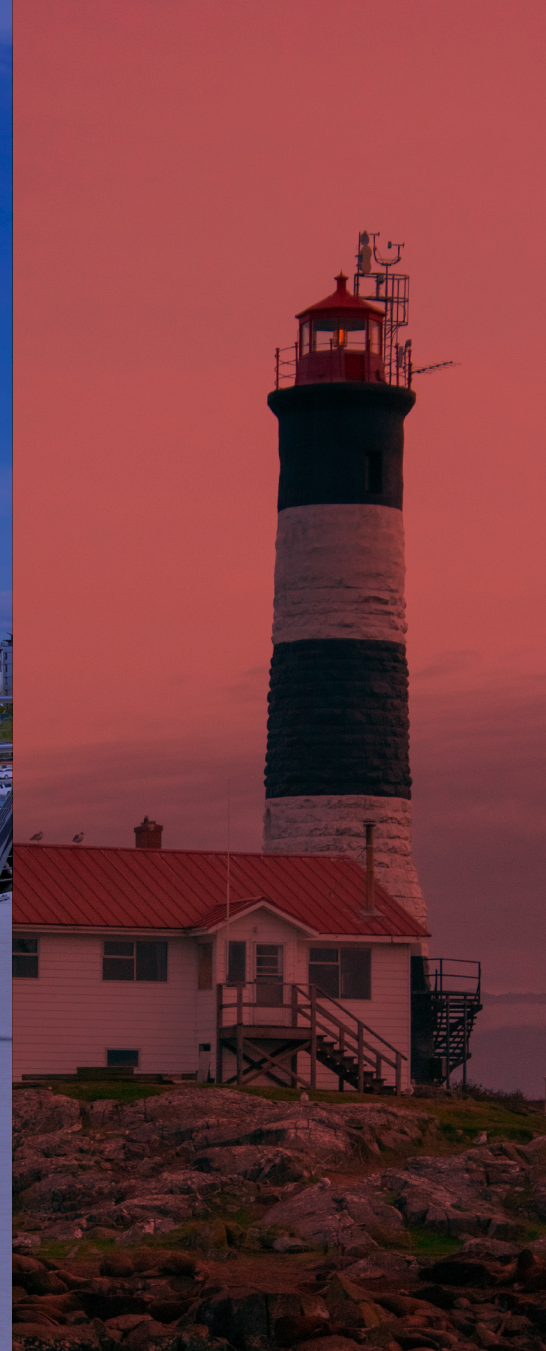


# Victoria Nurtures

Vital Conversations for  
Our Shared Future

*A Canadian Urban Institute  
Collaboration, April 2022*



# Foreword

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) is the national platform that houses the best in Canadian city building, where policymakers, urban professionals, civic and business leaders, community activists, and academics can learn, share and collaborate from coast to coast to coast. CUI believes that, by growing the connective tissue within and between cities of all sizes, we can, together, make urban Canada all that it can be.



Our **CUI x Local** series shines a spotlight on community-driven responses to some of the most pressing challenges in Canada's large urban regions. In collaboration with local leaders, we're on a cross-Canada listening tour to seek out the very best ideas that can inform community building, shape policy and be adapted by city builders across the country. What we're hearing and seeing are solutions that demonstrate creative, sometimes risky, inspiring approaches that haven't received enough national attention — yet.

In this spirit, **Victoria Nurtures** reports on what people involved in the arts, social services, economic development, neighbourhoods, urban planning and other sectors told us is working, what's not working and what's next. Through meetings with a diverse cross-section of Victoria leaders, we learned about the experiences and perspectives of the city's diverse populations. We listened to the unique conditions that are driving amazing "made-in-Victoria" solutions to the city's challenges; and we called for local perspectives on Victoria's future as an inclusive, sustainable and vibrant city that builds on its assets and potential. **Victoria Nurtures** introduces city builders to the people, place and potential of this city. The information gathered reflects some of the best examples Victoria can offer to Canadians who are seeking inspiration and new ways of doing things to improve the quality of life in our cities.

Here is what we heard.

# Land acknowledgement

## LEKWUNGEN TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the City of Victoria stands, and the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples whose historical relationships with the land and waters continue to this day.

CUI recognizes that colonization and associated attitudes, policies and institutions have significantly changed Indigenous peoples' relationship with this land. Urban planning and placemaking in this country has its own legacy of colonialism, exclusion, racism, barriers and prejudice. We are on a journey to better understand this legacy, and, more importantly, to work with Indigenous partners, leaders, elders and young people to overcome it through meaningful change.

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, we're building better and meaningful partnerships with Indigenous communities, developing new programs, and working to bring our work into better harmony with Indigenous cultures, beliefs and ways of being. Indigenous people and communities are an important part of building an inclusive, equitable and just future for urban Canada.



# Letter from Mary W. Rowe

CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE PRESIDENT AND CEO

In 2020 and 2021, CUI planned a series of tours to Canadian cities. Through these visits, we had the opportunity to experience these vibrant places through the eyes of the people who call them home. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we switched to week-long virtual visits, organizing conversations and roundtables with diverse groups on various topics. We've taken everything we've learned and compiled the learnings into a report to showcase the best on-the-ground local solutions and share them with the rest of Canada.

These are the stories that make urban Canada tick: the pulse of livability and resilience across the country, the risks and the hardships, the new voices, the local heroes and the bright spots that others need to hear about.

This report is an invitation to visit Victoria, to dip in and out, visiting its corners and its main streets, to hear how the city is moving.

For our final CUI x Local collaboration in 2021, we partnered with the City of Victoria and the Victoria Foundation to organize more than two

dozen virtual meetings, working group sessions and workshops with over 60 organizations and more than 100 individuals.

People told us what's special about their city and how they've been able to achieve successful, inspiring outcomes. They also told us about the challenges the city is struggling with — some unique to Victoria, and others more familiar to city builders across the country, including chronic systemic issues like poverty, homelessness, inequity and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

We listened to the unique conditions that are driving made-in-Victoria solutions: what's working, but also where the roadblocks are. This report is an invitation to discover Victoria, to dip in and out, visiting its corners and its main streets, to hear how the city is moving. It reflects what we heard and offers some of the best guidance Victoria can offer. While it's not an exhaustive catalogue, what follows are the community-driven initiatives and approaches that people told us reflect where Victoria is right now. It is helping to lay the groundwork for a healthy, inclusive future-ready city.

As CUI enters its 32nd year, the critical importance of Canada's cities is clear. Our collective ability to achieve the highest environmental, social and economic goals — at all levels of government and internationally — depends on how well our cities can manage local and systemic challenges, create and build on community-driven solutions, and take steps to secure their future well-being. We are focused on driving those linkages that accelerate innovation, hasten reform and direct investment. We want to ensure local realities and experiences are integrated into government policies, plans and programs at all levels. We believe urbanism involves everyone, and solutions must be grounded in the local. We will continue this journey together, and we look forward to hearing and sharing your stories. Please check in with us at [www.canurb.org/cuixlocal](http://www.canurb.org/cuixlocal) as we travel across Canada together.

***Mary W. Rowe (she/her)***

**PRESIDENT AND CEO  
CANADIAN URBAN INSTITUTE  
@ROWEMW**



# City of Victoria and surrounding area



# Victoria's Vital Signs: The annual community checkup

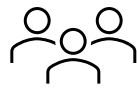
LEARN MORE ABOUT VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS [HERE](#).

Victoria's Vital Signs is an annual community check-up that measures the vitality of our region, identifies concerns, and supports action on issues that are critical to our quality of life.

The Victoria Foundation produces the report to connect philanthropy to community needs and opportunities.

Here are some of the highlights that were relevant to CUI x Victoria.

## + *Population*



# 92,141

Victoria Population  
Third largest city in B.C.

# 397,237

Greater Victoria population

Source: Statistics Canada

## + *Housing*



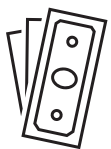
# 92%

Of respondents want permanent housing, but the top three obstacles are high rents, low income and lack of options

According to the 2020 Point in Time survey

Source: Capital Regional District in partnership with the Community Social Planning Council and Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness

## + *Family income*



# \$57,550

Greater Victoria median census family income after tax in 2018

Higher than the national and provincial average (\$53,440 in Canada and \$53,480 in British Columbia)

Source: Statistics Canada

## + *Children and youth*



# 633

Children and youth in care, of whom 66% were Indigenous

In South Vancouver Island, as of December 31, 2020

Source: BC Ministry of Children and Family Development

## + *Post-secondary education*



# 64%

Of the population had completed some post-secondary education

Aged 15 years and older in the Greater Victoria area

Source: Statistics Canada

# Victoria's Vital Signs: The annual community checkup

LEARN MORE ABOUT VICTORIA'S VITAL SIGNS [HERE](#).

## + *Household income on rent*

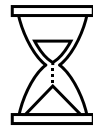


# 44%

Of the gross monthly income of a person working 35 hours a week at B.C.'s minimum hourly wage of \$15.20 would need to be spent on rent

For a bachelor apartment (\$1,015) in Greater Victoria, based on 52 weeks per year

Source: Statistics Canada

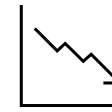


# 51

Hours a week at minimum wage is what a person would need to work to affordably rent a bachelor apartment

i.e. spend no more than 30% of household income on rent

## + *Economy perception*



# 64%

Of people who took the Vital Signs survey reported their perceptions of the economy as average, below average, or poor

Respondents who recorded an annual income over \$80,000/year, were more likely to rate the economy as excellent or good

Source: 2021 Vital Signs Citizen Survey

## + *Racism*



# 71%

Of Indigenous people, Black people and people of colour (BIPOC) in Victoria regularly experience racism

Source: Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria and Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership

## + *Migration*



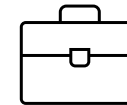
# 6,273

People was the total net migration Greater Victoria had between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020

Of whom 20% (1,261) came from countries outside Canada

Source: Statistics Canada

## + *Unemployment*



# 15%

Unemployment rate for youth, between 15-24 years old

In Greater Victoria in 2020, up from 6% in 2019

Source: Statistics Canada



# Inspired community-led solutions: connecting people, place and potential

The Greater Victoria area comprises multiple communities and neighbourhoods on southern Vancouver Island. The City of Victoria proper is the most populous and home to a downtown that hosts visitors from all over the world. In total, the Greater Victoria area is made up of:

## 13 MUNICIPALITIES AND THREE ELECTORAL AREAS OF VARYING DEGREES OF RURAL AND URBAN CONCENTRATIONS.

Each municipality harbours numerous neighbourhoods with their own distinct vibe and characteristics that are reflected in their local businesses, parks, restaurants and gathering places. Nestled along the southeastern coastline of Vancouver Island, each neighbourhood boasts unique ocean vistas, forests, gardens and mountains. Those fortunate enough to call this land home have connected deeply with its natural beauty for millennia.

