Social Indicators and Trends 2014

HEALTHY CITY FOR ALL

Goal: Cultivating Connections

Vancouverites are connected and engaged in the places and spaces that matter to us.

Healthy City for All Targets

- ❑ By 2025: all Vancouverites report they have at least four people in their network that they can rely on for support in times of need.
- ❑ By 2025: increase municipal voter turnout to at least 60 per cent.

Indicators in this Fact Sheet

- Social Connections and Community Engagement
- Volunteering
- Civic Engagement and Participation

Key Findings

- For many Vancouverites, community connections are tenuous and shallow; Vancouver can be a **lonely** and **isolating** city.
- **Approximately half** of Vancouver residents volunteer in their communities.
- **Only 43 per cent** of registered voters participated in the 2014 local election in Vancouver.

Why it Matters

Relationships are at the heart of a good life. Our social networks are a critical source of a myriad of supports. At different times in our lives we may draw on our social networks to help with food and shelter, to find a job, to enhance our self-confidence, to deal with illness, to heal from loss, to change the conditions in which we live, work and play—or simply to enjoy ourselves and relieve stress.

In addition to our personal relationships and social networks, the opportunity to participate in civic life is a core human need. Being engaged in the decisions that impact our lives and shape our surroundings can lead to better decisions as well as an enhanced sense of personal agency and control over our own lives. Being engaged is also about giving back to our communities, which benefits those who give as well as those who receive.

Engagement in civic and community matters cannot take place without a certain degree of knowledge about and understanding of important issues. Civic literacy allows us to exercise our rights and obligations as citizens at the local, national and global levels, and provides us with an understanding of the local and global implications of civic decisions.

Social connections are good for us as individuals, and they are good for our communities as well. Communities with higher levels of neighbourliness and more connections to civic institutions are more resilient—that is, they are better at withstanding, adapting to, and recovering from change, stresses, or disturbances.

A sense of belonging, connectedness and engagement in the places and spaces that matter to us is critical for our physical and mental well-being. People who feel included in their communities, connected to their social networks, and engaged in civic and community life report better health, have better health outcomes, and are more likely to care about and contribute to a healthy city for all.

About This Fact Sheet

This series reports on social indicators and trends related to the 12 long-term goals of the City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy. More information on the Strategy is available online at **vancouver.ca/healthycity4all**. **Cultivating Connections** explores indicators of connections and engagement. Social, community and civic engagement are vital parts of a healthy city for all.

Social research is always imprecise and uncertain. Collaboration, replication and information sharing are crucial to building a more complete and rigorous picture of health and well-being in Vancouver. Readers are encouraged to provide feedback, ask questions and to engage in exploring and interpreting the information presented here.

Areas of Study

Information in this fact sheet is presented for a number of different geographies. Some statistics are provided for Metro Vancouver and its different municipalities, shown below right. Within the City of Vancouver, this fact sheet provides some information organized by the local planning areas (neighbourhoods) shown below:

Voter turnout statistics are calculated using polling divisions, which vary for different levels of government and for different elections.

Engaging with Data Sources

Sources used are noted in each section of this fact sheet. Key online resources include:

- The Vancouver Foundation's *Connections and Engagement – a Survey of Metro Vancouver*, conducted in June 2012, provides a wealth of information on Metro Vancouverites' engagement in their neighbourhoods and communities. Extensive reporting and discussion can be found online at **vancouverfoundation.ca/initiatives/connections-and-engagement**.
- A number of Statistics Canada publications analyzing national survey data related to connections and engagement can be found at **www.statcan.gc.ca**.
- Recent City of Vancouver election results are available through the City's open data catalogue at **data.vancouver.ca**.
- Elections BC (**elections.bc.ca**) and Elections Canada (**elections.ca**) are the non-partisan offices that conduct, count and report on provincial and federal elections. Both agencies have a wealth of primary data, as well as analyses, publications and surveys relating to voting and civic participation.

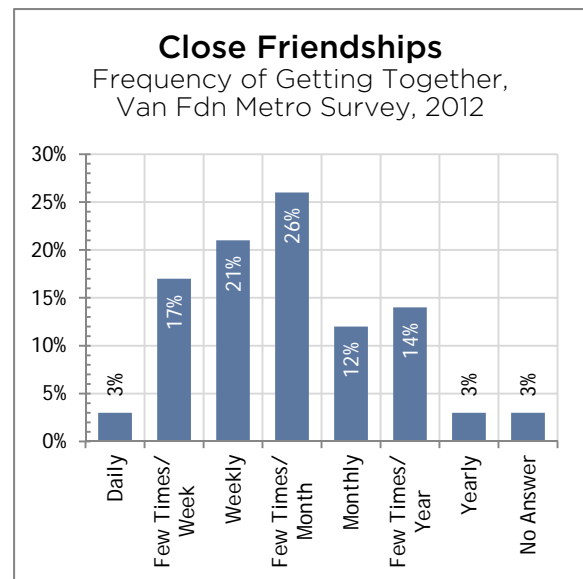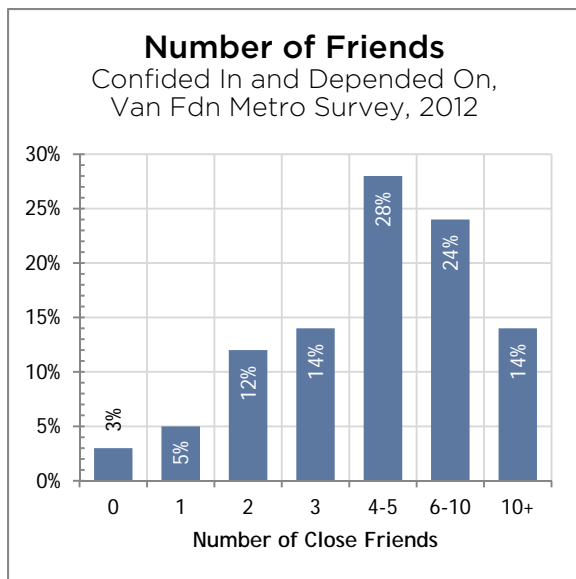## Indicator: Social Connections and Community Engagement

Building and cultivating social connections benefit both individuals and society as whole. People with extensive and strong support networks tend to have better health, longer lives and more economic success. On a societal level, social connections strengthen democratic participation and build stronger communities.

In practice, though, measuring social connections is extremely challenging. This section offers a selection of placeholder indicators using what data are available, primarily surveys conducted locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. The tentative conclusion that emerges is that **Vancouver can cultivate connections by recognizing the different barriers people face to connect and engage with their community**. Diversity and difference are essential parts of our city's identity, yet they also can make it harder to build connections. Social engagement is intimately related to other aspects of a healthy city for all. Addressing root causes of different forms of discrimination is a key step.

Support Networks, Friendships and Diversity

The 2011 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report "How's Life?" reported that Canada exceeded the OECD average in perceived levels of social support and trust in others. However, there were significant differences in the scope and strength of social support networks between different demographic and socio-economic groups. Generally speaking, lower-income groups, older persons and less-educated persons reported weaker social support networks and were at higher risk of social isolation. People who watched more TV, worked longer hours or commuted longer distances tended to spend less time building and maintaining social connections. Urban planning and land use choices, then, can have substantial impacts on connections and engagement.

Locally, the recent *Connections and Engagement* survey conducted by the Vancouver Foundation found the following about Metro Vancouver adult respondents' social support network and frequency of social contact:

Number of Friends
Confided In and Depended On,
Van Fdn Metro Survey, 2012

0: 3%, 1: 5%, 2: 12%, 3: 14%, 4-5: 28%, 6-10: 24%, 10+: 14%
Number of Close Friends

