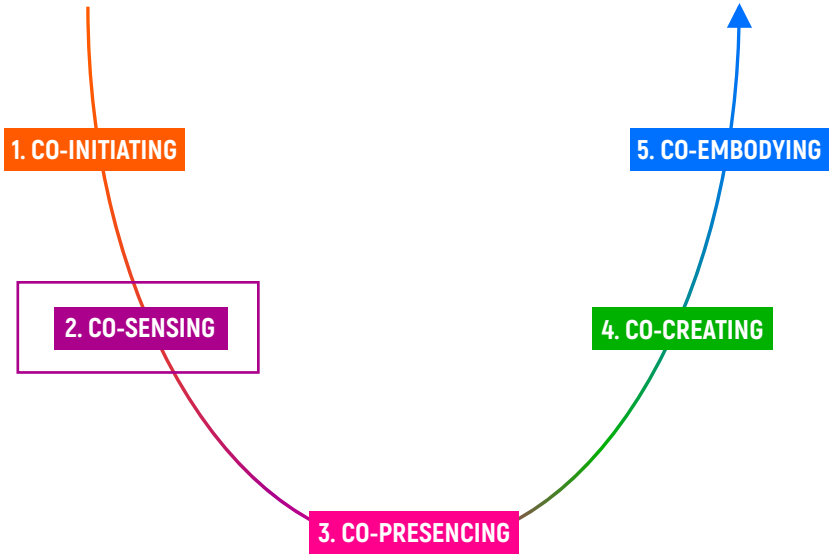

AGE-FRIENDLY NON-STRATEGY SOLUTIONS LAB

CO-SENSING WORKSHOPS

March 8, & April 15, 2019 @ City Studio

CITY OF VANCOUVER

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We acknowledge that our work together is taking place on unceded Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh territory and thank them for hosting us on their lands.

AGE FRIENDLY NON-STRATEGY + THE SOLUTIONS LAB APPROACH

Age-Friendliness in Vancouver

The landscape of policies, plans, strategies and programs that impact seniors and age-friendliness in Vancouver is vast. The Social Policy group in the City holds overall responsibility for the Healthy City Strategy, a Social Infrastructure Plan, a Poverty Reduction Strategy, and an Age-Friendly Action Plan, and most departments play important roles in creating an age-friendly city. The drivers for improved age-friendliness come from the growing number of seniors in Vancouver, and subsequent direction from the City Manager, the Senior's Advisory Committee, and Council to seek World Health Organization Age Friendly City status.

Some of the good work that the City of Vancouver has spearheaded in this portfolio includes:

- Age Friendly Strategy
- Social Isolation and Loneliness Among Seniors Report
- Dementia Friendly City Train the Trainer Curriculum
- Research (Ethnographic, Seniors profile)

What is most important is that we take an action research approach to experimenting and testing new ways of integrating change into existing policy rather than continuing to produce more strategies. So what is this Age-Friendly Non-Strategy Solutions Lab all about then, and how might it help with this integration?

Convening question: How might we deliver a healthy city for all seniors, within the complete Healthy City framework, without creating another strategy ?

The convening question in a social innovation lab is designed to be open and thought provoking, while creating a container for the explorations in the lab. It will evolve as the work in the lab progresses, as the team refines our understanding of the different perspectives on the question through the process, and as possible solutions begin to emerge.

What is a Solutions Lab?

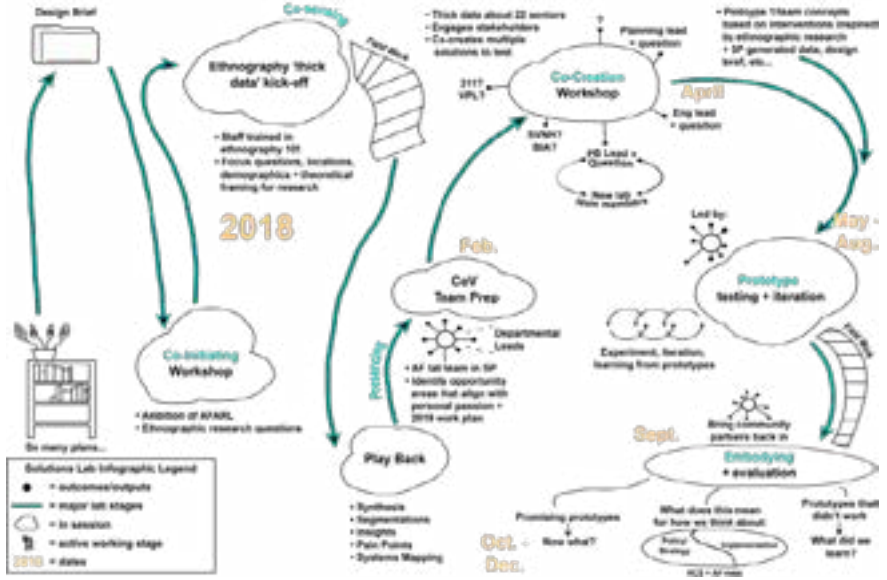
Our city is facing increasing pressure to address convergent and complex challenges like reconciliation, affordability, equity, climate change, social isolation – and age-friendliness. The go-to structures and processes of local governments were set up for a very different reality, and for significantly different work and responsibilities. If governments don't adapt, we'll be left behind. We're being called to experiment, learn, and scale new solutions in response to these pressures. We're being called to respond to the root causes of these systemic challenges, not just apply incremental quick fixes. The Solutions Lab is a response to this call.

SLab uses theory and practice from social innovation, design, systems change, transformative learning, and others to experiment and learn our way into implementable, people-centred, and scaleable solutions. One way that we do this is by bringing teams of City staff, community members, and stakeholders together in creative, dialogue-based, and action-oriented processes where we stretch our thinking, learn, and have fun together.

Purpose of the Age-Friendly Non-Strategy Lab

- Build and grow capacities and practices to understand the diverse lived experiences of seniors in Vancouver through research, data collection and analysis to understand root causes of systemic challenges;
- Develop and test possible solutions to improve social determinants of health for seniors;
- Adapt existing policy, strategy, and practice to scale promising solutions; and
- Create ongoing cycles of action research, learning, and evaluation to improve the lives of seniors in Vancouver.

Process:



CO-SENSING SESSION 1 - SYSTEMS THINKING

Purpose

- Strengthen and grow connections between City of Vancouver staff and community working on age-friendliness
- Connect findings from ethnographic research and data to powerful questions directly relevant to each team member
- Identify potential areas for systemic interventions that will improve age friendliness in Vancouver through more strongly connecting policy, implementation and lived experience

Agenda

1. Welcome and opening
2. Treasure Hunt
3. Systems Mapping
4. Sharing and refinement
5. Closing

Outcomes:

- Sense-making and ground-truthing of ethnographic research and data into the work, practice, and plans of lab team members
- Generating systems maps that wrestle down where potentially significant interventions with high leverage for change might reside in the system; and
- Finding 1-2 powerful creative questions for each person or team that will be used to form creative prototyping teams and the next set of lab workshops

Lab Team:

Anthony Kupferschmidt (West End Seniors Network), Cindy McMillan (Jewish Family Services), Karen Liebel (Vancouver Public Library), Shelley Jorde (South Vancouver Neighbourhood House), Susan Mele (Vancouver Park Board), Alena Straka,(COV-Planning); Carol Ann Young* (COV - Social Policy), Danny Enright (COV – 311), Peter Marriott* (COV - Social Policy), Vania Tse (COV - Transportation Design Branch)

**Also part of the design team.*

Design + Facilitation: Lindsay Cole (COV), Lanny Libby (COV)

INSIGHTS TREASURE HUNT

Workshop participants reviewed and reflected on information collected through ethnographic research (playbook link), socio-demographic profiles *(Appendix 1: Seniors Demographics Posters - Age Friendly Lab 1)* and policy and project reports that have been published in relation to Vancouver's senior's community including the recommendations from the **Age Friendly City Action Plan** and the **Social Isolation and Loneliness report**.

Participants were asked to capture insights that were compelling to them from all of this data.
Responses were organized thematically around the following topics:

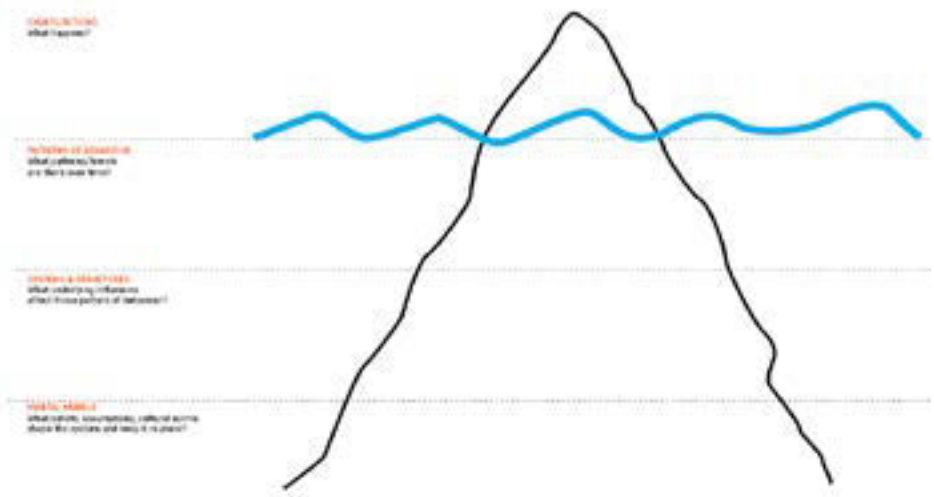
- Driving
- Language
- Volunteering
- Neighbourhood Level
- Housing
- Meaning
- Living Alone
- Financial
- "Just Fines"
- Scaling up what is working
- Programs
- Relationships
- Belonging

SYSTEMS SKETCHING

A system is made of interconnected and interdependent patterns of actions involving many components: organizations, institutions, people, and their relationships. Systems mapping is a set of methods and tools to help make sense of complex challenges, to reduce the otherwise paralyzing mess into usable maps that help surface intervention points to changing the system.

When to use this tool:

- To create a visual representation of the underlying complexity, interdependencies and uncertainties that we're working within
- To identify insights in ways that would not have been possible from a single perspective
- To spot patterns
- To find leverage points - places within a complex system where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything.



First Systems Sketches

Participants were encouraged to use the mind map or the iceberg map framework to identify the underlying elements within a system from the insights collected through the treasure hunt exercise. Maps were drawn to unpack the following events or conditions, and a sample of these maps is included in *Appendix 2*: *Systems Sketching Maps*

- Loss of driver's license
- Built environment not accessible to all ages, abilities, cultures, languages / Neighbourhoods are not being adapted to aging population
- Understanding the barriers to scaling up
- The cultural comfort: what to do if you have not been able to rely on your culture comfort historically?
- Women more likely to live alone and to experience challenges
- Work is thought to be the most important source of meaning in a person's life. What happens after retirement?
- Community Centre Programming
- Volunteering for seniors
- Living alone
- Creating relationships
- Housing displacement

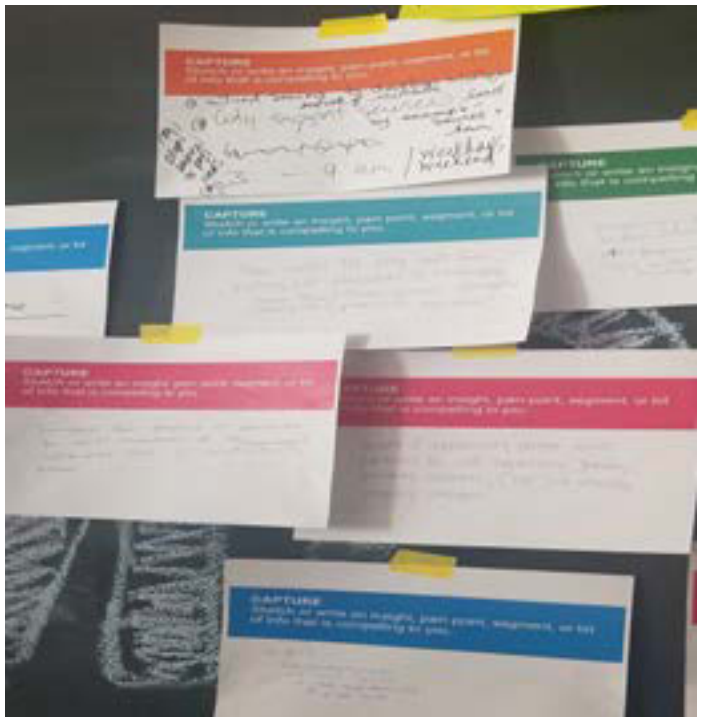
NEXT STEPS + FEEDBACK

Next Step - Systems Maps + Creative Questions Workshop:

- The design team committed to take the systems sketches away to try to work them into a smaller number of themes and maps.
- We agreed that we would continue with the current Lab team for the next session

Feedback:

Overall, the Lab team enjoyed the session scoring it an average of 4.5/5 scale of Excellent!