These local areas are built upon the traditional territory of the Coast Salish People and [10 unique First Nations](#). CUI enjoyed the privilege of being welcomed by members of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, whose traditional territory includes the City of Victoria, to host a week of discussions on inclusive city building. The event brought together diverse communities and perspectives to foster dialogue, understand challenges and identify solutions to move forward. It centred the voices and experiences of those who are often marginalized and shut out from equitable participation in Canadian society.

In total, CUI and local partners organized fifteen sessions with themes that ranged from institutional racism to sustainable business practices to climate trauma, grief and action. Each session, facilitated by individuals from diverse groups and communities, led to inspiring and challenging conversations. They spoke of major stumbling blocks and necessary reckonings for Victoria to address in order to build a stronger, more inclusive and resilient city.

Case in point: the median family income in the Greater Victoria area is about \$4,000 higher than the rest of the province and country, and, according to Statistics Canada, respondents to the Vital Signs survey who made at least \$80,000 were more likely to rate the economy as good or excellent. At the same time, over 70% of members of the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities said they regularly experience racism, according to a report from the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria and Greater Victoria Local Immigration Partnership. And over 33% of the respondents to the 2020 Point in Time survey reporting experiencing homelessness were Indigenous, despite accounting for only 5% of the general population (Source: Capital Regional District in partnership with the Community Social Planning Council and Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness).

While these polarities were ever-present in our discussions, the overall tone was hopeful. Grassroots and other organizations that have broken the mould with progressive visions described the factors leading to their success. Keep reading, and you will learn about the challenges the South Island faces, but more importantly, you will come across dozens of ideas and actions to contribute to a more inclusive and thriving environment.

The biggest takeaway from the week can be summed up by one theme: nurturing. Despite the hard truths voiced by some, and the uphill battle many are still fighting, almost everyone approached the discussions with the intent to foster openness, collaboration and healing. If we nurture each other, especially those in need, and nurture worthwhile ideas and values through active listening and respectful learning, there is no limit to our collective future.

Victoria is a national leader when it comes to facing Canada's problematic and tragic history with Indigenous people. In 2017 the City of Victoria and members of the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations created the City Family to help reconcile the past and continue to navigate ongoing difficult situations. As Mayor Lisa Helps explained during the opening of CUI x Victoria, this was an unusual concept to municipal politics at the time.

The City had originally approached Songhees Nation and the Esquimalt Nation to create a reconciliation task force, but were told that the Lekwungen unit of governance is the family, not a task force.



*We had never created a family before, of course, because we're a bureaucratic colonial institution. And so, we took our guidance from the Nations and created a family.*

– **Mayor Helps**

Christina Clarke, CEO of the Songhees Development Corporation, acknowledged that the City Family, and the paradigm shift it represents, has already helped the city get through some tough times. On Canada Day in 2021, Victoria witnessed a flare-up of vandalism fuelled by Canada's colonial legacy, a legacy that includes the discovery of dozens of unmarked graves of Indigenous children in B.C. and across Canada's residential school systems. Chiefs of South Island Nations spoke out against the protests while also acknowledging their value.



*The young people were expressing frustration that it's taking us too long to resolve issues that are important to them. The chiefs acknowledged that the youth want action and we need to take action: that's the takeaway.*

– **Christina Clarke**

This is the tip of a major reckoning that is underway in Victoria. Florence Dick, a member of the City Family and truth-sayer from the Lekwungen Nation, spoke of echoes from the past coming back to confront us.



*You don't want to have your grown kids come to you and give stuff back to you that wasn't meant for them when they were children. So that is me today, where I'm at and understanding the traumas.*

– **Florence Dick**

In one of the sessions, Janice Simcoe, also a City Family member and a member of the Chippewas Rama First Nation, recounted a rendition of O Canada she once wrote:



*O Canada, you're built upon the broken backs of men who hunted buffalo. We stand on guard for thee.*

— **Janice Simcoe**

"Canada is known as a peaceful and prosperous country, so what are we standing on guard for?" Simcoe asked. The question is a rhetorical one that invites each one of us to re-examine our history and community.

Members of the Chinese, Muslim and Black communities in Greater Victoria voiced similar sentiments throughout the sessions: they continue to labour under a legacy of trauma and historical injustices ingrained in our institutions, but look for a better, more just future and way forward.

The purpose of CUI x Victoria is to provide a platform for these truths and blatant injustices to be shared and validated. Participants courageously affirmed these histories.

They did so with the intent of being constructive and helping to evolve Victoria with these truths in plain sight.

The more those engaged with city building come together and learn from each other, the better and more quickly we can understand the impact of these historical wrongs, work to redress, build trust and move forward together.

The more we engage with each other and share our wisdom and perspectives, the better we can move towards building spaces and places within cities that are more equitable, just and widely prosperous.

**IT IS WITH THIS INTENT AND HOPE THAT WE PRESENT THIS REPORT.**



# How to use this report

The goal of this report is to be useful and digestible to all those interested in inclusive city building, in Victoria and across the country. The rest of the report is broken into five sections, each with a specific audience in mind:

<b>Section one:</b>	NEIGHBOURS AND PARENTS
<b>Section two:</b>	BUSINESSES
<b>Section three:</b>	NON-PROFITS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
<b>Section four:</b>	LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS
<b>Section five:</b>	REGIONAL AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The sections include a brief summary of the discussions CUI heard over the week-long event relevant to these audiences. The heart of each section is the set of actions participants articulated. Herein lies the hope of a way forward, and an answer to the crucial question on every attendee's mind:  
***But what can I do?***

The following sections can be read as standalone guides. Although each section is geared to a specific audience, there is value in reviewing the other sections as well. Neighbours and parents, for example, might want to know what local governments ought to be doing.

*Sections  
can be read  
as standalone  
guides.*

The sections also include bold and brave ideas to inspire the Victoria of tomorrow — a place that is more inclusive, nurturing of diverse perspectives, and provides space and security for those often marginalized. We invite you to find the section that most interests you. Read it. Think deeply about the topics. Imagine what could be.

**GO OUT AND DO SOMETHING.**

# At a glance

Foreward .....	2
Land acknowledgement .....	3
Letter from Mary W. Rowe .....	4
Map of Greater Victoria and Victoria .....	5
Victoria's Vital Signs .....	6
Inspired community-led solutions .....	8
How to use this report .....	11
At a glance .....	12
Overarching themes .....	13
Discussion topics .....	15

## Neighbours and parents..... 20

Simple tips and big ideas .....	22
Tangible to-dos.....	23
Pushing the envelope .....	27

## Businesses ..... 28

Simple tips and big ideas .....	31
Tangible to-dos.....	32
Pushing the envelope .....	35

## Non-profits and community organizations ..... 36

Simple tips and big ideas .....	39
Tangible to-dos.....	40
Pushing the envelope .....	42

## Local governments and institutions ..... 43

Simple tips and big ideas .....	45
Housing .....	46
Inclusive economy with Indigenous people .....	48
Food .....	51
Climate crisis and youth perspective .....	53
Homelessness .....	57
Reconciliation, education and inclusivity .....	59
Pushing the envelope .....	64

## Regional and national institutions ..... 65

Simple tips and big ideas .....	67
Tangible to-dos.....	69
Pushing the envelope .....	72
Acknowledgements .....	74

# Overarching themes

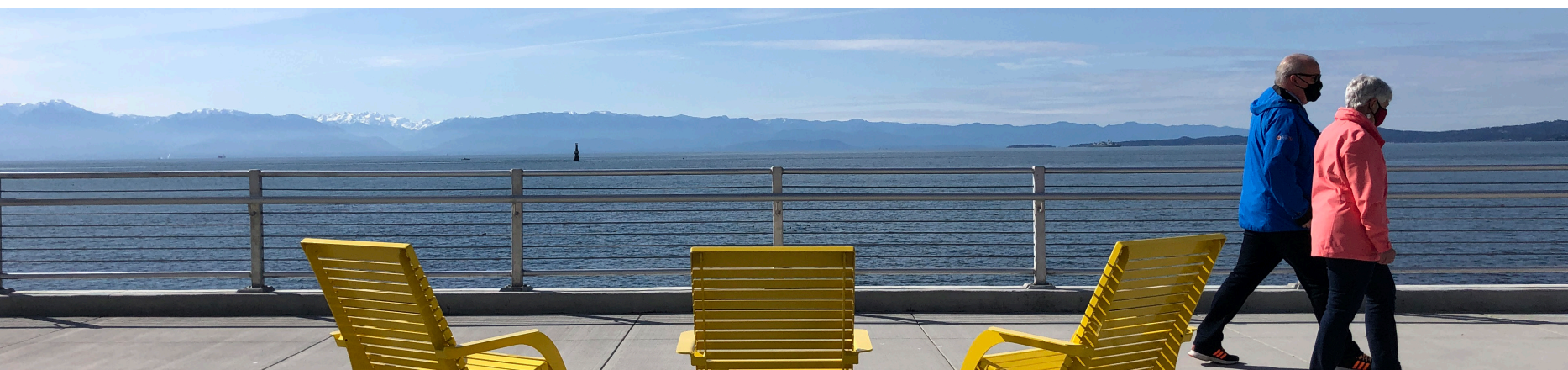
CUI x Victoria was a week filled with rich discussions about the things people love about their city, the things they felt could be better and their hopes for the future. Some key themes emerged and they are reflected in every section of this report. As you read through the sections, try to keep these in mind and think about what they mean to you.

