

RESILIENT VANCOUVER

PHASE ONE ENGAGEMENT REPORT



Executive Summary

The City of Vancouver is developing a Resilient Vancouver Strategy to tackle our biggest threats and build our collective capacity to navigate, withstand and thrive in the face of rapid change as a result of environmental, natural and technological transformations like climate adaptation, earthquake preparedness and the future of work in Vancouver.

Between April – December 2018, staff engaged over 2000 people and 500 stakeholders from a range of sectors and demographics to better understand what resilience meant to people and stakeholders across Vancouver, gather perceptions about Vancouver's strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities, learn about initiatives and work that contribute to our city's overall resilience and identify the gaps that will inform the strategy's direction in phase two.

Overwhelmingly, people agreed that earthquakes and affordability pose the most significant threat to our capacity to thrive in the future. We also heard concerns and ideas about building resilience through neighbourhood-based work, the impact of technology on our society, the ways that the economy may change in the future, and ensuring that our city infrastructure can serve our growing population under changing climate conditions.

We heard that many of our City's most persistent stresses are symptoms of deeply rooted systemic barriers and bias and that Vancouver's resilience is closely tied to reconciliation, culture, equity, accessibility, and climate adaptation. And we heard that our resilience story starts with our residents and in our neighbourhoods

In the next phase of work, staff will work with local partners and the 100RC Network, to more deeply understand options to address these and other challenges.

Background

In 2016, Vancouver was selected to be part of 100 Resilient Cities (100RC), Pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation – a commitment dedicated to helping cities around the world become more resilient to physical, social, and economic challenges. Since its launch in 2013, 100RC has helped cities around the world build resilience to threats. Vancouver is one of four Canadian cities and joins Toronto, Montreal and Calgary.

With support from 100RC, the City of Vancouver is developing a Resilient Vancouver Strategy to help Vancouver identify our vulnerabilities and work to build our collective capacity to navigate and withstand stresses (like poverty and homelessness) and shocks (like an earthquake) now and in the future. Resilience starts within our community, and the lived experience of our residents is among our greatest assets in shaping this strategy. The Resilient Vancouver Strategy will aim to ensure Vancouver residents,

communities, institutions, businesses, and systems can persist, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks Vancouver may experience.

Cities stand at the forefront of the challenges and opportunities of the 21st Century. Aging infrastructure, extreme weather, and mass migration all disproportionately affect urban centers. Like other cities that recognize the need to lead amid this global landscape, Vancouver is making a commitment to its future resilience. We look at resilience as building capacity with our residents, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems to thrive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks Vancouver may experience.

This engagement summary highlights the actions and feedback staff received during the first phase of engagement that took place between May 2017 and December 2017. This phase was meant to share information about the 100 Resilient Cities program and the Resilient Vancouver Strategy, understand the conditions, factors and trends that contribute to, or threaten our collective ability to thrive in the future and identify actions and initiatives that are happening that build and contribute to our resilience.

This report provides an overview of the engagement process, key themes and most promising initiatives and ideas that emerged. Participants included individuals representing academia, other levels of government, environmental, not-for-profit organizations and the general public.

Definitions

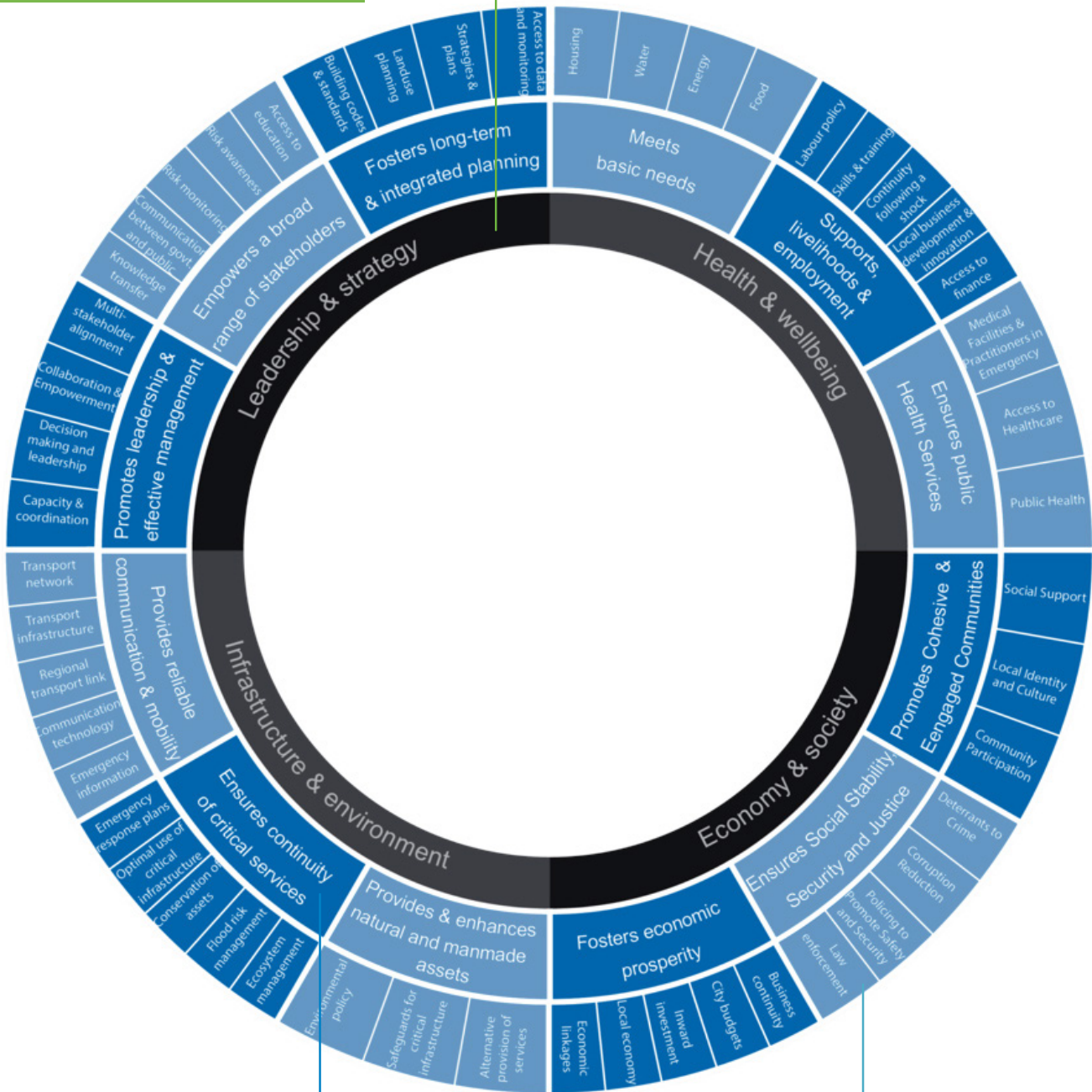
Resilience: 100 Resilient Cities defines resilience as the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow, no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. Shocks are typically considered single event disasters, such as fires, earthquakes, and floods. Stresses are factors that pressure a city on a daily or reoccurring basis, such as chronic food and water shortages, an overtaxed transportation system, endemic violence or high unemployment. City resilience is about making a city better, in both good times and bad, for the benefit of all its citizens, particularly the poor and vulnerable.

City Resilience Framework

The City Resilience Framework (CRF) is a unique framework based on extensive research into cities around the globe. It provides a lens to understand the complexity of cities and the drivers that contribute to their resilience. Looking at these drivers can help cities to assess the extent of their resilience, to identify critical areas of weakness, and to design actions and programs to improve the city's resilience. When possible, staff used this tool to help guide the discussion by asking participants to place their actions and factors directly onto the CRF.

4 Dimensions

The CRF is built on four essential dimensions of urban resilience.



12 x Drivers

Each dimension contains three drivers which reflect the actions cities can take to improve their resilience. The drivers from the core of the CRF, and when taken together they represent a city's resilience to a wide range of shocks and stresses.