Close Friendships
Frequency of Getting Together,
Van Fdn Metro Survey, 2012

Daily: 3%, Few Times/Week: 17%, Weekly: 21%, Few Times/Month: 26%, Monthly: 12%, Few Times/Year: 14%, Yearly: 3%, No Answer: 3%
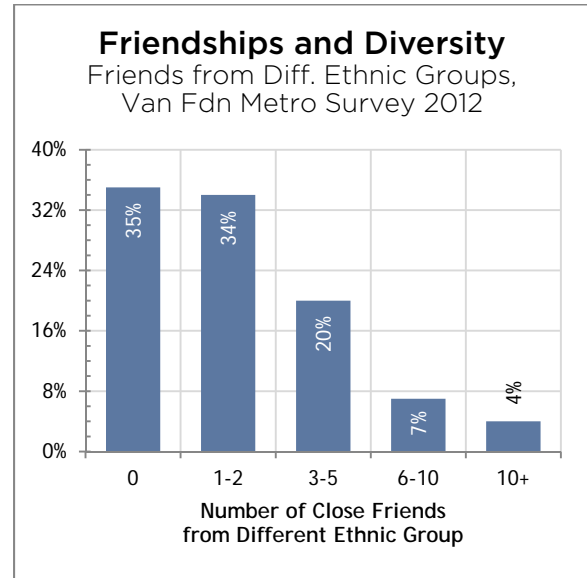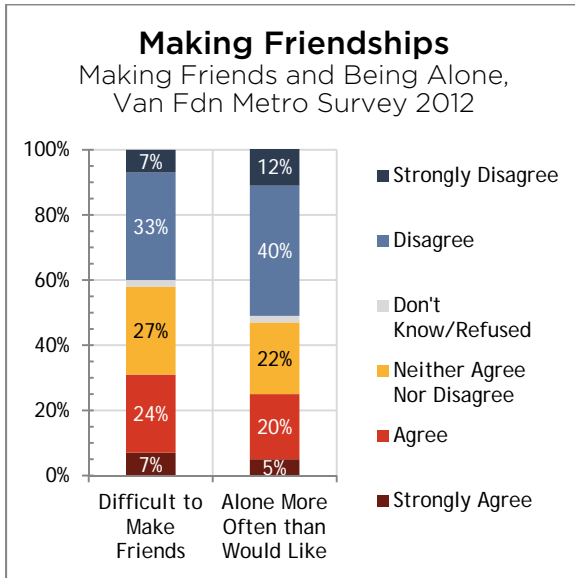
Age, ethnicity, housing type and newcomer status impact these statistics. Not all Vancouverites are equally able to cultivate connections with close friends. Groups reporting the weakest level of social connectivity were people aged 25-34, newcomers and people living in high-rise apartments.

The key issues that the survey identified were that it can be difficult to make friends, neighbourhood connections are weak and that there is a retreat from community life. The survey also found that people embrace diversity in theory more than practice, and that affordability is an underlying concern impacting connections, perceptions and engagement.
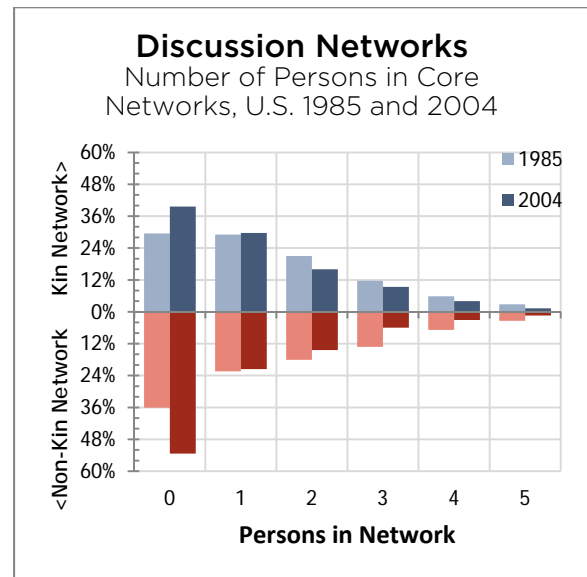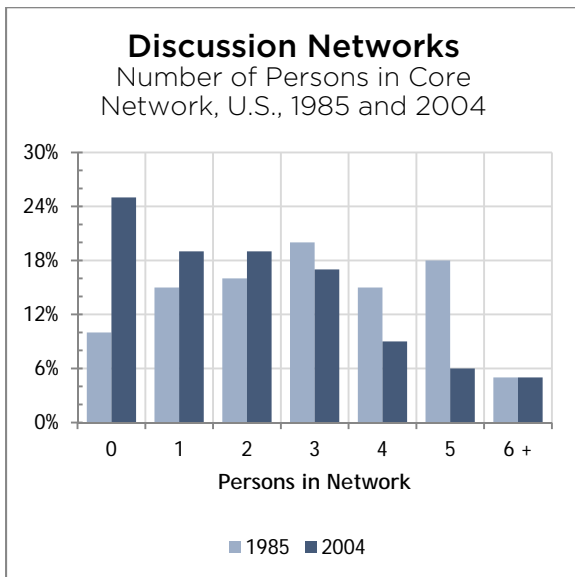
Nearly one-third of survey respondents found it hard to make friends and a quarter of survey respondents stated that they feel alone more often than they want to be. Just over one third of survey respondents did not have friends from different ethnic groups.

Making Friendships
Making Friends and Being Alone,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Friendships and Diversity
Friends from Diff. Ethnic Groups,
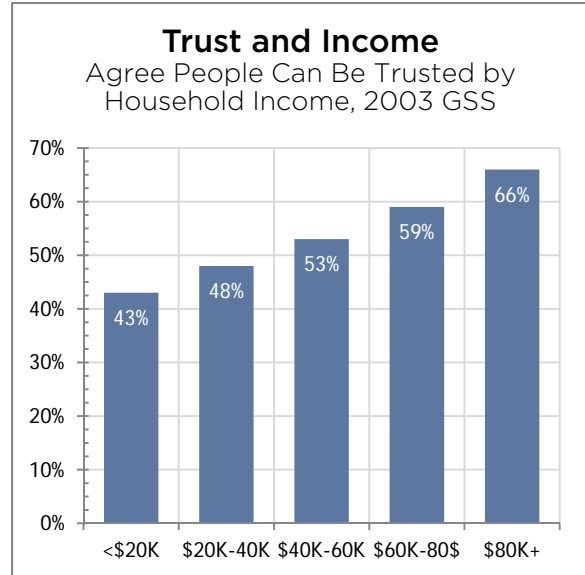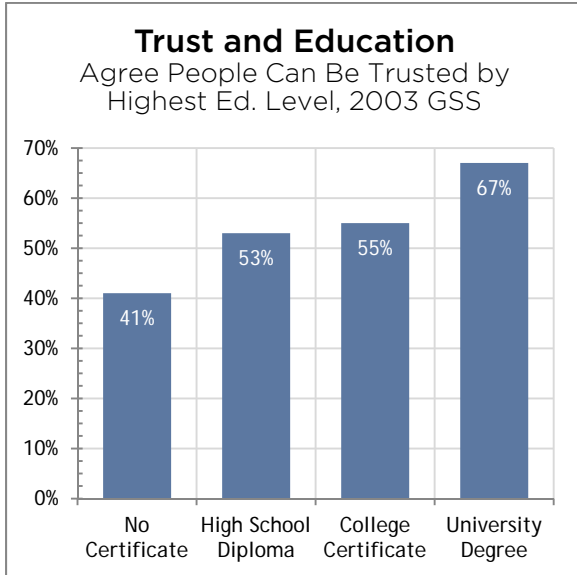Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Discussion Networks

A key indicator of social connections and social isolation is found in the size of people's discussion networks: those that they can discuss important matters with. Little data is available from Canada, so this indicator presents American data as a potential model for future local research.

U.S. General Social Surveys from the 1985 and 2004 suggested that loneliness and social isolation in the U.S. has risen sharply. This research also records a shift away from ties formed in neighbourhood and community contexts toward conversation with close kin. The percentage of respondents who reported nobody to talk to rose from 10 per cent in 1985 to 25 per cent in 2004. People found it harder to discuss matters with people outside their families: in 2004, 53 per cent of respondents reported having no non-kin persons in their discussion network.

Discussion Networks
Number of Persons in Core
Network, U.S., 1985 and 2004

Discussion Networks
Number of Persons in Core
Networks, U.S. 1985 and 2004

Trust

Statistics Canada surveys indicate that age, income and education impact levels of trust in others, as measured by people's perceptions of whether someone would return a purse or wallet if it were lost. In 2003, the likelihood of trust in others tended to increase with the age of respondents, though it dropped off slightly after the age of 65. Trust in others tended to increase with higher household incomes, and with higher levels of education.
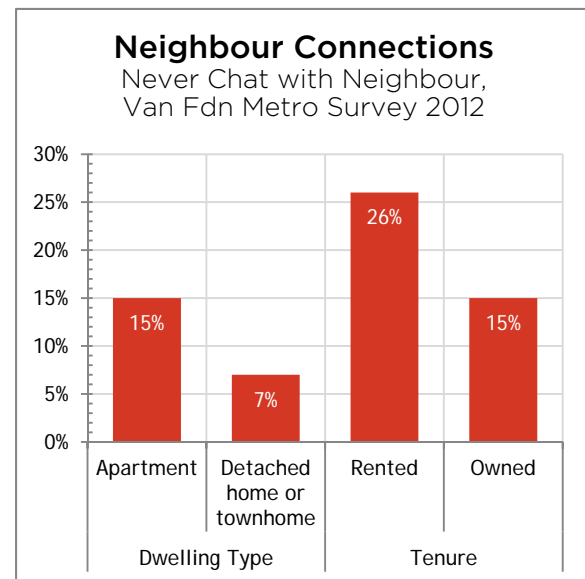
Trust and Education
Agree People Can Be Trusted by Highest Ed. Level, 2003 GSS

No Certificate	41%
High School Diploma	53%
College Certificate	55%
University Degree	67%

Trust and Income
Agree People Can Be Trusted by Household Income, 2003 GSS

<$20K	43%
$20K-40K	48%
$40K-60K	53%
$60K-80$	59%
$80K+	66%

Neighbourhood Connections

Connections with neighbours vary by a number of factors, including housing type and tenure. The Vancouver Foundation survey found that the rate of persons reporting that they never chat with their neighbours was twice as high in apartments as in ground-oriented dwellings, and nearly twice as high in rented dwellings compared to owned dwellings.

