed renter services:

- Education and information on renter rights;
- Legal advice, advocacy and services related to the provincial Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) and Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) (e.g. services provided by TRAC and other legal advocacy organizations);
- Emergency financial assistance for renters (e.g. Vancouver Rent Bank);
- Referrals to renter services both in the RSC and across the broader community; and
- Assistance navigating basic renter issues (maintenance and repair, conflict with landlords, etc.).

### *Inclusion of City and Provincial services*

Staff are currently exploring other services for co-location, including City departments and provincial ministries such as the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

### *Operational model*

A lead non-profit operator is needed to manage the RSC, including centre operations, managing RSC staff positions, partnership development, communications, and ensuring that the RSC achieves the vision and aspirations identified by the community. Through the RFEOL process, TRAC was the sole organization that expressed interest in being an 'anchor tenant', with all of their services and staff located at the RSC. In subsequent discussions with the City, TRAC has also expressed interest in being the lead operator of the RSC should the Basic RSC prove feasible to implement.

### *Staffing Needs*

The Feasibility Study Report further identifies staffing needs for the RSC, drawing from the experiences of existing co-located spaces as well as the specific context of the RSC. Staff note that TRAC, as the potential anchor tenant and lead operator, does not have the capacity to provide these positions from their current funding or staffing. These new staff positions would need to be created and funded as core to operating a co-located services centre. It is anticipated that the lead operator would manage the staff team.

The identified new staffing needs are:

- Operations Manager (1FTE): oversees logistics of co-location and shared service delivery, including day-to-day office management and managing shared staff.
- First Point of Contact (1FTE): provides a warm welcome and basic information and referral to services, including connecting renters to a Navigator for additional support when needed.
- Navigator (1FTE): offers knowledge of and supports in accessing comprehensive, city-wide referrals in the rental services sector. Currently, a general information and referral service like this does not exist and would need to be created. This is particularly

important for renters who are facing barriers in navigating the rental housing system and accessing services.

### *Opportunities and Benefits of Piloting the Basic RSC*

- A champion exists to drive implementation: TRAC has expressed interest in being the anchor tenant and lead operator of the RSC. As a key organization whose sole purpose is to provide services to renters, TRAC is well-placed to play this role if there is support to increase their capacity to do so.
- Buy-in from right organizations: several key organizations have expressed interest in co-locating at the RSC. Additional work is anticipated to confirm interest and bring on additional organizations.
- Achieves Council's objective of being a point of entry for renters and providing the most commonly used renter services in one place.
- Substantially achieves the vision and aspirations identified through community engagement.
- Starts with core services, with the opportunity to grow services over time based on community need and demand.
- Over time, during funding renewal cycles, some partners may be in the position to seek additional resources from their funders.
- Piloting the RSC would provide valuable information to potential funders on the impact of the RSC to support this effort.

### *Risks and Challenges of Piloting the Basic RSC*

- This option does not immediately address all of the many and diverse needs for renter services and goals for an RSC identified through the engagement process.
- Time will be needed to get the right partners at the table and develop a shared service model for how organizations will work together to serve renters.
- During the pilot period, it is expected that operating costs would need to be more highly subsidized than they would over the long-term as the lead operator builds relationships and brings in more prospective partners.
- A lack of ongoing operating funding (revenue) is the key challenge for this option, described in the Financial Implications section below.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

### Projected Annual Revenue vs Expenditures

This section describes projected revenue compared to expenditures for the Basic Renter Services Centre. Table 3 summarizes revenues and expenditures and identifies that there is a projected funding gap of \$410,000 - \$440,000 / year.

*Table 3: Projected Revenue and Expenses for Basic Renter Services Centre*

<b>Annual Expenditures</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
City of Vancouver rent contribution (2019 est.)	\$133,000	<i>Grant from City for amenity bonus space with nominal rent</i>
Non-profit tenants' contribution to operating costs	\$50,000 - \$80,000	<i>To be confirmed, to be paid by non-profit tenants</i>
<b>Total Projected Annual Revenue To Date</b>	<b>\$183,000 - \$213,000</b>	

<b>Annual Revenue</b>		
Rent at 900 Howe St.	\$133,000	<i>Grant from City</i>
Allocable operating costs identified in the lease agreement	\$79,600	<i>All or some would be paid by the lessee</i>
Additional operating costs associated with providing shared services & serving renters at the RSC	\$118,400	<i>Additional funding required</i>
Staffing costs for 3 positions described above	\$292,000	<i>Additional funding required</i>
<b>Total Projected Annual Expenditures</b>	<b>\$623,000</b>	
<b>Estimated Revenue Gap</b>	<b>\$410,000 - \$440,000</b>	<i>Fundraising required</i>

### *City Contribution to Operating Costs*

The City is contributing the amenity-bonus facility at 900 Howe St. for the RSC. This facility can be granted to a non-profit agency at a nominal rent, with an estimated value of \$133,000 per annum (2019). This is in addition to the City's one-time contribution of \$1.46M to address costs related to developing a Renter Services Centre, including tenant improvements at 900 Howe St. and other activities.

### *Non-Profit Tenants' Contributions to Operating Costs*

Based on the Request for Expression of Interest, it is estimated that non-profits can contribute an estimated \$55,000 - \$80,000 / year to ongoing operations of the RSC. Only two organizations interested in full-time space at the RSC indicated that they could contribute toward operating costs. Organizations interested in part-time space indicated that they do not currently have funding for what would essentially be satellite offices to their primary offices.

### *Revenue Gap*

As a lower level of government with limited resources and many pressures, the City cannot fund a service like this alone. Funding support from senior government or non-profit foundations would be required to enable the RSC to operate.

Lessons learned from interviews with existing co-located spaces recognizes that service hubs typically rely on grant contributions and donations that support capital infrastructure and ongoing operations so the need for additional funders is not unexpected or unusual.

### Exploring Funding Partnerships

#### *Anticipated Funding model*

A successful funding model for the RSC will include:

- City contributions of \$1.46M to support development of the RSC, including tenant improvements at 900 Howe and other activities;
- The City contribution of a grant of space at 900 Howe from the City, including nominal rent (estimated value of \$133,000);
- Contributions from non-profit organizations located at the RSC; and
- Grants provided by funders that could be managed by the lead operator.

### *Exploring funding partnerships*

Staff have met with potential funding partners, including private foundations and provincial Ministry of Housing staff, to explore the opportunity of piloting the Basic RSC. Interested funders may provide grants to the RSC's lead non-profit operator (i.e. TRAC).

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Feasibility Study Report identifies a number of enabling conditions that are critical to the feasibility of piloting a Basic RSC. Over the next few months, staff will undertake immediate next steps including:

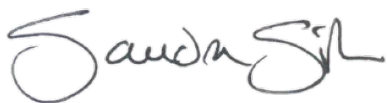
- Engage with potential partners including private foundations and the Province to determine their interest in co-funding a pilot of a Basic RSC at 900 Howe Street;
- Identify all confirmed and projected revenue sources for a pilot of the Basic RSC;
- Identify & determine solutions to address remaining revenue gaps;
- Continue to gauge TRAC's interest; and
- Re-assess the feasibility of proposed options for the RSC based on the results of updated revenue sources.

Staff will provide an update to Council on July 5, 2022 (RTS 14850), identifying all confirmed and projected revenue sources to implement a pilot of the Basic RSC, identifying any remaining revenue gaps, and providing an updated feasibility analysis of options for implementing an RSC.

### **FINAL REMARKS**

Staff have been working to advance Council's objectives to develop a community-based Renter Services Centre as a single point of entry and assistance for renters with co-located services on-site at 900 Howe Street. This memo with supporting Appendices provides further detailed information on the feasibility of a Renter Services Centre and identifies next steps.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca) and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.



Sandra Singh, General Manager  
Arts, Culture, and Community Services

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**APPENDIX A: What We Heard Report and Appendix  
APPENDIX B: Renter Services Centre Budget Table, Council Approved Funds (2019)**

## Appendix A

### What We Heard Report

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City of Vancouver

# Renter Services Centre Feasibility Study

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What We Heard | Engagement Summary  
April – December 2021



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Vancouver is located on the unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations who have lived in their territories since time immemorial and are Rights-holders and stewards of these lands and waters.

Thank you to the many individuals and organizations who contributed to this report:

- Thank you to the many people who currently rent in Vancouver who shared their voices, struggles and ideas with us.
- Thank you to the members of non-profit organizations and the City's Advisory Committees who took the time to participate in workshops and interviews, including those who partnered with us to hold focus groups for renters.
- Thank you to the members of the Project Advisory Committee who provided insightful advice and expertise on the development of the Renter Services Centre.

Website: [Vancouver.ca/renteroffice](https://vancouver.ca/renteroffice)

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## Overview

**A home is the foundation for Vancouverites to work, learn, thrive, and form a sense of belonging and community in our city. Most households in Vancouver rent their homes. Every renter needs a secure, affordable home that meets their needs. Yet, many renters in Vancouver face challenges finding and keeping a home.**

Many renters rely on community organizations for resources and services to help them stay in safe, suitable and affordable housing. The City of Vancouver (the “City”) is exploring the idea of bringing organizations together under one roof through the creation of a ‘Renter Services Centre’ (the “Centre”) to help renters better access the services they need.

The proposed Centre would provide space to existing service providers to co-locate services in downtown Vancouver. The Centre would help better serve renters. It would not duplicate existing non-profit services.

The City is undertaking a feasibility study to help decide whether and how to move forward with developing the Centre. Between April and December 2021, the City collected feedback from a range of renters and service providers to find out more about:

- Challenges that renters are experiencing with their rental housing;
- Renter service needs and gaps;
- Experiences of renters in accessing existing services, including barriers;
- What types of services are needed at the proposed Renter Services Centre, including how those services should be delivered;
- The potential value that a Renter Services Centre could add for service providers and renters; and
- Interest from service providers in participating in the Renter Services Centre.
- This document summarizes the key takeaways from the engagement process. A full summary of feedback can be found in the appendix.



## Engagement Activities

**A variety of engagement activities were used to collect feedback, including focus groups with renters, an online survey, workshops with City Advisory Committees and organizations serving renters, and interviews.**

We prioritized hearing from renters who are disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities in renting and accessing services and who are typically under-represented in engagement methods like surveys. Better understanding their experiences in renting and accessing services is critical for designing a Renter Services Centre that can be accessed by a wide range of renters. Focus groups, held in partnership with community organizations, were the primary method to hear from renters impacted by systemic inequities.



### RENTER FOCUS GROUPS

Ninety-six renters participated in focus groups. Participants included people experiencing poverty or struggling to make ends meet; urban Indigenous peoples; people of colour and racialized peoples; newcomers, including immigrants, refugees, those with and without citizenship or permanent residence status such as temporary workers; LGBTQIA2S+ peoples and gender diverse peoples; people who use drugs and substances; people living with mental health challenges; neurodiverse persons; persons with disabilities; people with first languages other than English; parents and caregivers; seniors; youth, including youth 'aging out' of government care; and women, including victims of gender-based violence.

There is diversity within these groups, and many face barriers as a result of multiple intersecting characteristics and lived experiences.

Additionally, participants had a range of living situations, including those living alone, with roommates, and with family members; living in rented apartments, basement suites, houses, and laneway homes; and living in housing operated by non-profit organizations, and private landlords; living in Single Room Occupancy hotels, transitional housing, and housing co-operatives. Some participants had experienced homelessness, either in the past or currently.

A full list of focus groups is included in the appendix.



### RENTER SURVEY

A total of 587 respondents completed the survey, including 484 who are currently renting in Vancouver and 85 who had previously rented in Vancouver. Respondents represented a wide range of ages, neighbourhoods, and income groups. The survey was primarily shared through the City's online engagement platform and targeted social media and was presented in translated form in Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Punjabi, Vietnamese, and Tagalog. Print ads were included in Chinese and Punjabi language media, and the West End Seniors' Network newsletter. The survey was also distributed through non-profit organizations that provide services to renters.

Due to the voluntary nature of the survey, the results cannot be generalized to all renters in Vancouver. This is because only those interested in the topic would have completed the survey. In addition, online surveys tend to underrepresent some demographics. This survey received a lower response rate from young adults, men, people of colour, renters who do not speak English at home, and immigrants who came to Canada less than 20 years ago.



### CITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKSHOPS

City staff conducted four workshops with City Advisory Committees, including the Renters Advisory Committee, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee and two workshops open broadly to Advisory Committee members. Twenty-four Committee members participated in total.



### INTERVIEWS & WORKSHOPS WITH NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

City of Vancouver staff conducted 21 interviews and two sector-based workshops with local housing and social service organizations on the topic of the proposed Renter Services Centre. One of the sector-based workshops was with renter-serving non-profit organizations and the other was with member organizations of the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (a collaboration of organizations working to improve access to services for newcomers). A total of 38 organizations participated in either an interview or workshop, with some attending both.

A full list of participants can be found in the appendix.



Renters told us that they sometimes have to choose between housing and other basic needs.

## What We Heard

### Key Takeaways

Engagement participants generally expressed support for the proposed Renter Services Centre and offered many ideas for how to make it a success, as well as some concerns and considerations. They also shared their experiences renting in Vancouver.

#### CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY RENTERS

Renters experience a range of challenges due to the high cost and limited supply of rental housing in Vancouver. Challenges include:

- **Lack of affordable housing options for a range of renters**, such as larger units for families with children, people living alone, accessible units, and units affordable to people receiving Income Assistance or Persons with Disabilities (PWD) are barriers to finding appropriate housing. Households also struggle to afford housing suitable for their families or circumstances, while managing other expenses.
- **High cost of rental housing and low availability means renters feel a power imbalance with landlords**. Renters may fear repercussions including eviction or harassment from landlords if they ask for repairs or stand up for tenant rights.
- **Insecure tenancies**, including fear of being evicted due to landlord's use of property, renoviction, or other reasons; and having to move frequently.
- **Poorly maintained and unsafe buildings**, including landlords not taking care of repairs.



- **Racism and discrimination** in finding and maintaining housing, especially anti-Indigenous racism, discrimination based on age which disproportionately impacts youth and seniors, as well as reluctance to rent to families, people receiving income assistance and PWD, and households with pets.
- **Barriers to securing housing**, including racism and discrimination as described above, long waitlists for non-market housing, and being excluded from market rentals due to insufficient credit history or a lack of landlord references.
- **Poor treatment and conflict between landlords and renters, renters and roommates**, including renters being taken advantage of through illegal rental contracts, harassment from landlords and building managers, and conflict with roommates.
- **Low incomes**, due to the low level of support from Income Assistance and Persons with Disabilities, low wages, and people with educational barriers to employment.

## SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING RENTER SERVICES

**Systemic challenges are impacting the ability of non-profit organizations to deliver services, which in turn affects renters' experiences in accessing services.**

- Service providers are increasingly stretched thin and the demand for services is growing. There are often not enough resources to help everyone who needs support or prioritize urgent cases.
- Service providers may also be constrained by eligibility requirements required by funders, or by a need to restrict service to those most in need, such as restricting services to those under a certain income threshold.
- Many of the challenges renters identified were related to capacity and resource shortfalls that service providers are facing.
- Some expressed concern that the Renter Services Centre wouldn't address the underlying need for affordable housing and would place even more demands on service provider.



## BARRIERS TO ACCESSING RENTER SERVICES

Many renters have had positive experiences getting support from various service providers when facing rental challenges. However, some renters experience barriers when they try to access provincial government or non-profit services. We heard about the following barriers to services:

- **Lack of individualized supports to address the specific circumstances and needs of those seeking services**, such as translation or services provided in first languages, cultural safety, mental health supports, trauma-informed practice, and accessibility requirements.
- **Information that is hard to understand making the system complicated to navigate.** Accessing services is difficult when there is limited guidance on where to look for help or what questions to ask.
- **Eligibility requirements for services exclude some renters seeking help.** Free or low-cost services may be offered only to those under a certain income threshold, based on immigration status, or other criteria.
- **Free legal services are not available to all those who need them.** Many renters who need financial assistance with legal services report that they are ineligible because free services are often limited to those under a certain income threshold.
- **Unwelcoming staff and environments** that make people feel intimidated. This includes long wait times and complicated processes to access services and supports, including getting shuffled between service providers.
- **Locations and hours that are difficult to access.** Lack of free parking and distance from transit can create barriers to services. Many services are provided only during regular business hours when many renters work and are unavailable to access them.

“

**“People don’t understand the nature of my disability and make assumptions about my abilities regarding accessing services, while putting more pressure on me to self-advocate for my unique needs.”**

**– Source: Participant, Renter Survey**



**Non-profit organizations told us that it takes time to build relationships and trust with those seeking support so a point of contact would be helpful to help renters navigate services.**

**– Source: Non-Profit Interviews**



## RENTER SERVICES CENTRE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY

**We heard that a Renter Services Centre would be made more accessible with:**

- Warm, friendly staff.
- A welcoming, non-bureaucratic environment; suggestions included featuring artwork by featuring artwork by xʷməθkʷəy̓ mm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaɬ (Tsleil-Watuth) artists, as well as aesthetically pleasing design, plants, visuals and signage that are inclusive of LGBTQIA2s+ peoples, free coffee and more.
- Cultural diversity and sensitivity, including training for staff.
- Trauma-informed training for staff.
- Accessible environment that takes into consideration access for individuals with mobility challenges, as well as reducing other barriers for persons with disabilities.
- Staff who are knowledgeable about service networks and can refer as needed.
- A point person to provide information on available services and help navigate the service landscape.
- Individualized supports that meet people where they are at and address their particular circumstances.
- Longer and more flexible hours, including evening and weekend hours.
- Access to information in multiple forms, including in person, by phone, and online – some spoke to a need for access at multiple locations.
- Multilingual programming and translation.
- Protection of privacy, including protecting sensitive information and having private spaces to speak to service providers.
- Location that is convenient to access by car and transit, with adequate parking and close proximity to transit stops. There was mixed feedback regarding proposed location at 900 Howe St. with concerns about the proximity to the law courts, accessibility by transit, and distance from other Vancouver neighbourhoods.
- Designing the facility and services with the intent of reducing barriers, such as including child-friendly spaces, offering refreshments, and offering bus tickets.



One of the biggest challenges reported by both renters and non-profits is that many are unaware of renter services. Overwhelmingly, we heard that renters don't know what is available or where to go to find information. Many renters are also not aware of their rights under the Residential Tenancy Act.

### RENTER SERVICES CENTRE: RECOMMENDED SERVICES

We heard that the following services would be valuable at the Renter Services Centre:

- **Coordinated services**, including referrals between organizations at the Centre and connections to a range of service providers in Vancouver. Referrals, where possible, should be streamlined and provide support through the entire renter experience (from accessing a subsidy to finding housing to advocacy). Renters and service providers told us that renters are struggling to figure out who can help them, and often get shuffled between organizations. However, service providers also face funding and staff limitations that impact renters.
- **Connections to a referral network beyond the Centre**, including to other renter services, as well as others such as employment, health, mental health, food banks, cultural services, and others.
- **Advocacy and legal support on renter issues**, in particular, legal education, workshops, advice, and free legal aid.
- **Dispute resolution and mediation** to help address conflicts with landlords.
- **Financial supports**, including help applying for Income Assistance, Persons with Disabilities, and rent subsidies. This could include staff from BC Housing and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction on-site.
- **Peer support and/or support workers** to provide more direct support for those at risk of losing housing, including things like attending unit viewings, advice on how to handle conflict with landlords or roommates, or providing orientation about renting a unit and tenant responsibilities.
- **Help with housing searches**, including assistance with finding available housing, applying for non-profit housing, and connecting with friendly landlords.
- **Amenities**, such as access to computers, printers, and showers.





## Next Steps

**Results from engagement activities will be used to help assess the feasibility and value of the proposed Renter Services Centre. In the spring of 2022, staff will report to Vancouver City Council with the outcomes of the Renter Services Centre Feasibility Study.**

The City will continue to engage community to provide advice on the development of the Centre through a Project Advisory Committee, with membership from renter-serving organizations and renters with a diversity of lived experiences (a full list of PAC members is included in the appendix).



City of Vancouver

Renter Services Centre

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Appendix – What We Heard

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# 1 Renter Focus Groups and Advisory Committee Meetings

## 1.1 Overview

Between September and December 2021, City of Vancouver staff partnered with community organizations to hold 14 focus groups to hear from renters on the following topics:

- Experiences as a renter, including challenges
- Experiences accessing support with rental housing
- Feedback on the Renter Services Centre

The purpose of the focus groups was to hear from renters from a range of communities that are disproportionately impacted by systemic and structural inequities when renting and accessing services and are not typically well-represented in general online surveys. The sessions were hosted virtually and in-person between September and December 2021. Some focus groups were facilitated by the City, with community organizations identifying and inviting participants, providing space or setting up zoom calls, and providing advice on how best to engage the people they were connected to. In some circumstances, community organizations chose to facilitate focus groups without the City being present, as a way to create a safe space for participants. All focus group participants were provided with honoraria to acknowledge their time and expertise.

In total, 96 renters participated in the focus groups. Figure 1 shows the community organization that hosted or facilitated each session and the dates and number of participants for each session.

In addition to focus groups, City staff met with members from the Renters Advisory Committee, the Persons with Disabilities Committee, as well as two workshops open to Advisory Committees, with a total of 24 participants. Members of these committees are primarily renters or spoke to their lived experience accessing services. Their feedback has been integrated with the focus group findings below.

Participants included people experiencing poverty or struggling to make ends meet; urban Indigenous peoples; people of colour and racialized peoples; newcomers, including immigrants, refugees, those with and without citizenship or permanent residence status such as temporary workers; people with first languages other than; LGBTQIA2S+ peoples and gender diverse peoples; people who use drugs and substances; people living with mental health challenges; neurodiverse persons; persons with disabilities; seniors; youth, including youth 'aging out' of government care; women, including women victims of gender-based violence; and parents and caregivers. There is diversity within these groups, and many face barriers as a result of multiple, intersecting characteristics and lived experiences.

Participants also had a range of living situations, including those living alone, with roommates, and with family members; living in apartments, basement suites, houses, and laneway homes; and living in housing operated by non-profit organizations, private landlords, SROs, transitional housing, and co-operatives. Some participants had experienced homelessness, either in the past or currently.

Figure 1 Focus Group Dates and Participants

Date	Community Organization	Number of Participants
September 21, 2021	Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House / Drive Youth Employment Services	6
September 30, 2021	South Vancouver Neighbourhood House	11
September 30, 2021	South Vancouver Neighbourhood House	12
October 1, 2021	Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS)	9
October 7, 2021	First United Church Advocacy	5
October 13, 2021	Renter Office	3
October 16, 2021	Rainbow Refugee Society	7
October 18, 2021	Collingwood Neighbourhood House – Families Branching Out Program	7
October 19, 2021	Aunt Leah's	8
October 22, 2021	Collingwood Neighbourhood House	5
November 17, 2021	Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House	8
November 18 and 22, 2021	Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society	8
December 1, 2021	SRO Collaborative – Tenant Leadership	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>96</b>

## 1.2 Focus Group Findings

The focus group notes were reviewed, along with notes from the Advisory Committee workshops, and are summarized below by the topics that emerged.

### Challenges Renters are Experiencing

- Lack of housing that is safe, affordable, and close to transit. Participants noted that individuals on Persons with Disabilities or Income Assistance faced particular affordability challenges. It was also highlighted that youth, Indigenous households, immigrants and refugees, and families with children face particular challenges finding appropriate housing.
- Housing that is unaffordable for local incomes. Participants noted that many require a roommate to afford housing in Vancouver, that families with children can't afford larger units, and that renters make trade-offs between housing and basic needs which compromises safety and comfort.
- Housing that is poorly maintained. Participants reported that some renters are forced to fix and pay for repairs on their own when landlords fail to.
- Renters live in housing that is unsafe because they can't afford to move. Participants reported issues such as feeling unsafe in the neighbourhood or with roommates or other building tenants.

- Insecure tenure, with renters reporting that they feel constantly scared that they will be asked or forced to move and that it is difficult to find quality housing for the long-term. Moving often can mean losing community connections or support services that are based in a particular neighbourhood or municipality. Renters may also move due to lack of repairs, conflict with their landlord or roommates, because they can no longer afford their current housing, eviction etc.
- Experiences of racism, especially anti-Indigenous racism, and discrimination because of disability, age, being on Income Assistance or Persons with Disabilities, and lack of employment.
- Individual barriers to securing housing, such as damaged credit records due to medical bills, job and income inconsistency, and lack of citizenship, PR, or visa documentation (e.g., for refugees).
- Many people are dealing with multiple issues at once and services are often not well set up for individual situations (e.g., trauma, escaping violence, understanding new environment).
- Experiences of poor treatment and conflict with landlords, service providers, and roommates. These experiences may be aggravated due to biases around ability, pets, age, personal circumstances, income level and assistance, race, and sexuality. Some examples of poor treatment can include verbal abuse and harassment, mishandling of rental agreements (e.g., lack of transparency in agreements, making adjustments or changes outside of agreement, not giving deposits back), roommates being behind on rent, discrimination and denial of housing.
- Feeling power imbalance as a renter which can negatively impact general feelings of confidence and well-being, and willingness to access services to help understand and assert their tenant rights.

**We heard from participants that their past experiences limit their housing options. For example, landlords don't want to rent to them when they disclose that they had aged out of care or experienced homelessness.**

### **Experiences Accessing Housing Services and Supports**

- Interactions with kind and non-judgemental, efficient, and knowledgeable staff that were able to provide lots of information, help expedite processes, or otherwise provide accurate referrals for assistance
- Acknowledgement that there is limited staff capacity, and that staff also faces challenges in sourcing and connecting appropriate services with renters who need them; staff need to be set up for success
- Building community in the process of accessing services or support
- Having access to support workers, take-home information, and sliding scale payments for services to help reduce barriers
- Lack of services for individual barriers and circumstances – e.g., translation, mental health, lack of accessibility, etc.
- Long and complicated processes can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate. This can deter people from trying to access the services they need, or lead them to give up in the process of accessing services
- Lack of information on resources available for renters or information that is difficult to access or make sense of
- Not meeting eligibility requirements for supports (e.g., income cut-offs for legal services, permanent residency requirements)
- Lack of staff capacity and expertise in connecting with right resources or supporting with particular challenges, including need for training in trauma-informed practice, cultural competency, service landscape, etc.