50 x Sub-Drivers

Each driver comprises a number of sub-drivers which identify specific and more detailed actions to aid assessment.

Strategy Development Process

The Resilient Vancouver Strategy development process is divided into three main phases with specific objectives and will include engagement throughout.

Phase 1 - Preliminary Resilience Assessment: Through engagement and consultation with Vancouver residents, businesses, stakeholders, partners and other levels of government, this phase was aimed at:

- Understanding perceptions about Vancouver's resilience and the conditions and factors that contribute to our resilience
- Inventory and assess existing programs, resources and strategies that aim to address these concerns and challenges
- Identify where the gaps and challenges are that could threaten our resilience.

This information will be used to develop a Preliminary Resilience Assessment that will help identify priorities and discovery areas that will be further investigated in phase two.

Phase 2 - Discovery Areas: Building on the work done in phase one, staff will engage local and global partners and experts to explore the discovery areas and specifically the gaps and challenges that were highlighted in phase one and look to develop innovative solutions. Phase two will include deeper consultation and engagement with technical working groups to lay the foundation of the resilience strategy.

Phase 3 - Strategy Development: The final phase will focus on taking all of the information and feedback from the previous phases and creating a strategy.

Establishing the Context for Phase 1 Engagement

Prior to applying and becoming part of the 100RC network, City staff contributed to the identification of shocks and stresses Vancouver is most vulnerable to. These included:

- Lack of Affordable House
- Earthquakes
- Hazardous Material Accident
- Infrastructure Failure
- Rising Sea Level and Coastal Erosion
- Lack of Social Connectedness
- Aging Population
- Growing Income Gap
- Disease / Pandemic

Once accepted into the 100RC network, staff launched an online public questionnaire through Talk Vancouver to gather feedback on how the public perceived Vancouver's resilience across these areas, and to identify new areas of focus.

The City of Vancouver then partnered with 100 Resilient Cities to host an Agenda Setting workshop with 180 people representing over 100 partners, organizations, academia, non-profits and different levels of government. The purpose of this was to refine and modify the initial assessment of Vancouver's shocks and stresses, based on input from a broad range of perspectives. All of this information laid the foundation for the first phase of engagement of the Resilient Vancouver Strategy.

Phase 1 Engagement Process

Goals, Objectives and Design

The first phase of engagement was designed to feed into the Preliminary Resilience Assessment Report, and the refinement of targeted pieces of work, research and analysis that will ultimately lead to the development of actions and recommendations for the Resilient Vancouver strategy.

In addition to raising awareness about the strategy development process, the objectives of the first phase of the engagement process that took place from June - December 2017, were to:

- Learn what resilience means to people and stakeholders across Vancouver
- Gather perceptions about Vancouver's strengths, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities.
- Understand how a resilience strategy and the 100RC partnership can be leveraged to address unique local needs.
- Learn about, and identify opportunities to elevate existing initiatives that contribute to Vancouver's resilience
- Identify information gaps and refine focus areas for Phase 2

This engagement phase was designed to provide opportunities for a wide range of participants in a condensed period of time. As a result, a range of tactics were deployed to allow flexibility, encourage participation while respecting peoples time, and maximize opportunities to engage meaningfully. Staff used a variety of methods to engage people representing very different perspectives, including partnering with different groups to host workshops, and leveraging complementary engagement processes.

Engagement Tactics, Questions and Participants

A range of tactics were deployed to allow flexibility, encourage participation and maximize opportunities to engage meaningfully. These included presentations, workshops, focus groups, interviews, surveys and social media.



PARTICIPATION METRICS



WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

To engage diverse community groups and individuals, the City of Vancouver hosted 4 distinct workshops in partnership with different organizations including: Simon Fraser University (SFU) Public Square, the Vancouver City Planning Commission (VCPC), the Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC) and four Vancouver organizations. There is a report summary to accompany each of the specific events.



INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

A number of in-person interviews and focus groups were held to supplement the high-level information gleaned from larger events and surveys. All of the in-person sessions and meetings began with an introduction and brief outline of the project and background and included an overview of the goals and objectives, process and what we've heard to date. Depending on the type of session and the time allocated, the following questions were sent to participants in advance to help guide a discussion around resilience. These were expanded upon depending on the specific interest area of the participants.

Interview / Focus Group Questions

- What does resilience mean to you?
- Shocks and stresses
- What have we heard so far?
- What's missing?
- What are the top 3 factors, trends and/or issues that influence or enable your organization to thrive in the future? And in the event of a shock?
- What are the top 3 factors, trends and/or issues that influence or enable the demographic you serve to thrive in the future? And in the event of a shock?
- Where do these factors/issues fit on the City Resilience Framework?
- What programs, actions or initiatives does your organization currently do that contribute to resilience?
- What would make a meaningful difference to your organization and the demographic you serve, to survive, adapt and thrive in the future?

PRESENTATIONS

A series of short presentations were delivered by the Chief Resilience Officer and staff to City Advisory Committees, other groups as requested, and at events and conferences. These varied in length from 15 minutes to 1 hour and were largely intended to provide information, answer questions, and set the foundation for future engagement through phase 2.

INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIONS INVENTORY

In addition, the City collaborated with the University of British Columbia (UBC), and the Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM), to design and deliver a process to gather information from city staff about the range of initiatives underway that link to resilience, and to identify opportunities to integrate and support that work through the 100RC partnership and network members. This internal process used the 100RC Actions Inventory tool to gather and evaluate actions related to resilience that are underway across city departments, and engaging staff to provide greater detail about the initiatives and their reflections on opportunities to enhance resilience value. As part of this, staff also reported on the factors that they believe will influence city resilience based on their experience working in community, and also as citizens of the Vancouver area. This actions inventory provides an opportunity to evaluate perceptions of resilience in comparison to the work that is being done across the city.