57 per cent of overall respondents reported not doing favours for their neighbours, but this increased to 77 per cent for high-rise apartment dwellers.

Correlation is not causation; building community in high-density housing is possible, and differential housing types are also associated with other inequities that make cultivating connections challenging. But these survey results challenge Vancouver to more deliberately consider connections and engagement as it plans land use and development.
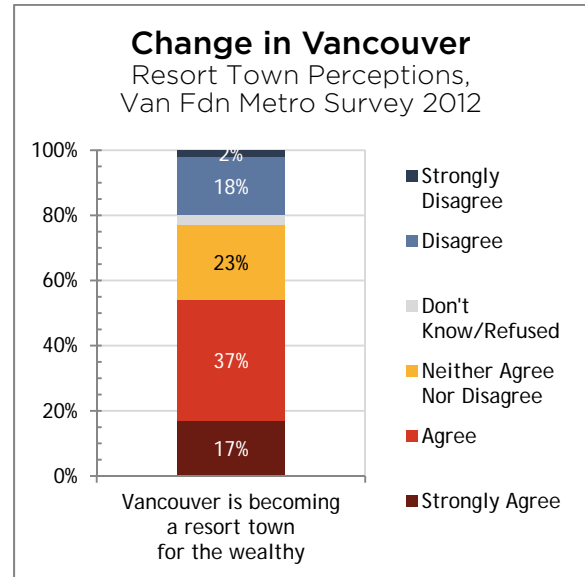
Neighbour Connections
Never Chat with Neighbour, Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Dwelling Type		Tenure	
Apartment	Detached home or townhome	Rented	Owned
15%	7%	26%	15%

Community and Civic Life
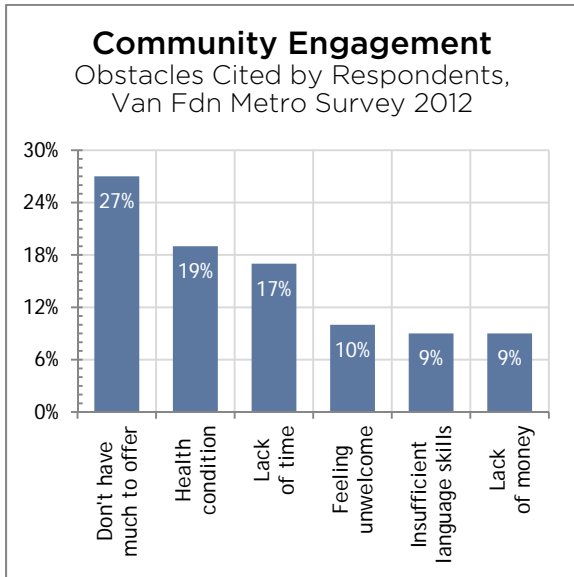
A positive finding from the Vancouver Foundation is that the majority of people surveyed had participated in many aspects of community life during the past 12 months. Eighty-three per cent of respondents had visited a local library, community or recreation centre. However, a much smaller percentage of people surveyed were civically engaged, and this is discussed further later in this document.
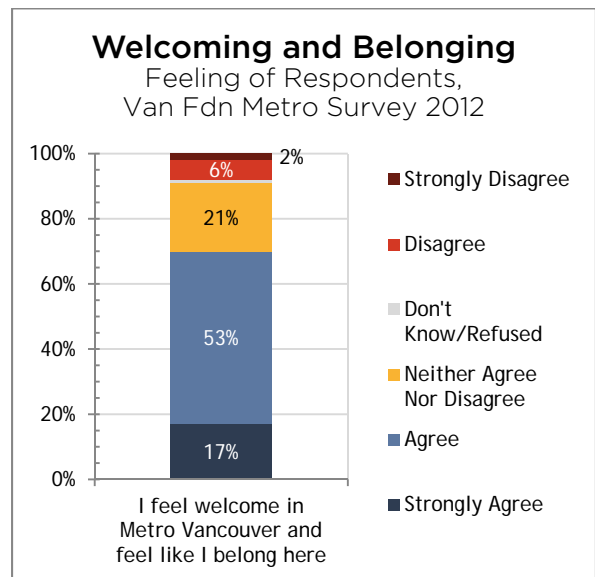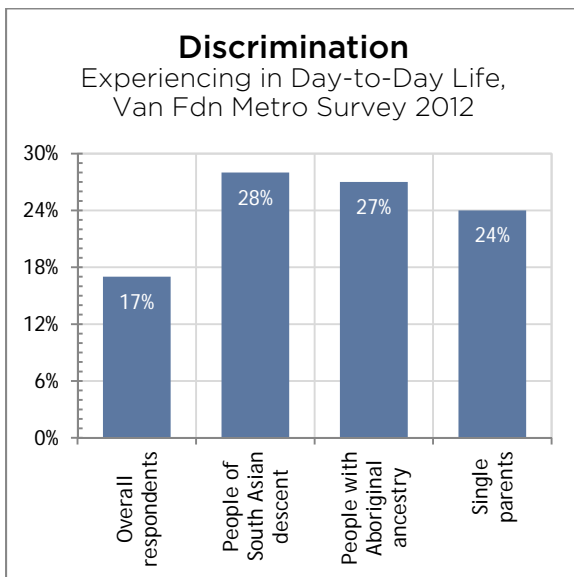
Obstacles to Community Engagement

Why are Metro Vancouver residents not more engaged? In the Vancouver Foundation's survey, common obstacles to community engagement included people feeling that they don't have much to offer, health conditions, lack of time, language skills, not feeling welcome and a lack of money. Participants expressed that they live increasingly in silos separated by ethnicity, culture, language, income, age and geography.

The cost of living and housing are major challenges for many people. Forty-five per cent of people surveyed stated that they are just about getting by or finding it difficult or very difficult to get by. High rent and mortgage cost were highlighted by 70 per cent of those struggling to get by.
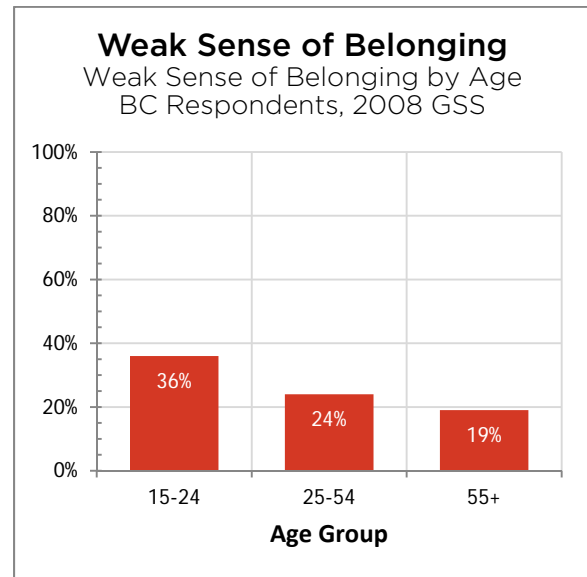
Community Engagement
Obstacles Cited by Respondents,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Change in Vancouver
Resort Town Perceptions,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Diversity and inclusion are other factors impacting engagement. Nearly two-thirds of respondents thought that while most people are tolerant of different ethnic groups, they nevertheless preferred to be with people in the same ethnic group as themselves. 17 per cent of survey participants experienced discrimination in their daily lives, and 42 per cent of survey respondents felt that younger and older generations did not make an effort to get to know each other. While most survey respondents felt welcome and felt a sense of belonging, the study also found that neighbourhood connections are polite but weak. Vancouverites are "cordial" with their neighbours, but this connection often lacks substance.