## + *Nurture*

Like the nursery logs found in the old-growth forests of southern Vancouver Island, the area's urban institutions, organizations and individuals play a role in nurturing each other, contributing to communal growth and strength. This theme folds into others, including equity, consideration, sensitivity, intelligence and a willingness to learn. It includes a post growth economy, land stewardship and the positive feedback loop that happens when we shape the spaces around us, which in turn shapes us as individuals and communities. The goal of being more nurturing is foundational to city building in order to foster understanding, overcome division and build more caring communities.

## + *Relationships*

Meaningful efforts towards change begin with meaningful relationships. Genuine relationships help us to pivot from one perspective to another. They offer the opportunity to understand what identities intersect in people and communities that differ from ours. The path towards reconciliation and decolonization cannot be traveled without personal relationships, nor can inclusive economic development, sustainable practices, or reducing and removing stigma around mental health and homelessness — the list goes on and on.





### + ***Historical injustices lead to unjust power distribution***

Participants spoke about how historical wrongs are ingrained and protected in our society, precisely where power is concentrated. Institutions formalize and enshrine the legacy of those injustices — racist practices and mentalities that gave rise to the residential school system, for example, the remnants of which can be seen in our government bureaucracies. Misconceptions and stigma were something that many people spoke about. The emotional weight and labour are real for the communities and people who are disadvantaged by these exclusionary and dominant systems. Their positions give them a different perspective on how to heal, address these injustices and move forward — perspectives which we all benefit from incorporating into policies and practices. Many said that greater cooperation is needed between organizations, different levels of government and communities to combat these racist vestiges and democratize power distribution.

### + ***Evolving influences***

Many of those who spoke at CUI x Victoria said people are showing a renewed desire and commitment to grapple with the tragic chapters of our collective history and present circumstances. There is a changing of the guard as members from historically-marginalized communities are stepping into positions of influence, albeit slowly and sometimes only with consent from those currently wielding influence. What we heard from participants was clear: before moving toward action, we must sit with the truth; and a key to strengthening the changing of the guard is investing in more data. Nearly every session lamented the dearth of data that hampers inclusive city building. As long as there is no data to reflect experiences of injustice, some can and will insist they don't exist.

### + ***Collaboration over competition***

Rather than pitting interests against each other and competing for fixed resources with like-minded organizations or individuals, collaboration emerged as a major theme at CUI x Victoria. After hearing and learning from others with different perspectives and finding the humility to change how you think, building on efforts already underway is the next natural step. However, that effort must be trauma-informed and inclusive. We heard that self-representation of minority groups and structural changes are how to accomplish greater collaboration.

# Discussion topics

The City of Victoria and the Victoria Foundation, along with CUI, planned the sessions and invited speakers in an extended process that included consultation with many stakeholders in the Greater Victoria area. As the discussions unfolded, they took some unexpected turns and zeroed in on some very important topics. Here are six major ones that participants addressed.

*Six major topics addressed by participants*

## + ***Reconciliation, education and inclusivity***

Nearly everyone who spoke at the event recognized the need for reconciliation with Indigenous people on the South Island and across B.C. and Canada. They recognized that this process will take years of meaningful action, listening and humility as the colonial legacy continues to come into focus.

Education, interpreted as going well beyond the formal institutions of schools, universities and colleges, was flagged as critical. Personal self-initiated education to learn more about those whose identities, histories and cultures differ from our own is where much of the work resides.

Inclusion, we heard, means acknowledging the experiences and realities of those who are often systemically marginalized, and including them, their voices, and experiences in the public spaces of the city and in policy making. Our cities are stronger and more resilient when everyone sees a place for themselves.

## Sessions that focused on reconciliation, education and inclusivity:

- [Welcoming City Strategy](#)
- [The Non-field Field School: Community-Immersed Learning in COVID-19 Times](#)
- [The Making of Hope Meets Action: Echoes Through the Black Continuum](#)
- [Our Shared Future: Reflections From Youth](#)
- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods
- [Belonging in Victoria: Muslim Voices](#)
- [Inclusive Economies](#)

The Salish Sea Hub is Canada's Knowledge for Change (K4C) hub, focusing on building community-based research capacity and action towards decolonization, racial and gender equality, and climate action. The Hub is a multi-sector partnership between the University of Victoria, Victoria Foundation, and Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

## + **Housing**

Greater Victoria's rental market has long been plagued by low vacancy rates. Figures dating back to October 2020 from Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation puts the region at a 2.2% vacancy rate. Many participants reflected on the availability of housing and said they felt squeezed out of the existing real estate and rental markets, which is causing a high degree of anxiety about the future. Developers felt hamstrung by competing forces and economic realities, too.

City planners have a number of initiatives to address these concerns. Changes to zoning practices lie at the centre of these initiatives and many of the concerns we heard.

### Sessions that focused on housing:

- [Missing Middle Housing and Inclusive Climate Friendly Neighbourhoods](#)
- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods
- Our Neighbourhood: Addressing Stigma, Supporting Small Business
- [Climate Justice, Climate Grief, Climate Action: Intergenerational Dialogue on Climate Change and What's Next](#)

## + **Homelessness**

Homelessness is an issue that cities across Canada are grappling with, and one that has only gotten worse since the pandemic began. It is closely related to housing but often involves a wide array of other complexities, including the legacy of colonialism and its impacts on Indigenous people, substance use and mental health challenges, lack of support services, and the inequity of opportunities that leaves certain groups out.

### Sessions that focused on homelessness:

- [Stories for a Canada Under Review](#)
- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods
- [Inclusive Economies](#)
- Healthy and Just Food Systems
- Our Neighbourhood: Addressing Stigma, Supporting Small Business
- Breaking the Mold: Indigenous Economies and New Collaborative Models for Greater Prosperity

## + **Food**

Food consistently emerged from the discussions in seemingly unrelated conversations. CUI heard that food has the power to heal trauma, reconnect families, help address homelessness and empower refugee communities. Many youth said that food systems are directly related to the climate crisis. Equality and responsible power distribution, some youth argued, can be gauged by the distribution of meaningful access to all points of the food system.

### Sessions that focused on food:

- Healthy and Just Food Systems
- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods
- [Our Shared Future: Reflections From Youth](#)
- [Climate Justice, Climate Grief, Climate Action: Intergenerational Dialogue on Climate Change and What's Next](#)
- Breaking the Mold: Indigenous Economies and New Collaborative Models for Greater Prosperity
- [Inclusive Economies](#)



*“Not just providing a safer, warmer place to die.”*

During the ***Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Towards Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods*** session, we heard from many community leaders providing support to those experiencing homelessness in Victoria. The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness Society (ACEH) has transformed the approach to housing and homelessness for Indigenous populations, by centring voices of Indigenous people who shared their immediate needs, lived experiences and perspectives on solutions. It offers a model across Canada.

ACEH provides a new way of delivering housing for Indigenous people experiencing homeless and creating a community that is rooted in land-based healing and feeding the spirit, heart and mind. It creates space for culture and language by offering prayers, traditional foods and Elder involvement. It also applies a ***Decolonized Harm Reduction Framework*** that looks at creating pathways to healing and recovery.

We heard that the program isn't about the numbers or just getting people off the streets, but rather building a family and community centred on love.

## + *Economy*

Economic inclusion is integral to any sustained conversation and effort towards inclusive and resilient city building. Participants gave voice to a new and emerging economic model that can be summed up by the Post Growth Economic movement which is gaining popularity around the world. The Post Growth model emphasizes environmental responsibility and quality of human life over profit margins. Indigenous self-autonomy through economic development is a central part of this major issue.

### Sessions that focused on economy:

- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods
- Breaking the Mold: Indigenous Economies and New Collaborative Models for Greater Prosperity
- [Inclusive Economies](#)
- [Climate Justice, Climate Grief, Climate Action: Intergenerational Dialogue on Climate Change and What's Next](#)
- [Missing Middle Housing and Inclusive Climate Friendly Neighbourhoods](#)
- [Our Shared Future: Reflections From Youth](#)

## + *Climate crisis and youth perspectives*

Ongoing efforts to recognize and address the global climate challenges were at the forefront of the minds of many people. The climate crisis touches all aspects of Victoria's communities in one form or another. Youth participants had incredible and stark insights into the future consequences of this struggle. Many of them also pointed out that this issue arguably impacts them most, because they are likely to see the most significant ramifications over time. Despite this, they are often shut out of contributing meaningfully due to student debt and the need to work many jobs just to make ends meet, and by power structures that ignore them.

In 2019, over 50% of B.C. women\* were employed in sectors most affected by public health measures to limit the spread of COVID-19, including health care, retail, education, and accommodation and food services — all with high levels of social interaction at a time when physical distancing was encouraged to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus.

### Sessions that focused on climate crisis and youth perspectives:

- Healthy and Just Food Systems
- [Climate Justice, Climate Grief, Climate Action: Intergenerational Dialogue on Climate Change and What's Next](#)
- [Our Shared Future: Reflections From Youth](#)
- [Missing Middle Housing and Inclusive Climate Friendly Neighbourhoods](#)
- Breaking the Mold: Indigenous Economies and Collaborative Models for Greater Prosperity
- Indigenous Homelessness: Building Pathways Toward Healing and Reconciliation in Our Neighbourhoods

Concentration of employment in these sectors led to B.C. women losing 60% more jobs in March 2020 than men, increasing the effective unemployment rate of women in the province to 26.5% in March 2020 and 28% in April 2020.

\* BC Women's Health Foundation

***“I am because you are. Our freedom is linked to the way we relate to one another and the way we relate to the land.”***

In ***Healthy and Just Food Systems***, participants explored the changes and shifts within the local food security movement over the past two years, balancing entrenched hunger and poverty with people’s desire to connect with one another and the land. The discussion looked at the intersection of race and equity, and challenges and opportunities, as we emerge from the pandemic.

We heard that food sovereignty includes all human and non-human communities, and that we can’t talk about food sovereignty without talking about our relationships to one another, to the land and to everything that sustains us.

One participant shared that as she learned the stories of this land, food was a big part of her learning.

Food is something that connects all of us. When we talk about food, we are talking about ecology, tradition and justice. Many participants also acknowledged the relational healing capacity of equity in our food systems.