Some of the things that worked well included:

- I liked the challenge of thinking differently, and using systems mapping to find treasures
- Learning from a diverse and talented group of colleagues
- Being "forced" to look at many different information sources, and already beginning to see things that I can start addressing at work

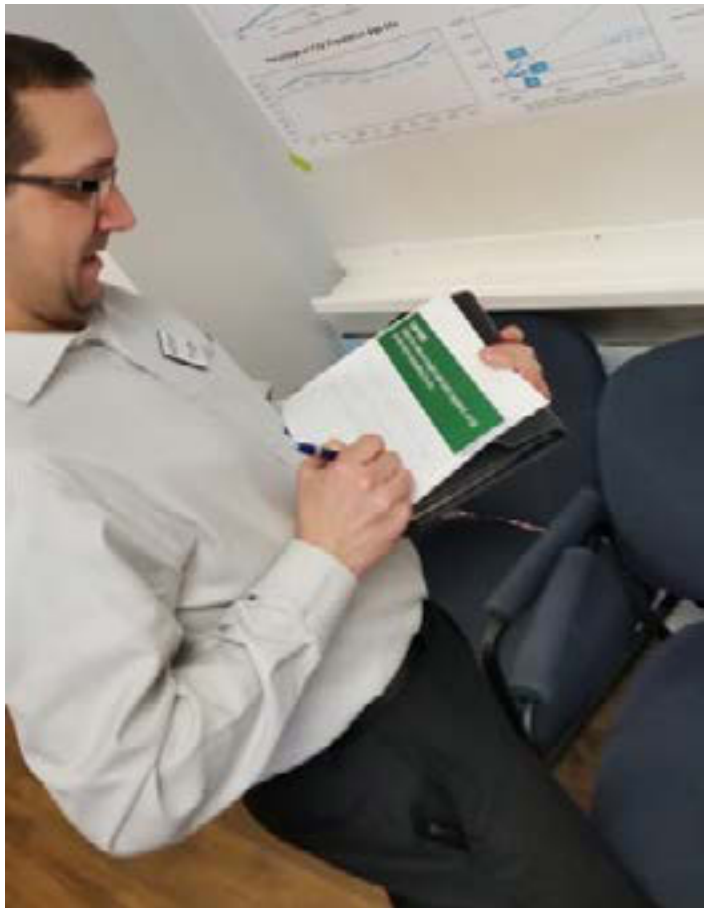
Some of the things that you'd like to change for next time included:

- Getting information about the session in advance, including agenda, resources etc.
- Getting some examples of the exercises
- Fresh air and food

CO-SENSING SESSION 2 - SYSTEMS MAPS + CREATIVE QUESTIONS

Purpose

- Strengthen and grow connections between City of Vancouver staff and community working on age-friendliness
- Connect findings from ethnographic research and data to powerful questions directly relevant to each team member
- Identify potential areas for systemic interventions that will improve age friendliness in Vancouver through more strongly connecting policy, implementation and lived experience



Agenda

1. Welcome and opening
2. Feedback Loops and Deep Structure
3. Fractals
4. Generating powerful questions
5. Closing

Outcomes:

- Finding patterns, feedback loops, and fractals to inspire experimentation and learning through prototyping; and
- Finding 1-2 powerful creative questions for each person/team that will be used to form creative prototyping teams and the next set of lab workshops.

Lab Team:

Anthony Kupferschmidt (West End Seniors Network), Sylvie Kruchten, (Jewish Family Services), Alena Straka,(COV- Planning); Carol Ann Young* (COV - Social Policy), Jessica Land (COV, Park Board), Peter Marriott* (COV - Social Policy), Vania Tse (COV - Transportation Design Branch)

Catch up session Apr. 23 with: Danny Enright (CoV – 311), Karen Liebel (Vancouver Public Library), Shelley Jorde (South Vancouver Neighbourhood House)

**Also part of the design team.*

Design + Facilitation: Lindsay Cole (COV), Lanny Libby (COV)

FEEDBACK LOOPS

In between sessions, the design team took the collection of treasures (aka insights) and systems sketches and created four aggregated systems maps with the following themes: social infrastructure; physical infrastructure; meaning; and scaling. Lab participants were then asked to team up to find feedback loops on each of the maps to show virtuous, vicious, stabilizing, and stagnating patterns. The process of identifying feedback loops helped to provide clarity around the systemic factor we are trying to find and address.

LOOP TYPE: VICIOUS
(Things are geeting worse and worse)

When the literacy rate is low, qualifying for jobs becomes difficult which increases the level of unemployment. High unemployment leads to the number of households existing at or below the poverty level to increase. As poverty increases people are more likely to prioritize income-generating activity over education, which further decreases the literacy rate.

LOOP TYPE: VIRTUOUS
(Things are geeting better and better)

When a parent extends trust to a child, the child's freedoms are increased. As the child experiences the enjoyment of increased freedoms, their desire to maintain these extra privileges increases. As their desire to have privileges increases, their responsible behavior is also increased, which in turn increases the parent's trust in the child.

LOOP TYPE: STABILIZING
(Keeping things from geeting worse)

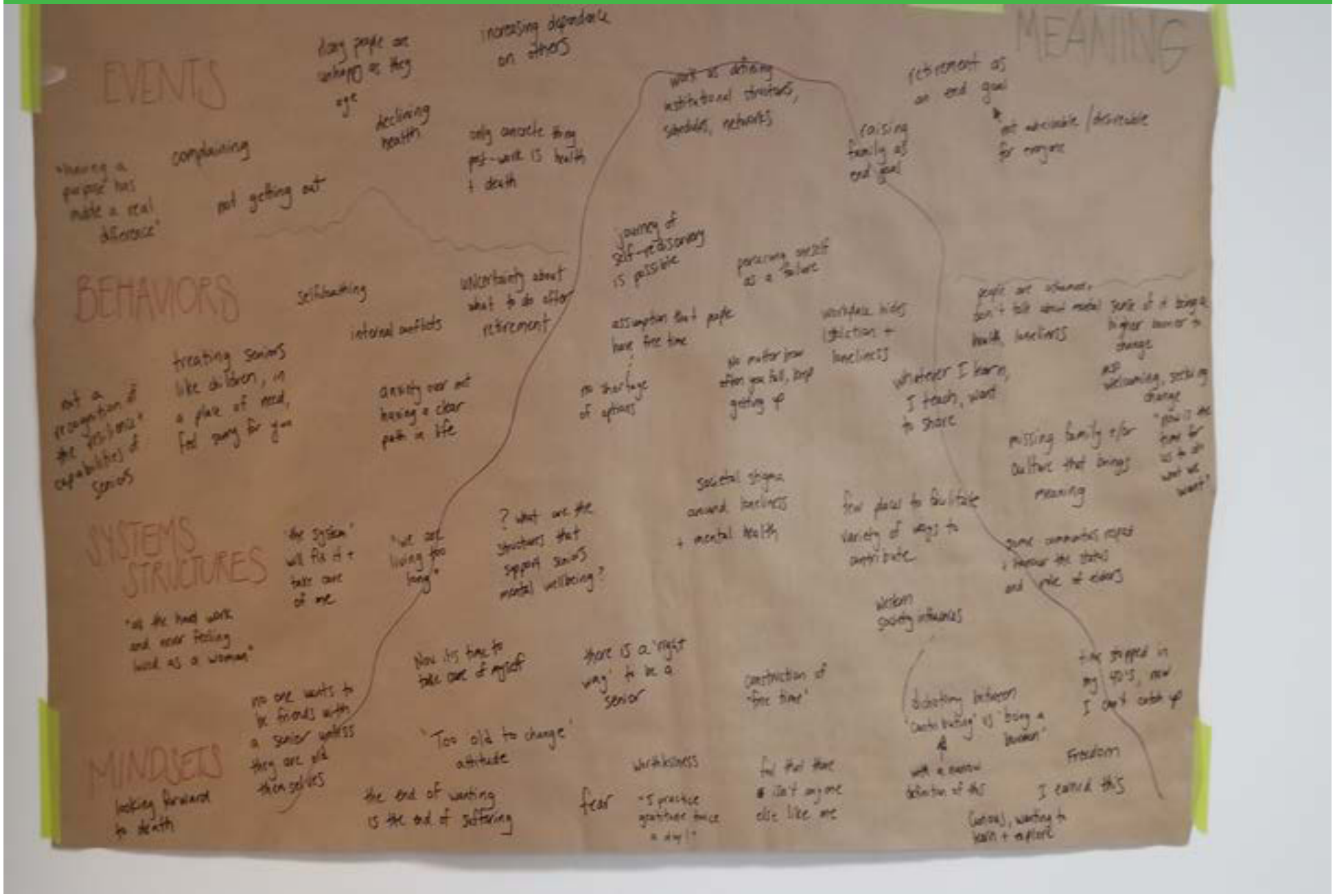
As the use of fossil fuel increases, the reserves of fuel are depleted, which leads to an increase in commodity price (of fossil fuel), which then results in a decrease of fossil fuel use.

* Taken from: Omidyar Groups: Systems Practice Tool, (P.39).

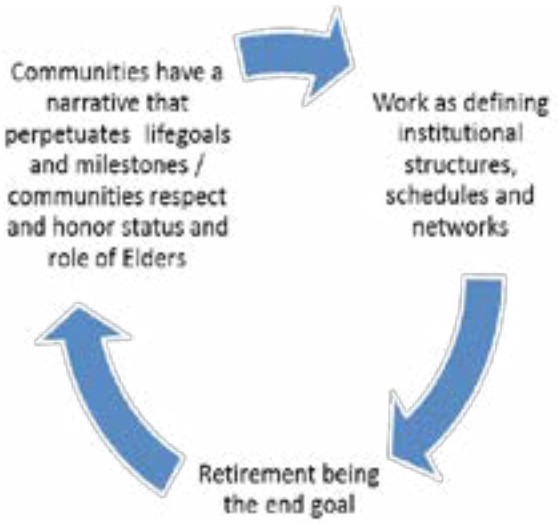
LOOP TYPE: STAGNATING
(Keeping things from getting better)

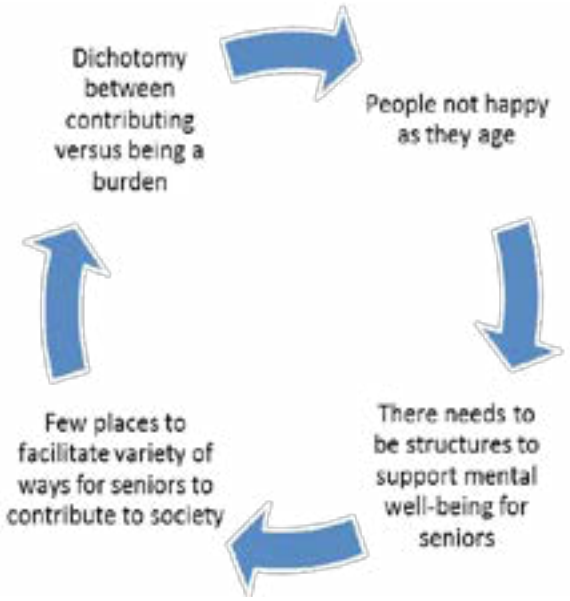
When a student shows an improvement in the quality of their classroom behavior, the teacher's expectation of that child's behavior increases (now they know what the child is capable of!). As the teacher's expectations rise, the likelihood that the teacher will make the effort to engage and praise the child is diminished. When the child does not receive praise for their effort, their behavior deteriorates.