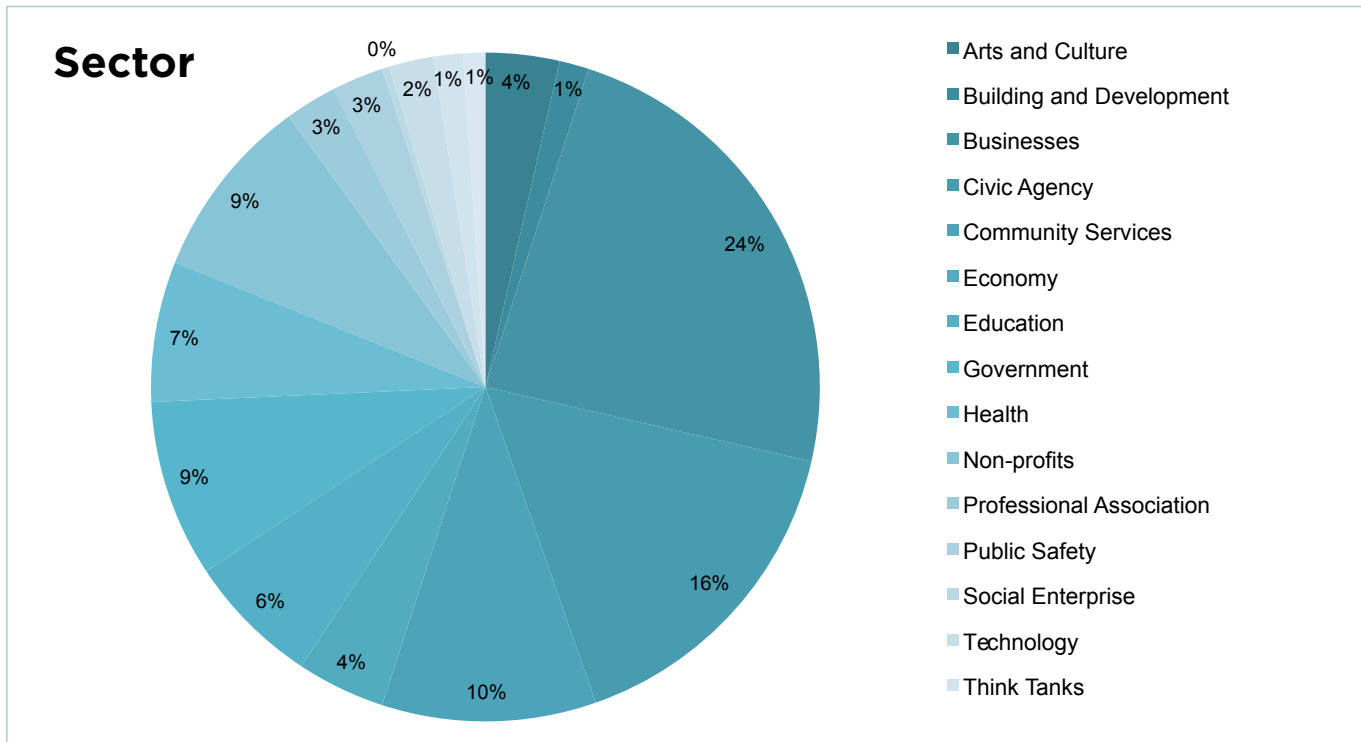
HOW INPUT WILL BE USED

The input gathered during this engagement phase, along with technical, data, additional actions and financial information will be used to inform a Preliminary Resilience Assessment.

The Preliminary Resilience Assessment will provide a high level summary of the current state of resilience in Vancouver, describe the work that has been done to date to understand Vancouver's key threats and opportunities to build resilience; and identify emerging resilience themes. This information will help guide the focus areas for the Resilient Vancouver Strategy.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT - 579 PARTICIPANTS

Though this process, City staff engaged with a range of stakeholders from over 15 different sectors and discussed various topics and areas related to Vancouver’s resilience. The following charts provide a snap shot of the sectors stakeholders were from and the topics, areas and/or expertise they brought to the conversation.



Public Engagement

Talk Vancouver Survey – 01/06/17

Sharing Our Stories Event and Survey – 10/24/17

Vancouver Planning Commission Summit and Survey – 10/25/2017

Vancouver Economic Commission Workshop and Survey – 11/7/2017

Resilient Neighbourhood Workshop – 01/29/17

Development Services, Building and Licensing

- Development Services
- Building Inspection
- Licensing, Property Use & Animal Services

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

- Planning
- Housing
- Urban Design
- Sustainability

Legal Services

Human Resources

Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management

Fire and Rescue Services

Outcomes, Perceptions and Feedback

Outcomes, perceptions and feedback are broken down in the following sections by what we heard during pre-engagement, and what we heard during Phase 1 engagement. Pre-engagement includes the broad public online questionnaire and the Agenda Setting Workshop. This exploratory work took place prior to the launch of Phase 1.

The second section highlights the themes staff heard between May-December 2017 as part of Phase 1 of the Resilient Vancouver process.

Pre-engagement (January – April 2017)

Resilient Vancouver – Public Questionnaire (TalkVancouver) – January 2017

A public questionnaire was completed by 1921 individuals through the TalkVancouver web platform and was hosted on City of Vancouver’s website during December 2016-January 2017. This questionnaire aimed to:

- Understand perceptions of Vancouver’s resilience.
- Understand perceptions about Vancouver’s shocks and stresses.
- Raise awareness about the Resilient Vancouver Strategy.

Internal Engagement – City of Vancouver Departments

Office of the City Manager

- External Relations and Protocol
- Business Planning and Project Support
- Intergovernmental and Strategic Partnerships
- Resilience

Arts, Culture and Community Services

- Social Policy
- Homelessness Services
- Civic Theatres
- Cultural Services

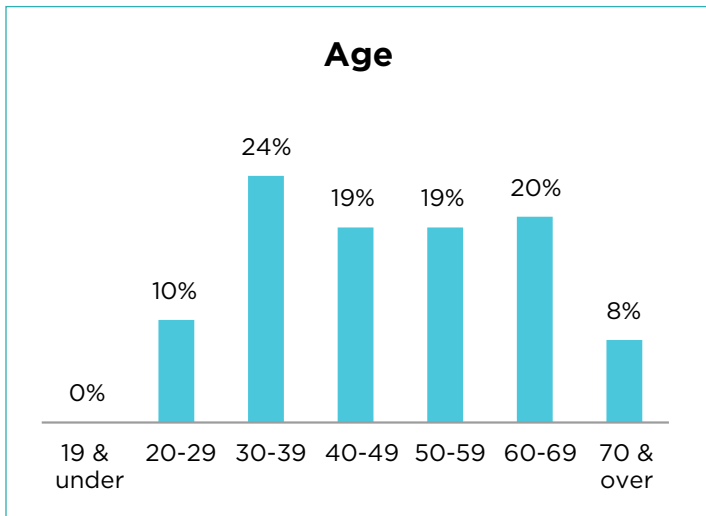
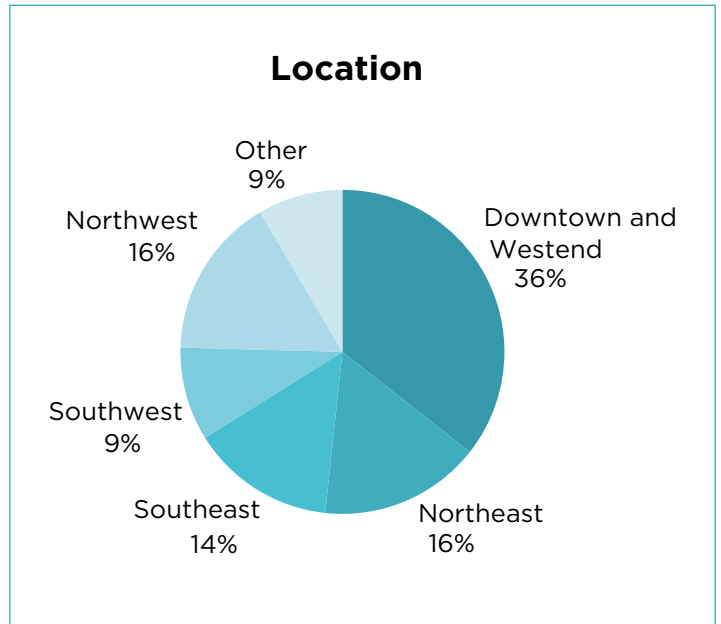
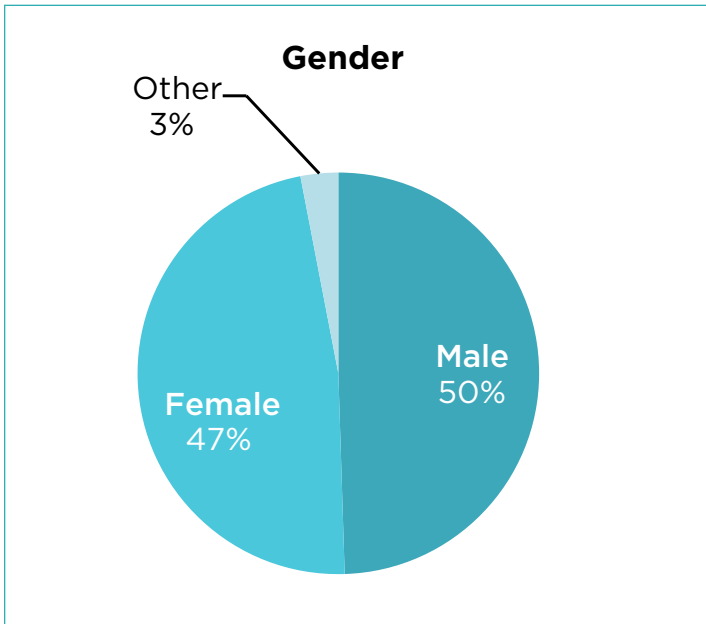
Engineering Services

- Water, Sewers and Green Infrastructure
- Green Operations
- Zero Waste and Recovery
- Public Space and Street Use
- Transportation
- Streets