CUI heard there is a need for dialogue between grassroots organizations, community and different levels of government to understand what people need within local food systems and acknowledgement that food insecurity is a symptom of a bigger issue created by colonial capitalism.

In terms of building food sovereignty, CUI heard that it begins with empowering people to participate in food systems — not only eating, but from seed to preparation.

# Neighbours and parents

Nowhere is the question, “But what can I do?”, more profoundly felt than in our own neighbourhoods. Sometimes, individuals or families can feel powerless when thinking about the organizations, governments and businesses that wield power and influence in their own backyards.

Participants of CUI x Victoria offered ample reasons for hope and plenty of tips on what everyday people can do to take action. This section is geared towards what each one of you can do in your neighbourhoods to help nurture the Greater Victoria area towards the communal goals of more inclusion and equity.

Again, the importance of one-on-one relationships dominated the comments heard in this area throughout the event. Simple conversations that have no other motive than getting to know the person in front of you can go a long way. Open, active and humble listening paves the way for new perspectives, attitudes and, ultimately, behaviour.

**ZAHEERA JINNAH**

Dr. Zaheera Jinnah is an assistant teaching professor in the school of Social Work at the University of Victoria. She has published extensively in migration studies and volunteers as the secretary for the women's board at the Masjid Al Iman, Victoria.

As an immigrant mother who is visibly Muslim, she is working actively with the City of Victoria to normalise Islam and to counter racism and Islamophobia.





## Simple tips and big ideas

- Nurture openness, humility and active listening within yourself and those around you
- Build relationships with people and organizations in your neighbourhood
- Learn how historical injustices and power distribution negatively impact those in your community
- Keep your eyes, ears and heart open for opportunities to support those who have been historically pushed to the margins of society
- Join a cause rather than start a new one.



*We all the want the same thing  
for our neighbourhood — safety  
and security.*

**— Participant,  
Our Neighbourhood**





## Tangible to-dos

### LOOK INSIDE

- Educate yourself on the Indigenous history of your neighbourhood
- Be prepared to be humble and open to learning things that challenge your deep beliefs and assumptions
- Re-examine the history of Canada from the perspective of Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) communities through resources at public libraries and organizations led and supported by BIPOC communities
- Learn about intersectionality, and the different identities that intersect for you and those in your neighbourhood
- After finding new information, ask more questions, think about what you can do, and then do something small to start
- Include your kids, neighbours, friends and family in your findings and efforts, through conversation and learning

### LOOK OUTSIDE

- Learn about the stigmas that those living with homelessness, addiction or mental health issues face
- Understand the stigmas you've harboured, and work to unlearn those with compassion and understanding
- Learn about the economic realities of housing development in order to advocate for the reform you want to see
- Find out if there are any grants available for your neighbourhood by searching online for local, provincial and national funding agencies to support hyper-local initiatives or needs that are important to you and your neighbours. For Victoria check out the [My Great Neighbourhood Grants](#).
- Look around your neighbourhood for barriers that those with less privilege face, and help advocate for change
- Find out what local non-profits are in your neighbourhood, and consider volunteering at one you support
- Learn about the hidden emotional labour that those living with trauma or those less privileged in your neighbourhood have to do on your behalf, like explaining their history or culture to you or translating from one language to another
- Research online about what food sovereignty means and why it's important to minority ethnic groups and Indigenous people, and how it connects to healing from trauma
- Learn how poverty, homelessness and petty crimes are related
- Find out what accommodations your local schools have made for those who experience racist-based bullying — are there safe spaces?
- Find out what eco-friendly practices and vendor contracts your local schools have

***“Until the lion tells his side of the story, the tale of the hunter will always be glorified.”***

One of the biggest takeaways from CUI x Victoria was how racism is experienced and perceived by those who face it and those who see it. During the ***Belonging in Victoria: Muslim Voices for Change*** session, we heard from five Muslim women who shared their experiences dealing with racism. From overt racism to micro-aggressions, nearly everyone agreed that Canada is more racist than any of us want to admit. For example, more Muslims have been killed in targeted Islamophobia hate-attacks in Canada compared to any other G7 country in the past five years. As one participant put it, “racism is not about who you are. It’s about how you are perceived.”

However, more people seem open to having difficult conversations about Islamophobia. We heard that identifying Islamophobia fosters safety, and that representation matters, especially in education, government and policing.

Despite the lack of representation, some participants shared that Victoria has the potential to be one of the most diverse and Muslim-friendly cities in Canada, compared to other places they’ve lived. The City of Victoria has already taken action through their Welcoming City Strategy, which includes working with parent advisory committee to create safe spaces for newcomer children at school and better coordination between schools to access resources.



*I challenge you to open your door, let people in, challenge yourself to be your best, to get to know people, to see the excellence that is out there. I challenge you to give voice to other people.*

**— Participant,  
Hope Meets Action**

## ACT

- Participate in consultations held by government organizations and non-profits in your neighbourhood
- Organize or attend community potlucks and other events
- Consider leading a project that will bring your neighbours together to learn, eat and play together; see [Neighbourhood Small Grants](#) for more information
- Vote with your wallet, if for no other reason than it makes you feel better to be more intentional
- Approach organizations, groups or neighbours who belong to a less-privileged community, and ask how you can support them
- Find out what art and culture initiatives representing diverse perspectives are going on in your neighbourhood and support them by being a customer/patron/volunteer
- Consider growing food on your front lawn or boulevard. Check out [Growing in the City](#).
- Support organizations that prioritize locally sourced food
- Contact your local grocery stores and find out what their policy is around food waste
- Contact your local police department and ask them what their practice and policies are around arresting those who are unhoused



*If one person is not free, then no one else is. If one community does not have justice, neither do all others.*

**— Participant,  
Just Food Systems**



**DANIELA PINTO**

Daniela Pinto is a Brazilian-Canadian intercultural community engagement practitioner, performer and storyteller in Victoria, B.C. For almost a decade, Daniela has contributed to community building in several advisory roles for higher education institutions, NGOs and the government.

As a member of the Visible Bodies Collective, a group of Indigenous and racialized women, she performs on diverse topics to promote self-healing and social justice. Additionally, Daniela is the co-founder of the Ciranda Project, a community-led initiative created during the COVID-19 pandemic to support newcomers' mental health and well-being. Daniela holds a Master's in Political Science from the University of Victoria.



## ➤ Pushing the envelope

What would Victoria look like in 15 years if...

*Every neighbourhood had a committee dedicated to addressing stigma, racism and xenophobia in their own backyard?*

*Communities took more control of their food sources?*

*Community organizations were run primarily by those they serve and by those who live in the neighbourhood?*



CHILDREN'S NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

# Businesses

Most of those who participated in CUI x Victoria want businesses to be inclusive of and responsible to the environment and the community on both a local and global scale. This includes making space for those who have been historically shut out of equal economic opportunities, including Indigenous people, youth, visible minorities, those living with a disability, and those experiencing homelessness, mental health issues or substance use issues.

Some youth participants said that meaningful job opportunities are severely limited for them. To make matters worse, youth unemployment rose from 6% to 15% between 2019 and 2020 as a result of the pandemic.

Many spoke of a much-needed shift in economic priorities: It's no longer good enough to run business as usual. Instead, many participants are supportive of and want to see more economic models that put people, the environment and global interconnections at their core, rather than profit.

Participants lauded collaborations similar to the Indigenous Prosperity Centre as meaningful and inspirational. The Centre is led by 10 South Island First Nation governments, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre and the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria. It aims to increase collaboration between First Nations communities to leverage greater upskill training, employment and other development opportunities. Some participants noted that the centre also acts as a safe space where non-Indigenous businesspeople can learn about Indigenous history and ask questions that they may otherwise be too scared or embarrassed to ask.

Plenty of uphill battles remain. Numerous participants said First Nations governments, for example, often don't have the resources or capacity for engagement officers — or someone dedicated to liaise with community organizations, businesses or government when they are looking for input from First Nations. When a business wants to engage with a First

Nation, that task falls to someone whose desk is already full, which can lead to missed opportunities. The hidden cost for First Nations governments to educate non-Indigenous people about Indigenous history is real and often takes an emotional toll that is not reflected in business models.

Missed opportunities, some participants said, perpetuate stigmas and misconceptions that reinforce power imbalances. Members of BIPOC communities and youth, for example, were among those who spoke of the weight of misconceptions and stigmas. Immigrants with professional experience often can't find work that matches their skills, youth often feel ignored and shut out of meaningful engagement with the economy, and Indigenous economic development can sometime be seen as a land-grab that sets the economy back.





JANICE SIMCOE

Janice Simcoe is an Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) woman who lives in what is called both Lekwungen Territory and Greater Victoria, B.C. Janice is the Director of Eyē? Sqā'lewen: the Centre for Indigenous Education & Community Connections at Camosun College in Victoria, which serves 1,300 Indigenous students and is engaged in deep cultural change in its work with Indigenization and decolonization.

In addition to her work with the college and local First Nations, Janice is a committed urban Indigenous community member. She serves on multiple boards and councils, including the City Family, which advises the City of Victoria as it moves towards reconciliation.



## Simple tips and big ideas

- Foster work environments that are inclusive of and sensitive to different perspectives and intersectional identities
- Build humanizing relationships with your staff, business neighbours and locals
- Create clear goals, plans and timelines to empower marginalized people within your workforce
- Assess how you might collaborate with competitors to improve the community you operate in.



*Painting climate change and sustainability as a consumer issue directly benefits large corporations. It is placing the blame on us rather than corporations.*

**— Participant,  
Youth Voices**





## Tangible to-dos

- Make a point of building personal relationships when doing business
- Pay for engagement with First Nations governments to learn and better understand the history, capacity and structure of the government
- Create processes embedded in business operations that centre inclusion and compassion
- Create formal and informal platforms for dialogue to bridge gaps
- Seek and advocate for data to better respond to local concerns; for example, business owners concerned about theft could advocate for better statistics that illuminate the root causes of poverty
- Develop clear objectives and goals to realize inclusivity in your business
- Provide a flexible work environment that recognizes and supports employees to achieve their goals and priorities at work and outside of work
- Create a work environment that is sensitive to the hidden emotional labour that members of BIPOC and other marginalized and stigmatized communities often carry
- Pursue participatory grants for marginalized people within your business
- Learn about local Indigenous history and culture before seeking engagement
- Support BIPOC-led organizations in their quest for self-determination



***“We’re all human. Sometimes, we just need to start there.”***

In the ***Our Neighbourhood: Addressing Stigma, Supporting Small Business*** session, local business owners and people experiencing homelessness had an opportunity to connect and share their experiences with each other.