Meaning:

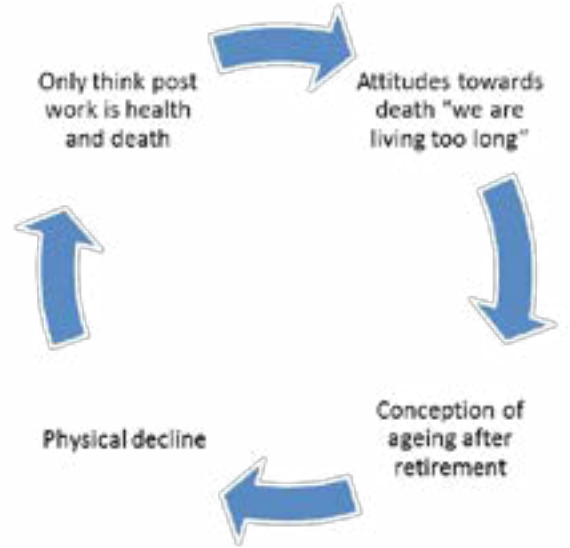

MEANING
EVENTS
BEHAVIORS
SYSTEMS STRUCTURES
MINDSETS
increasing dependence on others
declining health
complaining
not getting out
retirement as an end goal
raising family as end goal
journey of self-rediscovery is possible
selfloathing
internal conflicts
uncertainty about what to do after retirement
treating seniors like children, in a place of need, feel sorry for you
anxiety over not having a clear path in life
no shortage of options
whatever I learn, I teach, want to share
missing family e/or culture that brings meaning
societal stigma around loneliness + mental health
few places to facilitate variety of ways to contribute
? what are the structures that support seniors mental wellbeing?
"we are living too long"
"the system" will fix it + take care of me
"all the hard work and never feeling loved as a woman"
Now its time to take care of myself
there is a 'right way' to be a senior
construction of 'free time'
no one wants to be friends with a senior unless they are old themselves
'Too old to change' attitude
looking forward to death
the end of wanting is the end of suffering
fear
worthlessness
Freedom
I earned this

Meaning:

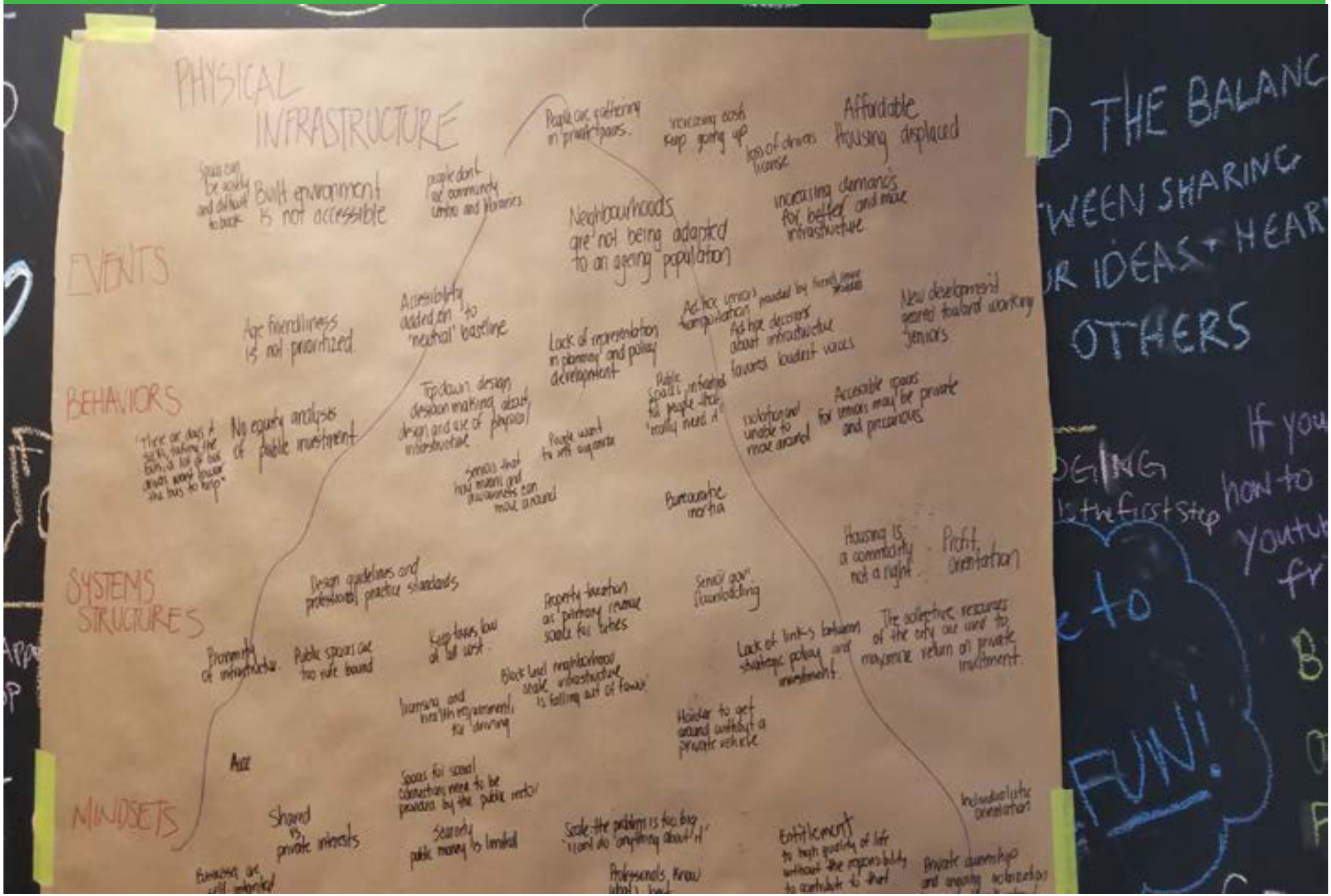

Communities have a narrative that perpetuates lifegoals and milestones / communities respect and honor status and role of Elders
Work as defining institutional structures, schedules and networks
Retirement being the end goal


Dichotomy between contributing versus being a burden
People not happy as they age
There needs to be structures to support mental well-being for seniors
Few places to facilitate variety of ways for seniors to contribute to society

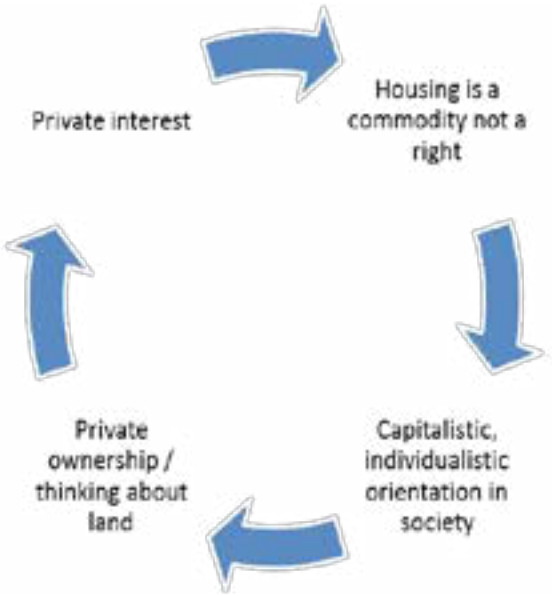
Mental health and practicing gratitude
Attitudes to be too old to change, doing things the same way
If they have a purpose that has made a difference, gives them a purpose
Journey of self-discovery is possible, helping out contributing to society

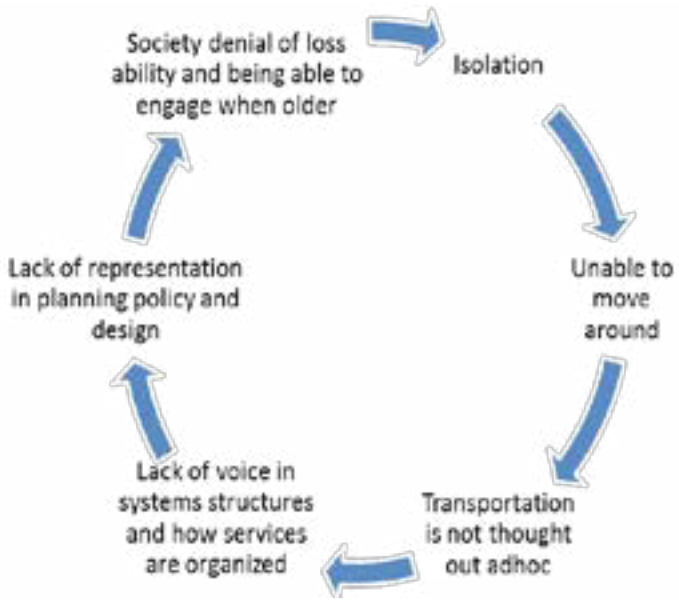

Only think post work is health and death
Attitudes towards death "we are living too long"
Conception of ageing after retirement
Physical decline

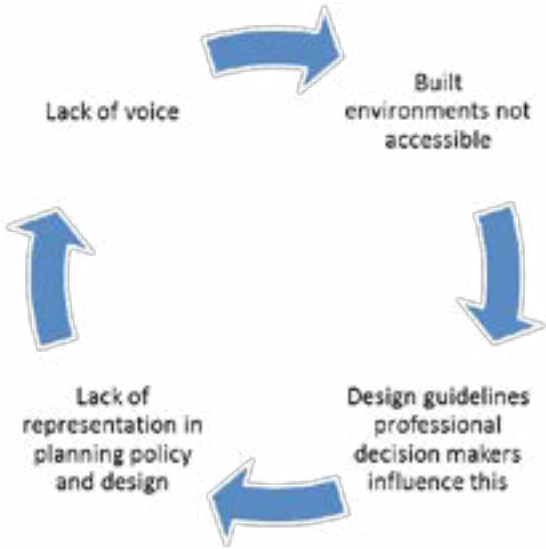
Physical Infrastructure:



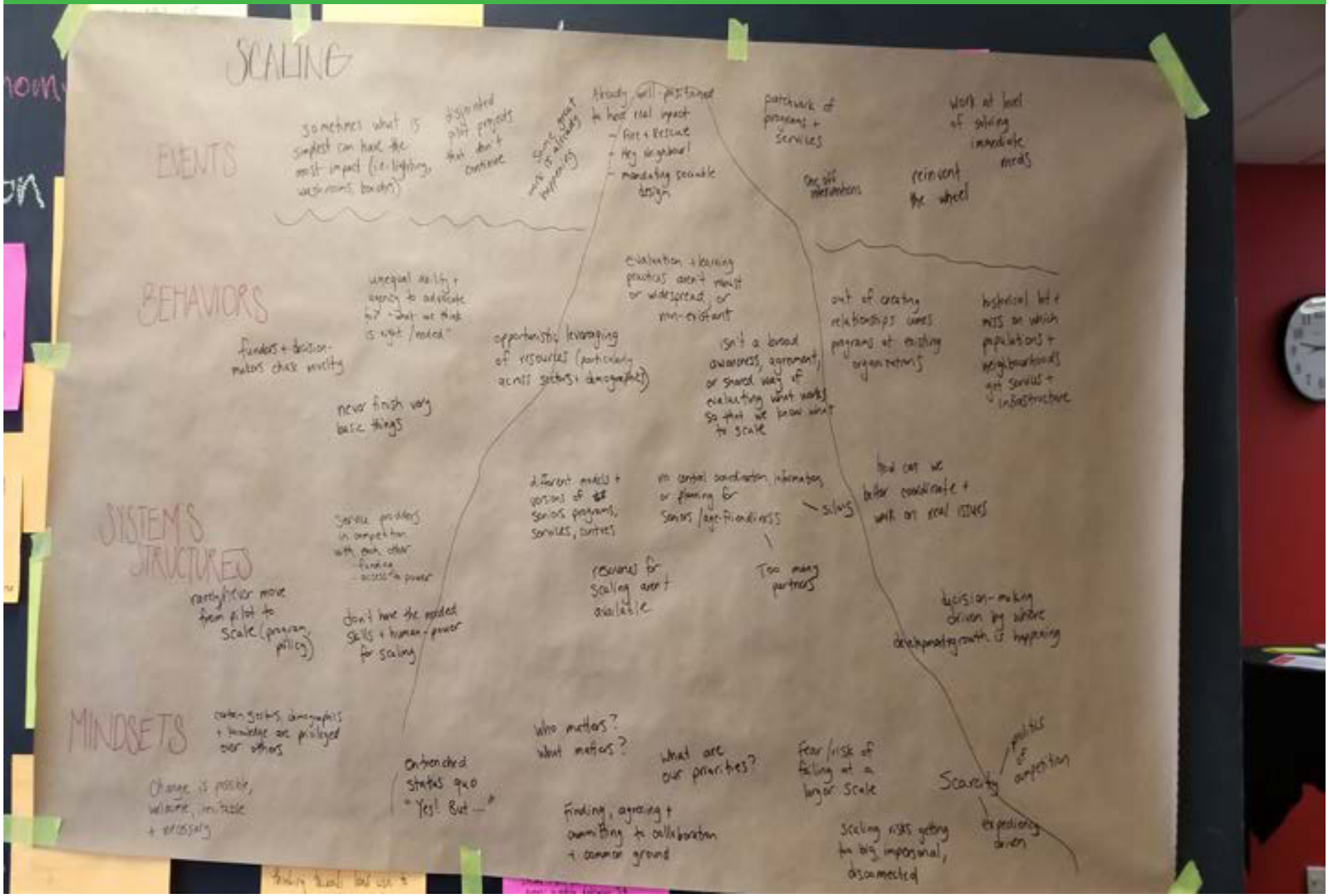
Physical Infrastructure:



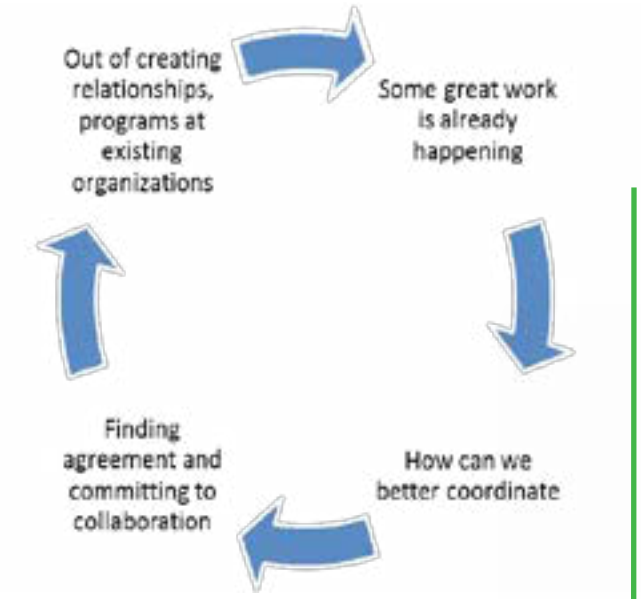




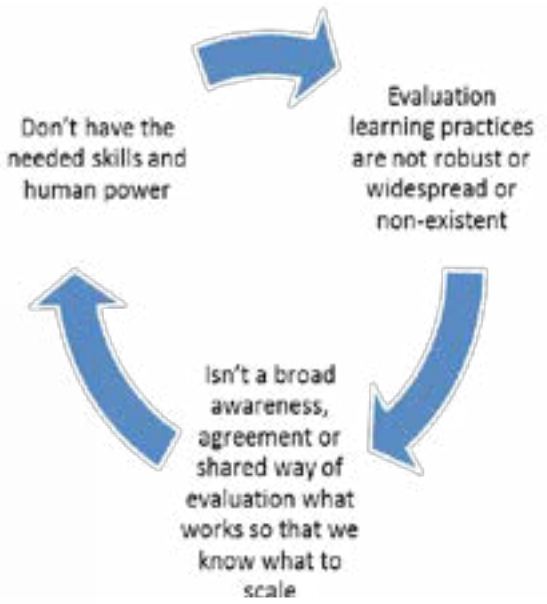
Scaling:

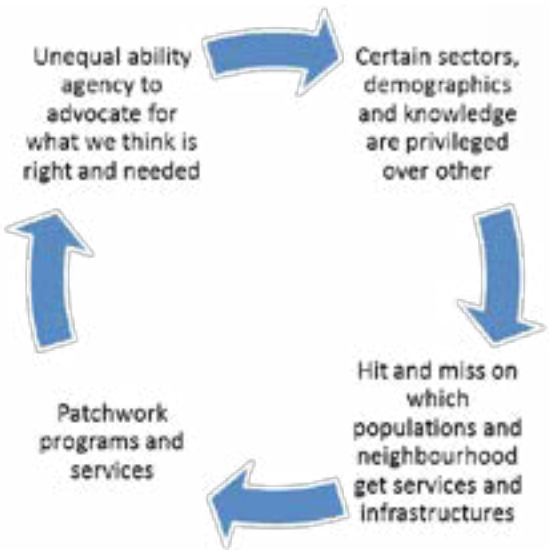

SCALING
EVENTS
BEHAVIORS
SYSTEMS STRUCTURES
MINDSETS
sometimes what is simplest can have the most impact (i.e. lighting, washrooms, boaches)
disjointed pilot projects that don't continue
Already well-positioned to have real impact
- Fire + Rescue
- Hey neighbour!
- mandating sociable design
patchwork of programs + services
work at level of solving immediate needs
reinvent the wheel
unequal ability + agency to advocate for "what we think is right / needed"
funders + decision-makers chase novelty
never finish very basic things
opportunistic leveraging of resources (particularly across sectors + demographics)
evaluation + learning practices aren't robust or widespread, or non-existant
isn't a broad awareness, agreement, or shared way of evaluating what works so that we know what to scale
out of creating relationships comes programs at existing organizations
historical lot + miss on which populations + neighbourhoods get services + infrastructure
different models + versions of seniors programs, services, centres
no central coordination, information, or planning for seniors / age-friendliness
silos
how can we better coordinate + work on real issues
service providers in competition with each other
funding
access to power
rarely/never move from pilot to scale (program, policy)
don't have the needed skills + human-power for scaling
resources for scaling aren't available
Too many partners
decision-making driven by where development growth is happening
certain sectors, demographics + knowledge are privileged over others
Change is possible, welcome, inevitable + necessary
Entrenched status quo "Yes! But..."
Who matters? What matters?
What are our priorities?
Finding, agreeing + committing to collaboration + common ground
Fear / risk of failing at a larger scale
Scaling risks getting too big, impersonal, disconnected
Scarcity
politics of competition
expediency driven

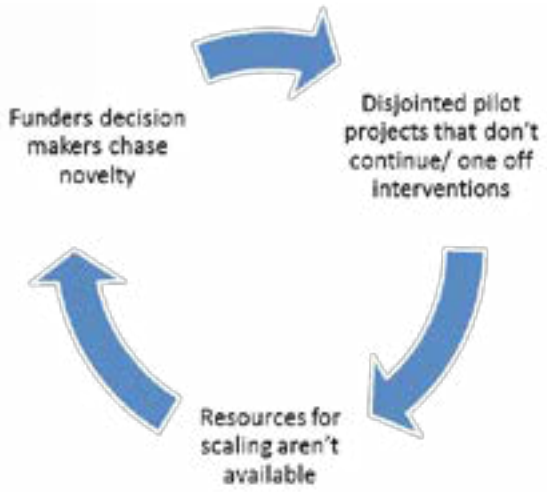
Scaling:


Out of creating relationships, programs at existing organizations
Some great work is already happening
How can we better coordinate
Finding agreement and committing to collaboration

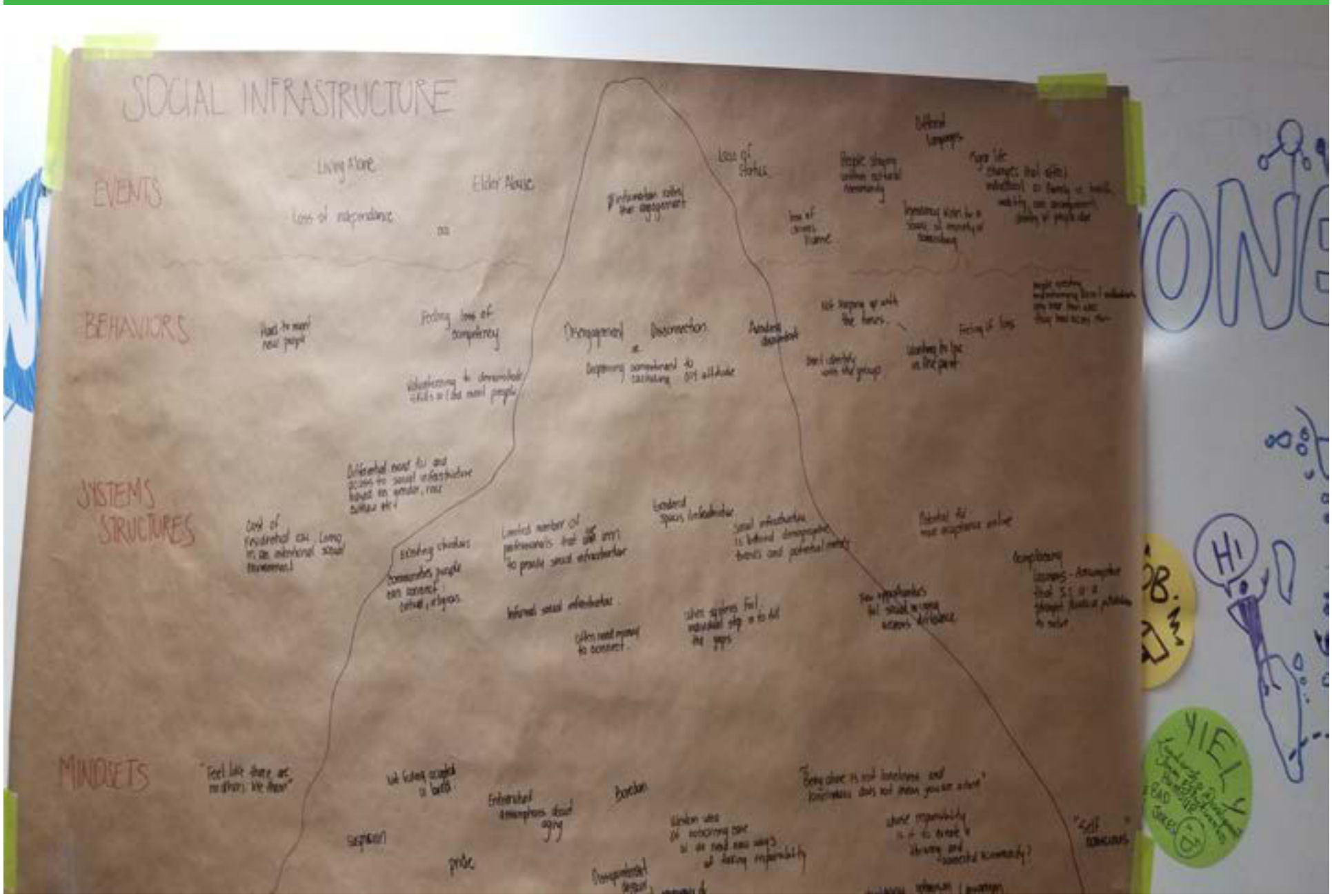
Planning piece missing, no central coordination information or planning for services
We know what works sometimes what is the simplest can have the most impact
We are funding it/ scarcity, politics of competition, expediency driven
Means something else is a higher priority " what are our priorities"


Don't have the needed skills and human power
Evaluation learning practices are not robust or widespread or non-existent
Isn't a broad awareness, agreement or shared way of evaluation what works so that we know what to scale

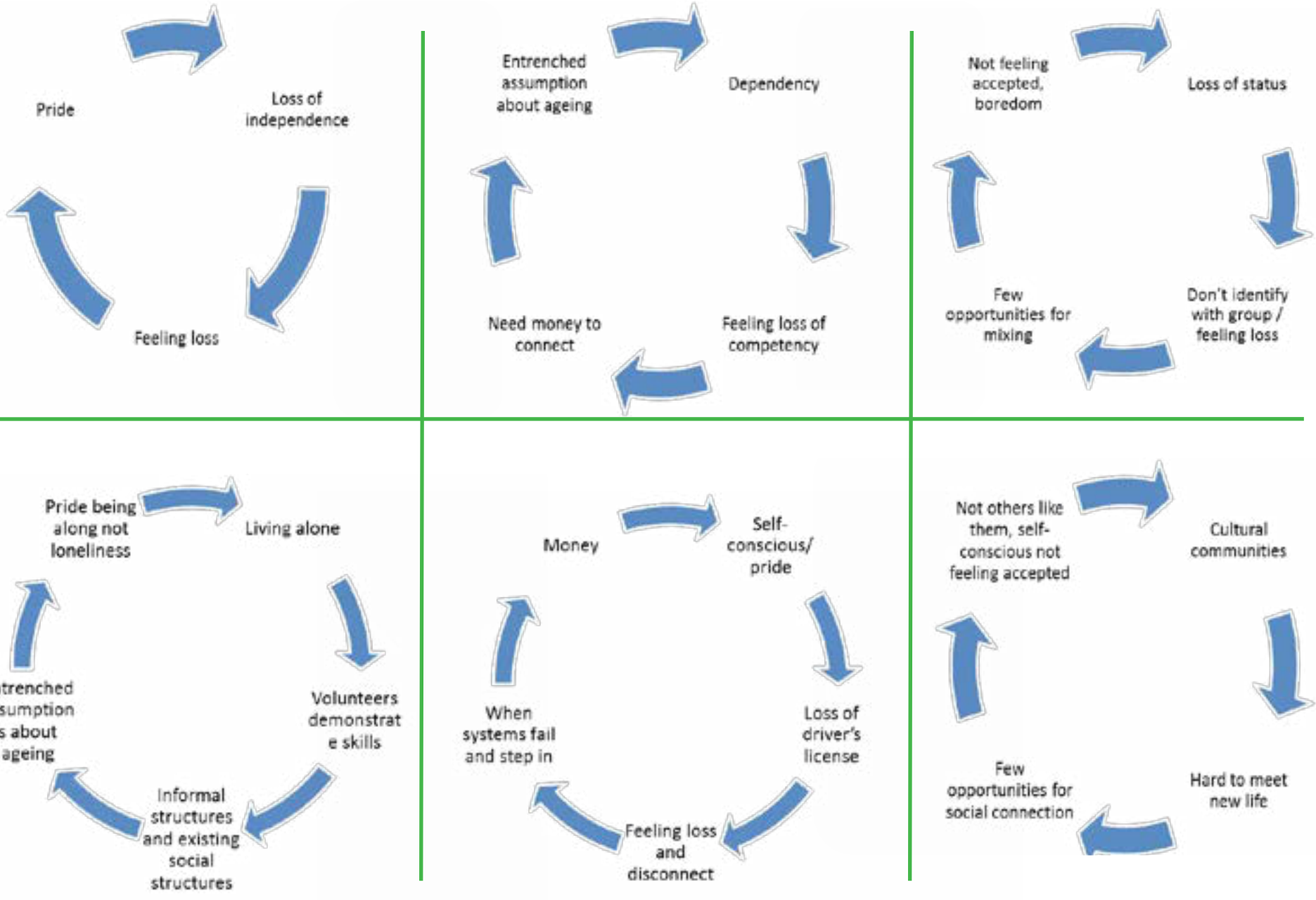

Unequal ability agency to advocate for what we think is right and needed
Certain sectors, demographics and knowledge are privileged over other
Hit and miss on which populations and neighbourhood get services and infrastructures
Patchwork programs and services


Funders decision makers chase novelty
Disjointed pilot projects that don't continue/ one off interventions
Resources for scaling aren't available

Social Infrastruture (people / relationships):



Social Infrastruture (people / relationships):



FRACTALS + CREATIVE QUESTIONS

Fractals are repeating patterns within systems, nested within one another. Think of a fern frond, or a snowflake . Fractals can help us to find smaller “wholes within a whole” so that we can find places within complex systems to take action, and not be overwhelmed by trying to imagine how to change it at a larger scale/fractal. In order to identify places in the system to intervene, participants were asked to choose a feedback loop that is powerful and compelling to them, and a place where they can imagine taking experimental action in their own lives and work.