- Non-inclusive, non-accessible and discriminatory service related experiences or environments, resulting from treatment from staff or bureaucratic environments that are not culturally sensitive or able to provide the right language or personal supports needed; the pursuit and process of accessing services can be re-traumatizing
- Fear of repercussions from landlords when accessing services or pursuing rights

### Types of Services Renters Need

- Coordinated services, including referrals to services as needed and wraparound supports such as mental health, employment services and food security programming
- Additional services for at-risk people such as support from social workers to help folks access the office, sign forms, view housing listings, and communicate with landlords
- Financial assistance including education on how to manage finances and access financial support/programs such as Rent Bank and income assistance
- Advocacy and legal support, including free or affordable legal advice, information on renter and landlord rights and responsibilities, understanding terms of tenancy agreements
- Help with housing search, including finding housing, avoiding scams, and avoiding unsafe landlords and conditions
- Services designed to support people moving in and/or out of residence (e.g., financial assistance, information on what to pack or how to access moving support); emotional supports, as moving is stressful both emotionally and physically; urgent responses with moves can be essential as many tenants are made to move within tight timing constraints (e.g., eviction)
- Access to services and materials that provide an overview of the service landscape, and how to find housing and complete a tenant agreement, etc.; this is especially important for newcomers or those that do not have full understanding of the housing and housing service context
- Services designed to reduce barriers to accessing services—trauma-informed service delivery, accessibility supports (e.g., for those who use wheelchairs or experience other disabilities; translation and non-technical language; access to resources such as computers; peer support workers; staff training in cultural competency)

We heard from participants who have had to move frequently because they can't find long term leases, or because they have had experiences of poor living conditions or conflict with landlords. Moving is not only expensive, but also disruptive to households.

### Space and Service Delivery Considerations for Renter Services Centre

- For the proposed location, proximity to the Law Courts may be both a benefit and a deterrent to access. For some, the downtown location may be convenient because of other services they access, including at the Law Courts. However, for others who may have negative experience with the criminal justice system, the location may feel uncomfortable.
- Streamlined service delivery and communication across services, complementary services, connections between organizations
- Incorporating Indigenous cultural programming and the leadership of Elders to make the space more welcoming for Indigenous renters
- Potential to co-locate some key provincial services such as Income Assistance and BC Housing
- User-centered space and services, including friendly and knowledgeable staff to create a welcoming environment; empathy is needed to help people navigate resources; help navigating services landscape and access resources
- Careful consideration of what organizations are hosted in the space, and how they contribute to continuity in service delivery (to avoid gaps)
- Having an intake system to keep track of appointment scheduling, basic user information with notes such as around accessibility requirements or best way to contact, and progress of renter's file
- Accessible and inclusive design, including wheelchair accessibility and diverse needs
- Promotion of available services as many renters are unaware of what exists and how to access

We heard that service providers need to take time to build relationships and trust with those seeking support so a point of contact would be helpful at the Renter Services Centre. This is especially important for building trust with people who have had bad experiences trying to get help in the past.

## 2 Renter Survey

### 2.1 Overview

The City of Vancouver posted an online survey to gather feedback on the proposed Renter Services Centre on the City's online Shape Your City engagement portal, [www.shapeyourcity.ca](http://www.shapeyourcity.ca), from July 13 to September 30, 2021. The purpose of the survey was to better understand current renter service use, gaps in renter services, and feedback on the proposed Renter Services Centre.

The survey was professionally translated and made available in the top six languages spoken in Vancouver including English, Tagalog, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Vietnamese, and Punjabi. As well the Shape Your City survey platform contained an automatic translation tool hosted by Google Translate, enabling users to translate the survey into other languages.

The survey consisted of 24 non-mandatory questions, meaning that respondents were able to skip questions. The survey was shared on the City's online engagement platform, with targeted social media, including translated content, to reach Vancouver renters. Print ads were included in Chinese and Punjabi language media, and the West End Seniors' Network newsletter. As well, the survey was distributed through the City's relationships with non-profit organizations that provide services to renters. Several non-profit organizations also distributed paper copies of the survey to renters. Please note that due to the voluntary nature of the survey, the results cannot be generalized to all renters in Vancouver. This is because only those interested in the topic would have completed the survey. In addition, online surveys tend to underrepresent some demographics. This survey received a lower response rate from young adults, men, people of colour, renters who do not speak English at home, and immigrants who came to Canada less than 20 years ago. The City took proactive steps to address issues of representation through targeted focus groups (see Section 1).

The number of respondents for each question is shown in the figure title (e.g., N=587). Open-ended comments were reviewed and summarized by theme with the number of responses within each theme shown as a number in parentheses.

In total, 587 people responded to the survey. Results are organized into three sections:

1. Overview, including respondent demographics
2. Previous use of renter services
3. Feedback on the proposed Renter Services Centre

### 2.2 Demographics

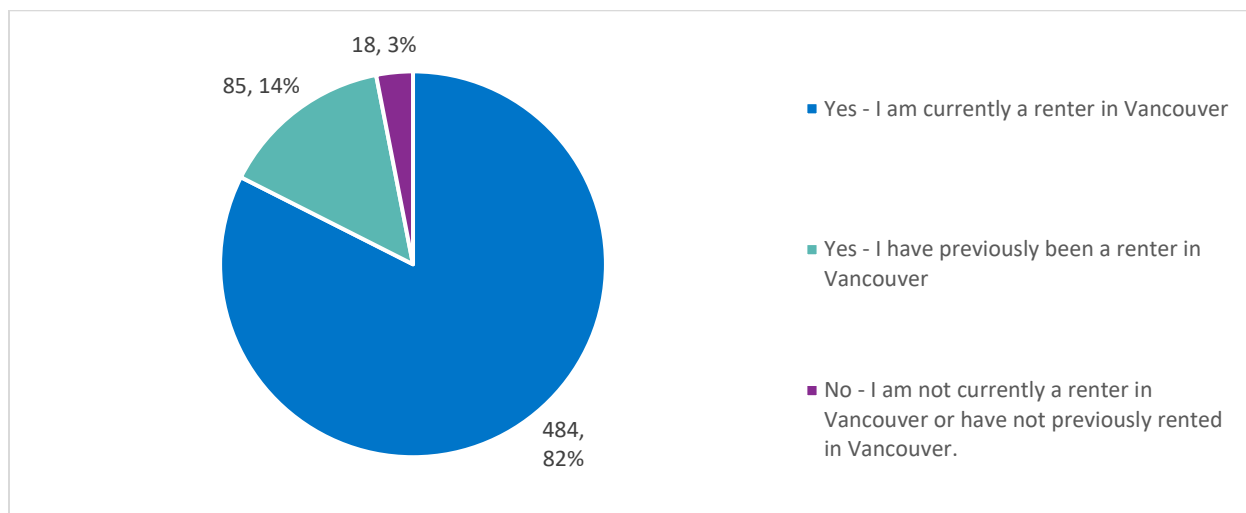
This section summarizes the demographics of survey respondents and, where available, compares respondents to the overall population of renters in Vancouver as of the 2016 census.

#### 2.2.1 Tenure and Housing Situation

Respondents were asked if they are a renter in Vancouver and Figure 2 shows their responses. All responses were analyzed and are summarized below. Respondents who selected "No" to this question were taken to an ending page and did not fill out the rest of the survey.

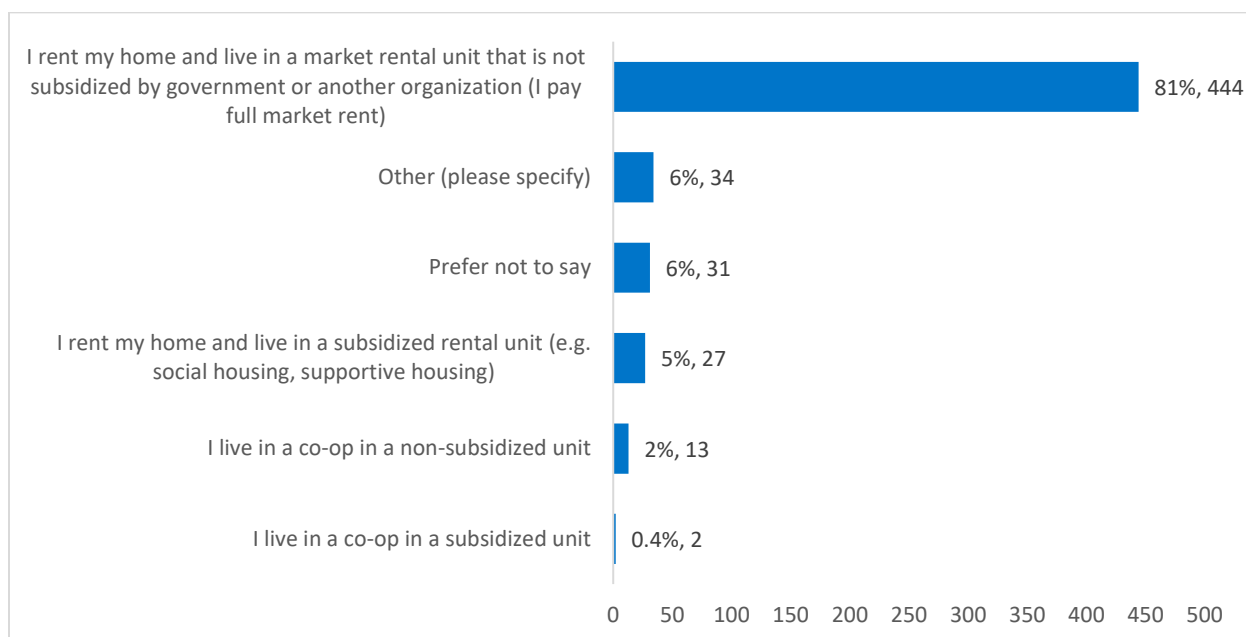


Figure 2 “Are you a renter in Vancouver?” (N = 587)



Respondents were asked about their current housing situation (Figure 3). 81% of survey respondents rent their home and pay full market price to live in a rental unit. 12% of renter households live in housing that is subsidized, which may be non-market housing such as that operated by a non-profit, cooperative housing, and households accessing a rental supplement.

Figure 3 “What is your current housing situation where you live?” (N = 551)



### 2016 Census, Subsidized Housing

For comparison, 12% of Vancouver renter households lived in subsidized housing according to the census. Because of the high number of respondents who selected “other” and “prefer not to say”, it is unclear how reflective survey respondents are of renters who access subsidized housing.

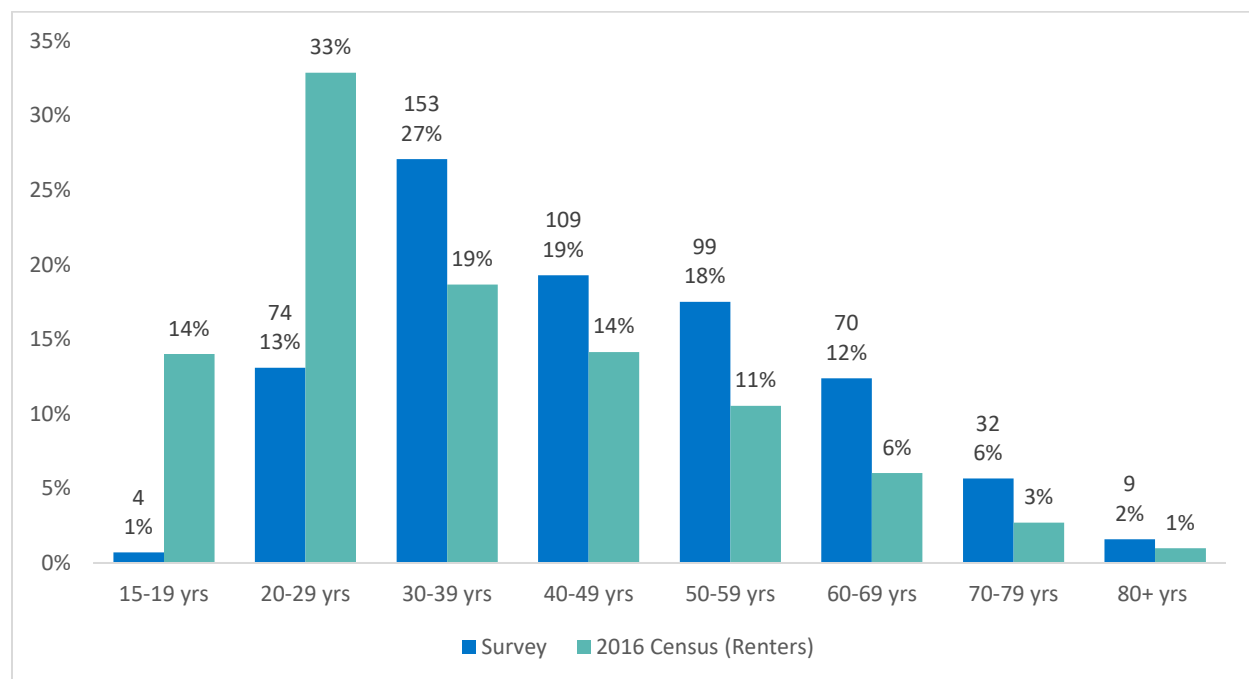
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” above reported the following responses:

- Own home<sup>1</sup> (23)
- BC Housing rental subsidy (e.g., SAFER) (4)
- Living with family (2)
- Left Vancouver due to high cost of housing (2)
- Converted school bus (1)
- Seniors’ housing (1)
- Couchsurfing (1)

### 2.2.2 Age

Figure 4 shows the age distribution of respondents. The survey received a proportionally higher response from demographics over 30 years. Note that surveys often receive a lower response from youth and young adults and the City collected feedback from youth through the focus groups.