Corporate Communications

Real Estate and Facilities Management

- Facilities Planning & Development
- Strategic Operations & Program Management
- Facilities Operations
- Real Estate Services



	Proportion of Respondents
Downtown & West End	24%
Northeast	19%
Southeast	17%
Southwest	11%
Northwest	19%
Other	10%

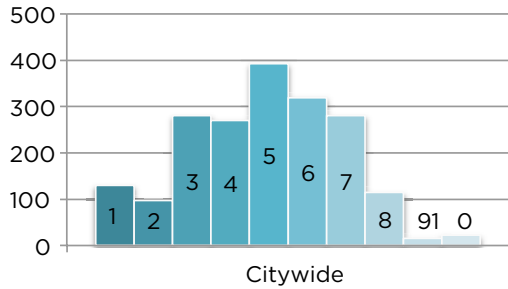
Nearly 2000 respondents completed the Resilient City Talk Vancouver Online Questionnaire. Generally, there was broad representation across age, gender and location, but the survey can't reach everyone. Moving forward into the second phase of engagement, City staff will make more of an effort to ensure voices from the following under represented demographic groups are better represented. These include:

- Young people under 19 and 20-29
- Residents of Southwest Vancouver (esp. young women)
- Residents of Vancouver Metro Region who are an important part of the City of Vancouver's social, cultural and economic fabric (e.g. commuters into Vancouver, Indigenous communities)

PERCEPTIONS OF VANCOUVER'S SHOCKS AND STRESSES

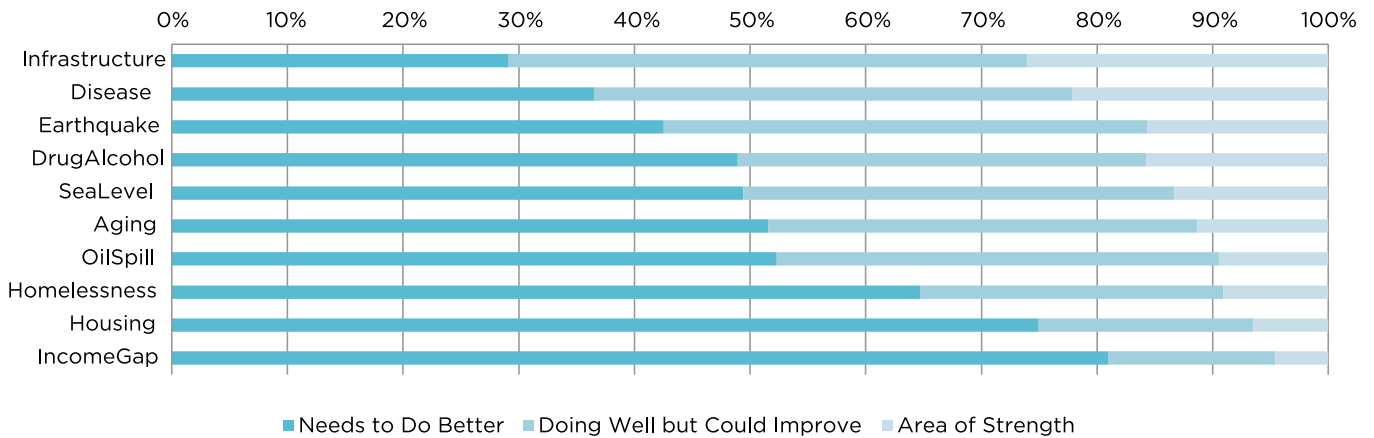
Respondents were asked to rate their perception of Vancouver's overall resilience. Most of the responses fell between the middle (three and seven), indicating that respondents felt Vancouver was somewhat resilient to a range of shocks and stresses, but more work is needed.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how resilient do you think Vancouver is?



The chart below shows how respondents rated their perceptions of Vancouver's resilience to various shocks and stresses. This chart shows how those average ratings map onto the 3-stage scale used by the 100RC perceptions tool. When broken down by specific issue, it is clear that social and economic issues are high priority - more than 90 % of respondents felt that the addressing the income gap is an area where Vancouver needs to do better. Meanwhile, less than 20 % of respondents perceive our collective resilience to earthquakes, oil spills, and sea level rise as being "Areas of Strength." (Note: Those respondents who chose "Don't know/ Would like more information" were excluded from the sample. The chart on the next page highlights these responses.)

Perceptions: Shock & Stresses



	Number of Respondents "Don't know/Would like more information"	Proportion of Respondents
Infrastructure	78	4%
Earthquake	240	12%
Oil Spill	334	17%
Disease	795	41%
Housing	56	3%
Sea Level	644	34%
Drug/Alcohol	109	6%
Homelessness	47	2%
Income Gap	238	12%
Aging	341	18%

Survey results indicated that while respondents know what kinds of hazards, shocks and stresses that Vancouver is vulnerable too, in many cases there was low awareness with respect to how prepared the City and the community is to withstand and recover from these threats should they materialize or in some cases get worse. In addition, other trends and areas of concern were highlighted that affect resilience, such as the economy and the future of work in Vancouver, transportation and how the City of Vancouver communicates with residents and businesses (especially in the event of an emergency like an earthquake). The high proportion of people that identified the need to know more about issues like Sea Level Rise, an area where the City has invested significantly, suggests that more can be done to engage the public and that there is an opportunity to explore alternative methods of education and information sharing.

AGENDA SETTING WORKSHOP

On April 4, 2017, the City of Vancouver in partnership with 100RC, hosted an Agenda Setting Workshop. The workshop was an opportunity to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders and city leaders to discuss and capture community perspectives and priorities for enhancing resilience in Vancouver. The input gathered at the workshop helped identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, priorities and additional shocks and stresses Vancouver is vulnerable to. The goals of the workshop were to:

- Establish a shared understanding of resilience and the 100RC initiative.
- Establish a strong and clear foundation for the resilience strategy process.
- Identify how the resilience strategy can help stakeholders to address their existing priorities.
- Identify stakeholders who should be involved in the development of Vancouver’s resilience strategy.
- The Agenda Setting Workshop Report is available [HERE](#), including the methodology and process for drawing out the common themes insights summarized following section.

COMMON THEMES

A common narrative in resilience workshops held in cities around the world is the concept of “Bouncing Back” after change or disaster. In Vancouver, a strong theme emerged around the concept of robustness and the idea of thriving instead of just surviving. Workshop participants stressed the importance of resilience starting with the community first, followed by a consideration of infrastructure in order to really be able to bounce forward following a shock, like an earthquake. Culture and heritage were raised as important elements missing from the City Resilience Framework that are important for Vancouver in the context of Indigenous history, and also a core element of a community’s capacity to thrive day-to-day.

COMPLEMENT AND BUILD ON EXISTING WORK:

The City of Vancouver and participating organizations are not considering resilience for the first time. In order to be successful, Vancouver’s resilient strategy must complement and work in harmony with pre-existing goals. The CRF provides an opportunity to view and assess current initiatives

through an integrated lens, and to set priorities for investment based on evidence from the community on what’s working and what’s not.

EQUITY AND AFFORDABILITY:

Issues related to equity and affordability were highlighted as significant and immediate issues that affected a community’s ability to thrive. These are issues the City is tackling through current initiatives, and must influence and inform resilience efforts.

The risk of an economic or housing shock is a real concern, and while most highlighted the potential negative impacts to the local economy, some tables postulated that an economic/housing shock may have positive, long-term ramifications for housing affordability within the region, through the ability to re-imagine housing stock and ownership models. It was suggested that there is an opportunity to utilize scenario-based planning to think about what these models may look like before a shock occurs, in order to build resilience to market adjustments.

Participants identified the interdependencies and relationships between shocks and stresses rather than viewing them individually and independent of each other. Many tables bundled stresses such as lack of affordable housing, gentrification/displacement, homelessness, racial and social injustice and chronic alcohol and addiction together. These issues were identified as high priority for Vancouver, are clearly interrelated, and solutions will need to involve multiple city departments and other agencies.