They then generated a powerful creative question to capture the energy and essence of each fractal. The Lab design team then reworked and refined these to make sure that they each had the main ingredients needed to launch into the co-creating workshops that will come next. Each of these creative questions is going to become the seed for a prototyping team, and also an invitation for other people to join our work at the next stage.

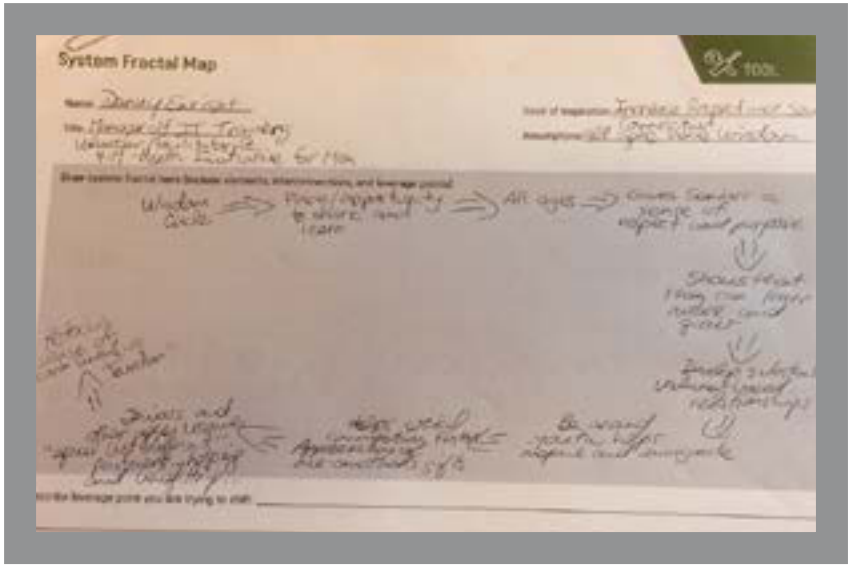
GENERATING CREATIVE QUESTIONS

All Ages Have Wisdom

Creative question: How might we encourage people from different age groups in the LGBTQ communities to share mutually enriching wisdom so that they can increase their perception of contributing and create real connections based on significant emotional and intellectual exchange?

North Star: Reframe seniors as resilient and strong contributors to community.

Lead: Danny Enright

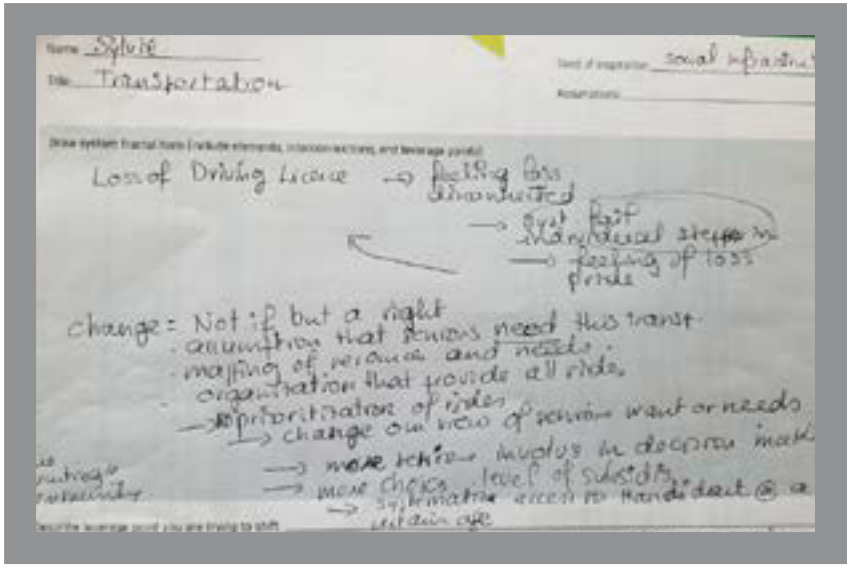


Transportation as a Right

Creative question: How might we make transportation access/ choices a priority for all organizations that provide transportation services to seniors so that they can enable seniors to have control and agency over their lives?

North Star: Access to transportation is a right for all seniors so that they can live free and connected lives on their own terms.

Lead: Sylvie Kruchten

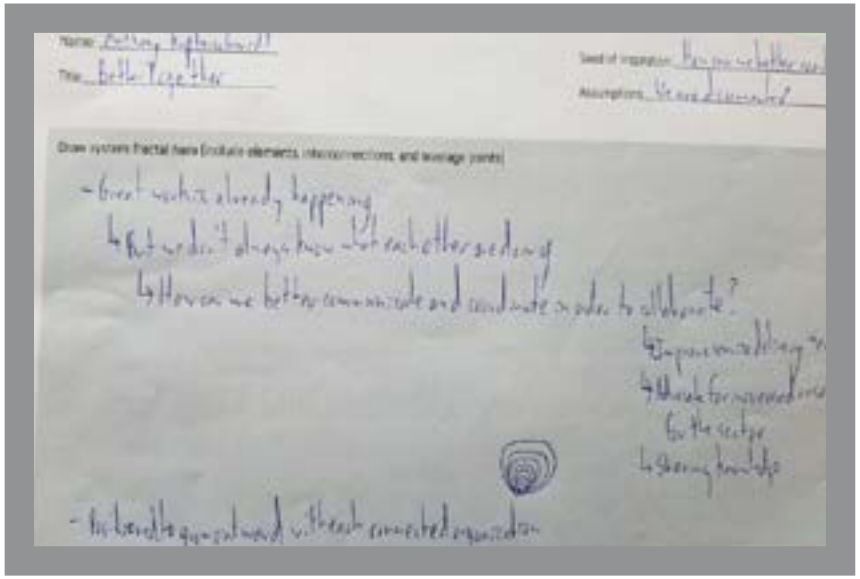


Better Together

Creative question: How might we improve connections, communication, coordination and collaboration for community-based seniors services providers so that they can share knowledge, improve service delivery, and advocate for increased resources for the sector?

North Star: A collaborative and effective network of seniors serving organizations the provides consistent, comprehensive network of spaces, programs and services for seniors in Vancouver.

Lead: Anthony Kupferschmidt

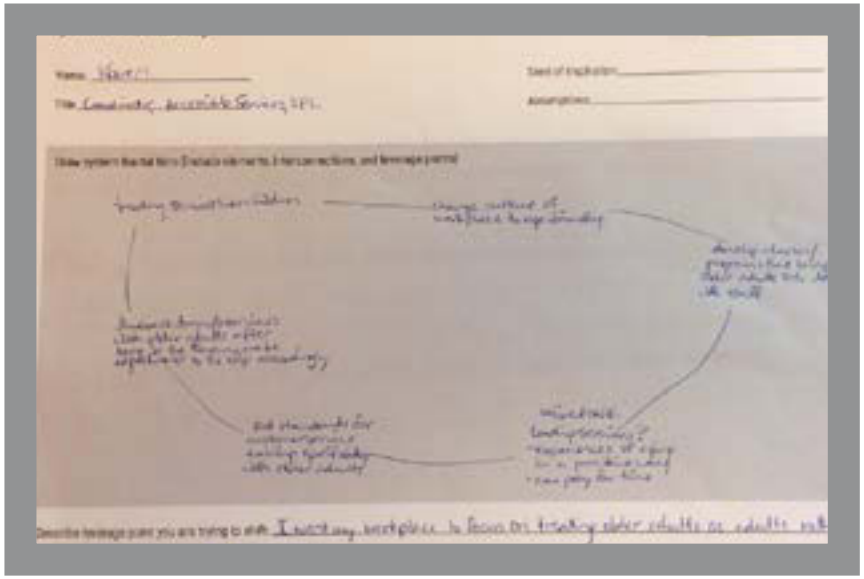


Treating Older Folks with Respect and Agency

Creative question: How might we shift mindsets of VPL front line staff about older adults, particularly those with mobility/access challenges, so that they can be consistently treated with respect and dignity?

North Star: All people receive respectful service by all CoV staff.

Lead: Karen Liebel

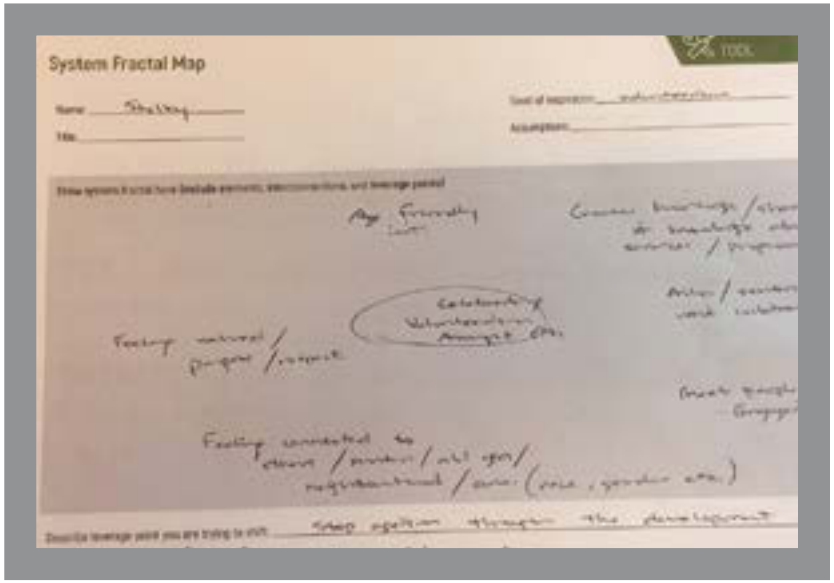


Volunteer Infrastructure that Stops Ageism

Creative question: How might we develop and promote volunteer infrastructure so that seniors workers and agencies can more fully integrate older adult volunteers as integral team members?

North Star: The contributions of older adult volunteers are acknowledged, valued, and celebrated.

Lead: Shelley Jorde

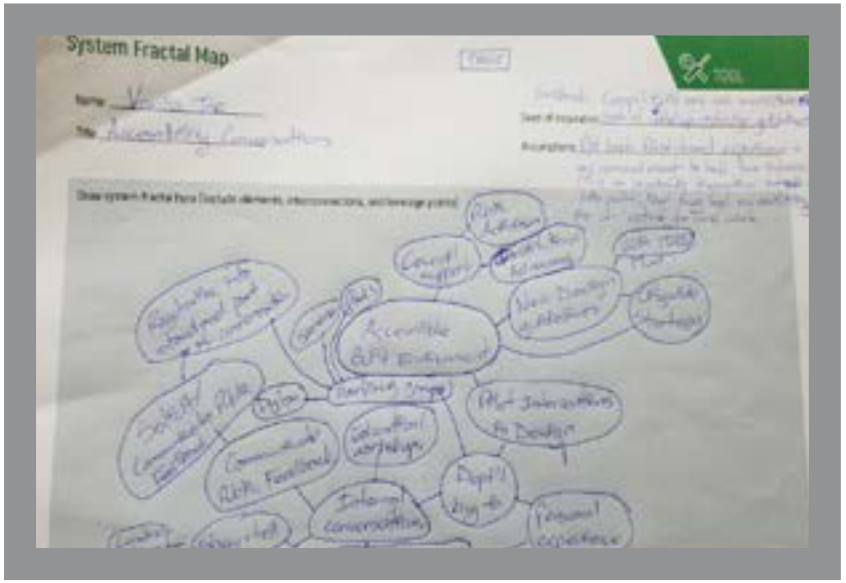


Accessibility Conversations

Creative question: How might we energize ourselves as staff to test, push, implement accessible design in transportation infrastructure on a day-to-day, front of mind basis?

North Star: The City's built environment is accessible to people with a range of abilities.