Figure 4 “What is your age?” (N = 565)

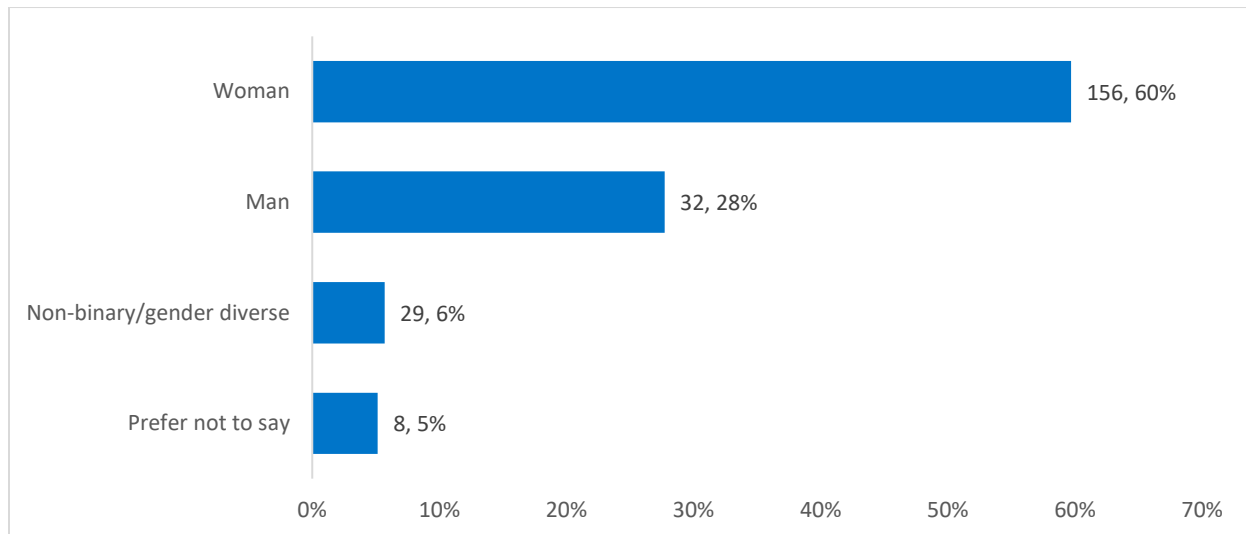


<sup>1</sup> Some respondents were individuals who previously rented in Vancouver.

### 2.2.3 Gender

Figure 5 shows the gender identities of respondents. In addition to the results in Figure 5, two respondents selected none of the above and identified as 'genderfluid queer' (1) and 'trans' (1).

Figure 5 "How would you describe your gender identity?" (N = 563)



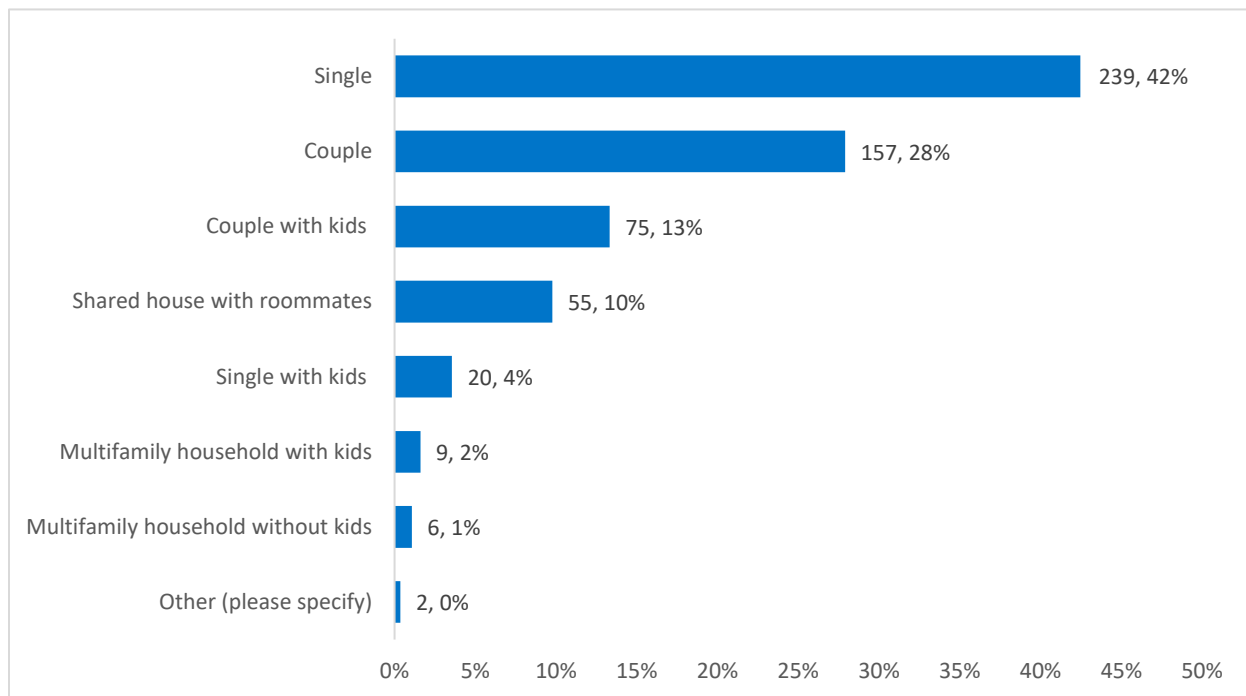
#### 2016 Census, Gender

2016 Census data only provided a binary gender option for respondents (woman, man) and is therefore incomplete. For a general comparison, census data for the City of Vancouver shows that women make up 51% of the population, while men make up 49%. The survey had a high response rate from women, which is typical of surveys of this nature.

### 2.2.4 Household Types

Figure 6 shows respondents household types. The highest proportion of respondents identified as single (42%), followed by couples (28%), couples with kids (28%), shared house with roommates (10%), and single with kids (4%).

Figure 6 “How would you describe your household?” (N = 563)



### 2016 Census, Household Type

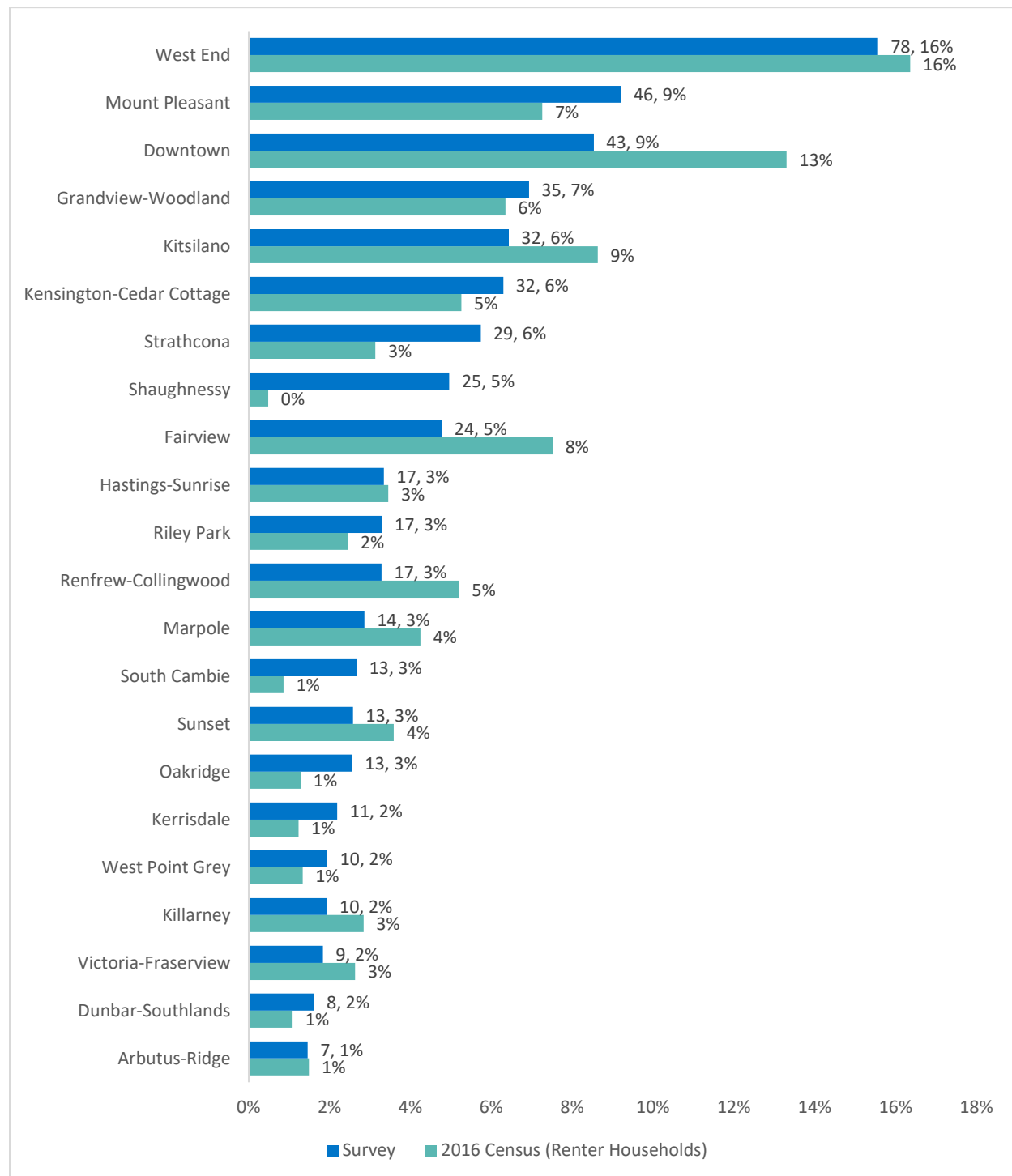
The survey was generally comparable with 2016 census figures for renter household type.

- 48% of renter households as single (non-census households, which is mostly individuals living alone, as well as those living with roommates)
- 21% couples without children
- 12% couples with children
- 7% single parents with children.
- 1% of renter households were multiple-family households.

## 2.2.5 Neighbourhood

Figure 7 below shows the neighbourhood representation of survey respondents and comparison with renter households in the 2016 census. The survey generally had good representation of neighbourhoods. Downtown, Kitsilano and Fairview had somewhat lower response rates.

Figure 7 “If you have a fixed address, what Vancouver neighborhood do you live in?” (N = 557)



### 2.2.6 Indigenous Identity

Survey respondents were asked if they identified as Indigenous. 89% of respondents identify as non-Indigenous, 8% as Indigenous (Indigenous ancestry, Metis, or First Nations), and 4% preferred not to say.

Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Mixed ethnicity and Indigenous ancestry (3)
- Black Indigenous (2)
- Asian Indigenous (2)
- Northern Finnish Indigenous (1)
- Unknown Indigeneity (1)
- Canadian (1)

#### 2016 Census, Indigenous Identity

4.1% of Vancouver renters identified as Indigenous in the 2016 census.

### 2.2.7 Racial Identity

Figure 8 below shows the distribution of respondents when asked about their racial identity. Respondents were able to choose multiple options. The majority of survey respondents identified as White (71%), followed by 9% who identified as East Asian (e.g., Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese).

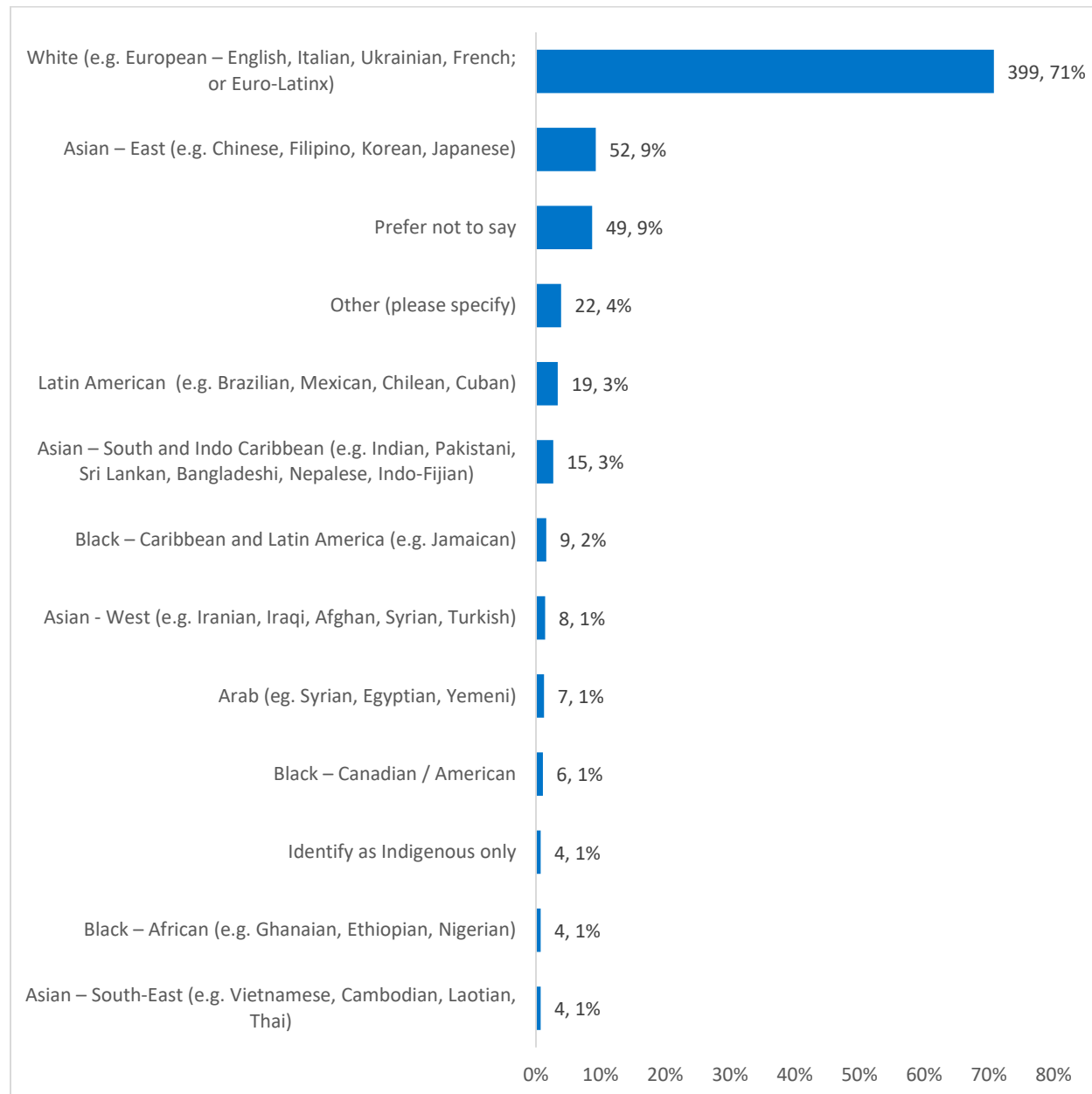
#### 2016 Census, Racial Identity

- Not a visible minority: 60%
- Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Japanese (East Asian): 23%
- South Asian: 5%
- Latin American: 3%
- Southeast Asian: 3%
- Black (not disaggregated): 2%
- West Asian: 2%
- Arab: 1%

Compared to the census, the racial identity of survey respondents is not representative of the community as a whole. The survey over-represented renters who are white, and had a particularly low response from East Asian residents.