SOCIAL ISOLATION:

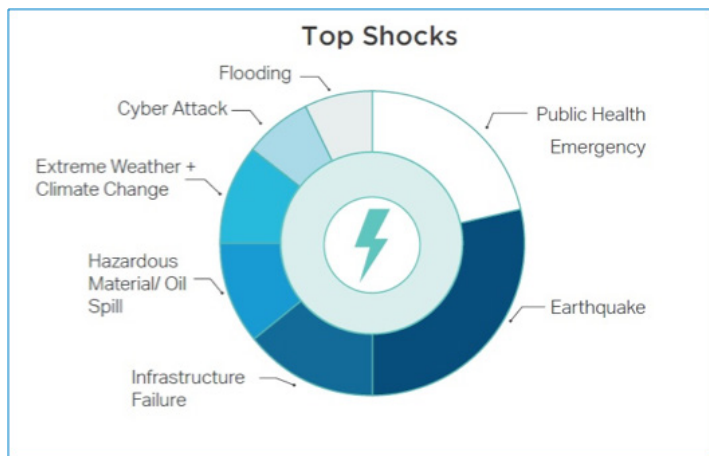
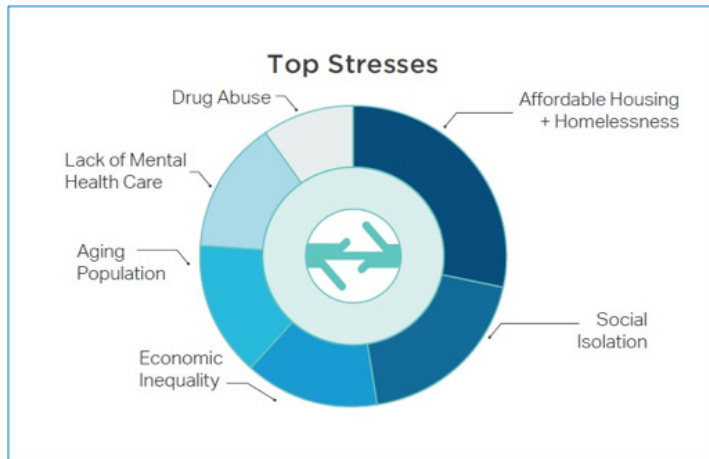
Social isolation and a lack of social cohesion were recognized as key issues which could negatively impact Vancouver’s ability to be able to deal with major crises. Building stronger community relationships was thought to be key to withstanding and adapting to change and bouncing back after shocks.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:

A significant earthquake was recognized as a low frequency but high impact event that the residents and businesses in the city were not individually prepared for. Participants acknowledge the significant work done in this area over the last several years, but recognize the complexity of the challenge and support continued collaborative efforts and continued investment in earthquake preparedness.

RANKING OF SHOCKS AND STRESSES

The following diagrams outline the top shocks and stresses workshop participants identified as key issues for Vancouver. Note that these categories and the language used were developed by 100 Resilient Cities. Participants also provided feedback that the language used is not consistent with local best practice, particular in the case of stresses related to health, mental health, and addictions.



KEY TAKEAWAYS – PRE-ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Staff used the feedback from the public TalkVancouver questionnaire and the Agenda Setting Workshop to inform the engagement approach for Phase 1 of the strategy process. During Phase 1, the feedback from the survey and the workshop was shared with participants to spark discussion, brainstorm new ideas, and build off of existing ones. Many themes identified during pre-engagement were heard continuously throughout the first phase regardless of who we were talking to. The pre-engagement also helped staff identify key stakeholders that required targeted effort to hear from, including those that were not well represented, and subject matter experts in areas like earthquakes, the economy, and critical infrastructure.

External Engagement (May – December 2017)

Between May and December 2017, staff collaborated with community partners to host a series of workshops, focus groups, interviews and presentations to gather input from local stakeholders, partners, experts and various levels of government to better understand their ideas around Vancouver’s resilience. The ideas, perceptions and feedback are summarized below into overarching themes that were discussed most consistently throughout the process. This section is divided into three sections:

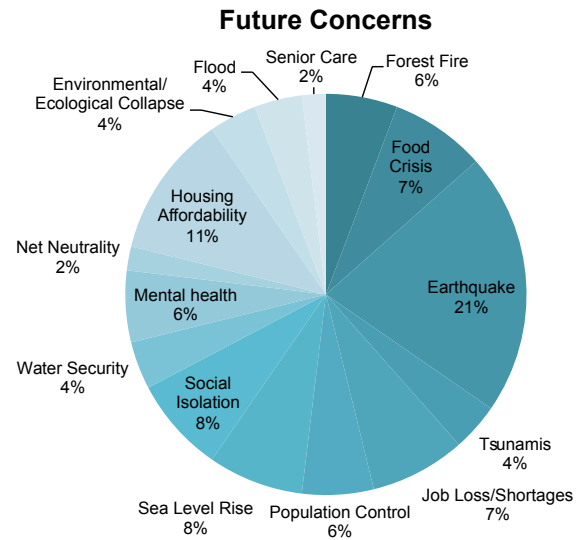
- High level snapshots of participants perceptions of Vancouver’s shocks and stresses from the Sharing our Stories Event, Vancouver Planning Commission Summit and the Vancouver Economic Commission Workshop.
- High level themes from all of the external feedback collected throughout phase 1.
- High level themes from all of the internal feedback collected throughout phase 1.

WORKSHOPS SNAPSHOTS

Sharing our Stories Event (October 24, 2017)

One of the exercises at this event asked participants what they felt were the shocks and stresses, trends or issues that would likely impact the wellbeing of their community. These discussions revealed an overwhelming concern about earthquakes and other natural disaster impacts, including forest fires and sea level rise.

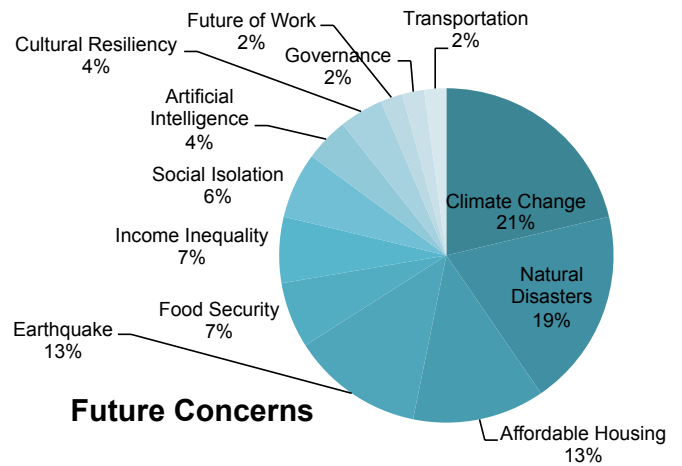
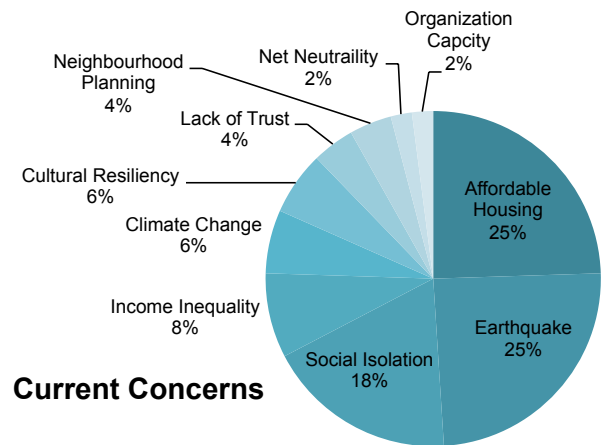
The following chart provides a quick snapshot of some of the concerns facing Vancouver including aging population, food and water security, economic/environmental collapse, affordability and net neutrality.