Lead: Vania Tse

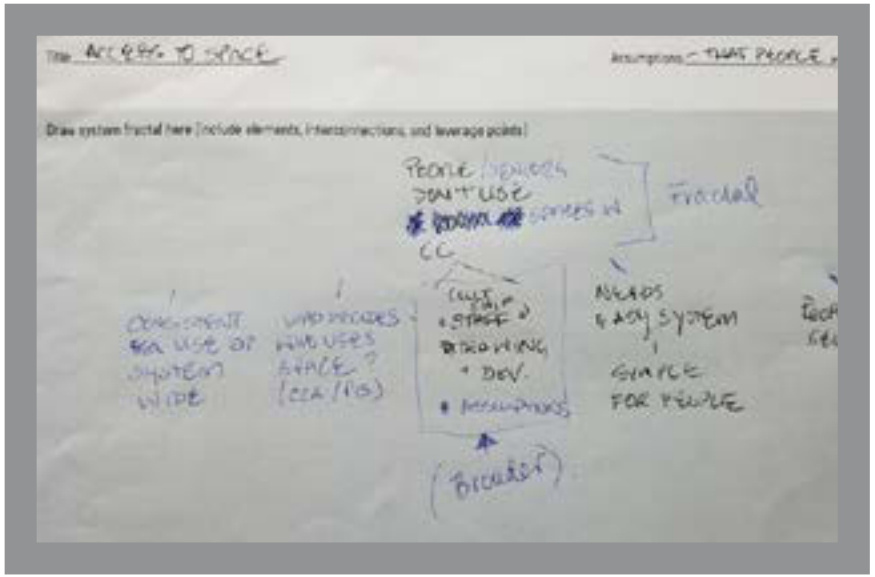


Access to Community Centre Spaces

Creative question: How might we create equitable access to community centre spaces for seniors in instances where the Park Board system has created barriers to access these spaces, so that they can feel like they socially belong and are connected to their community?

North Star: Equitable access to public spaces to help grow social connections.

Lead: Jessica Land + Susan Mele

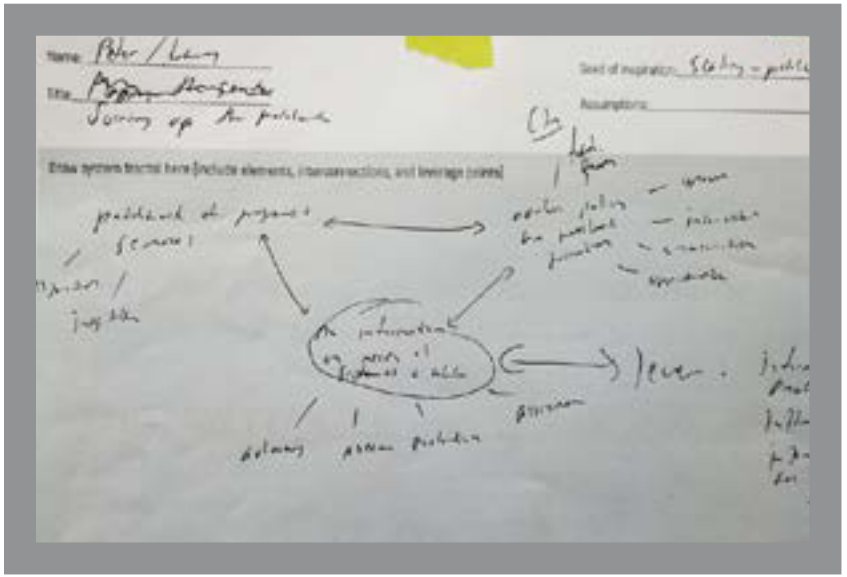


Joing up the Patchwork

Creative question: How might we extend the knowledge base we use to understand aging in Vancouver for City staff to use in prioritizing City investments in senior facilities, programs and organizations so that they can be more equitable, consistent and evidence-based?

North Star: Systemic, consistent and equitable investment in the health of the seniors serving sector.

Lead: Petter Marriott + Lanny Libby



NEXT STEPS + FEEDBACK

Next Steps:

- The design team committed to take the work from this session and tighten it up to make for a clear and strong starting point for the co-creation sessions
- The design team will work with Lab team members to identify and invite additional 2-4 people for each creative question to join our May 29th and June 10th sessions at CityStudio.
- There will be two co-creation sessions when we will brainstorm solutions to our creative questions, and develop a prioritized prototyping concept to test.

Feedback:

Overall the Lab team had a good session, with an average score of 4/5 in Excellence!

What worked well for you today?

- It took a while to warm up to the deeper thinking. Once the mindset shifted it was great
- Very well structured, focused, good questions and activities that led to insights and connections between ideas
- Great group

What would you change for next time?

- Needed a bit more time with fractal work - question-building, building connections, and making feedback loops

Any subtle shift, big insight, or aha that you'd like to share?

- The fractal I chose is actually part of something much larger which I hadn't realized
- The complexity of the issues

Vancouver has nearly 100 thousand seniors, and nearly 80 thousand more approaching retirement age

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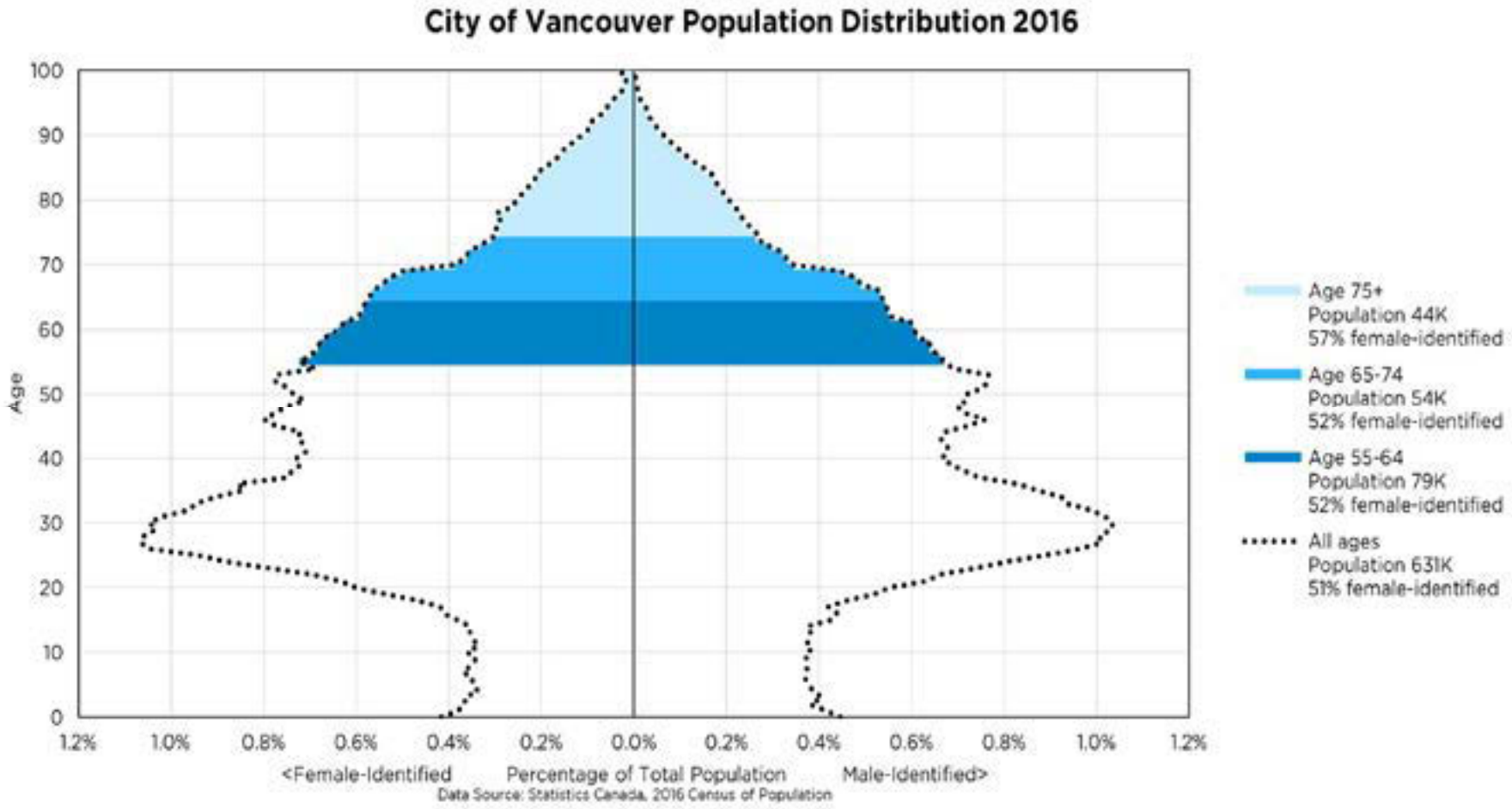

The number of seniors in Vancouver is growing rapidly, and will continue to increase over time

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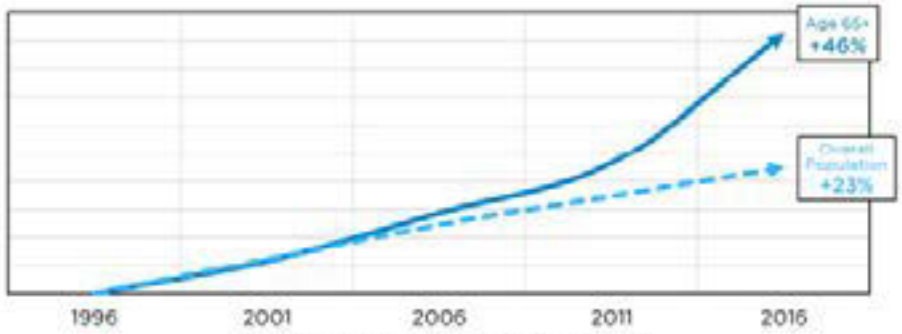
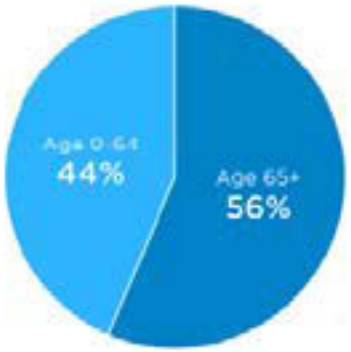
Population Growth Rate 1996-2016