These are shown for general comparison but cannot be directly compared with the survey data because the categories used in the census are different.

Figure 8 “In addition to your response to the previous question, which racial group(s) do you identify with? Select all that apply” (N = 564)



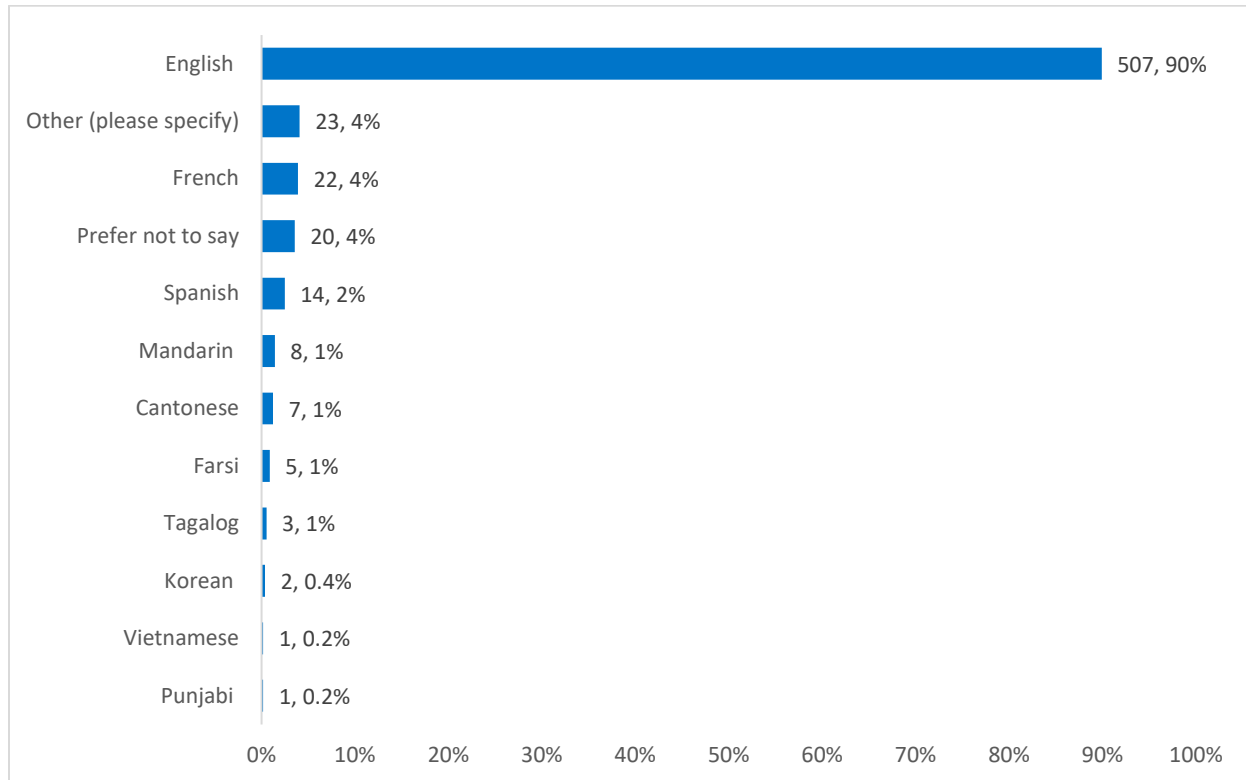
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Jewish (6)
- Mixed (5)
- Canadian (4)
- Slavic (2)
- Unknown/do not know (2)
- Taiwanese (1)

## 2.2.8 Language Most Often Spoken At Home

Respondents were asked what language they speak most often at home (Figure 9). 90% of survey respondents indicated that they spoke English often at home.

Figure 9 “What language do you speak most often at home? Select all that apply” (N = 564)



### 2016 Census, Language Most Often Spoken at Home

The 2016 census reported that 74% of renters spoke English at home, indicating that the survey did not have a strong reach into communities that speak other languages at home.

Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

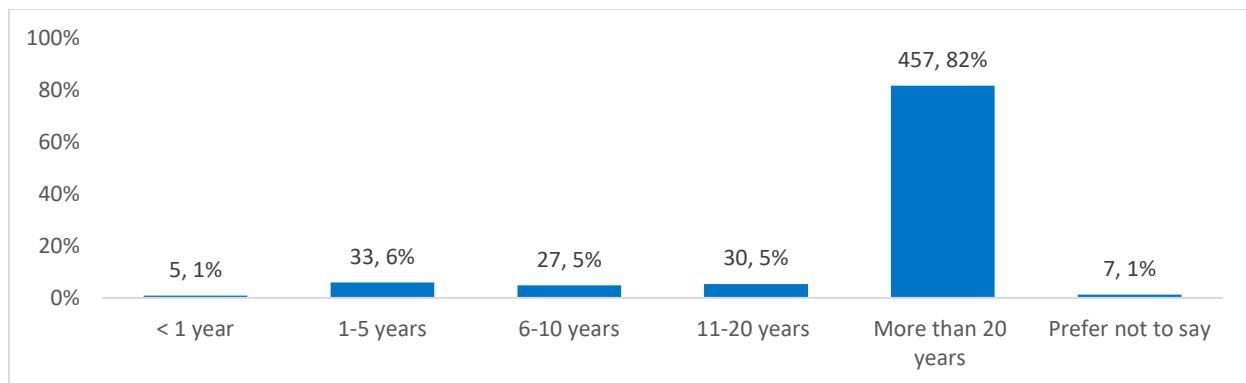
- Dutch (2)
- Arabic (2)
- German (2)
- Russian (2)
- Hindi (2)
- ASL (1)
- Cree (1)
- Greek (1)
- Hebrew (1)
- Urdu (1)
- Italian (1)



## 2.2.9 Length of Time in Canada

When asked how long survey respondents had been living in Canada, 82% reported that they have lived in Canada for more than 20 years (Figure 10).

Figure 10 “How many years have you lived in Canada?” (N = 559)



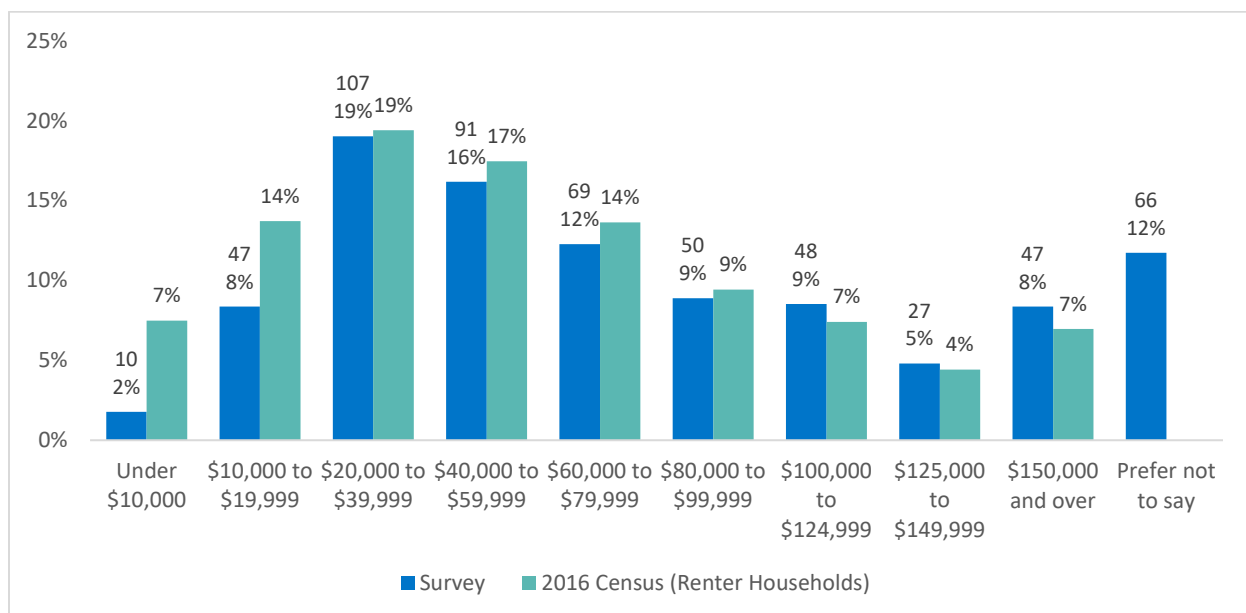
### 2016 Census, Immigration

The 2016 census reported that 61% of Vancouver renters were either non-immigrants or had migrated to Canada before 2001, indicating the survey did not have strong reach into renters who are more recent immigrants.

## 2.2.10 Household Income

Respondents were asked about their total household income (Figure 11). The survey had a good response rate from most income groups, though with a lower response rate from those earning very low incomes (under \$20,000).

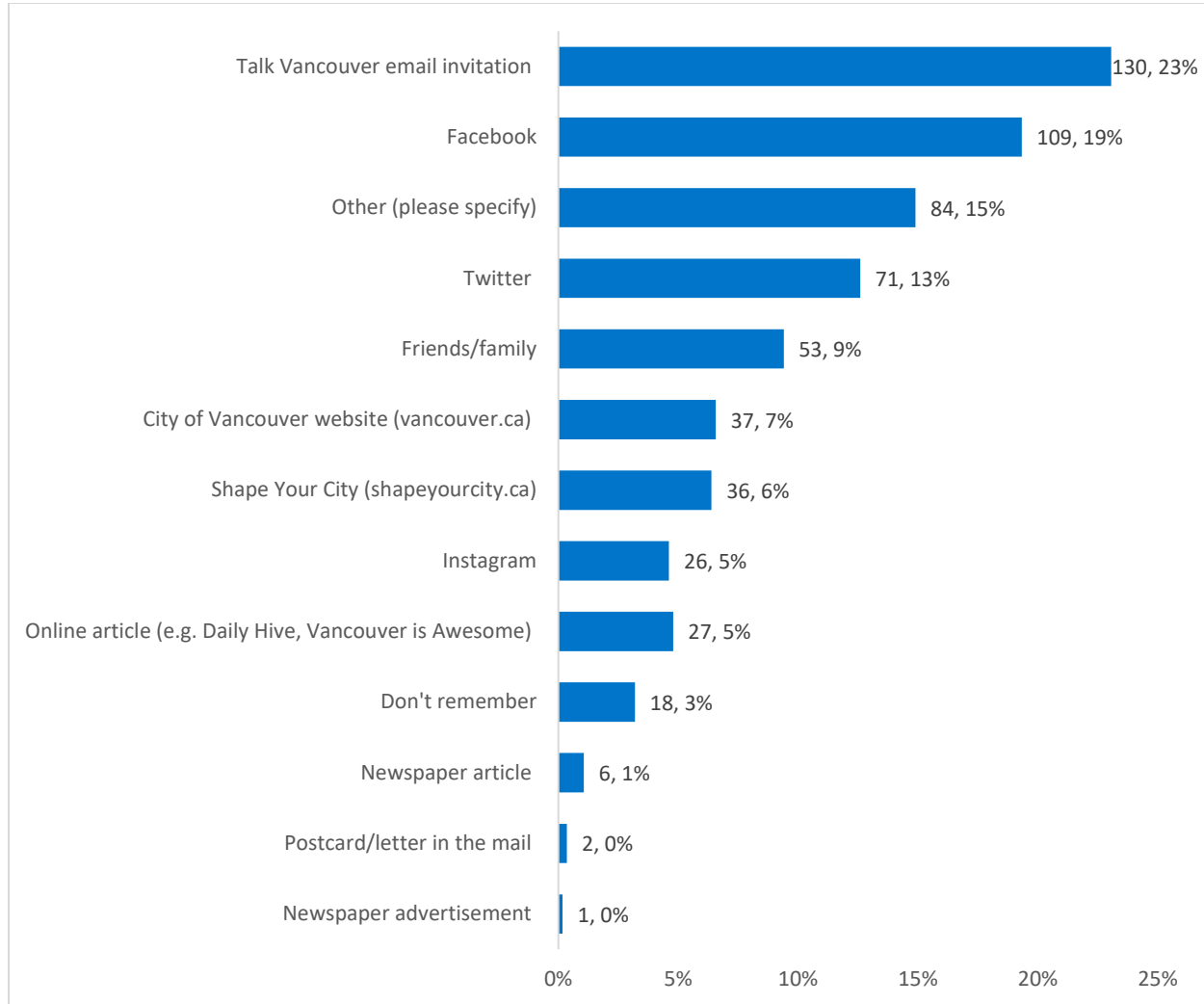
Figure 11 “Which of these best describes your total household income per year before taxes?” (N = 562)



### 2.2.11 Information on Survey

When asked how survey respondents heard about this survey, respondents identified a Talk Vancouver email invitation (21%) and Facebook (19%) as the top platforms as shown in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12 “How did you hear about this survey? Select all that apply” (N = 564)\*



\* “Poster” was also listed as an option but received no responses.

Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Mayor’s emailing list (32)
- Notification from another organization (23)
- LinkedIn (16)
- Email (6)
- Work (3)
- Google alert (1)
- Phone call (1)
- Political party (1)
- Prefer not to say (1)

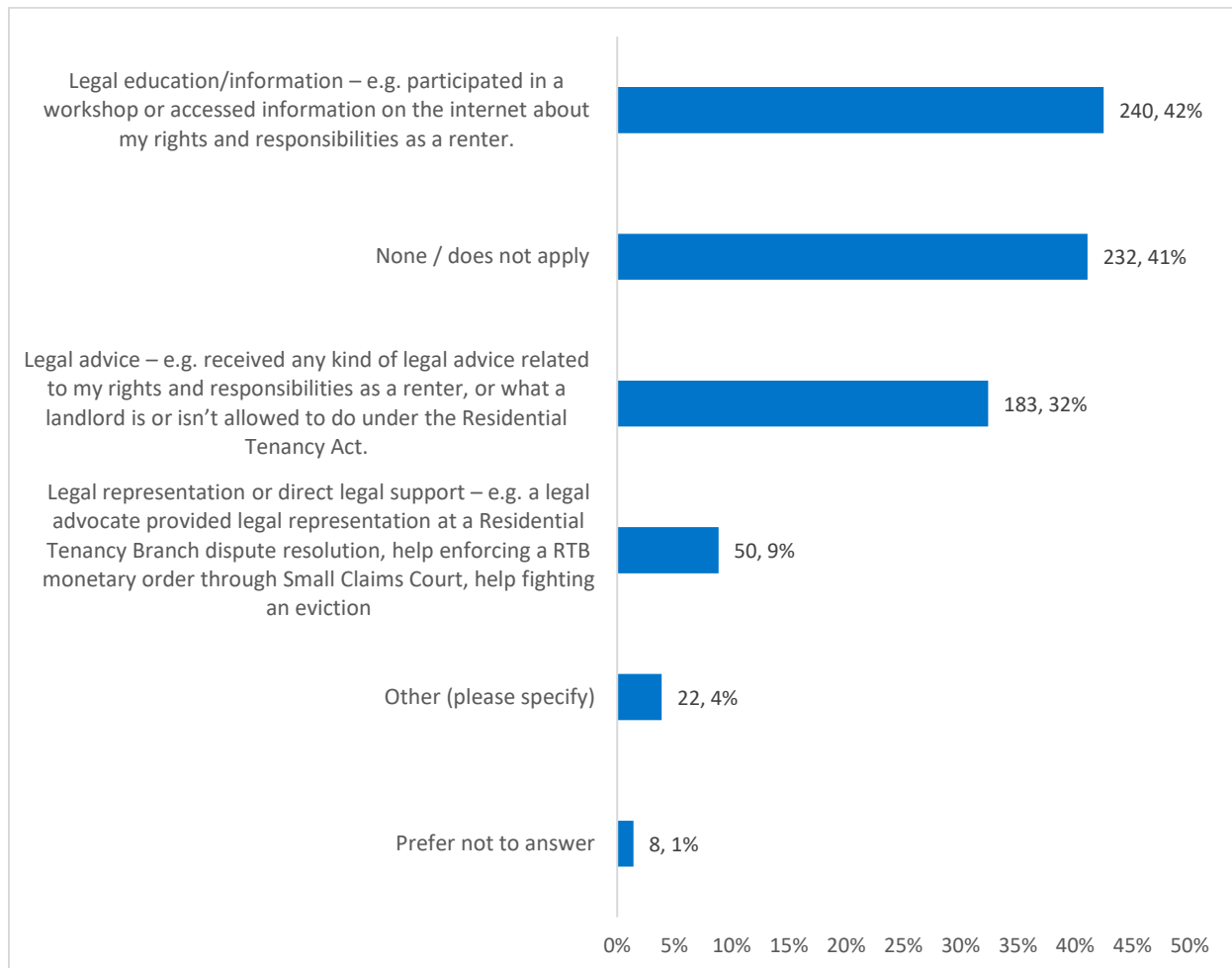
## 2.3 Previous Use of Renter Services

Respondents were asked about their previous use of renter services. For all types of services, a high number of respondents had selected “none / does not apply” indicating that they haven’t accessed those types of services and / or did not need those types of services. This result is to be expected as renters typically engage with various services when they experience challenges with their rental situation.

### 2.3.1 Legal Services

Respondents were asked what types of legal services they had accessed and were able to select multiple options (Figure 13).

Figure 13 “Which of the following types of services have you accessed as a renter?” (N = 565)



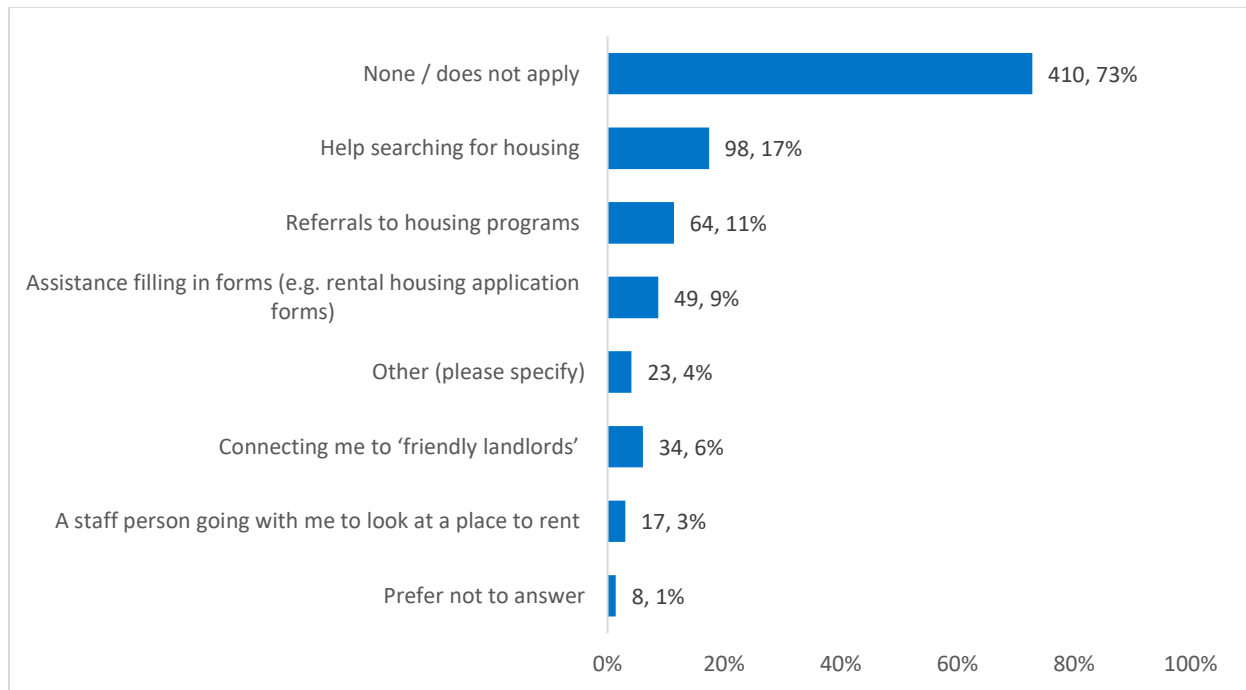
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Accessing services through the Residential Tenancies Branch (4)
- Tenant Resource and Advocacy Centre (3)
- Not being aware of existing services (3)
- Support from political party (3)
- Personal network (2)
- Direct action (2)
- Through local MLA branches (2)
- BC Housing (1)
- The Tenants Union (1)
- Pro bono services (1)

### 2.3.2 Assistance Finding Housing

Respondents were asked what types of services they had accessed to help them finding housing and were able to select multiple options (Figure 14).

Figure 14 “Which of the following services have you accessed to help you find housing?” (N = 563)



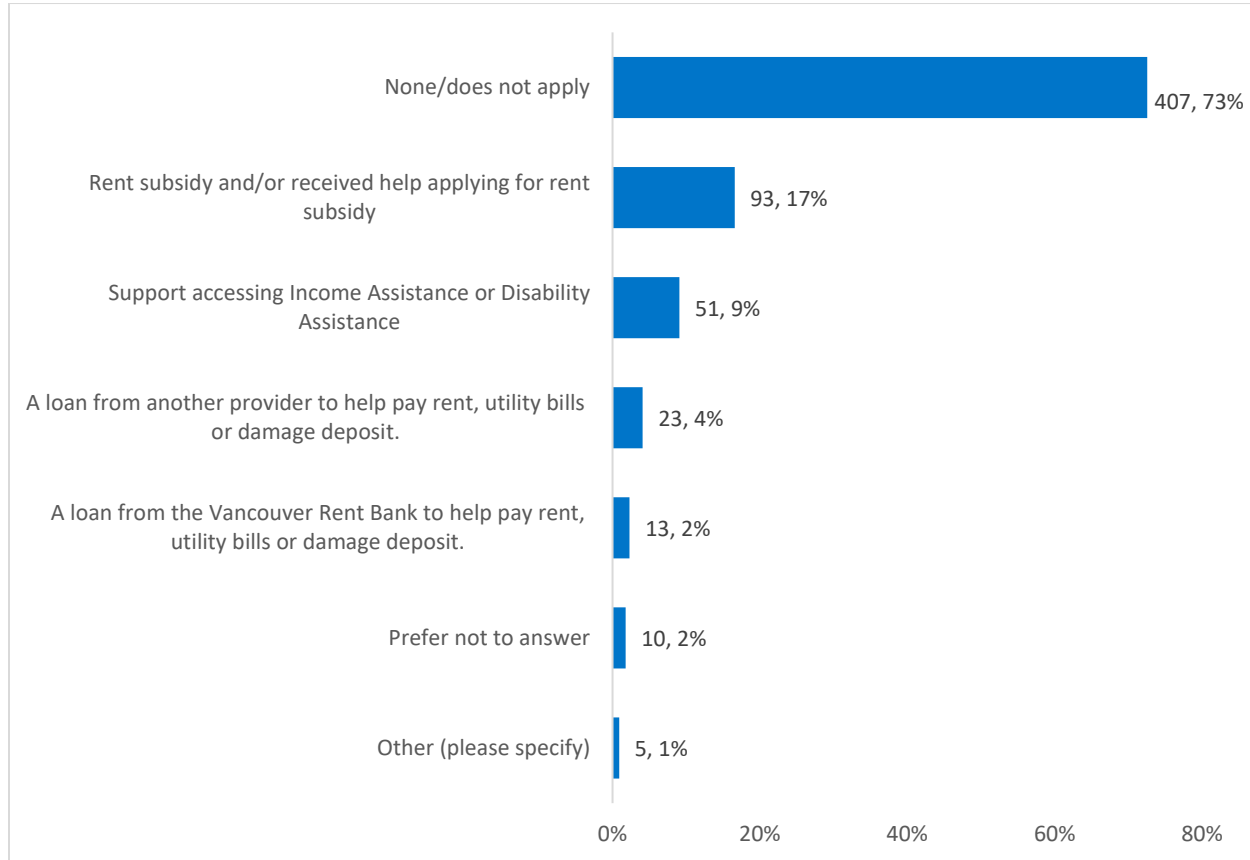
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Was unaware of services available (6)
- Accessing services to find inclusive, accessible and LGBTQ2S+ friendly housing (4)
- Using social media for support (4)
- Interacting with personal connections (e.g., friends/family) for support (3)
- Accessing broad ranges of services (3)
- Relocation (2)
- Legal (1)

### 2.3.3 Financial Support

Survey respondents were asked what types of financial services they have accessed to help with their rental housing and were able to select multiple options (Figure 15).