Vancouver Planning Commission Summit - October 25, 2017

The VCPC saw resiliency as a “top of the mind’ issue in light of recent global earthquakes, hurricanes, nuclear threats, mass atrocities and refugee crises that had direct relevance to Vancouver. 140 participants shared what their current and future concerns were for Vancouver. Affordable housing and earthquakes came up repeatedly, along with climate change and income inequality. Discussions also included:

- the importance of social connection, inclusion and trust in responding to shocks and stresses;
- the need to create vertical communities as the city moves to more high rises;
- the value of leveraging the strength and experiences of new immigrants;
- concerns and opportunities made possible by technology and artificial intelligence
- the value of re-connecting with our sense of place; and
- the need for spaces to be with people who are different.



Vancouver Economic Workshop – November 7, 2017

On November 7, 2017, the Vancouver Economic Commission and City of Vancouver’s Resilience Team convened a group of private sector stakeholders to develop a collective vision for Vancouver’s future economy and identify the issues we must address in order to realize that vision. Below is a snapshot of some of the challenges, concerns and opportunities we heard about the economy in Vancouver.

WE ASKED: What is the biggest challenge your organization is likely to encounter in the next 15 years?



- 58% talent** Difficulty finding, training, and retaining enough skilled employees to meet our growth potential
- 30% cost** Finding and gaining access to affordable operating space and weathering the increased cost of doing business
- 20% adaptation** Not being able to support workers in a changing employment landscape / maintaining relevance in a rapidly shifting economic landscape
- 2% infrastructure** Aging infrastructure—increased demand for infrastructure combined with severe funding constraints

WE ASKED: What is your biggest personal fear for the future of Vancouver's economy?



- 40% affordability** Fear that we will not be able to retain talent, families, and young people as a result of increased costs of living
- 20% displacement** Fear of displacement of businesses due to increased cost of doing business, especially for small independent businesses
- 15% external forces** Fear of external forces having negative impact on Vancouver's economy, including geopolitical risk and economic recession
- 15% cultural** Fear of legacy thinking and cultural biases holding back the potential for a 21st century economy and excluding certain demographics from sharing in prosperity

EXTERNAL FEEDBACK THEMES

What does resilience mean?

Many people spoke about resilience in the context of culture, social connectivity, and disasters. Reconciliation was highlighted by many as integral to Vancouver's resilience. Most responses centered on the ability to "bounce back" after an event or tragedy and participants discussed the link between resilience and community cohesiveness. Participants also highlighted the importance of community coming together in the face of adversity and of rebuilding with a strong sense of community.

When talking about what resilience means, conversations also centered around earthquakes and Indigenous reconciliation. It was clear that earthquake risk is front and center in the minds of many Vancouverites. Several participants raised the ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from an earthquake as directly related to resilience.

An important theme that was discussed was the model of resilience that Indigenous communities have provided and continue to provide to Vancouver. Respondents made clear that there was a lot to learn from both the contributions of Indigenous people to Vancouver, e.g., their role in saving residents during the fire, as well as how they've managed to survive all of the direct and indirect attempts to marginalize them.

Resilience is...

- Collective strength and the ability to recover and.
- Adaptation without the loss of a core identity.
- Learning from challenges and becoming stronger.
- Reliance on the community to rebound and recover.
- Sustainability, adaptation, and community.
- People being able to help each other in times of crisis, disaster, social problems

Vancouver's Resilience

When we asked people about resilience, we asked them to consider the context of Vancouver as a community, and not just in terms of the performance of the City of Vancouver as a governing organization. Through this, we were able to get feedback both on city government as a factor contributing to resilience, and also about the conditions and systems that exist outside of city government. One of the most striking findings from the Phase 1 work was the wide range of definitions and perceptions of resilience that people

hold. The factors that people identified as contributing to resilience spanned personal experience to global issues, and people drew complex connections across many scales. For the most part, discussions focused on gaps and issues negatively impacting resilience in Vancouver - including housing affordability, seismic risk, and social isolation - but many people also made a point of highlighting areas where we (as a community) were strong, commonly citing sustainability, diversity, entrepreneurial spirit, access to nature, and community-led initiatives as key strengths. There is a huge appetite from our residents, businesses, partners, stakeholders and other levels of government to work together to address these concerns.

Affordability (or lack thereof)

It's no surprise that affordability was the number one stress that came up again and again through the first phase of engagement. In addition to the lack of affordable housing, the increase cost of living in Vancouver and low wages (B.C. has the lowest minimum wage in Canada), we heard that the impact it is having on people and organizations across different sectors and neighbourhoods is varied and dire. The non-profits we spoke to consistently reported difficulty attracting and retaining staff due to housing affordability, at the same time as demand for their services are increasing. The stress on families (young families in particular), seniors (homelessness among seniors is on the rise), and our city's most vulnerable is having the worst impact of all. Participants felt that there is no holistic approach to address affordability. For the most part, it's looked at through a housing lens (increase housing and alleviate the pressure), however what is considered "affordable" by the City of Vancouver, is still not affordable for middle-to low income families.

Social Connection and Isolation

Many participants cited social isolation as a factor that negatively impacts resilience and the ability for individuals and communities to thrive day-to-day and in a crisis. Social isolation was attributed to a number of different and interconnected issues, including affordability, transient communities, stress, language and cultural divides, lack of accessibility, racism, age and technology. However it is worth noting that almost all of the non-profits and service providers highlighted their attempts to address isolation and increase social connectedness through programming and utilizing space and opportunity as a way to bring people together. For example, the Vancouver Society for Children Centres creates opportunities for their families to connect with one another in their child care spaces, and 411 Seniors use their centre to bring seniors together by hosting discussions, tax centres and acting as a liaison

between the seniors they support and government services. MOSAIC provides critical education and translation services for newcomers, and hosts dialogues and social events to support newcomers to thrive in Vancouver. Other examples of positive work to address social isolation include the City of Vancouver's Healthy City Strategy, and the Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants program.

De-stigmatize mental health, addictions, and poverty

Another consistent theme throughout this process was the need to support and resource the de-stigmatization of mental health, addictions and poverty in how we talk about them and address them. More than one in five residents in Vancouver currently lives in poverty. There is a correlation between low incomes are more likely to suffer from chronic conditions, live with disabilities, require health services, suffer from mental distress, and die earlier (Poverty Reduction Strategy). We heard from people that instead of considering mental health, addiction and poverty as "stresses", that these are actually symptoms of systemic bias and barriers. The need to continue to work to de-stigmatize and provide opportunities for people experiencing these challenges is important for near and long term resilience. Participants acknowledge that certain groups are disproportionately impacted by these issues including women, seniors, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and refugees; but this does not mean that these groups or people are not resilient. There are many myths about what it is like and what it means to live in poverty and these misconceptions often contribute to stigma and increased barriers for low-income individuals. The way governments define and measure the multiple dimensions of poverty is an important part of addressing these stigmas, and engaging people with lived experience is essential to getting it right.

Food Insecurity

Conversations about poverty and affordability often led to concerns about food insecurity in Vancouver. Freshroots and KidSafe - organizations that are committed to ensuring the wellbeing of school age children in Vancouver acknowledge that food is crucial to our survival and development. Children and youth who have access to and consume nutritious and healthy meals do better in school. However, it was noted that Canada is the only G8 nation that doesn't have a national school food program despite the fact that 1 in 8 Canadian households struggle to put food on the table - amounting to over 4 million Canadians, including 1.15 million children. That translates to about one in nine households (11.8%) in BC and participants recognize that food insecurity is worst for those most vulnerable. Furthermore, for every farmer under 35, there are 6 over 65 and while growing food is important, even farmers need

to retire. In addition to feeding children, Freshroots also trains and teaches future growers, food distributors, chefs, and marketers what food is and where it comes from through their Schoolyard Farm Internship.