Discrimination
Experiencing in Day-to-Day Life,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Welcoming and Belonging
Feeling of Respondents,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

The Vancouver Foundation survey is a valuable snapshot of the region, but little research exists to contextualize or compare these findings with other places or times. What research there is, though, corroborates the story that belonging is often tenuous and weak, and differs across different socioeconomic classes, cultures, generations and locations.

Statistics Canada's General Social Survey in 2008 highlighted that over a quarter of survey respondents in BC had no sense of belonging to their local community; this is a similar figure to the 2012 Vancouver Foundation survey. Moreover, more than a third of youth under 25 reported a weak or very weak sense of belonging to their community.

Sense of Belonging
To Indicated Places
BC Respondents, 2008 GSS

- Canada: 93%
- BC: 83%
- Local Community: 74%

Weak Sense of Belonging
Weak Sense of Belonging by Age
BC Respondents, 2008 GSS

- 15-24: 36%
- 25-54: 24%
- 55+: 19%

Age Group
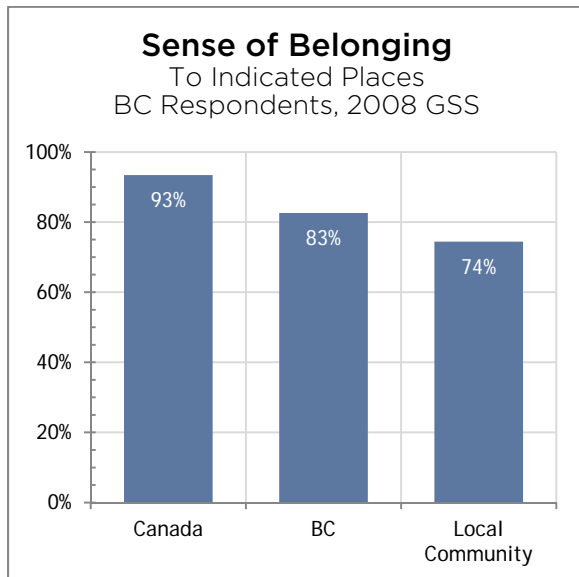
What is our city's future? Recent research has revealed a number of gaps and opportunities to build a more connected and engaged Vancouver. The bigger challenge, though, will be in the implementation: connections and engagement are not problems that can be solved without attention to broader questions of affordability, inclusion, belonging, power, privilege and inequity.

Data Sources

The primary data source used in this section is the Vancouver Foundation's *Connections and Engagement – a Survey of Metro Vancouver*, June 2012. Extensive reporting and discussion can be found online at **vancouverfoundation.ca/initiatives/connections-and-engagement**.

International statistics are from the OECD's 2011 "How's Life?" report.

Statistics about discussion networks in the United States are adapted from Brahears, Mc Pherson and Smith-Lovin, "Social isolation in America: changes in core discussion networks over two decades," published in the 2006 *American Sociological Review*.

Additional national and provincial statistics are adapted from Statistics Canada publications, including "Perceptions of Canadians: A Sense of Belonging, Confidence and Trust" published in *Canadian Social Trends,* winter 2004; the 2008 *General Social Survey*; and "How Social Networks Help Canadians Deal with Major Change," *The Daily*, June 26, 2009.

Indicator: Volunteering

Volunteering is one way in which people contribute to their community. In 2010, 47 per cent of Canadians and 50 per cent of British Columbians volunteered. Nationally, the rate of volunteering has increased since 2004, but the hours of volunteer work has plateaued. Most of the volunteer hours that 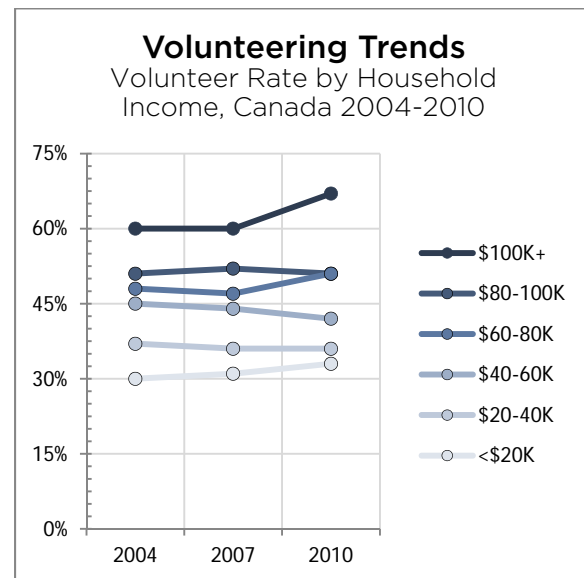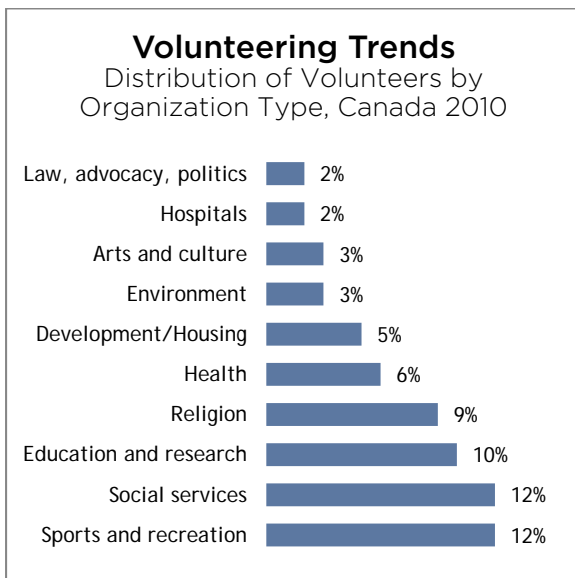are contributed come from a small number of volunteers; the top 25 per cent of volunteers contributed 78 per cent of all volunteer hours.

Volunteering Trends
Volunteer Rate and Median Hours, Canada 2004-2010

	2004	2007	2010
Volunteer Rate	45%	46%	47%
Median Annual Volunteer Hours	61	56	55

Volunteering Trends
Distribution of Volunteers by Hours Contributed, Canada 2010

	1-55	56-160	161-390	391+
Percentage of Volunteers	50%	25%	15%	10%
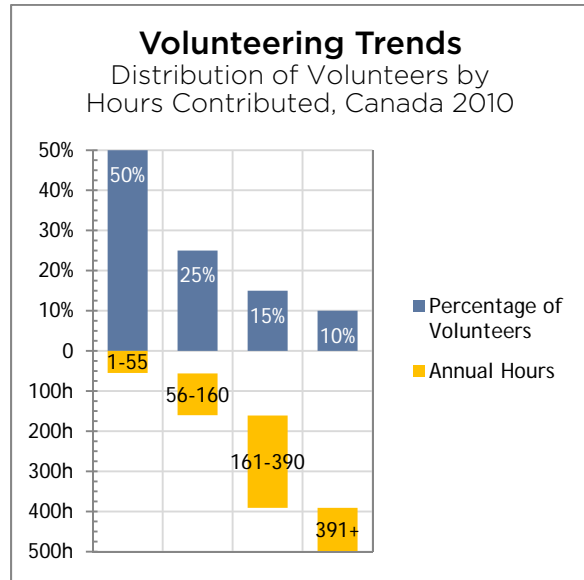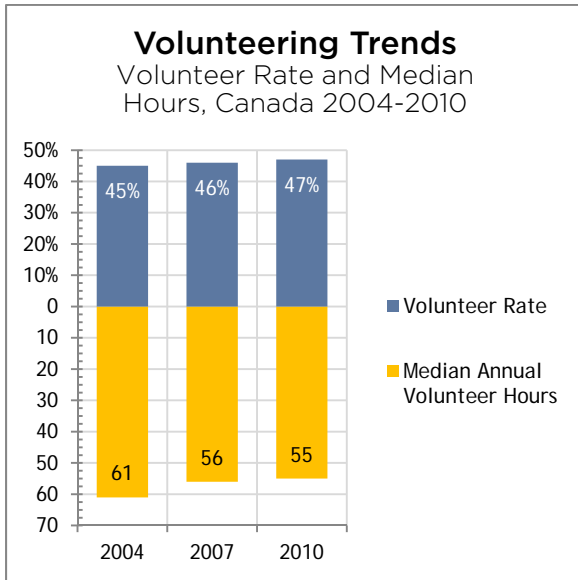
In 2010, Canadians were most likely to volunteer for organizations operating in the areas of sports and recreation, social services, education and research and religion.
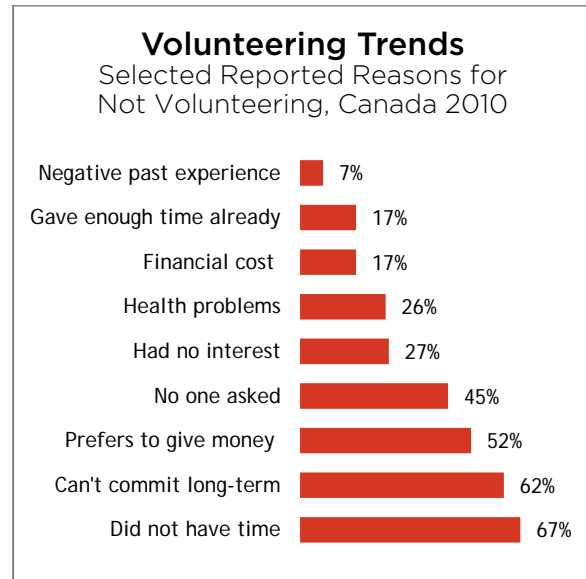
Age, marital status, education and household income all impact the likelihood of volunteering. In general, younger Canadians have been more likely to volunteer than older Canadians, though seniors tend to provide more volunteer hours. Single Canadians were more likely to volunteer than Canadians who were married or in common-law relationship. Canadians with a university education were more likely to volunteer than those with less education, and more likely to report more volunteer hours. Volunteer rates have also tended to increase with higher household incomes. Having school-aged children in a household increased the likelihood of volunteering. Actively religious people were more likely to volunteer more hours.