Figure 15 “Which financial services have you accessed to help you with your rental housing?” (N = 562)



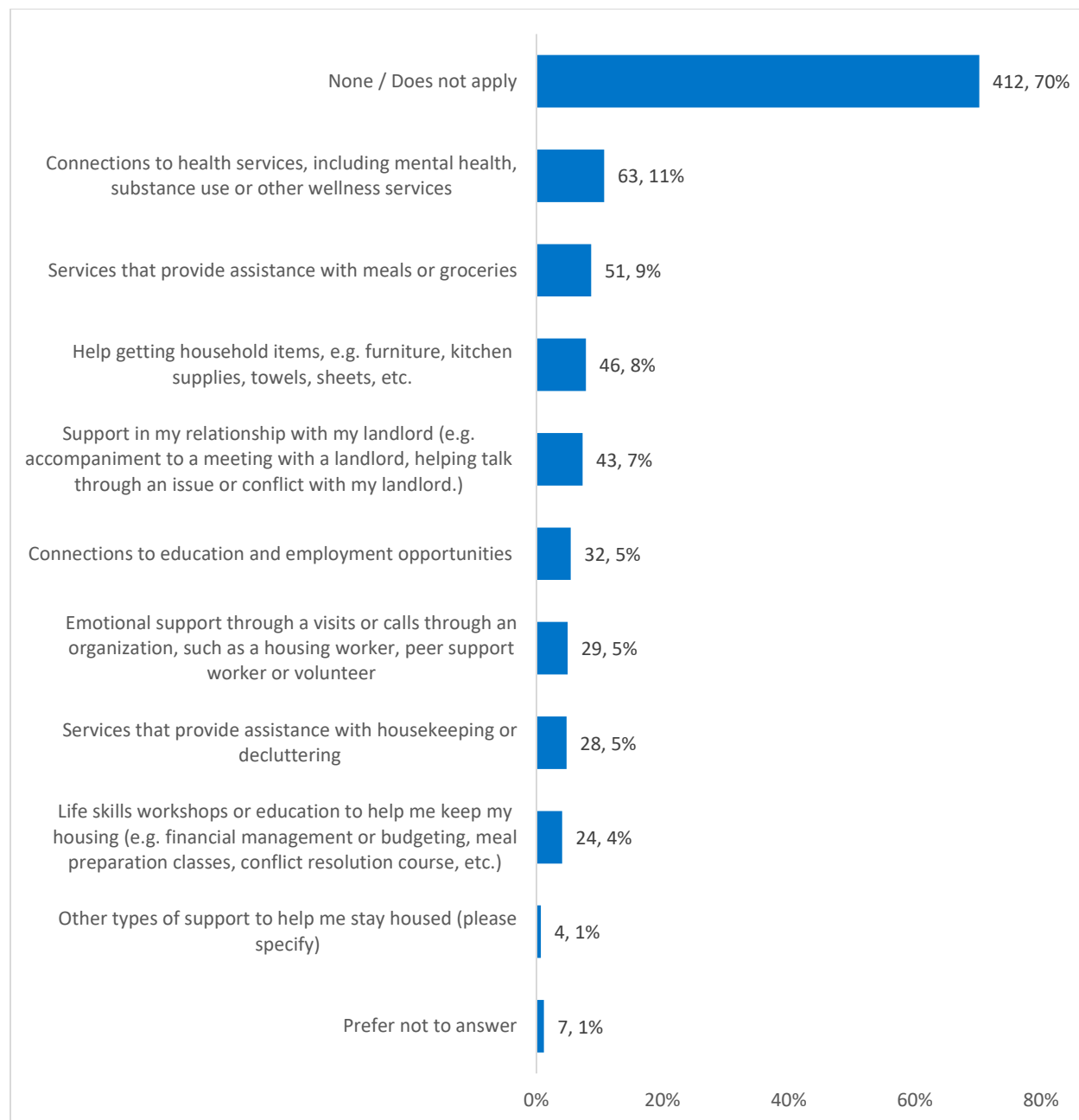
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Borrowing money from family (3)
- MLA office (1)
- Student loan (1)

### 2.3.4 Other Support Services

Survey respondents were asked what types of housing support services they have accessed to help keep or maintain their housing and were able to select multiple options (Figure 16).

Figure 16 “Which of the following housing support services have you accessed?” (N = 559)



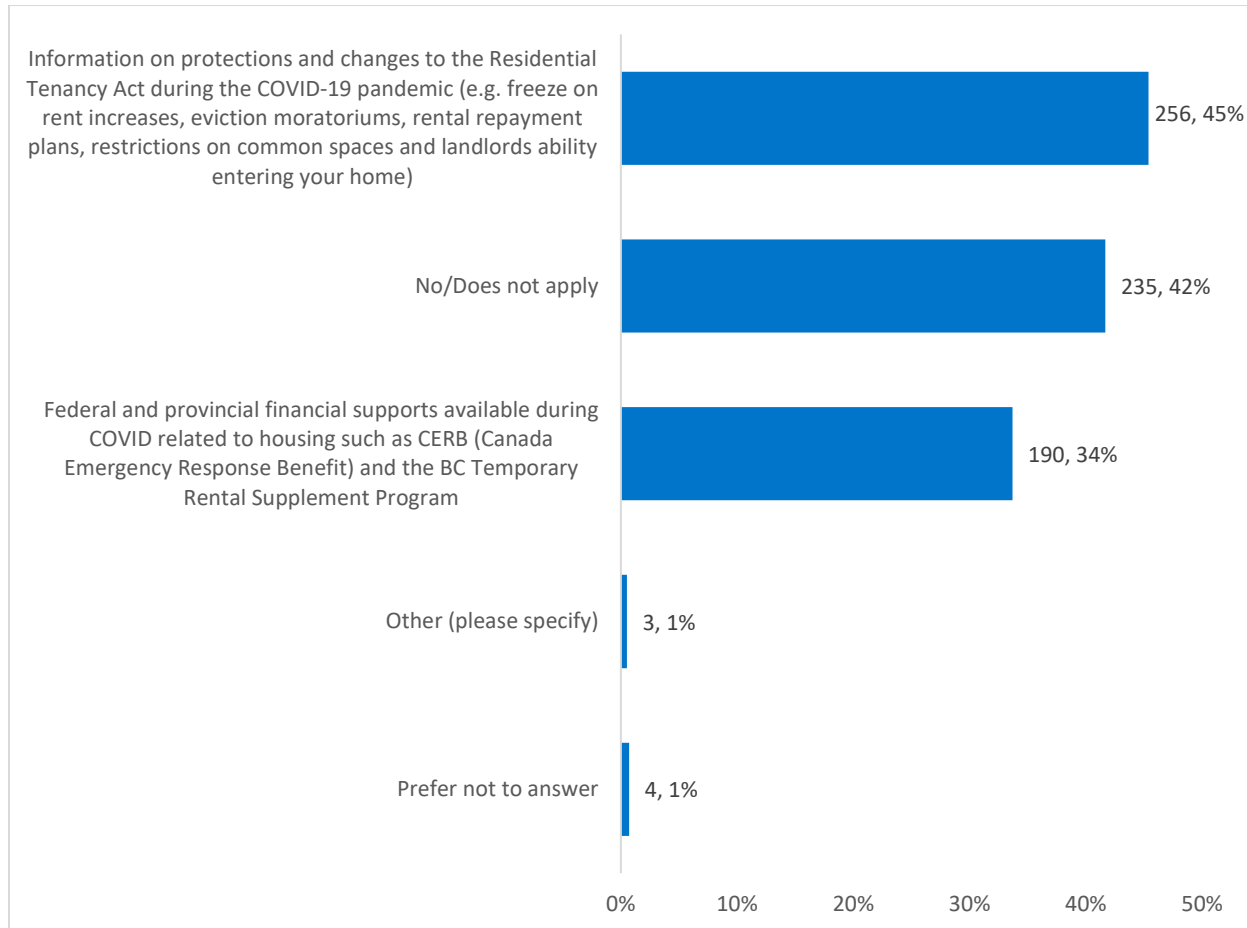
Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Support from friends and family (2)
- Support from community organization (1)
- Packing / moving (1)

### 2.3.5 Supports Related to COVID-19

Respondents were asked what types of COVID-19 related supports they had accessed related to renting and were able to select multiple options (Figure 17).

Figure 17 “Which services or supports related to renting have you accessed because of the COVID-19 pandemic?” (N = 564)



Respondents who selected “Other (please specify)” reported the following responses:

- Disability subsidy (3)

### 2.3.6 Barriers to Accessing Service

Survey respondents were asked to describe any barriers or challenges they have experienced in accessing services. 316 respondents provided comments. Responses are summarized by theme below with the number of comments on that theme shown in parentheses. Only themes mentioned three or more times are shown below.

- Lack of awareness of services / rights (57)
- No barriers / not applicable to me (40)
- Time / hassle involved accessing supports and services (waitlists, call times for BC Housing, onerous applications, etc.) (28)
- Lack of housing options / rent is too expensive (21)

- Lack of support related to the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) / difficult process to access the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) / bias against renters at RTB (19)
- Information for renters is complicated / unclear / inaccurate (16)
- Barriers due to disability (physical barriers, unsupportive staff, mental health, hard of hearing, PWD, lack of accessible housing (14)
- Unhelpful staff (rude, inconsistent information, can't actually help, profiling) (12)
- Hours don't work for schedule (12)
- Not eligible (e.g., citizenship / Permanent Residence status, income too high, credit check, not as vulnerable as others) (10)
- Lack of staff and resources at service providers and RTB (8)
- Cost of legal services (7)
- Lack of supports for seniors (7)
- Barriers due to refugee status, LGBTQ2+, racism (6)
- Fear of upsetting landlord (6)
- Lack of translation supports / cultural supports (6)
- Lack of internet access / computer knowledge (4)
- Rental history / credit history / employment status or history (4)
- Lack of supports for students / bias against young renters (3)
- Lack of supports finding housing / roommates (3)

### 2.3.7 What Helps with Service Access?

Respondents were asked what helped them access services when they needed them. 251 respondents provided comments, and these are summarized below. Note respondents talked about both what had helped them in the past and what they thought was needed for services to be more helpful.

- No supports needed / not applicable (41)
- What Helped in the Past?
  - Being connected with a supportive non-profit service provider (8)
  - Help from family / partner / friends (6)
  - Persistence, trying again and again (4)
  - Contacting BC Housing has been helpful (3)
  - Contacting MLA (3)
- What Would Make Services More Helpful?
  - Multiple forms of support are needed (in person, phone, online) (30)
  - Need to increase awareness of services (24)
  - Online information is needed - list of services, access by email, clear and easy to read (22)
  - Diverse, LGBTQ2+ friendly, compassionate, knowledgeable, and trained staff (e.g., trauma-informed, disability and mental health training) (12)
  - Need for increased hours of operation (11)
  - Access supports (e.g., multi-lingual services, child-minding, wheelchair accessibility,) (10)
  - More RTB support needed for renters (8)
  - Information - clear, easy to understand (7)



- Location (central, parking, near transit) (7)
- More supports needed (not specified) (6)
- More affordable housing needed, housing for people on Persons With Disabilities or Income Assistance, and for women fleeing violence (6)
- Not sure (5)
- Less paperwork (5)
- More resources needed for services to increase staff and supports (5)
- Clear eligibility information (3)
- Senior-friendly services (3)
- Access to an advocate (3)
- Affordable legal services (3)

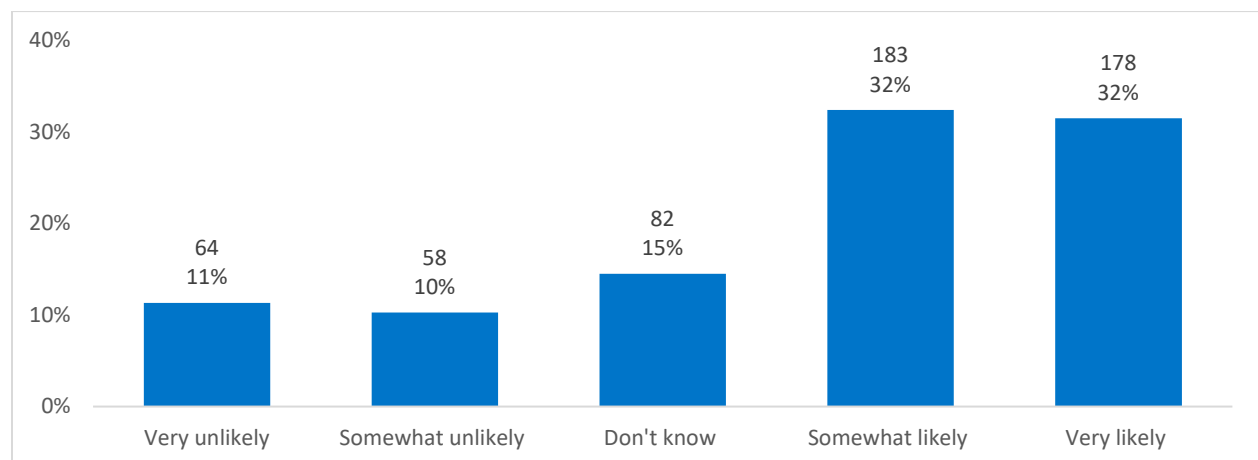
## 2.4 Feedback on Proposed Renter Services Centre

Respondents were asked a series of questions to collect feedback on the proposed Renter Services Centre.

### 2.4.1 Likelihood of Accessing Renter Services and Supports

Respondents were asked how likely they would be to access services and supports (Figure 18). 64% of respondents indicated they would be either very likely or somewhat likely to access services.

Figure 18 “If you were in need of support as a renter, how likely would you be to access services and supports at a Vancouver Renter Services Centre?” (N = 565)



### Open-Ended Comments

Survey respondents were asked to provide any comments on their answer to the question above. In total, 273 comments were provided. Responses are summarized by theme below with the number of comments on that theme shown in parentheses. Only themes mentioned three or more times are shown below.