Trust in Government

Discussions around the lack of transparency (and the resulting lack of trust) with respect to the City's engagement and decision-making process was another consistent theme heard throughout the first phase of engagement. There was a strong sentiment that when the City does engage, it's usually too late (decisions have already been made and the City is asking for feedback on a solution they are putting forward) and public feedback isn't reflected in any meaningful way. It was also noted that the City doesn't do enough to engage groups and individuals that are typically harder to engage (those who have language and accessibility barriers, and those who don't typically participate in civic processes). For example, 411 Seniors noted that most of the seniors they work with don't have access to a computer and are unable to complete online questionnaires. Similarly, those who don't speak English fluently often get left out of engagement processes. Finally, participants felt very little thought is given to where in-person sessions are held, such as open houses and workshops, as they are often inaccessible to for low-income individuals, or those with mobility challenges (even by transit), nor is there child/adult care available for individuals who are primary caregivers. As a result it is seen that the City regularly excludes individuals who are impacted by decisions from the decision-making process.

Local Decision Making and Community Governance

Staff heard concerns about the lack of civic literacy among residents and the importance of being engaged in the decision making process and the direct impact it has on shaping our surroundings and enhanced sense of personal agency and control. This was reflected in the 2014 municipal election when only 43 per cent of registered voters voted. It was noted that engagement in civic and community issues can't happen meaningfully without a certain degree of knowledge about how government works and what government is responsible for. For example it was noted that the average citizen doesn't understand what each level of government is responsible for (municipal, provincial and federal government) or decision making processes that have impacts on their communities and livelihoods. Civic literacy is necessary in order to allow citizens to exercise their rights and obligations and provide government with an understanding of the concerns and opportunities when considering implications of civic

decisions. This is foundational in order to start building trust between residents and government and empower communities to take on a greater role in the decision making process. Finally, there was a strong desire among a number of contributors to embrace more collaborative governance models with respect to utilizing civic facilities and public space.

Accessibility and Equity

Related to the above theme is the idea of accessibility within the City. At present, the City of Vancouver does not have an accessibility strategy. In the words of one interviewee, “How can you begin to develop a resilience strategy for the City when we don’t yet have an accessibility strategy?” This conversation partly referred to the city’s built environment, but also the systems of support that are in place (or lack thereof) to support people with disabilities. Moreover, the themes of this conversation drew heavily on equity – with many programs and services within the city leaving out significant groups including those with disabilities, individuals with low income, women, people who do not speak English, Indigenous and Urban Aboriginals, people of colour and people with mental health and addictions challenges. However, some participants acknowledged the work around gender equality, reducing language barriers, destigmatizing mental illness, drug addiction, poverty, and supporting seniors and people with disabilities that community members and organizations in have taken the lead on.

Culture

Culture was a big theme that was woven into many conversations about resilience and was identified as being a cornerstone of resilience. The lack of understanding about Vancouver’s history and cultural heritage is also considered to be a factor in why Vancouver is considered a lonely and isolated City. A strong cultural foundation has the potential to make our neighbourhoods more resilient and socially connected places to live. Vancouver is one of the most multicultural and diverse cities in Vancouver; 44% of Vancouver residents are immigrants and there are about 150 languages spoken. There is tremendous opportunity to draw on the experiences of all of our residents to build resilience and shape Vancouver’s cultural identity to be more inclusive. And while Vancouver has a reputation of fostering its arts and culture sector (at one point Vancouver has had more artists per capita than any other city in Canada), the current affordability challenges and digital revolution is changing that landscape.

Reconciliation

There was a lot of discussion about reconciliation and what it means to different people, groups and organization. Contributors working in the non-profit sector in particular, and participants at the VCPC summit and Sharing our Stories Event, highlighted the strong connection between resilience and reconciliation and redress with Indigenous, Chinese, Japanese and South Asian communities was necessary. Many people highlighted the important work that City of Vancouver has done to acknowledge and advance the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); however, some felt that the current governance and city-building processes are insufficient to accomplish reconciliation because they continue to exclude some community voices. In some cases this exclusion can result in inadequate access to basic necessities such as healthcare, education and even clean water. These injustices translate into vulnerabilities and, coupled with isolation, they become the antithesis of resilience. Indigenous communities and other groups including early Chinese and Japanese immigrants were subject to discriminatory public policies, exclusionary land-use practices and unjustified incarceration. These communities have persevered and contributed significantly to the history of the region. The road to a resilient city starts with an honest understanding of the past, how we got here and how we move forward in a way that lifts all people.

Racism

Similar to the above theme, participants noted racism as a barrier to realizing resilience in Vancouver. Vancouver is often celebrated as a universally inclusive place – however, in reality this is not always the case. A recent study commissioned by Vancity found that 82 per cent of visible minorities in B.C. say they have experienced prejudice or some form of discrimination. This sentiment was reinforced by participants who talked about witnessing and being on the receiving end of racism in Vancouver. Participants noted there was an overall lack of acknowledgement about racism in Vancouver because they believed people would prefer to ignore it or refuse to admit it is a problem.

Climate adaptation in neighbourhoods

Recent research completed by the City of Vancouver shows that Vancouver is expecting one meter of sea level rise by 2100 and some areas like Southlands and False Creek (neighbourhoods that already experience flooding) are at higher risk than others. There is a desire among residents, businesses and neighbourhoods to collaborate and collectively address some of these concerns within

their own neighbourhoods. For example, a program called Green Block is working with four neighbourhoods within the city to help foster sustainability through collaboration and innovation to create resident-focused solutions to reduce their ecological footprints. Other organizations like the Vancouver Economic Commission and Climate Smart work with businesses who want to reduce their ecological footprint and the City of Vancouver was one of the first cities in North America to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. While there is a huge appetite to respond to climate change at every level of government, the focus is on policy changes. There is tremendous desire from neighbourhoods to respond at a neighbourhood level but there is currently very little support, resources and tools available to have a meaningful impact.

Emergency Preparedness and Risk Awareness

Most participants had some understanding of emergency preparedness. Almost all of the organizations mentioned having processes and procedures in place in the event of a shock like an earthquake or fire. However the majority of these plans were short-term to immediate responses that lasted anywhere from 72 hours to one-month, meaning they had no “recoverability” or business continuity plan for after the initial shock. Reasons varied by organization and sector. Neighbourhood organizations and non-profits don’t have a clear understanding of what they are responsible for and what the City is responsible for (most of the facilities that these organizations operate out of are owned by the City of Vancouver). They also expressed consistent challenges in regards to a lack of storage space to store emergency food or water for more than 72 hours. Participants were more aware of some risks more than others (this was also highlighted in the TalkVancouver Questionnaire). For example, earthquake was almost synonymous with resilience. Flooding and fire were also acknowledged as risks we should be proactively preparing for. This led to discussions about action needed to ensure seismically sound buildings and infrastructure (such as our roads and bridges) and adaptation measures for our waterfront.

Business Continuity

When talking about resilience, discussions about being prepared in the case of an emergency and having a business continuity plan were often confused for the same thing. While emergency preparedness is considered as being prepared with the basic essentials in the event of an emergency, a business continuity plan is a longer-term plan to help businesses and organizations recover and continue to operate after a shock like a fire or flood. Most of the participants didn’t have a business continuity plan

(this is consistent with research that shows the majority of small businesses in Canada lack one) despite being aware of Vancouver’s earthquake risk. While specific reasons weren’t provided, studies have shown that lack of awareness (business owners didn’t realize they needed one) and lack of knowledge or resources to develop one are factors. Similarly recent shocks like the Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and the 2013 Calgary floods have demonstrated the necessity of having one. According to the Calgary Chambers of Commerce, there were 7,000 Calgary businesses affected by the flood but only 57 per cent of those were likely to reopen.

Seismic Mitigation

Most of the discussion around seismic mitigation was discussed in the context of Vancouver being at risk of an earthquake and emergency preparedness. However, conversations with experts from various organizations and government highlighted concerns and questions about whether Vancouver’s buildings and infrastructure could withstand an earthquake. There is a roughly 40% chance that Vancouver will experience a 6.8 magnitude (or greater) earthquake in the next 30 years. While more work is needed to understand and address Vancouver’s seismic risk, we do know many people and buildings in Vancouver would not survive an earthquake. Earthquake risk amplifies and threatens to worsen all existing challenges the city faces, including social inequity, lack of affordability, displacement-gentrification, and strains on housing and small businesses.