Volunteering Trends
Distribution of Volunteers by Organization Type, Canada 2010

Organization Type	Percentage
Law, advocacy, politics	2%
Hospitals	2%
Arts and culture	3%
Environment	3%
Development/Housing	5%
Health	6%
Religion	9%
Education and research	10%
Social services	12%
Sports and recreation	12%

Volunteering Trends
Volunteer Rate by Household Income, Canada 2004-2010

(Legend: $100K+, $80-100K, $60-80K, $40-60K, $20-40K, <$20K)

Across Canada, the most frequently reported reason for volunteering was to make a contribution to the community, while the most common reason for not volunteering was a lack of time.

Volunteering Trends
Selected Reported Reasons for Volunteering, Canada 2010

Reason	%
To fullfill religious beliefs	21%
To improve job opportunities	22%
To network or meet people	46%
To explore one's strengths	48%
Friends volunteer	48%
Personally affected by a cause	59%
To use skills and experiences	78%
To make a contribution	93%

Volunteering Trends
Selected Reported Reasons for Not Volunteering, Canada 2010

Reason	%
Negative past experience	7%
Gave enough time already	17%
Financial cost	17%
Health problems	26%
Had no interest	27%
No one asked	45%
Prefers to give money	52%
Can't commit long-term	62%
Did not have time	67%

The Vancouver Foundation *Connections and Engagement* survey asked how many survey participants volunteered as well as the frequency of volunteering. The overall rate was similar to the rate found in Statistics Canada surveys: about half of respondents reported volunteering.

Volunteering Trends
Reported Frequency, Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Category	%
At least once/week	14%
At least once/month	19%
Once or twice/year	16%
Don't know/refused	
Not volunteered	49%

Informal Volunteering
Reported Rates of Forms of Helping Others, Canada 2010

Form	%
Teaching, coaching, tutoring	17%
Other	24%
Paperwork	29%
Shopping or driving to store/appointment	47%
Health related or personal care	53%
House work/ home maintenance	61%

Finally, it is important to contextualize rates of formal volunteering by acknowledging the other informal contributions people make. Informal volunteering rates across the country are much higher than formal volunteering rates; in 2010, 83 per cent of Canadians surveyed helped others directly in some form. Helping others with home maintenance, and providing care for friends or family members were the most common forms of informal support practiced.

Data Sources

Canada-wide volunteering statistics are adapted from Statistics Canada's Survey of Giving Volunteering and Participating. Publications referenced include "Caring Canadians" (Statistics Canada catalogue no. 71-542-XIE), "Volunteering in Canada" (11-008-X) and "Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians" (89-649-X-2011001).
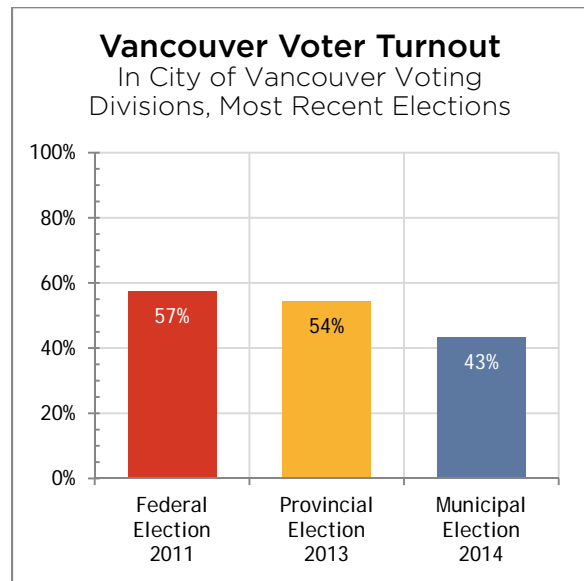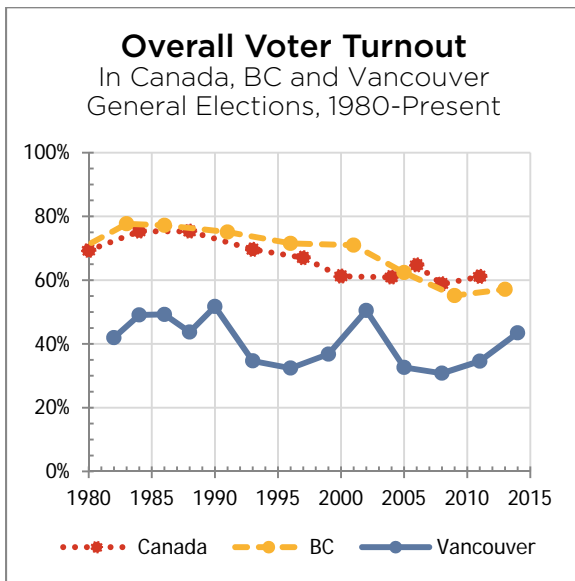
Local statistics are adapted from the Vancouver Foundation's *Connections and Engagement* survey, 2012.

Indicator: Civic Engagement and Participation

Civic engagement allows people to express their voice and to contribute to the political functioning of society. Barriers to participation impede the realization of full democratic citizenship. While civic engagement and participatory government are essential for democracies, they are also hard to measure. The bulk of this section looks at indicators of formal participation through voting, but it is important to understand that the statistics provided are only a small picture of civic engagement.

Voter Turnout

Voter turnout at all levels has generally declined, though participation in local elections may be increasing. Among electoral divisions within the City of Vancouver, turnout in the most recent elections was 57 per cent in the 2011 federal election, 54 per cent in the 2013 provincial election and 43 per cent in the 2014 local election.

Overall Voter Turnout
In Canada, BC and Vancouver
General Elections, 1980-Present

Vancouver Voter Turnout
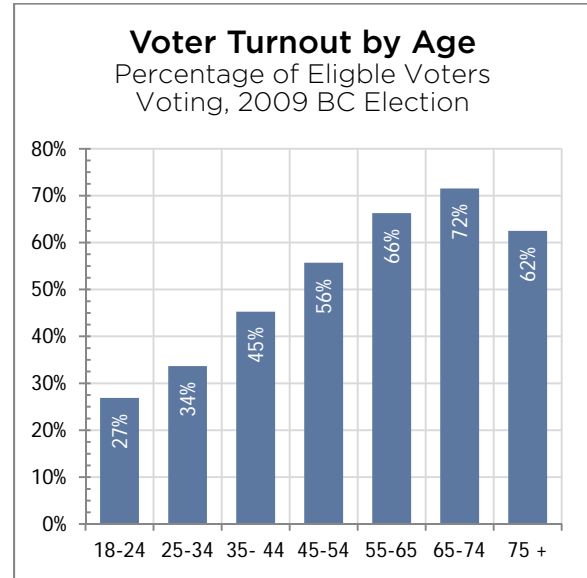In City of Vancouver Voting
Divisions, Most Recent Elections

Vancouver's voter turnout rate in 2014 was the highest of any city in Metro Vancouver; only Bowen Island and the villages of Lions Bay, Belcarra and Anmore had higher turnout. Voter turnout for municipal elections in other large Canadian cities has been fluctuating over time; in general, though, participation in municipal elections is often low across the country.