The session focused on creating a safe space that fostered empathy, compassion and understanding. Participants were grateful to hear from each other, articulate the challenges they face and explore what they could do to help one another.

We heard that there aren’t enough resources in place to support people experiencing homelessness and struggling with mental health, and that frontline workers lack training. We also learned that there is a big divide between the businesses community and those who experience homelessness and mental health issues/addiction.

We heard that more opportunities to have these types of conversations would be welcome and foundational to building a downtown that is healthy, inclusive, safe and vibrant.



*Imagine going to business meetings in Asia. You would approach it with humility and your two ears open and your one mouth probably often closed as you learn and adapt and realize how to best contribute to a valuable conversation.*

**– Participant,  
Inclusive Economies**

**TREVOR HANCOCK**

Dr. Trevor Hancock is public health physician, recently retired from his position as a professor and senior scholar at the School of Public Health and Social Policy, University of Victoria. In the 1980s, he helped to create the global healthy cities movement, and has been an internationally recognised leader in this area for more than 30 years.

In recent years, he has focused on the concept of a "One Planet" community/region as a way to integrate the concepts of healthy and sustainable communities, and in retirement has started a new NGO, Conversations for a One Planet Region, to explore and popularise these ideas locally.



## ➤ Pushing the envelope

What would Victoria look like in  
5, 10, 20 or 50 years if...

*All businesses put  
underprivileged  
people at the centre of  
their business models,  
instead of as an  
afterthought?*

*All businesses  
had to be social  
enterprises?*

*Reconciliation  
with First  
Nations included  
businesses providing  
opportunities tailored  
to Indigenous  
people?*

*Economic  
development of  
First Nations  
governments was  
adopted as an economic  
strength rather than  
a weakness?*

*Businesses  
championed  
universal basic  
income and other  
equity-seeking  
initiatives?*

*Businesses  
prioritized  
collaboration over  
competition for  
limited resources?*



# Non-profits and community organizations

Many participants spoke of a deep gratitude and appreciation for the people who dedicate their time and energy to non-profit and community organizations. These folks nurture a sense of community and belonging by bridging gaps between services provided by the public and private sectors.

They also build and humanize relationships with and among individuals at risk of slipping through the cracks because of unequal distribution of resources, opportunities and power.

The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH), for example, is pioneering culturally supportive housing and decolonized harm reduction programs. Their programs include an Elder-in-residence, land-based healing, and the preparation of traditional foods to help clients heal from trauma by reconnecting with themselves, their families and their culture. Through extensive partnerships, the ACEH is opening numerous facilities for the underhoused that focus on the particular needs of Indigenous people for health and healing.



The La Teranga Food Bank is another success story — it opened in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the community of people of African-descent in the Greater Victoria area. The local chapter of the Red Cross, an international organization, is one of La Teranga's partners, and together they bring a sense of home and connection through food for their clients.

Session discussions identified a number of challenges that non-profit and community organizations face. Despite the collaborative approach to community building that is evident in Victoria, some non-profits noted a lack of relationships and missed opportunities to collaborate, which reinforces the barriers experienced by people already pushed to the margins.

A number of people noted that the profit-oriented culture of capitalism, from the local level to global commerce, creates uphill battles for these organizations. The profit priority gets in the way of efforts aimed at healing trauma. We heard that food and a connection with land, for example, was seen as a powerful tool for healing but can be co-opted by the international agribusiness.

A lack of community data and research prevents informed and meaningful service design. We heard that in almost every session: from nuanced statistics on petty crime downtown to the relationship between mental health and homelessness to the prevalence of racially motivated harassment, more data is needed.



*We needed to ensure that we weren't just providing them with a safer, warmer place to die. I know that sounds harsh, but that was the reality. So, from there, we began to look at how do we create pathways to healing and recovery?*

**— Participant,  
Indigenous Homelessness**

**FRAN HUNT-JINNOUCHI**

Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi is Kwakwaka'wakw with over 25 years experience in senior management and direct engagement working with Indigenous peoples. Her areas of knowledge include Indigenous adult post-secondary education, business development, and Indigenous housing and homelessness. Since its inception, Fran has led the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) Society.

The organization began as a non-profit and soon after became a housing provider, recognizing the urgent need for Indigenous-led solutions. It now provides the province's first Culturally Supportive Housing which operates according to the Dual Model of Housing Care she developed. At the ACEH houses, *Speqəŋéutxw* House and Culturally Supportive House, decolonized harm reduction is a central component of care.



## Simple tips and big ideas

- Nurture the dignity of those you serve
- Build relationships by taking the time to listen with the aim of taking action and making progress
- Assess the unpaid and unacknowledged emotional labour of those around you resulting from injustices and unequal power distribution
- Re-investigate Canadian history by learning and unlearning; consider how your organization can support the shifting of power towards more equitable representation and opportunities
- Educate your organization on how your cause fits into bigger injustices created by colonization and collaborate with like-minded organizations to address those injustices



*This is not a program. These are not clients.  
These are not numbers. We are going to  
build a family and community and it's going  
to be centered on love.*

**— Participant,  
Indigenous Homelessness**





## Tangible to-dos

- Develop clear goals and objectives to reflect and incorporate the participation of the people you serve
- Build personal relationships on the local level: go for a coffee with someone who you think of as “different” from yourself
- Compensate staff based on lived experience and the value their lived experience adds to their work
- Identify barriers for your clients created by policies, bylaws and constitutions
- Advocate for more disaggregated data that will support you to carry out your organization’s mandate
- Collaborate widely with like-minded organizations on local, regional, national and international levels
- Collaborate with private sector players with shared values and who are supportive of your mandate
- Support, encourage and be an ally to BIPOC-led organizations
- Create dialogues between grassroots movements, organizations, academics and levels of government
- Conduct community-based research and data collection to identify local needs
- Promote collaboration instead of competition for limited resources
- Ensure your vision is holistic and long-term and centres on the dignity of your clients



*Seeing the potential for healing in our communities brings forward opportunities and challenges which are hopeful. It makes me think we will start having difficult discussions that are needed.*

**— Participant,  
Just Food Systems**



**ASTRID BROUSSELLE**

Astrid Brousselle is a professor and director of the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria, British-Columbia, Canada. She is also the convener of the group UVic in the Anthropocene. Astrid's expertise is in health and evaluation. She is particularly interested in contributing to Planetary Health for the creation of more sustainable and healthy societies.

During 2011 and 2016, she held the Canada Research Chair in Evaluation and Health System Improvement. In her career, she has published more than 80 scientific articles and books. In 2017, she received the recognition Mention coup de coeur of the Jean-Pierre-Bélanger Prize from the Association Pour la Santé Publique du Québec (ASPQ) for her public positions defending the public health care system.





## Pushing the envelope

What would Victoria look like in  
5, 10, 20 or 50 years if...

*Lived experience  
was valued MORE  
than formal  
experience in staff  
selection?*

*Non-profits were  
staffed primarily by  
clients and former  
clients?*

*Local, regional  
and national  
governments  
collaborated to support  
local and grassroots  
organizations?*

*COVID-19, the Truth  
and Reconciliation  
Committee and the discovery of  
mass graves of Indigenous  
children served as an opportunity  
to re-imagine how non-profits  
and community organizations  
operate and care for  
their clients?*

JOHNSON STREET BRIDGE – CYCLE PEDESTRIAN



# Local governments and institutions

This section is designed to help local governments and institutions, like post-secondary schools and museums, navigate their relationships with the public, non-profit organizations, and other local governments and institutions. The actions in this section are aimed at nurturing those relationships in hopes of making them more responsible and equitable.

These priorities highlight the importance of relationship-building, with a focus on one-on-one connections cultivated over time. Many said that local research and data collection would lead to more meaningful, evidence-based consultation and engagement. Numerous communities in the Greater Victoria area identified the need for more representation of minorities in public spaces and public office. A major theme throughout the conversations was the need for greater reconciliation between local governments/institutions and South Island Indigenous communities.

This section is broken down into six major issues identified by participants. Each section has a summary of the discussions, positive examples, areas for improvement and actions for moving forward. These include:

- Housing
- Inclusive economy with Indigenous people
- Food
- Climate crisis and youth perspective
- Homelessness
- Reconciliation, education and inclusivity

**CHRISTINA CLARKE**

Christina Clarke joined Songhees Nation staff 27 years ago, serving as executive director from 2013 to 2019. Currently Christina is CEO of the Songhees Development Corporation which owns and operates Songhees Events & Catering, Songhees Tours, Songhees Innovation Centre and the Songhees Nation Investment Corporation.

Christina sees the economy as an ecosystem and seeks to strengthen connections as a board member for the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce and the Victoria Esquimalt Harbour Society; as co-chair of the Indigenous Prosperity Centre Working with the South Island Prosperity Partnership; and as a member of the GVHA First Nations Economic Development Committee.



## Simple tips and big ideas

- Nurture and cultivate institutional humility that seeks to adapt and learn, especially from hard-to-reach voices.
- Foster and build relationships internally and externally with like-minded organizations and individuals at the user-end of your programs and services
- Identify agencies or individuals that antagonize or thwart your efforts, then identify common values and goals to strategize how to collaborate with them



*How are we reaching those people that do have opposing views and engaging them in the conversation that is progressive and towards action-taking?*

**— Participant,  
Missing Middle Housing**

# Housing

The City of Victoria has already identified zoning changes to expedite the creation of affordable and more inclusive housing as a major issue that it is working on.

The City also has a strategy for addressing the so-called missing middle of the housing market. The missing middle refers to the lack of smaller multi-unit residential buildings, like row-housing, duplexes, townhouses and small apartment buildings. These units are rarely built in Victoria, in part because of the time it takes to get approvals for these projects and the uncertainty of the political process associated with the approvals. The City is aiming to change this after feedback received from the community.