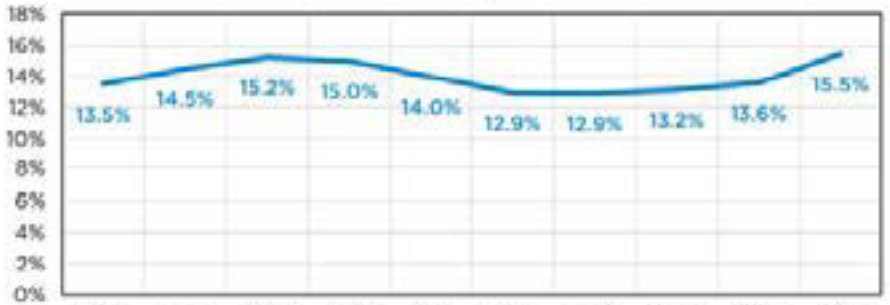


Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population

28 Thousand Net New Residents 2011-2016

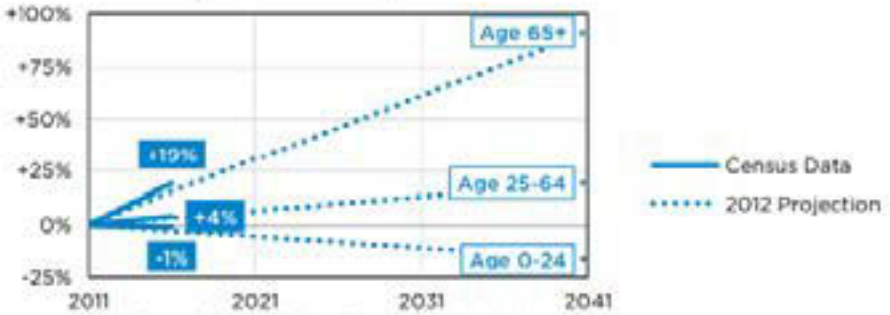


Percentage of City Population Age 65+

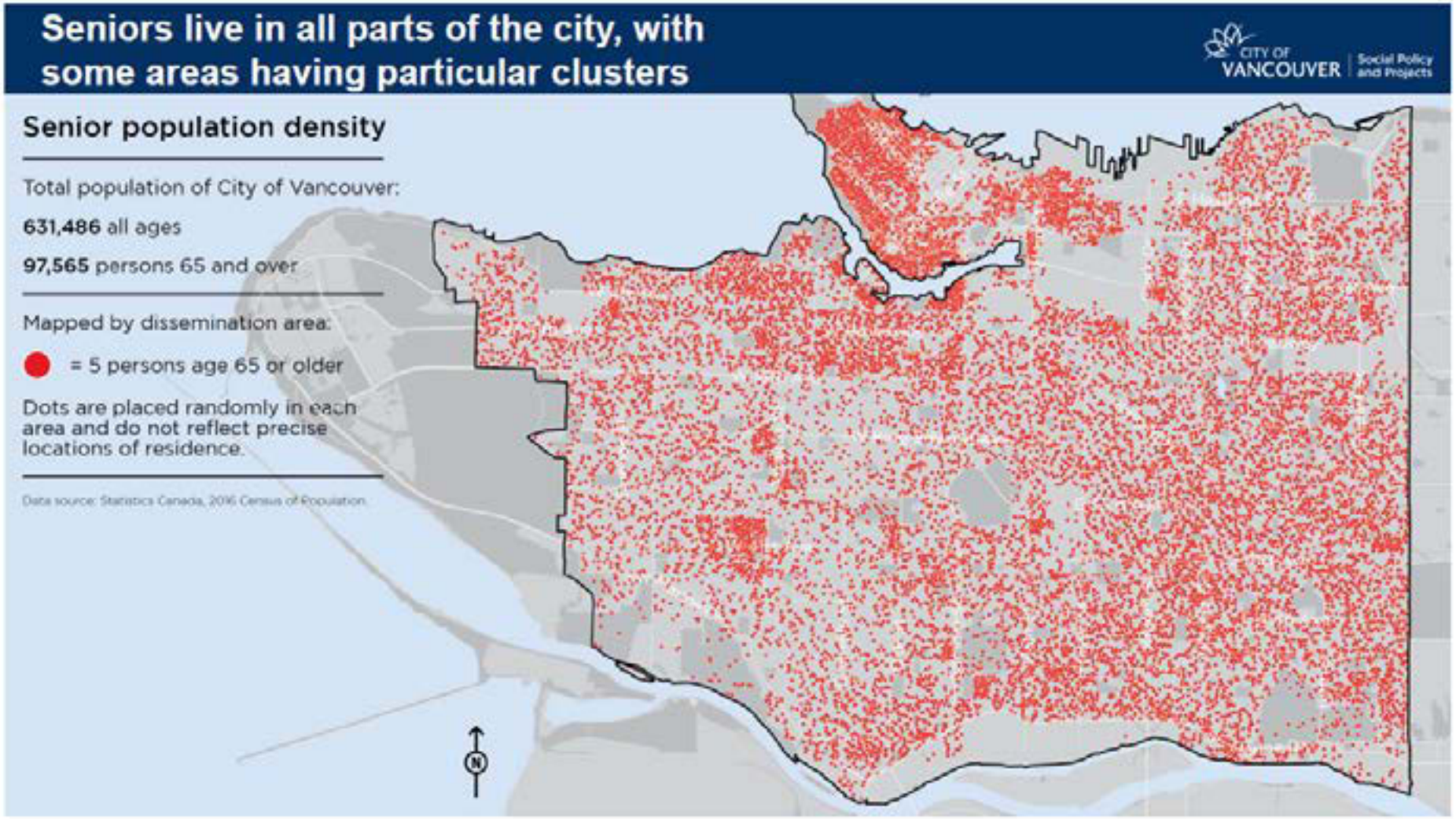


Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population

Population Projection: One Scenario



Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population; Urban Futures, May 2012 Population and Housing Projections for City of Vancouver


Seniors live in all parts of the city, with some areas having particular clusters
CITY OF VANCOUVER
Social Policy and Projects
Senior population density
Total population of City of Vancouver:
631,486 all ages
97,565 persons 65 and over
Mapped by dissemination area:
= 5 persons age 65 or older
Dots are placed randomly in each area and do not reflect precise locations of residence.
Data source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population
N

Most Vancouver neighbourhoods now have more seniors (65 and over) than children (under 15)

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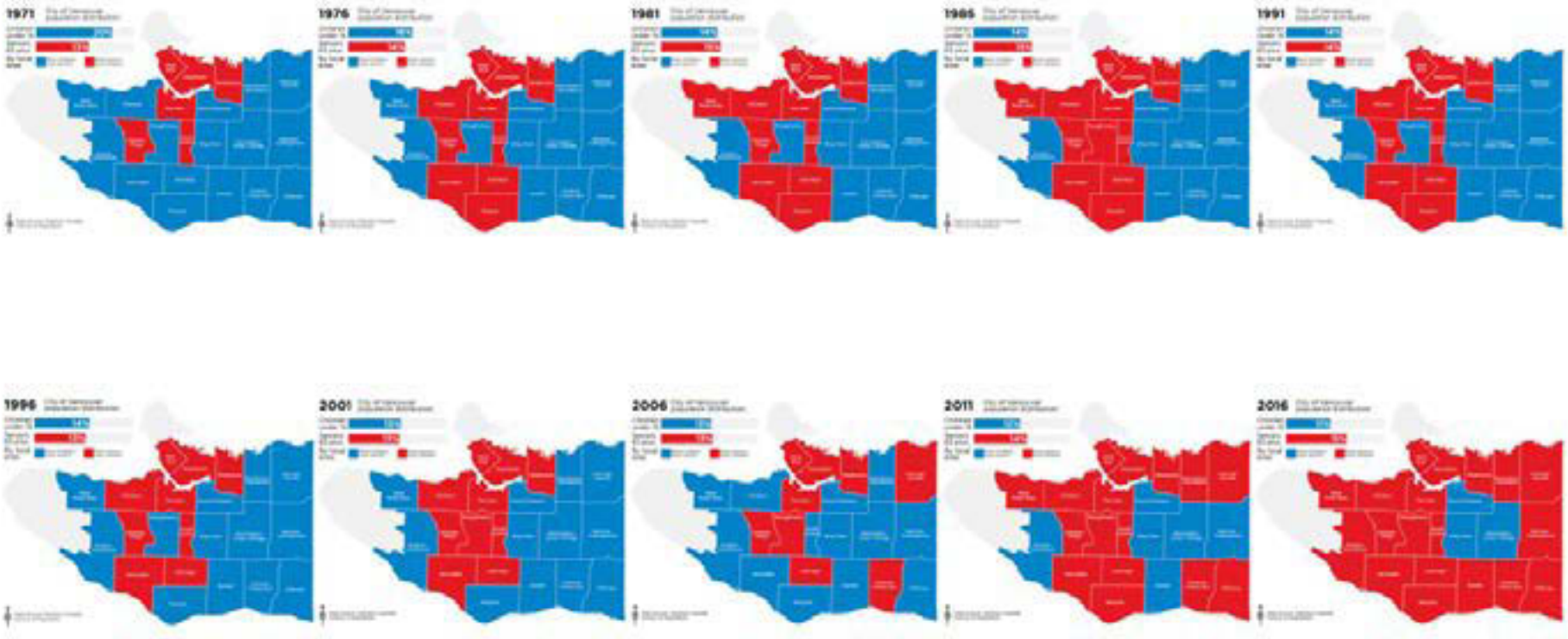

Vancouver seniors have diverse racial, cultural and linguistic identities

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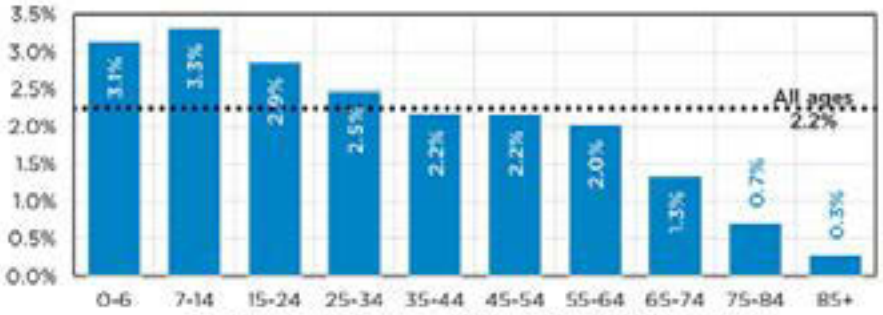
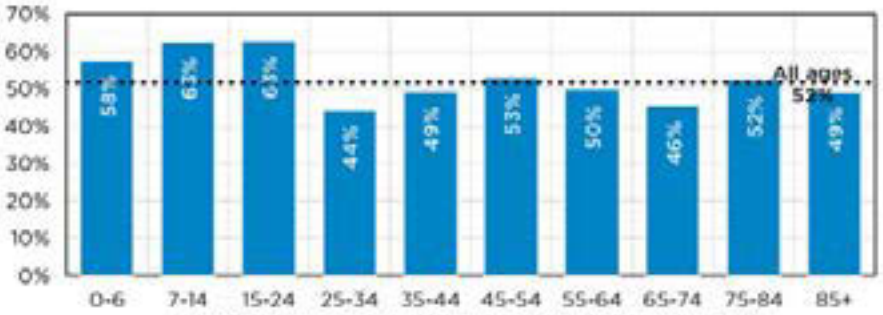
Population with Indigenous Identity, 2016



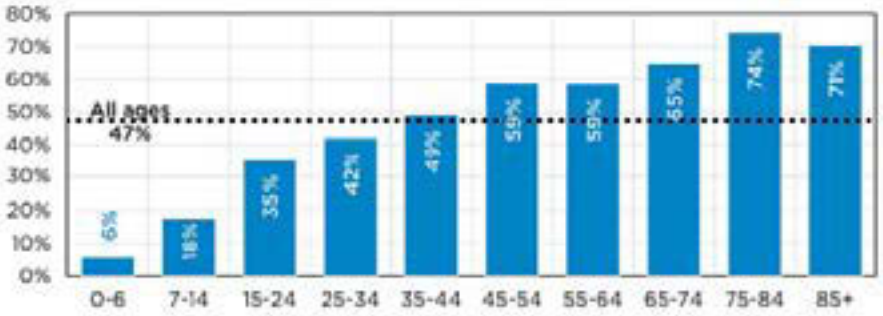
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population custom tabulation accessed through Community Data Program, Canadian Council on Social Development

Population in a Visible Minority Group, 2016



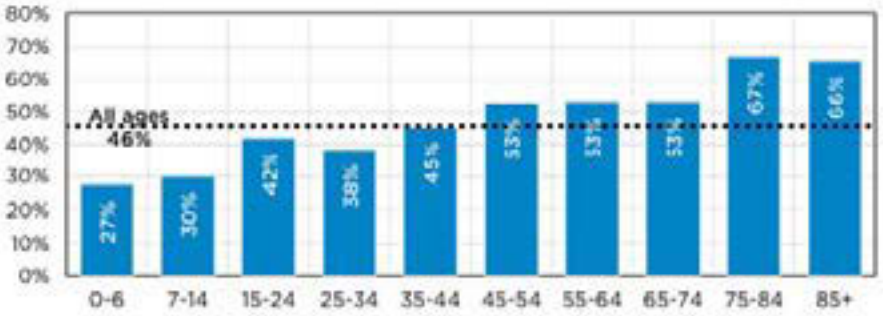
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population custom tabulation accessed through Community Data Program, Canadian Council on Social Development

Population Born Outside of Canada, 2016



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population custom tabulation accessed through Community Data Program, Canadian Council on Social Development

Pop. with Non-English First Language, 2016



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population custom tabulation accessed through Community Data Program, Canadian Council on Social Development

Older women are more likely to live alone, and to experience income and housing challenges

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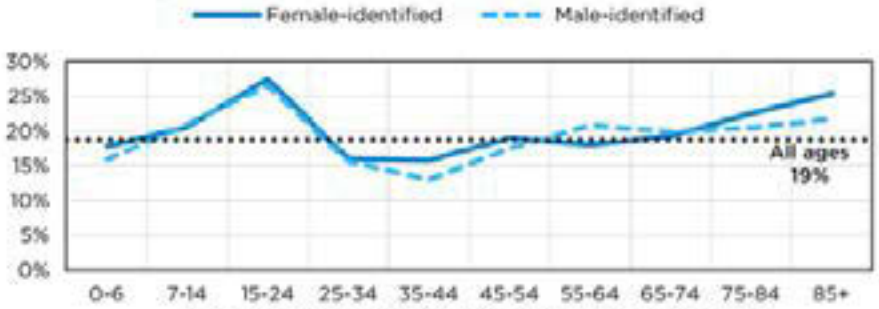
Low-Income Population (LIM-AT), 2016

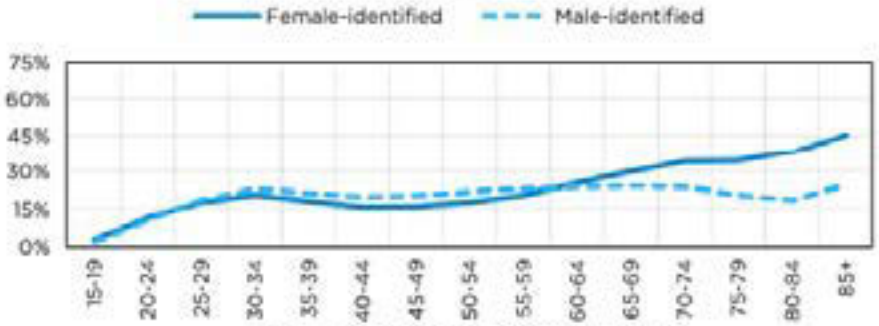


Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population custom tabulation accessed through Community Data Program, Canadian Council on Social Development