Funding Models for Non-Profits

Not surprising, current funding and financial models were themes heard throughout the first phase of engagement. Two specific challenges emerged: many organizations struggle to obtain operational funding, so their day-to-day operational funding is scarce and limited and they struggle to provide adequate pay and support to staff members who are also facing affordability issues within the city. Additionally, organizations that provide basic necessities for communities have recently been struggling with a raft of new grants that are attached to the concept of “innovation”. In the words of one service provider, “Those grants simply don’t apply to us. There’s nothing innovative about feeding kids breakfast. We are just trying to meet a basic need.” On the flip side, many organizations that are trying to innovate and create systems-change are stymied by being tied to single-year grants that are predicated on success. In other words, there’s no space for failing and learning when trying new things. Also, in order to test and work towards real long-term change, single-year or even two-year grants prevent non-profits from investing in long-

term planning. Change to complex problems takes time – five years or more in most cases – and these organizations are left trying to come up with annual quantitative metrics to prove the value of their work, when the value is long term and qualitative.

Financing the public good and infrastructure

Another theme staff heard through various stakeholders was the need to be more transparent about how public dollars were spent and the mechanisms in place that help staff determine the trade-offs for different solutions and approaches. There was consensus that the overall health and success of Vancouver was dependent on affordability and equity for families, residents and businesses. With regard to resiliency in particular, financing needed to be future looking, encompass potential shocks and stressors and include social factors that build community stability as well as economic well-being (not necessarily growth). While many people highlighted the need to fund efforts in social resilience, by exploring new mechanisms like

Future of work

The future of work in Vancouver in the context of affordability and the digital revolution we are currently in the middle of was raised as major trend that would influence Vancouver – although people spoke about this issue in very different ways. More and more organizations and companies are losing capable and educated talent because they can't afford to live in Vancouver. Young people with post-secondary degrees are working for a couple of years to gain experience in Vancouver and then leaving. This is especially true for non-profits who are struggling to retain staff and meet the demand for the services they provide. Companies are also struggling to retain talent because they can't match wages and face increasing property values. We heard that there is growing skills gap with respect to this digital transformation. Technology is moving faster than systems are able to keep up and it's affecting the way we do business and function in our day-to-day lives. Despite all of these changes, there has been very little movement on the labour policy front to reflect this. The inclusiveness of the economy in the future and the risk of further income disparity for people that aren't able to access the skills and training to participate, is a concern.

Economy

It's acknowledged that Vancouver has a strong economy; however concerns were raised about maintaining that growth, and for all people to be able to benefit from

it, in the face of current challenges like affordability, the changing nature of work, retaining talent, aging infrastructure and external influences such as geo-political risk. More than 90% of Vancouver's businesses are small and mid-size businesses, employing more than 75% of the working population; yet, many of these business owners are concerned about the viability of their continued success in Vancouver as land values and lease rates climb. One of the most pervasive concerns around economic resilience has been the high cost of living in Vancouver. Employees and employers alike are expressing concerns over brain drain. In Vancouver's case, this means people staying until they are mid-career (in their 30s and 40s) then leaving to a community where housing is less expensive in order to raise a family or put down roots.

INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

UBC and CRO Interviews and Focus Groups with City Staff and Leaders

Between May and December 2017, the Chief Resilience Officer worked with the UBC Sauder School to conduct interviews and inventory actions internal to the city. Common themes emerging from these interviews are discussed below.

Government - Community Interactions: Relationship, roles, expectations & accountability

Internally, COV staff felt the global trend of diminishing trust between government and the public was also manifesting itself here in Vancouver. Staff also spoke to the lack of civic literacy and concerns of how social isolation is having an impact on community wellbeing. There was recognition among City staff that different approaches are needed to better engage and empower residents and neighbourhoods to respond to the needs of their communities by providing them with a clear understanding of city processes and how they work, and understanding and removing barriers that prevent residents from engaging. It was recognized though that this is not just about the way the city works – residents and stakeholders also have less time and more stress and may not have the capacity to participate no matter what. A number of staff highlighted the opportunity to leverage the knowledge of staff that are also residents of Vancouver, and expressed an interest in building strong relationships in the communities they are working in. This can be hard under pressure of deadlines and increasing workloads that don't provide the time it takes to establish relationships.

Data Literacy & Information Access

Like a lot of organizations today, how to gather, store and utilize the abundance of data that is available is a game changer. We've never ever had access to so much data so quickly. There's a skill and technology gap with respect to how we collect and utilize data and the potential for what is possible. Used to its fullest potential, the data currently available to us can give us a better understanding of future trends and allows us the strategic foresight to make better decisions when planning for the future. Understanding the opportunities from city data, continuing to pursue an open-data policy, and building capacity in systems to leverage future technologies is seen as a huge opportunity for the City and for the community to foster innovation and accountability, and for modelling the potential trade-offs and resilience value of investments and plans. At the same time, data literacy, and the potential for a widening digital divide, is a concern in the context of equity and access to information and city services, and with respect to the nature of work and training needs for city staff and the public. It was also acknowledge that the Smart Cities Challenge and the development of a resilience strategy was an opportunity to further explore this in partnership with community and the many tech and data experts that live in Vancouver.

Infrastructure & Investment

Similar to the above theme, utilizing data to develop a framework to help staff assess, prioritize and invest in critical infrastructure was a theme that came up repeatedly internally and externally. Many staff are working to evaluate new infrastructure and technologies that will enable our city to be resilient to future conditions; these require capital and operating investments in the near term and represent a new way of doing things. Utilizing data and modelling to understand the potential impacts of disasters and threats, is an opportunity that staff would like to explore. Staff noted that as the pressure on infrastructure increases, we need to explore new ways to build and finance assets ranging from dykes and flood protection to resilient infrastructure and seismic upgrades.

Building, Investing in Local & Organizational Workforce for the Future

Consistent with the feedback heard externally, the future of work was also a theme that came up internally with respect to skills development, capacity building and retaining young talent. Affordability and the cost of living is affecting staff and the City is beginning work to better

understand how as an organization we need to innovate and transform in this digital age to meet the needs of residents and businesses.

Social Cohesion & Connection

Supporting better connected communities is a priority for the City of Vancouver and was reinforced by staff. Connected neighbours and communities are better at responding during emergencies and look out for their neighbours. Understanding how the City can support this through city planning and the development of city-wide strategies is important to staff.

Conclusion

Resilience in an urban setting is all encompassing and affects every part of our day-to-day. Developing a Resilient Vancouver Strategy will help us to continue to be a prosperous and growing city. However we first must acknowledge that not everyone in Vancouver is thriving. Vancouver's population is aging, and affordability impacts our shared future. More than one in five Vancouverites faces poverty; housing costs are high and rising; and many residents struggle to find secure, well-paying employment. While many Vancouverites enjoy good physical health, people with serious mental health and addictions and their families struggle to access services and supports that they need.

Vancouver has been thinking ahead to build a resilient city. Current policies combined with impressive initiatives led by citizens, businesses and organizations across our city, and throughout the region, ensure a strong foundation for building resilience. By working with our communities, partners and stakeholders, the city will build on the work it has already done, and integrate and amplify resilience solutions being driven by local partners. In developing the Resilient Vancouver Strategy, we will seek to address the city's shocks and stresses through a holistic lens that accounts for the entire urban ecosystem. Rather than viewing any one issue in isolation, or the work of one sector or organization as independent of another, Vancouver, with the support of 100RC and community partners, will develop solutions designed for the interdependence of the city's systems, and solve multiple challenges through single interventions.

Ultimately, resilience must be fostered at multiple levels, including individual, neighbourhood, organizational, and broader policy levels. The feedback gained from the broader Vancouver community will help shape and inform City-wide resilience strategies while aligning critical work already taking place across Vancouver.

RESILIENT VANCOUVER

PHASE ONE ENGAGEMENT REPORT