Many participants said young families are being squeezed out of the city by rising costs. The 2020 Point in Time Survey found that the top three obstacles people face to permanent housing are high rents, low income and lack of options.

Someone making minimum wage would have to work 51 hours per week just to afford to rent a bachelor apartment.

Developers in the Greater Victoria area said the current zoning system is a real barrier. The GST charged on development makes building larger units less economical, which leads to an increased number of smaller units being built. Developers also noted that housing projects can die a death by a thousand cuts with hidden fees.

Many participants liked The City's push for 15-minute neighbourhoods that emphasize sustainable transportation and the support of local business. They had many suggestions about how to move forward on this and other housing issues.



## 51 hours

of work per week making minimum wage  
to afford to rent a bachelor apartment

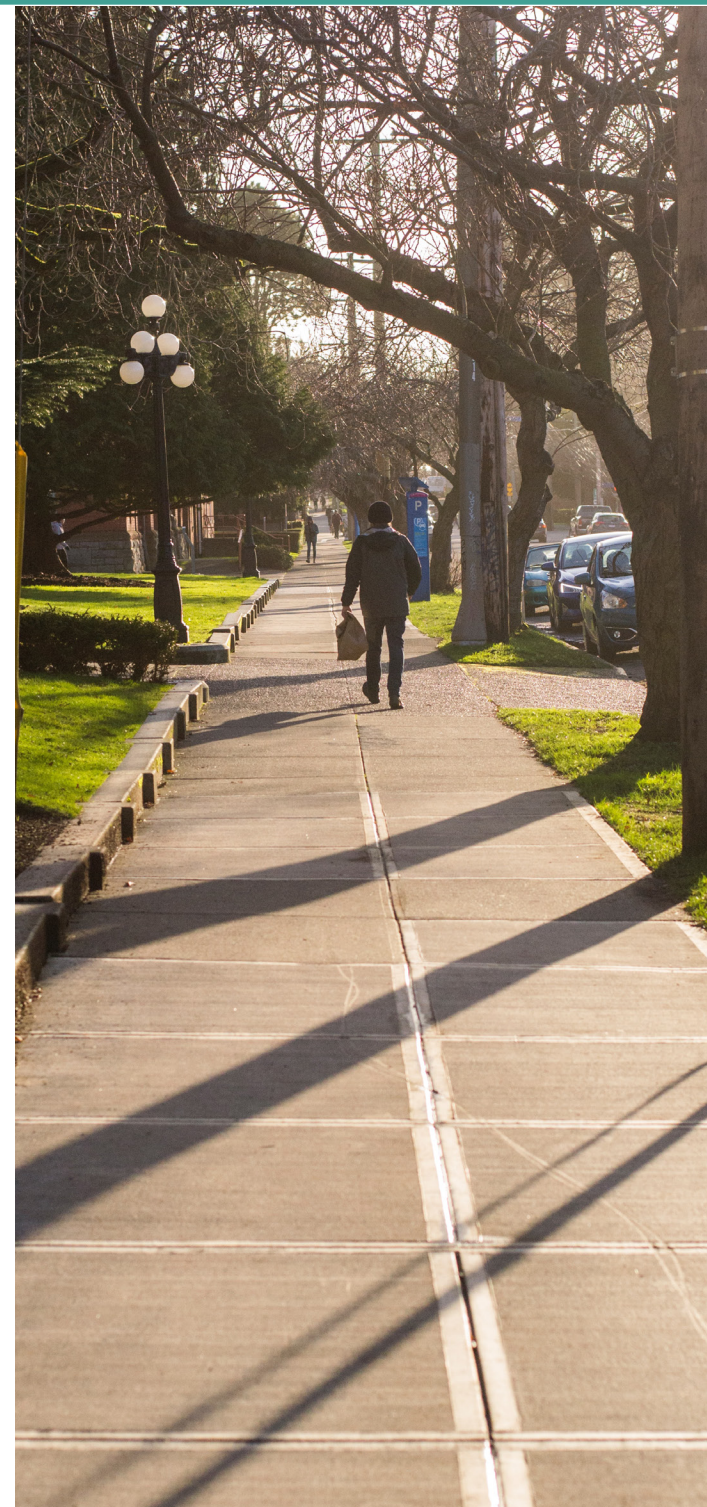
- *Statistics Canada*





## Tangible to-dos

- Zone neighbourhoods as villages and corridors that would allow for a mix of residential, services and small commercial enterprises while cutting red-tape delays
- Support education efforts for local elected officials on the economics of development
- Help the public understand zoning differences and options through a communication campaign
- Showcase examples of successful mixed-used residential zoning
- Invest in more carshares and biking lanes
- Increase downtown parking fees to promote bike use and public transportation use
- Dedicate time and effort to improving relationships with provincial and federal governments to foster more and better collaboration on housing and funding for housing
- Create more green space and recreational trails throughout region
- Create process to include meaningful participation of youth and renters in consultations
- Incentivize development of affordable dwellings large enough for families



# Inclusive economy with Indigenous people

The Indigenous Prosperity Centre is already bringing together stakeholders in the Greater Victoria area under an umbrella initiative that is Indigenous-led. This includes local and regional governments, First Nations governments and private sector players.

More First Nations are joining the Union of BC Municipalities, which some said signals a positive trend towards more collaboration with Indigenous communities.

However, we heard that despite all the progress made, some local government institutions don't quite understand the power imbalance between local governments and Indigenous communities. First Nations governments do not have the same resources and capacity. The lack of balance comes at an emotional and economic cost to those who work in First Nations governments as they take on more and more work that is not appropriately acknowledged or compensated.



## Power balance

lacking between local governments  
and Indigenous communities





## Tangible to-dos

- Create a budget within your organization that can be used to compensate Indigenous expertise and lived experience
- Support capacity-building and engagement efforts of First Nations with financial and human resources
- Take an Indigenous-led and Indigenous-informed approach to engagement and consultation
- Create a shared space for your organization to learn from First Nations governments and other organizations as early as possible at the beginning of a new project
- Develop clear goals and objectives to remove barriers for Indigenous participation in local economies
- Develop collaborative platforms, including procurement practices, training and Indigenous economic development, for all sectors to work together to reduce barriers



*There are policies and attitudes at the City of Victoria that are really holding back inclusion and building resistance to the kind of changes that we need to be making for climate-friendly communities.*

**— Participant,  
Missing Middle Housing**



***“If you can't afford to pay a living wage, you don't have a viable business model.”***

The pandemic has created an opportunity to explore new and inclusive ways to move toward a world in which social and economic well-being is enjoyed by all. In the ***Inclusive Economies*** and ***Breaking the Mold: Indigenous Economies and New Collaborative Models for Greater Prosperity*** sessions, participants discussed the current barriers to financial well-being and explored societal values regarding inclusion and growth that are required for a new economy.

We heard that there is a need to better understand how people currently benefit from or are left out of economic opportunities by collecting disaggregated data across all sectors. We also heard that more institutional and social mechanisms for cross-collaboration are needed.

Almost everyone agreed that we should be prioritizing collaboration over competition for resources, and funding and government policies should reflect this.

Participants also shared that more diversity is needed among people who make decisions and hold power. As one participant put it, “If you want to truly change something you need to change the power structures through which decisions are made.”

Participants saw tremendous opportunities to create and foster a more inclusive economy through the power of storytelling, building every business as a social enterprise and being more intentional about where we spend our money.



*What we need to activate in the future is actually having our own space, not ones given to us by the white community.*

**– Participant,  
Hope Meets Action**



# Food

Many people we spoke with identified food as a powerful healing and community organizing tool. It connects people to their culture, to the land and to each other.

Participants pointed out that food sovereignty and access is not equitable across all communities. A growing number of residents and families are food insecure and rely on local charitable food services, such as food banks, for regular access to food. The City of Victoria has partnered with some local groups engaged in food sovereignty; however, there are more ways local governments and institutions can support this effort.



## Food insecurity

A growing number of residents and families are food insecure and rely on local charitable food services



## Tangible to-dos

- Support BIPOC community organizations engaged in food sovereignty
- Develop incentives to encourage local food systems over imported food sources
- Incentivize the use of urban space for growing food
- Resource local research and data collection on the impacts of food insecurity and sovereignty
- Introduce bylaws and incentives to prevent corporate waste of food
- Encourage commerce that caters to food sovereignty
- Provide spaces and opportunities that foster cultural connection with food growth, preparation and consumption



*What does food sovereignty look like?  
There are questions that have as many  
answers as people.*

**— Participant,  
Healthy and Just  
Food Systems**





# Climate crisis and youth perspective

We heard that while climate change impacts us all, it doesn't impact us equally. We heard youth describe the grief and trauma associated with environmental destruction.

They feel the full weight of the climate crisis as they look toward the decades ahead. Indigenous groups and developers also weighed in on our current climate crisis and the lack of action. Here's what we heard about what institutions and local governments can do to help the fight against the climate crisis.



## Youth

feel the full weight of the  
climate crisis



**COLIN SPARKS**

Colin Sparks, 16, is an entrepreneur and environmentalist at heart. Over the last year he has taken immense interest in city planning (particularly in the Netherlands), development and a bit of politics, and has had many meetings with MLAs and developers. Knowing the loss of one of Canada's rarest ecosystems, he is currently working on restoring a Gary Oak ecosystem in his backyard grove.

His investment portfolio reflects his passion for ethical and sustainable industry. Colin has been volunteering with children at Canvas Church and has been a group leader at the church's summer camps.



***“Climate change is happening right now. It’s changing our lives.”***

In the ***Climate Justice, Climate Grief, Climate Action: Intergenerational Dialogue on Climate Change and What’s Next*** session, long-time activists, scholars and youth were brought together for an intergenerational discussion about climate inequity, climate anxiety and climate action.

The conversation kicked off as participants reflected on the extreme weather B.C. experienced during the summer of 2021; one of the worst wildfire seasons and the heat dome that resulted in many fatalities and an entire town burning down. We heard that while climate change impacts us all, it doesn’t impact us equally. Climate change affects the most vulnerable first and, in that context, we have to look at climate issues through an intersectional lens.