Municipal Voter Turnout
2014 Local Elections,
by Metro Vancouver Municipality
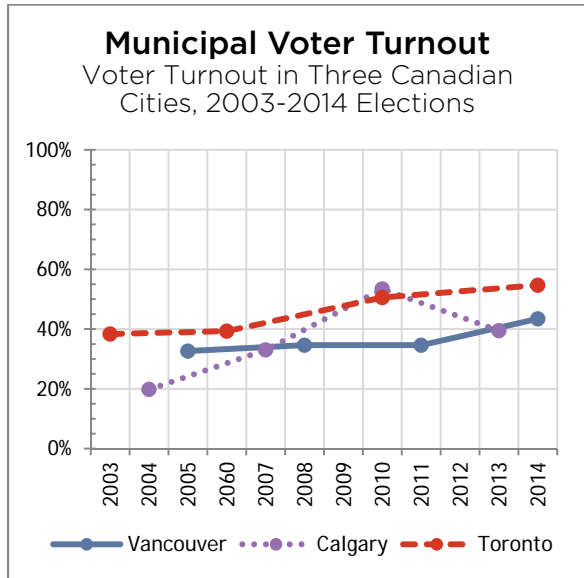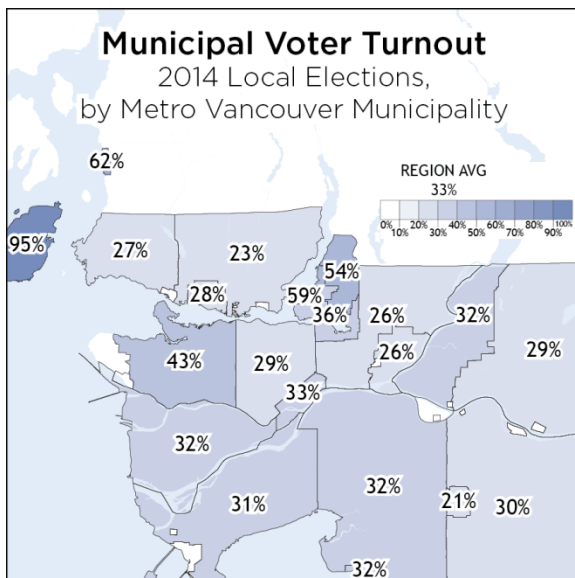
Municipal Voter Turnout
Voter Turnout in Three Canadian
Cities, 2003-2014 Elections

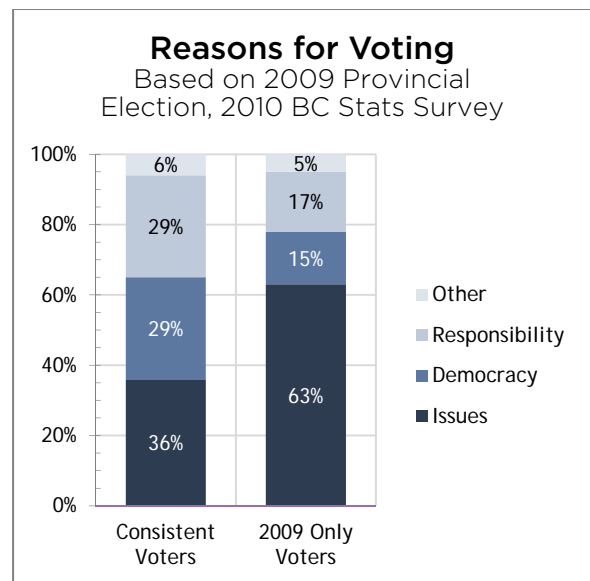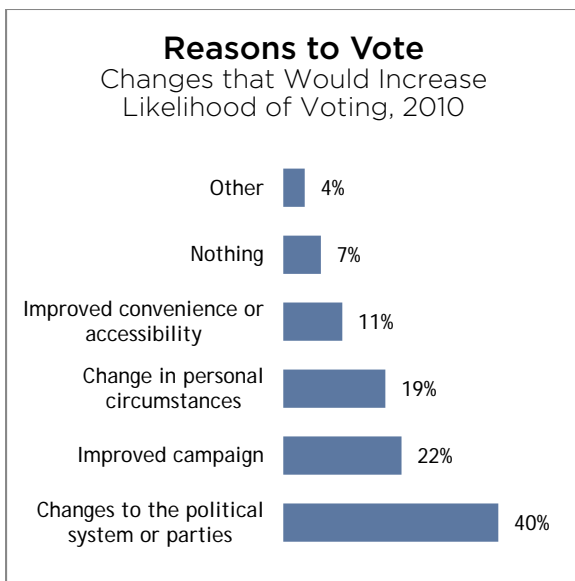**Why is voter participation low?** Surveys conducted by Statistics Canada and by election agencies reveal that the primary reasons for not voting are disinterest in the political process, which includes a general disillusionment with politics and feeling that voting would not make a difference; or that they are too busy.

Participation is consistently higher among older voters; in the 2009 BC election, only 27 per cent of voters under 25 turned out, but 72 per cent of persons aged 65 to 74 voted.

Reasons for Not Voting
Cited by Survey Respondents in the 2011 Federal Election

- Canada
- BC

Reason	Canada	BC
No interest	28%	23%
Busy	23%	24%
Away	10%	12%
Illness or Disability	9%	9%
Did not like candidates	8%	8%

Voter Turnout by Age
Percentage of Eligible Voters Voting, 2009 BC Election

Age	Turnout
18-24	27%
25-34	34%
35-44	45%
45-54	56%
55-65	66%
65-74	72%
75 +	62%
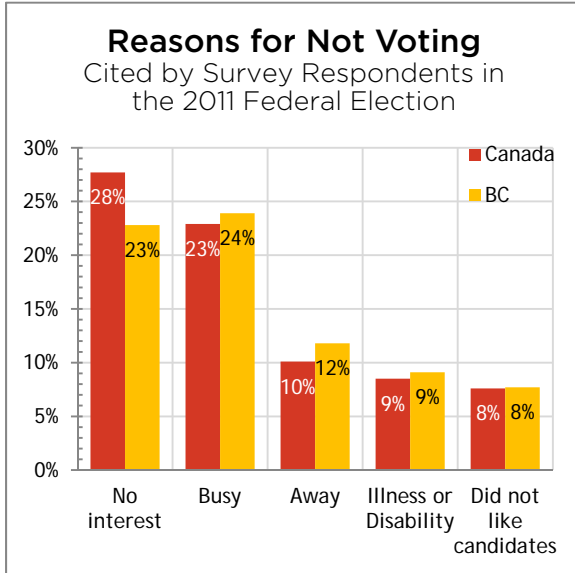
Not voting is rational behaviour if it is perceived to not make a difference in people's lives. A survey conducted in 2010 by BC Stats asked BC voters what would make them more likely to vote; changes to the political system or to the party system were the most commonly cited factor.
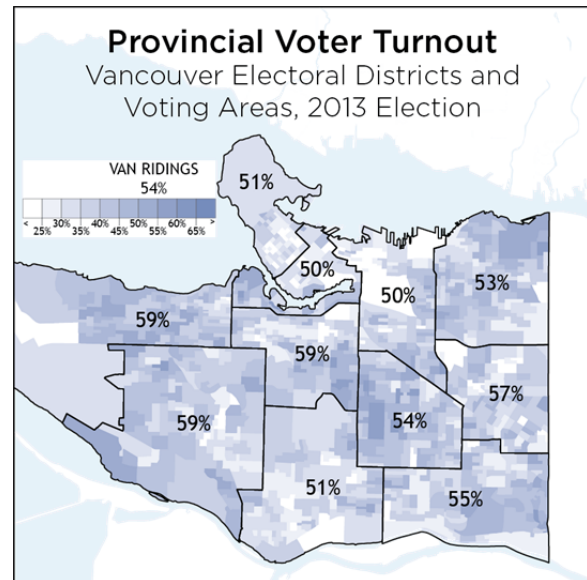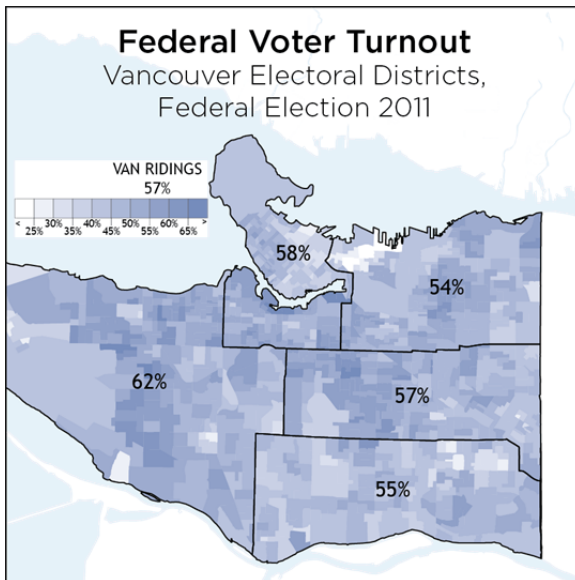
The same study analyzed voting patterns during the 2009 provincial election. Among people who voted consistently, people were motivated to vote in relatively equal terms by issues; by democracy-based concerns, such as exercising a right to vote; and by responsibility-based concerns, such as voting being a duty. Voters who did not consistently vote were primarily motivated by concern over election-specific issues.