HHs Spending 30%+ Income on Shelter, 2016

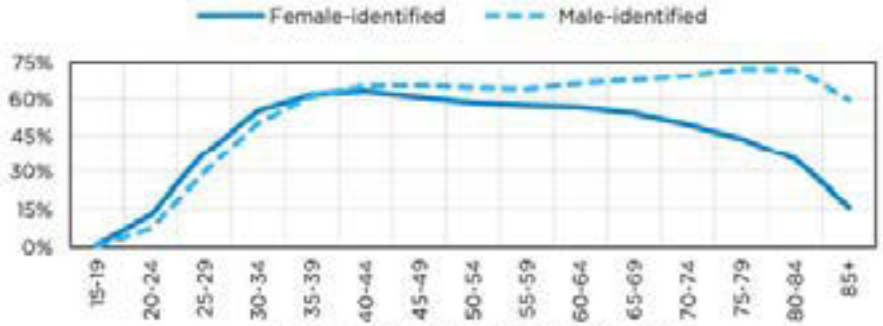
Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

Population Living Alone, 2016



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

Population Living with Partner, 2016



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

Seniors have strong community belonging and access services, but are less likely to have support networks and good health

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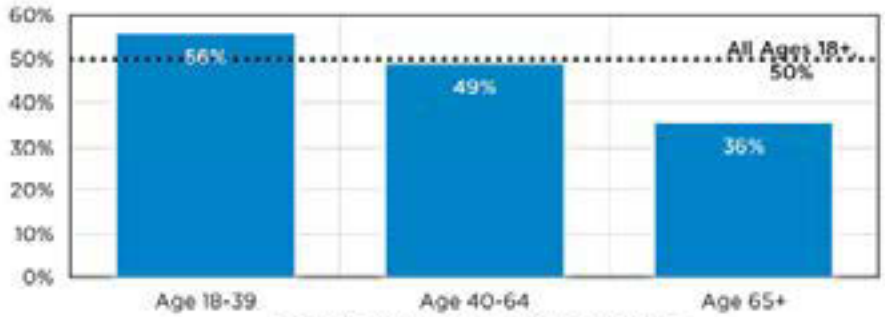
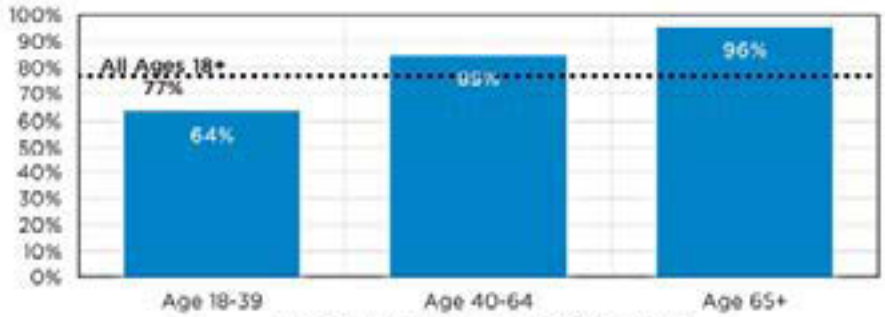
Report Good or Excellent Health, 2013-2014



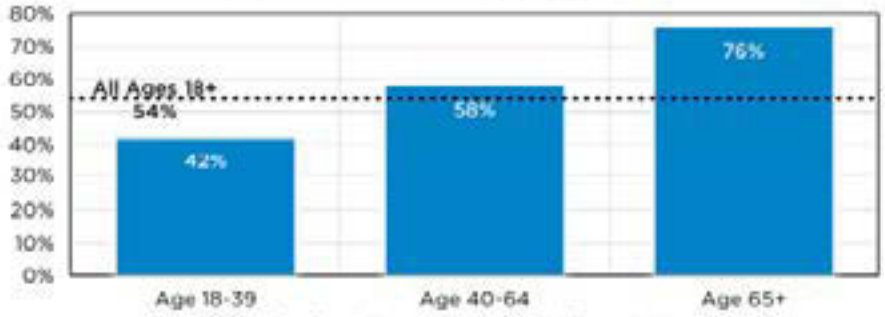
Data Source: Vancouver Coastal Health/Fraser Health, My Health My Community Survey 2013/2014

Have Family Doctor, 2013-2014



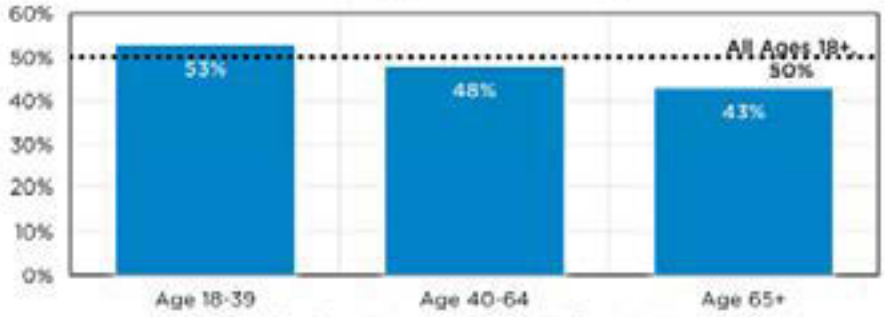
Data Source: Vancouver Coastal Health/Fraser Health, My Health My Community Survey 2013/2014

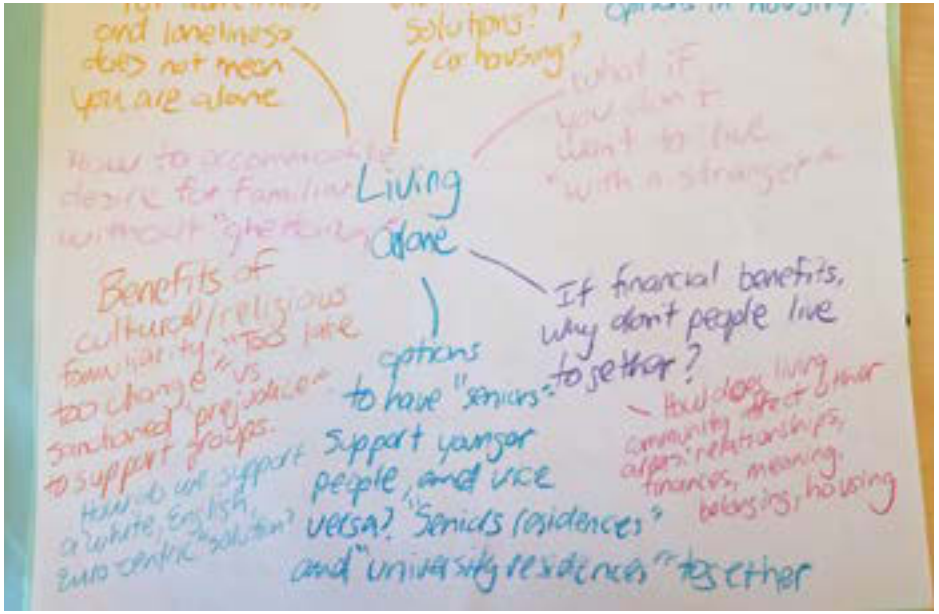
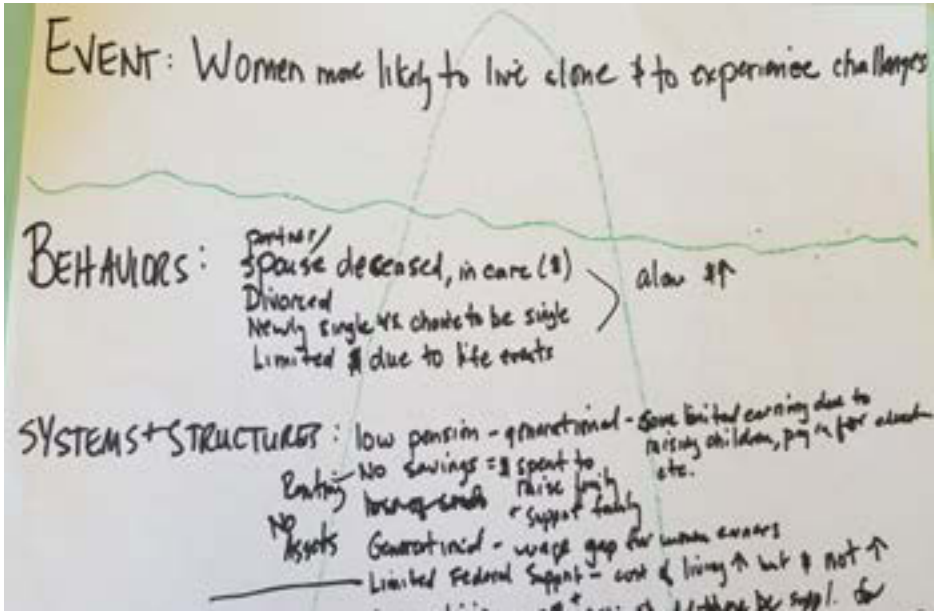
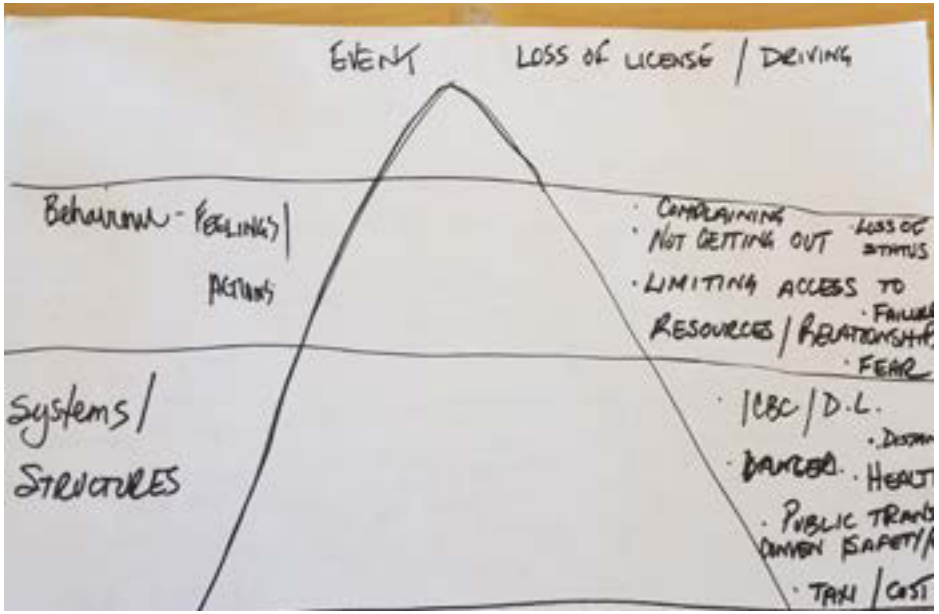
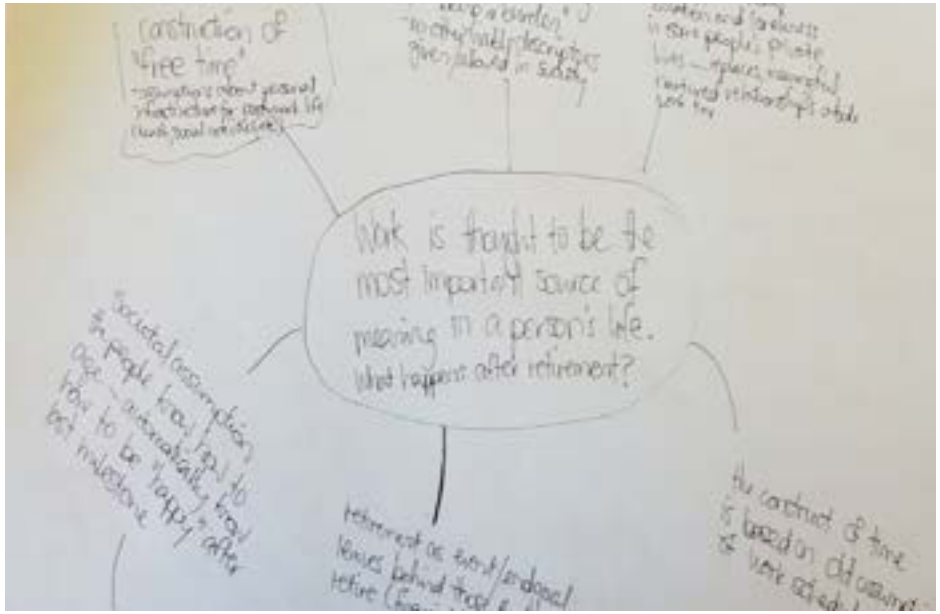
Strong Sense of Belonging, 2013-2014



Data Source: Vancouver Coastal Health/Fraser Health, My Health My Community Survey 2013/2014

Four or More in Support Network, 2013-2014



Data Source: Vancouver Coastal Health/Fraser Health, My Health My Community Survey 2013/2014

APPENDIX 2: SYSTEMS SKETCHING MAPS