Participants recognized that solutions exist in different sectors, but there’s a lack of coordination and collaboration and implementing solutions is hard when so many people benefit from existing systems and the ways things are currently done. One participant shared, “If we really want things to change, we need to prioritize the planet over profit.”

During this conversation, we heard that we could learn from Indigenous people, who have been living on these lands for thousands of years, and their deep understanding of local ecologies and systems to respond to climate change. However, the relationship has to be reciprocal and centered on reconciliation and decolonization.

Many of the youth spoke about their feelings of climate anxiety, not being heard, and not being included in decisions that will affect them and their future. Despite this, they’re hopeful and keen to do their part to advocate for change.



*Sustainability shouldn’t only be for the rich and able-bodied.*

**– Participant,  
Youth Session**



## Tangible to-dos

- Introduce bylaws and regulations to hold corporations more responsible for environmental destruction, as well as incentivize climate-friendly behaviour
- Provide free access to public transit
- Create more bike lanes
- Create measures to reduce student debt so that students can seek meaningful jobs fighting the climate crisis
- Provide Indigenous knowledge-holders with meaningful influence on environmental policies
- Consult and learn from First Nations on land stewardship initiatives
- Empower youth to create a national platform to connect and discuss urban environmental policies and implement them
- Universities and other post-secondary institutions should provide resources and support to fold youth into conversations on environmental issues



# Homelessness

Homelessness is an issue that those who attended CUI x Victoria spoke about with urgency.

It disproportionately impacts those already forced to the margins of society by historical injustices and institutional biases, including Indigenous people and those living with mental health challenges and substance use issues.

The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH), however, is providing an inspiring example that others across the country are paying attention to. Its dual model for housing care pairs culturally focused programs with harm reduction services through a decolonizing lens. The ACEH is currently running two culturally supportive buildings in Victoria and is opening a third in the spring of 2022.

But large organizations still tend to exist in silos. Greater collaboration is needed between different levels of government and local players.

There's a need for more comprehensive planning to address the root causes, which requires disaggregated data that isn't currently being collected. The existing processes and services in place don't always meet the needs of the people they're meant to help, because the intake process doesn't take a human centred approach. Building one-on-one relationships is the best way to get people who could benefit from the services through the door.



## Human-centred

approach to health and housing supports is needed





## Tangible to-dos

- Hold community potlucks to build goodwill, relationships and trust between residents of supportive and affordable housing and nearby neighbours
- Build one-on-one relationships with service providers and Indigenous organizations to better understand the cultural and historical context of the services required
- Bridge the gap between local initiatives and funding opportunities at the provincial and federal levels
- Foster cooperation between police departments, BIPOC communities and frontline organizations
- Spearhead, resource and advocate for greater data collection and research identified by local service providers and community organizations
- Sponsor communication campaigns, programs and workshops to humanize and remove the stigma from those experiencing homelessness



*Open your heart to whatever is happening  
because learning never stops.*

**— Participant,  
The Non-Field Field School**





## Reconciliation, education and inclusivity

A dominant theme that we heard throughout CUI x Victoria was reconciliation through education. Not “education” in the formal or institutional sense, but rather that each one of us has a responsibility to discover and address our own ignorance. Many participants said that, for local governments’ employees and elected officials and other public sector employees, this responsibility is crucial and their actions and decisions have a profound ripple effect. This came through in the discussions around Indigenous autonomy.

 **Canada**  
is facing a reckoning

Victoria, along with the rest of Canada, is facing an undeniable and overdue reckoning with its colonial legacy after the discovery of mass graves of Indigenous children who attended residential schools. Indigenous autonomy includes that reckoning, but also includes building an inclusive economy in which Indigenous businesses are given a chance proportional to the injustices they have faced. Reconciliation must include the Indigenous experience in the economy. A host of deep-rooted misconceptions and biases need to be addressed to achieve that; for example, the notion that providing resources to Indigenous businesses is bad for the overall economy.

Other equity-seeking groups, including Muslim women, members of the Black community and youth, spoke about their experiences of racism and unfair power structures too. There have been more deaths in Canada fuelled by Islamophobia than any other G7 country in the last five years. And a lack of public art that reflects the City’s diversity is apparent all over the Greater Victoria area. The youth we heard from said they often feel shut out of crucial conversations impacting their future, leading to widespread feelings of disempowerment and disillusionment.

One bright spot for some is the recent exhibit at the Royal BC Museum, “Hope Meets Action: Echoes Through the Black Continuum”. Members of the Black community were invited to conceive and lead an exhibit celebrating B.C.’s Black history. Many of those involved in the initiative spoke of the empowerment and even privilege they experienced. Others spoke of a need to move towards the day when institutions governed historically by white privilege are not providing that opportunity to minority communities, but when those communities themselves have the power and resources to lead these institutions.

Another bright spot was hearing from some of the students at the University of Victoria Law School’s Non-field Field School who shared their experience living and learning from the Cowichan Tribes. The only program of its kind in Canada, the joint degree program in Canadian Law and Indigenous Legal Orders teaches students the ways in which Indigenous legal processes are being applied today, while the students work with the community on law-related projects. This land-based learning around laws and justice offers a revolutionary change to Canadian mainstream education.



MICHELLE CORFIELD

Michelle Corfield is a skilled negotiator and facilitator and has extensive experience working with all levels of government. She has earned her Doctor of Management and Organizational Leadership, Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution, and Bachelor of Arts in First Nations Studies between 1996 and 2007.

Her educational achievements have been the catalyst for the determined focus of her entrepreneurial business practice, where she also provides leadership, strategic guidance and mentorship to various universities and colleges, principally as the executive in residence for the Executive MBA in Indigenous Business in Leadership at Simon Fraser University from 2001 to 2020.

***“We experienced first-hand what ‘working in a good way’ means from being able to learn from the land and Indigenous Elders.”***

In “The Non-Field Field School” session at CUI x Victoria, the University of Victoria (UVIC) shone a light on its joint degree program in **Canadian Common Law and Indigenous Legal Orders** that includes unique field schools on the south Island. Recently, UVIC Indigenous Law partnered with Cowichan Tribes — the largest First Nation Band in B.C. to deliver a transformative field school experience that required students to explore the diversity of Indigenous legal traditions and observe first-hand the ways Indigenous legal processes are being used today. Faculty and students shared their experience on the Quw'uts'un ancestral site surrounded by urban development, including their deepened relationship with the people, land and its history.

Students shared how complex and personal the experience was and the potential for the future. For example, what if all lawyers and judges were required to learn about Indigenous legal orders?

The program allowed students to learn from the world around them, from Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers, and from oral histories. We heard that the experience is critical for lawyers who want to practice Indigenous law and that Indigenous law sometimes provides better answers than common law, especially when it comes to how we co-exist with the land and with one another.



*There is a tremendous amount of emotional labour that is inherent in the process of reclaiming space. People will get upset because the old rules no longer apply.*

**– Participant,  
Hope Meets Action**





## Tangible to-dos

- Learn about the history of residential schools, read survivors' stories, read [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit People \(MMIWG2S\)](#), and read the [94 calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report](#)
- Read, learn and implement the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#) and incentivize compliance within local governments and institutions
- Build personal relationships — this is where reconciliation must begin
- Support and resource BIPOC community-driven initiatives and pave the way for the autonomy of those groups
- Work with BIPOC communities to develop communication campaigns to address historical prejudices faced by members of BIPOC communities, including Muslim women
- Invest in BIPOC arts, food systems and social enterprises
- Implement anti racist-based and anti-bullying programs in elementary and high schools for teachers, staff and students
- Conduct a systemic review of racism within law enforcement, including meaningful opportunities for engagement, and a review of municipal bylaws around race-based harassment
- Support BIPOC excellence by showcasing the diversity in achievements across the city by amplifying their stories
- Provide resources for meaningful consultation with and advocacy for, solidarity with, and accountability to BIPOC communities



**SILVIA MANGUE ALENE**

Silvia Mangué Alene holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a major in Human Resources from Camosun College, a post-graduate diploma in Intercultural Education from the University of Victoria, and a Certificate in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from Cornell University.

Silvia is the co-founder and president of Kulea Culture Society, which has the purpose of raising awareness about and reducing discrimination and stereotyping by engaging respect for equity, diversity and inclusion

through education, consultation, research, programs, conferences and cross-cultural exchanges. She is also the president of the BC Black History Awareness Society an organization that educates, disseminates and supports Black British Columbians' achievements. Since June 2021, Silvia has worked at the City of Victoria's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion office.

She was born in Equatorial Guinea, immigrated to Madrid, Spain in 1978 at the age of eight, and lives in Victoria B.C.

## Pushing the envelope

What would Victoria look like in 5, 10, 20 or 50 years if...

*Car elevators were built instead of underground garages?*

*Only low-rise buildings were allowed to be built?*

*Corporations were held responsible for landfill waste instead of individual consumers?*

*Wisdom and practices among South Island First Nations were implemented in Victoria's economic practices and philosophies?*

*Front lawns were used for growing food instead of grass?*

*Indigenous leaders occupied positions of power in regional and national finance institutions?*

*Stigma around homelessness, poverty, mental health and substance use issues were eradicated?*

*Everyone got to grow their own food that was personally and/or culturally significant?*

*Financial institutions had to operate in a trauma-informed way responsible to historical injustices?*

*Youth were given full rein to develop public spaces?*

*Cars were banned from downtown in favour of wide pedestrian walkways flanked by green spaces and local businesses?*

*At colleges and universities, youth were responsible for policies that dealt with everything from environmental impact to hiring and program selection?*

*Muslim women and other members of the BIPOC community had full confidence in the police's enforcement of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws?*

*Student debt was eliminated?*

GO BY BIKE MURAL



# Regional and national institutions

Participants were very clear about two necessary and parallel approaches to address the challenges facing the Greater Victoria area, a bottom-up approach in some cases and a top-down approach in others. This section is geared towards regional and national players with interest in the South Island region — levels of government above the local level and organizations that operate across B.C., Canada and internationally.