Reasons to Vote
Changes that Would Increase Likelihood of Voting, 2010

Change	Percentage
Other	4%
Nothing	7%
Improved convenience or accessibility	11%
Change in personal circumstances	19%
Improved campaign	22%
Changes to the political system or parties	40%

Reasons for Voting
Based on 2009 Provincial Election, 2010 BC Stats Survey

	Consistent Voters	2009 Only Voters
Other	6%	5%
Responsibility	29%	17%
Democracy	29%	15%
Issues	36%	63%

Finally, how does voter turnout relate to demographic characteristics? At first glance, neighbourhoods with people more likely to vote had higher median incomes, a larger proportion of older individuals and a greater proportion of University-educated residents. Neighbourhoods with a greater proportion of recent immigrants, a larger proportion of the population not in the workforce or unemployed people as well as a higher proportion of families with children tend to have lower turn-out rates.

In the 2011 federal election, the west side riding of Vancouver Quadra had the highest voter turnout. In the 2013 provincial election, the Quilchena, Point Grey and Fairview ridings had the highest. The maps below show turnout for each riding, with shading reflecting turnout at individual polling stations.

Federal Voter Turnout — Vancouver Electoral Districts, Federal Election 2011

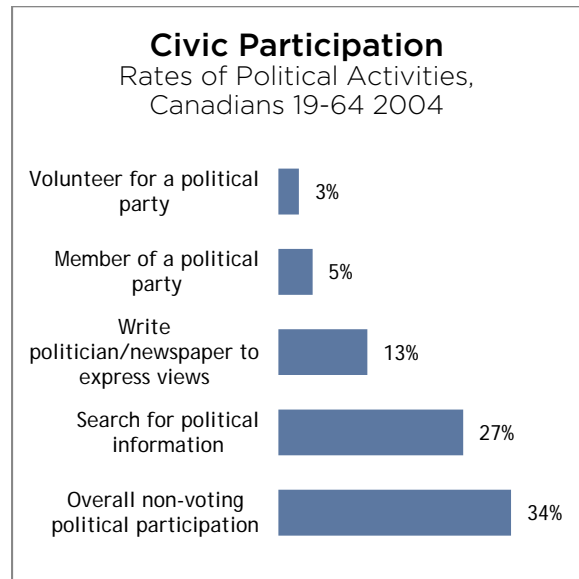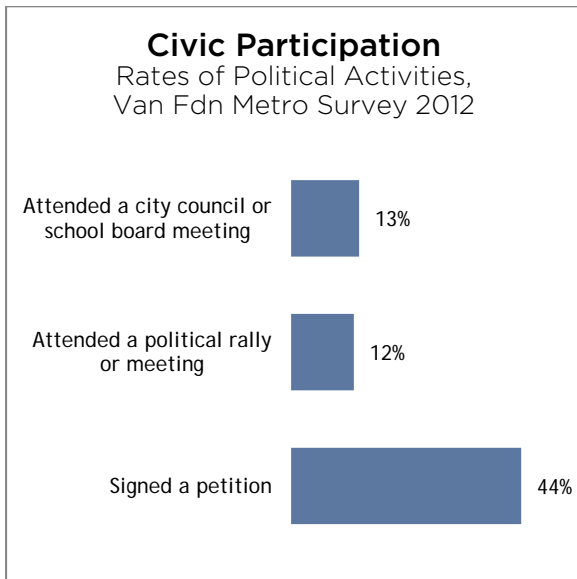Provincial Voter Turnout — Vancouver Electoral Districts and Voting Areas, 2013 Election

Because Vancouver's most recent local election allowed voters to vote at any polling station rather than an assigned one, it is not possible to provide a geographic breakdown of turnout in 2014 and future elections. As such, the maps below present information from the 2011 election. Although turnout tended to be higher on the west side than the east side, there were some exceptions. Approximating voting divisions to local areas shows that in 2011 voting divisions in West Point Grey had the highest turnout, followed by Dunbar-Southlands and Grandview-Woodland. The lowest turnout was found Downtown, and neighbourhoods in south Vancouver also stood out as having low turnout.
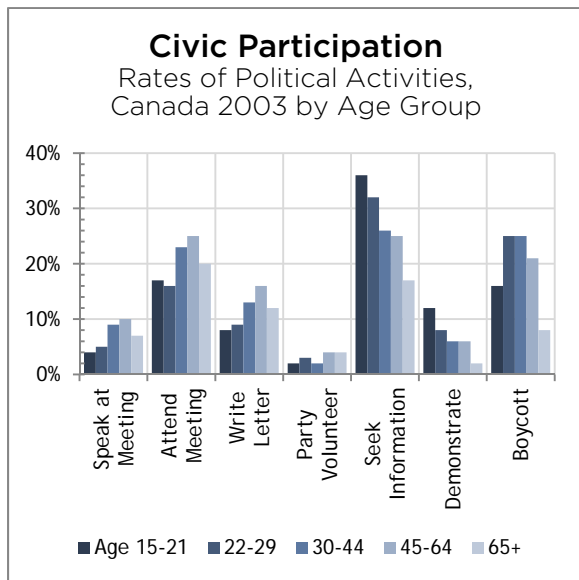

Municipal Voter Turnout — Vancouver Polling Divisions, Local Election 2011

Municipal Voter Turnout — Vancouver Polling Divisions Approximated to Local Areas, Local Election 2011
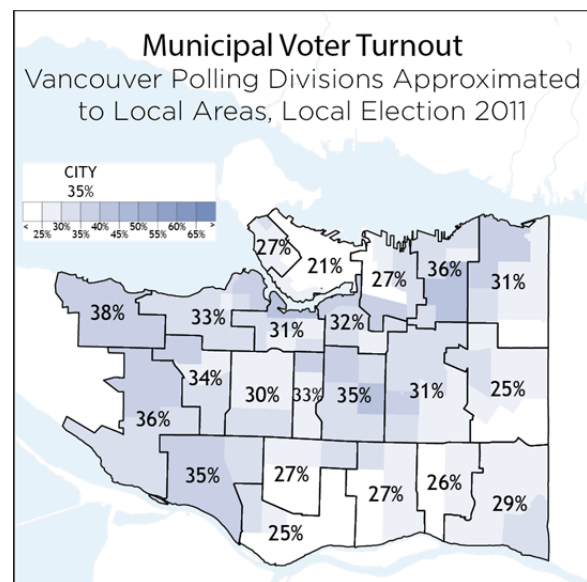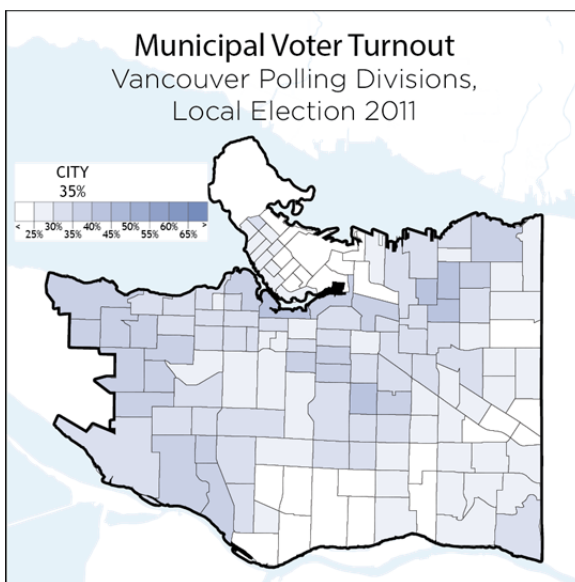
Participation in Other Political Activities

The quality of public life and the performance of institutions are powerfully connected by norms and networks of civic engagement. Indicators in this area, though, point toward declining levels of political involvement. Robert Putnam's iconic study of social capital, *Bowling Alone*, described a steep reduction in Americans' attendance at public meetings on town or school affairs between 1973 and 1993. Other indicators that Putnam analyzed also spoke to a general decline in trust, reduced civic engagement and a declining voter-turnout. Although Putnam has since observed an increasing level of young adults becoming involved in politics since the 2000s, this participation is increasingly polarized. Upper- and middle-class youth have become more involved in politics, but lower-class youth have become less involved.