#### Location

- Location should be in multiple places and / or convenient (73)
- Downtown is not easily accessible (e.g., due to parking, feeling lack of safety), and not necessarily close to people in need (6)

### Services

- Virtual, online and phone access for help and information (38)
- Increase awareness of services available (10)
- Extended / flexible hours (10)
- Depends on services offered (8)
- Finding housing (5)
- Legal advice, tenant rights, advocacy (5)
- Specific situations (e.g., tenants in non-profit housing, in market rental, newcomers) (5)

### Space

- Having a physical space that is accessible and welcoming to people (e.g., street front, human scale, approachable); being next to law courts, government building and business district is intimidating and unwelcoming for people (12)
- Must meet accessibility needs (9)
- Having a physical space for in-person conversations would be beneficial (6)
- Must be inclusive, friendly and welcoming to all people (e.g., LGBTQ2s+, IBPOC, newcomers) (6)

### Staffing

- Adequate staff capacity (11)
- Staff need to be knowledgeable about various aspects of tenant needs (6)

### Community Concerns Regarding the Renter Services Centre

- Prioritize systemic and housing market issues instead of Renter Services Centre (11)
- Renter services already exist and are supported by different levels of government (6)
- Do not waste capacity, resources and money on this (4)

## **2.4.2 Desired Services at Proposed Renter Services Centre**

Survey respondents were asked to list up to three services that should be available at the Renter Services Centre. In total, 408 open-ended responses were provided. Some respondents listed more than three services, which were included in the analysis. Responses are summarized by theme below with the number of comments on that theme shown in parentheses. Only themes mentioned three or more times are shown below.

1. Legal services (142)
2. General support for finding housing (62)
3. Education on tenant rights (63)
4. Practical resources (e.g., computers, internet access, phones, physical rooms) (48)
5. Dispute resolution / mediation specific to tenant-landlord disputes (43)
6. Legal advocacy (e.g., assistance with landlord disputes) (30)
7. Support filling out applications (35)
8. Access to knowledgeable peer support worker / navigator (30)
9. Landlord database (highlighting positive and negative reviews) (26)
10. Access to financial supports (e.g., rent bank, short-term financial assistance for rent relief) (23)
11. Financial advice and planning; information about financial supports (19)
12. Language translation services (18)

13. Referrals to service providers, organizations and programming that supports renters (e.g., legal, food, moving services, social services, government supports) (17)
14. Health services (14)
15. Eviction support (11)
16. Building maintenance (8)
17. Staff available to answer questions (8)
18. Support finding accessible housing (6)
19. Supports for newcomers (5)
20. Space for housing advocacy to address systems change (5)
21. Emergency services (e.g., for people experiencing sudden loss of job, risk of losing housing) (4)
22. Services to help determine eligibility for social housing and other supports (4)
23. Place to complain about housing situation (3)

### 2.4.3 Additional Feedback

Respondents were asked to share any additional feedback on how to design a Vancouver Renter Services Centre that would be welcoming and accessible. Responses are summarized by theme below with the number of comments on that theme shown in parentheses. Only themes mentioned three or more times are shown below.

#### Accessibility

- Accessibility is key; incorporate accessibility into building and space design, ensure staff are trained to be mindful and aware of accessibility concerns (48)

#### Location

- Location must be accessible for public transit; have storage for personal belongings; include parking (29)
- Hours should be available outside of regular working hours (24)
- Ensure there is broad and public awareness of this centre (7)

#### Environment

- Make the environment comfortable and inviting (e.g., add plants, nice lighting, universal washrooms, snacks available, calm ambiance, good seating etc.) (43)
- Environment feels safe and inclusive for all populations (31)
- The centre should be child and family friendly (10)

#### Staffing

- Staff cultural sensitivity training / awareness (including diversity representation in hired staff); staff should be compassionate and able to help translate materials and/or have translated materials available and/or help access language translation (14)
- There should be adequate staff capacity (including in person and remote) to help reduce wait times; enable people to make appointments (8)

#### Service Offerings

- Offer easy-to-use virtual support (phone lines, online chat/Q&A, good website) (28)
- Offer guides and resources in different formats for people to draw from and help themselves (18)

- Ensure renter information is confidential and secure (5)
- Programming that is interconnected and mutually supportive (4)
- Provide referral services (3)
- Have advocates available (3)
- Reduce / subsidize cost of services (3)

#### **Opposition to the Renter Services Centre**

- Renter services already exist and should not be replicated, the centre is outside the scope of the City's responsibilities (15)
- Direct resources towards systemic issues like the housing market and housing unaffordability (6)

## 3 Service Provider Interviews and Workshops

### 3.1 Overview

Between June and October 2021, City of Vancouver staff conducted 21 interviews and two sector-based workshops with local housing and social service organizations on the topic of the proposed Renter Services Centre. One of the sector-based workshops was with renter-serving non-profit organizations and the other was with member organizations of the Vancouver Immigration Partnership (a collaboration of organizations working to improve access to services for newcomers). In addition, interested organizations were able to attend a virtual tour of the proposed Renter Services Centre space at 900 Howe. The purpose of the interviews and workshops was to collect feedback on the proposed Renter Services Centre from organizations that provide services and supports to Vancouver residents who rent. A total of 38 organizations participated in either an interview or workshop, with some attending both.

#### Participating Organizations

1. Access Pro Bono
2. Atira Women's Resource Society
3. Aunt Leah's Place
4. Battered Women's Support Services
5. BC 211
6. Collingwood Neighbourhood House
7. Community Legal Assistance Society
8. Disability Alliance BC / The Right Fit
9. DTES Neighbourhood House
10. Family Services of Greater Vancouver
11. First United Church Advocacy
12. Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House / Drive Youth Employment Services
13. Gordon Neighbourhood House
14. Helping Spirit Lodge
15. ISS of BC
16. Kettle Society
17. Kinbrace Community Society
18. Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
19. Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
20. MOSAIC
21. Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
22. Network of Inner City Community Services Society / Vancouver Rent Bank
23. Rainbow Refugee
24. Senior Services Society of BC
25. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
26. SRO Collaborative
27. Tenant Resources and Advisory Centre
28. UBC Law Students Legal Advice Program / UBC Indigenous Legal Clinic
29. United Way of the Lower Mainland
30. Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society
31. Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society
32. Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture
33. Vancouver Tenant's Union
34. Watari Counselling and Support Services
35. West End Seniors Network
36. Whole Way House
37. Yarrow Society

Participants were asked the following questions:

- Do you have any feedback, suggestions, or concerns regarding the proposed Renter Services Centre?
  - How could the proposed Renter Services Centre add value for renters, your organization or the broader sector?
  - What would we need to consider in order to reduce barriers and increase access?
  - Are there any other concerns or suggestions that you would like to discuss with us?
- How might your organization wish to participate in the Renter Services Centre?

Interview participants were also asked about general feedback and advice about engaging renters as part of this process. They were also asked whether their organization was interested in hosting a focus group with renters and

whether they could distribute the survey to renters connected to their organization. Organizations were also informed that a Project Advisory Committee would be set up in the fall.

Responses to these questions were reviewed and summarized by theme.

## 3.2 Interview Findings

### 3.2.1 Suggestions for the Proposed Renter Services Centre

#### Service Delivery Models

- Satellite office service provision – “Hub and Spoke Model”; having a part time spaces in the RCS and/or across different locations for staff from different organizations to alternate
- City-wide referral network connecting to Renter Services Centre

#### Types of Services

- Service providers with complementary mandates and service provision that contributes to continuity (avoiding gaps in services); avoid competing / overlapping services
- Supports geared for individual circumstances, e.g., those experiencing homelessness, IBPOC, women experiencing violence, youth, seniors, temporary foreign workers, international students
- Services to help find housing; including advice on how to avoid scams, fill out applications etc.
- Financial or income support services (e.g., Rent Bank; help with filing taxes; rent subsidy access)
- Affordable / free legal services (e.g., legal aid/advice, representation/advocacy, interpretation of legal documents)
- Peer support for persons who may require a service and additional supports (e.g., seniors / persons experiencing homelessness)
- Advocacy services to support the pursuit of tenant rights
- Outreach services to help reach people who may not be able to easily access services in-person but require in person support (e.g., SRO tenants, wheelchair users)
- Education on tenant rights
- Evictions support services
- Connections to health services (e.g., mental health and wellness)
- Help with writing applications for services
- Hoarding/ cleaning support

#### Service Delivery Considerations

- Wraparound services (e.g., poverty alleviation, counselling, education and training, employment, health etc.)
- Translation for renters who don't speak English
- Protection of renter confidentiality in space and resources (e.g., separate printers, sound proofing)
- Remote and in-person access to services
- One-on-one personal support to help navigate individuals' unique situations
- Implementation of City's “Access Without Fear” policy and provide services regardless of immigration status and uphold privacy of service recipients
- Discrete entries/exits to the centre

- Ability to prioritize urgency cases (e.g., people facing deadlines with the Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB))
- Potentially rename the centre to more directly communicate the intention of the centre and what services are being offered
- The Renter Services Centre could support both renters and service providers with access to information on renters rights and services, as well as support with referrals

#### **Ideas for Making Renter Services Centre Welcoming and Reduce Barriers**

- Accessibility in physical design, programming, and location
- Create a welcoming, non-intimidating environment (e.g., greet people, “open-door policy”)
- Offer refreshments (e.g., food and drink, bus tickets)
- Access to amenities (e.g., showers, computer lab)
- Child-friendly spaces
- Community transportation support to the Centre (e.g., HandyDART shuttle access)
- Separate areas for different users to reduce potential conflict
- Decolonization supported through ongoing Indigenous engagement, cultural safety training etc.
- Evening and/or weekend extended hours

#### **Proposed Location Renter Services Centre**

- Downtown, central location is valuable with access to transit and other nearby services
- Some expressed concern about downtown being a barrier from those that live far away, who have mobility issues, or who are driving and need parking
- Need to be close to transportation options (e.g., public transit, shuttle access)
- Concern that the location near the courts may be intimidating for some users who have had interactions with law enforcement or are concerned about their immigration status

### **3.2.2 Interest in Participating in Proposed Renter Services Centre**

Seven organizations who were interviewed expressed interest in being a part of the Renter Services Centre and eleven saw value in co-locating services with mutual mandates and services that fill gaps. Eight supported having hot desks (short-term, bookable desk space) for organizations to access. Note that a formal Expression of Interest process was held by the City and those submissions will be used to gauge interest and demand.

Interviewees noted a few key questions about being involved in the proposed Renter Services Centre:

- Will there be resources available to help organizations operate (e.g., grants)?
- Will the City provide staffing resources to complement non-profit staff?
- What are the cost considerations for participating?



## 4 Project Advisory Committee

The Project Advisory Committee met three times over the course of the RSC Feasibility Study to provide advice and expertise on the development of the RSC, including reflecting on the results of community engagement. The Project Advisory Committee includes staff representatives from non-profit organizations, as well as individuals with lived experiences as renters in Vancouver:

### **Organizational members:**

- Access Pro Bono, Heather Wojcik
- Battered Women's Support Services, Rosa Artega
- Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Suzanne Liddle
- Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS), Angela Emam
- Disability Alliance of BC, Jackie Nicklin
- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House / Drive Youth Employment Services, Rosie Forth
- Individualized Funding Resource Centre Society, Chris Hofly
- MOSAIC, Mona Asmani
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Claudine Matlo
- Rainbow Refugee, Garfield Hunter
- Senior Services Society of BC, Alison Silgardo
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, Huda Bolbolan
- Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC), Andrew Sakamoto
- Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society, Marlee Laval
- Vancouver Association for Survivors of Torture (VAST), Jhevoi Melville
- Vancouver Tenant's Union, AJ Batalden
- Watari Counselling and Support Services, Ingrid Mendez

### **Individual members:**

- Athena Roddick
- Alexandra O'Donaghey
- Cenen Bagnon
- Colin Ross
- Erica Masuskapoe
- Holley W.
- Tracey Rust

## APPENDIX B: RENTER SERVICES CENTRE BUDGET TABLE, COUNCIL APPROVED FUNDS (RTS 13180, 2019)

In 2019, \$1.46 M was allocated from the Empty Homes Tax revenue reserve to fund the development of the Renter Services Centre (RTS 13180). The Budget Table below identifies the funding allocated in 2019, as well as adjustments made to re-allocate funds between budget items in June 2021, with the review and approval of Finance and the GM of ACCS. Adjustments were made based on new information emerging from activities to explore the feasibility of the Renter Services Centre.

### Budget for Development of the RSC: Council Approved Funds (2019) & Adjustments (2021)

	Council Approved Funds (June 2019)	Adjustments	Re-allocation of Funds (June 2021)	Notes
<b>Development/Interim Programming</b>				
Consultants - Functional Program / Governance	100,000	190,000.00	290,000.00	Addresses additional requirements to engage consultants to support development of the Renter Services Centre, including consulting services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce the Feasibility Study Report</li> <li>Conduct functional programming</li> <li>Support the operational readiness of a multi-tenant service hub, as identified through interviews with other co-located centres (preparation of governance and service agreements with sub-lessees, preparation of website and other communications materials for an RSC, etc.)</li> </ul>
Pre-Opening City & Partner Services	600,000	(541,000.00)	59,000.00	Most of the funding in this line item has been re-allocated to support capital costs for tenant improvements at 900 Howe St. The remaining funds of \$59,000 are designated for community engagement activities during the development of the Renter Services Centre.

<b>Centre</b> (Projected 2023 Q2 Opening)				
Lease Value	140,000	(140,000.00)	0.00	The City pays nominal rent for the premises at 900 Howe St. As such, no funds are required under this line item.
Capital costs/TIs (IT, furniture, renos)	550,000	410,000.00	960,000.00	REFM provided feedback on the expected costs required to undertake this activity; adjustments were made accordingly.
Centre (building) operating costs	70,000	81,000.00	151,000.00	Funding in this line item pays for the allocable share of the building operating costs for the City amenity bonus space at 900 Howe, as outlined in the head lease between the building owner and the City. These costs are currently being covered by the City, until such time that the Renter Services Centre opens.
<b>Renter Services Centre Total</b>	<b>\$1,460,000</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,460,000.00</b>	<b>No adjustments to the total budget.</b>