Locally, research comparing Canadians' involvement with political activities over time is very limited. The Vancouver Foundation's survey found that nearly half of Metro Vancouver respondents had signed a petition in the past 12 months, but much fewer had taken part in an in-person form of participation. Across Canada, 2003 survey results found that one in three Canadians aged 19-64 was politically active in some way.

Civic Participation
Rates of Political Activities,
Van Fdn Metro Survey 2012

Activity	%
Attended a city council or school board meeting	13%
Attended a political rally or meeting	12%
Signed a petition	44%

Civic Participation
Rates of Political Activities,
Canadians 19-64 2004

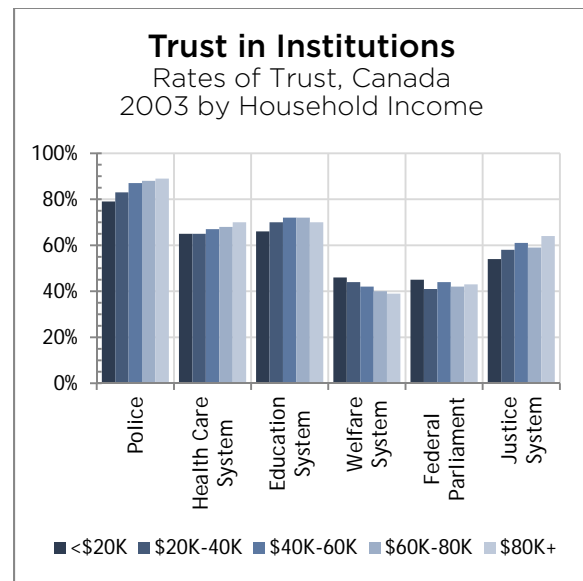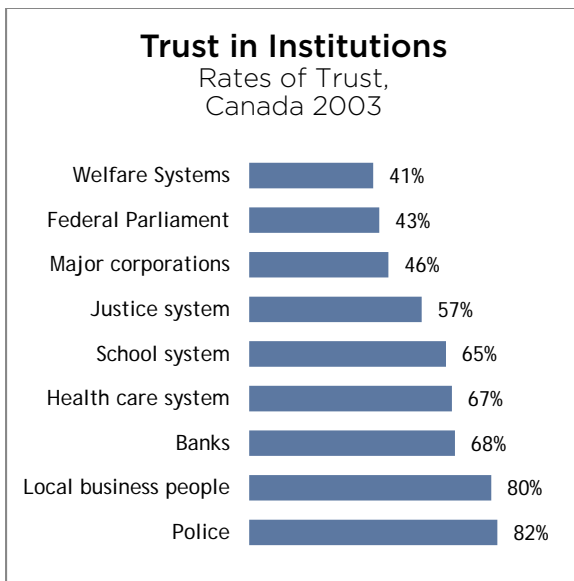| Activity	%
Volunteer for a political party	3%
Member of a political party	5%
Write politician/newspaper to express views	13%
Search for political information	27%
Overall non-voting political participation	34%

Demographic characteristics, attitudes, experience, socialization and engagement influence both the rate and form of Canadians' political participation. Post-secondary education is a large determinant of participation, as is having a sense of mastery over one's life. Children follow in their parents' footsteps: 41 per cent of Canadians whose parent had been a party volunteer participated in the political arena. The majority of young adults are engaged in a non-voting political activity, but in different arenas than older Canadians. Younger Canadians are more likely to demonstrate, search for information or to boycott a product than older Canadians. Older Canadians who are politically active are more likely to attend a meeting or speak at a meeting, write a letter to a politician or a newspaper and to volunteer for a political party.

Civic Participation
Rates of Political Activities,
Canada 2003 by Age Group

Legend: Age 15-21, 22-29, 30-44, 45-64, 65+
Categories: Speak at Meeting, Attend Meeting, Write Letter, Party Volunteer, Seek Information, Demonstrate, Boycott

Trust in Institutions

Confidence in institutions is essential for social stability and the functioning of democracy. Societies where institutional trust is high and corruption is perceived as low have better governance, stronger economic growth and citizens have greater respect for the law.

Empirical data on trust in institutions is limited. The 2003 General Social Survey asked Canadians about their trust in institutions: respondents were most likely to trust the police and local businesses and least likely to trust welfare systems and the federal parliament. Trust was also related to income and education, with higher income Canadians more likely to have confidence in the police, the justice system and the health care system than those with lower household incomes.

Trust in Institutions
Rates of Trust,
Canada 2003

Institution	Rate
Welfare Systems	41%
Federal Parliament	43%
Major corporations	46%
Justice system	57%
School system	65%
Health care system	67%
Banks	68%
Local business people	80%
Police	82%

Trust in Institutions
Rates of Trust, Canada
2003 by Household Income

Legend: ■ <$20K ■ $20K-40K ■ $40K-60K ■ $60K-80K ■ $80K+

In future, it would be desirable to conduct research on trust in institutions more frequently. There are indications that people's trust in institutions might have been impacted negatively by the 2008-2013 recession and banking crisis, for instance.

Data Sources

Data on voter turnout are collected from Elections Canada, Elections BC and the City of Vancouver. Additional comparative data are from the BC Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development and from the Cities of Calgary and Toronto. Past data on voter turnout in Vancouver are archived on the City's former website at **former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/elections/voter_turnout.htm**. Note that different jurisdictions may calculate turnout using either registered voters or eligible voters.

Information on demographics and reasons for voting are from BC Stats' publications *Motivations and barriers: exploring voting behaviour in BC* (January 2010) and *Who heads to the polls? Exploring the demographics of voters in BC* (March 2010). Information on voter participation in BC in 2009 is also captured in Elections BC's publication *Voter Participation by Age Group, Provincial Election May 12, 2009*.

Local civic participation statistics are from the Vancouver Foundation's *Connections and Engagement* survey.

Robert Putnam's work on social capital is widely published in academic journals. Specific articles referred to here include "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" published in the *Journal of Democracy* in 1995, and "Still Bowling Alone? The Post 9/11 Split" published in the same journal in 2010.

Statistics Canada publications referenced include *Canadian Social Trends* articles "Canadians and Their Non-Voting Political Activity" (2007), "Perceptions of Canadians: A Sense of Belonging, Confidence and Trust" (Winter 2004) and "Willing to Participate: Political Engagement of Young Adults" (Winter 2005); and "Factors Associated with Voting", Catalogue No. 75-001-X, *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Primary data sources for these articles include the General Social Survey and Labour Force Survey.

Toward a Healthy City for All

Encouraging and increasing community engagement, volunteering and civic participation are important goals for the City. It is important to note that the City cannot drive this process alone. Collaboration between the City, other levels of government, informal and formal community groups and organizations, non-profits, charities, community foundations, residents, businesses and all other stakeholders are needed to achieve this goal.

The City's Role

The City's commitment to engagement and civic participation is embedded in the many task forces, working groups, advisory committees and civic committees which advise the City and which the City supports. The Mayor's Engaged City Task Force (2012-2014) examined how to increase neighbourhood engagement, and how to improve the ways the City connects with Vancouver residents.

Other advisory bodies include:

- The Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability
- The Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addiction
- Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee
- LGBTQ Advisory Committee
- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Persons with Disability Advisory Committee
- Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee
- Seniors' Advisory Committee
- Vancouver Food Policy Council
- Women's Advisory Committee

The City also develops, owns and supports community infrastructure such as community centers, arts facilities and libraries. They are hubs of connectivity and provide an important linkage for residents not only to specific services and programs, but also to the wider community.

Some other areas in which the City is active:

- Providing grants and other community supports for community-led initiatives
- Consulting with residents, communities and neighbourhoods about new facilities, community plans and specific developments
- Facilitating targeted consultations with vulnerable and marginalized populations

Your Turn

Achieving a Healthy City for all is a collective challenge for governments, the not-for profit sector, the private sector and individuals. Your feedback is welcome on this and other social issues facing the City of Vancouver. Learn more and get involved at vancouver.ca/healthycity4all.