As movers and shakers above the local level, this section is about holding other orders of government accountable.

Communication campaigns to combat racism like Islamophobia, the collection of society-wide data and the fostering of relationships — one-on-one relationships and intergovernmental relationships — were high on the priority list.

Throughout CUI x Victoria, we heard some positive examples. Academic institutions are collaborating across provincial boundaries to incorporate Indigenous Elders and ways of learning. The South Island Prosperity Partnership, an organization made up of 70 stakeholders including First Nations

governments, helped establish an Indigenous-led prosperity centre that includes 10 South Island First Nations and is pursuing regional and federal partnerships.

The biggest challenges, however, exist in the disconnect between local governments and higher levels. Local organizations are in the best position to understand and address local challenges, but those efforts can be hamstrung by the considerable influence of regional and national players. Some participants said that in order for those players to have a responsible influence on the local level, they need to collaborate with and resource local initiatives by nurturing meaningful relationships and working environments.



KARENA (KARA) SHAW

Dr. Karena (Kara) Shaw is associate professor in the School of Environmental Studies and a member of the Institute for Integrated Energy Systems at the University of Victoria, on ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ territories. As a political ecologist, she researches and teaches about the social and political dynamics of environmental problems and solutions.

Her current work, pursued in collaboration with students, fellow researchers and community partners, explores how energy transitions can support multi-species communities that are more just, diverse and healthy.



## Simple tips and big ideas

- Nurture a holistic approach that connects locally identified priorities with regional, national and global networks.
- Build relationships between local governments and higher levels of government to avoid misconceptions and disconnections
- Hold bias-awareness workshops to facilitate a constantly evolving discussion around power distribution among all levels of government
- Approach local stakeholders and players at your level to identify overlapping goals and potential collaborations



*Law is not just words or a statute or what a judge says. For other people, law is a lived daily experience.*

**— Participant,  
The Non-Field Field School**



***“Fighting for change takes time and effort and needs to come from a place of truth.”***

***The Making of Hope Meets Action: Echoes Through the Black Continuum*** featured the BC Black History Awareness Society and the Royal BC Museum, which, for the first time in its history, handed over curatorial authority to the Black community.

We learned that right from the beginning the process for developing the exhibit needed to change. The system was not open to welcoming the Black community and their stories. The history of systemic racism in the museum was obvious, and while developing the exhibit was uncomfortable and risky, it was necessary to continue. One of the first steps they took was to acknowledge the colonial telling of history and why Black stories weren't part of that narrative.

We heard that years of pressure from the BIPOC community was the catalyst for creating an exhibit that was truly theirs. Through this process, they were able to build trust and a kinship that created the foundation for the exhibit. Participants shared that the exhibit was a good example of how to overcome the separation of communities and begin to move forward.



*Racism isn't about who you are, it's about who you're perceived to be.*

**— Participant,  
Belonging in Victoria**



## Tangible to-dos

### RESOURCES

- Provide grants and resources to Indigenous communities to support the creation of self-autonomy
- Resource engagement with First Nations governments and organizations to support their participation and build capacity
- Resource Indigenous-led communication campaigns to address misconceptions of Indigenous economic development and highlight the regional and national benefits of that development
- Resource disaggregated data initiatives to explore the impacts of poverty of Indigenous and other marginalized communities
- Increase resources for participatory grants that enable self-direction of initiatives led by under-represented groups
- Provide BIPOC communities with resources and space for public art displays
- Resource communication campaigns to raise awareness about historical injustices faced by BIPOC communities
- Resource communication campaigns to address race-based bullying, including Islamophobia in the Victoria area, B.C. and Canada
- Resource communication campaigns to address the stigmatization of those who are experiencing homelessness or living with addictions or mental health issues
- Resource disaggregated data collection to understand the intersectionality of food sovereignty, cultural identity and trauma healing
- Resource communication campaigns that build understanding of the intersectionality between climate crisis and justice, especially concerning Indigenous communities, the LGBTQIA2S+ community and those living with a disability



*Many benefit from the existing system, so they're not motivated to change.*

**– Participant,  
Youth Voices**

## HOUSING, FOOD ACCESS AND CLIMATE CRISIS

- Support local food organizations and systems and discourage imports from international food supply chains
- Develop and implement policies, regulations and laws that discourage food waste and environmentally destructive practices by large corporations
- Resource and implement structural reforms aimed at elevating the profile of youth voices and input
- Support and advocate for universal basic income and other equity-seeking initiatives
- Focus on top-down approaches against climate crisis through policies, regulations and laws that hold commercial and manufacturing enterprises responsible
- Reduce debt load for students so that they can engage on the frontline of the climate crisis

## PROCESSES

- Develop systems that acknowledge and reward lived experiences rather than formal work and educational experiences
- Re-examine the impact of the GST on urban development, and consider adjustments to encourage development that meet the housing needs of everyone
- Create joint working groups, protocol agreements and social mechanisms for collaboration with Indigenous groups and organizations based on shared learning space
- Implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act proactively by creating organizational priorities and structures in support of it
- Implement greater transparency and accountability mechanisms throughout organizations to identify biases and meaningfully address them
- Identify barriers within your scope of work that prevent inclusivity

## CULTURAL SHIFTS

- Take the time to build relationships across jurisdictions that are humanizing, respectful, inclusive and informed on intersectional identities
- Inform staff and implement organizational structures that acknowledge the hidden cost that BIPOC-led organizations and communities absorb, such as emotional labour and living with intergenerational trauma
- Train staff and implement organizational structures related to the relevant laws that First Nations governments are bound by, such as the [Indian Act](#), [the First Nations Fiscal Management Act](#) and [the Lands Management Act](#)



*The mind and heart cannot work  
independently — logic and caring are  
intertwined.*

**— Participant,  
The Non-Field Field School**



**KAREECE WHITTLE-BROWN**

Kareece Whittle-Brown is the director of Operations & Project Management at Here In Canada. Here In Canada is a Victoria-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping newcomer, immigrant and BIPOC communities achieve equitable representation and enjoy meaningful participation in society. The key mandate of the organization is to create the space that allows representation and fosters

engagement and participation through the delivery of different programs for individuals with historical and/or current barriers to equity. Kareece encourages everyone in society to act to be the change you wish to see in your community, as it takes action to bring about change.

## ➤ Pushing the envelope

What would B.C. and Canada look like in 5, 10, 20 or 50 years if...

*Indigenous economic development and a transfer of capital became the focus of reconciliation?*

*The dual model of housing to end Indigenous homelessness was adopted as the standard approach?*

*A post growth economy that prioritized environmental protection and local food sovereignty over profits became the standard approach?*

*Canada, the last signatory on UNDRIP, became a leader in implementing it?*

*College and university governance structures were run primarily by students?*

*Food sovereignty became a cornerstone of reconciliation and inclusion efforts?*

*Local food sovereignty eclipsed reliance on long-distance imports?*

*Belonging for equity-deserving groups meant a transfer of material equity to those groups?*

*Universal basic housing was implemented alongside universal basic income?*

HUMBOLDT POCKET PLAZA





*I could feel the whiteness in the process, and  
the process is the most important thing.*

— Participant,  
**Hope Meets Action**



# Acknowledgements

CUI x Victoria wouldn't have been possible without the leadership of the City of Victoria and the Victoria Foundation, who co-designed the program, reached out to participants, managed logistics, fostered deep conversations and listened with the intent to act.

## City of Victoria

MAYOR LISA HELPS

JOCELYN JENKYNs  
**City Manager**

GALA MILNE  
**Head of Strategic Operations**

SHELDON JOHNSON  
**Manager of Engagement**

## Victoria Foundation

SANDRA RICHARDSON  
**CEO**

CAROL HALL  
**Director Strategic Initiatives**

TANYA CHASSÉ  
**Strategic Initiatives Associate**

JONATHON DYCK  
**Director of Communications and  
Community Engagement**

ZAHURA AHMED  
**Senior Associate**

JESSICA DOLL  
**Manager of Giving Initiatives  
and Partnerships**

TRACY CULLEN  
**Manager of Strategic Initiatives**



## Participants and organizations

NƏ?ƏMTƏNAT,  
FLORENCE ROSE DICK  
Member of City of Victoria's City Family

JANICE SIMCOE  
Director of Eyə? Sqā'lewen at Camosun  
College's Centre for Indigenous  
Education & Community Connections

CHARLAYNE THORNTON-JOE  
City of Victoria Councillor

CINDY BLACKSTOCK  
Executive Director, First Nations Child  
and Family Caring Society of Canada

DR. DAVID MILWARD  
former Associate Professor of Law with  
the University of Manitoba

DR. SARAH MORALES  
Associate Professor in the Faculty of  
Law at the University of Victoria

DR. BRIAN THOM  
Associate Professor and Graduate  
Student Adviser in Anthropology at the  
University of Victoria

THOMAS HAWTHORNTHTWAITE  
Student at the University of Victoria  
Faculty of Law

JOLENE ASHINI  
Former Geologist, student at the  
University of Victoria Faculty of Law

CAROL ANNE HILTON  
CEO/ Founder of the Indigenomics  
Institute and the Global Centre  
of Indigenomics

MARISSA LAWRENCE  
Senior Program Officer, First Nations,  
Municipal Community Economic  
Development Initiative

CHRISTINA CLARKE  
CEO of the Songhees  
Development Corporation

ANGELA VAN DEN HOUT  
Director of Economic Development  
at Malahat Nation

MICHELLE CORFIELD  
Chief Executive Officer, Corfield &  
Associates Consulting Services

DON MONSOUR  
Victoria Community  
Association Network

JOSHUA T. ROBERTSON  
Writer and Curator of Hope Meets  
Action: Echoes Through the  
Black Continuum

CHARITY WILLIAMS  
Community Curator

SILVIA MANGUE  
President, BC Black History  
Awareness Society

CHRIS O'CONNOR  
Learning Program Developer and Hope  
Meets Action project lead at the Royal  
BC Museum

LINDA GEGGIE  
Executive Director, The Capital  
Region Food and Agriculture  
Initiatives Roundtable

JUMANA RISHEQ  
Youth Program Coordinator, Mission  
Community Skills Centre and Creative  
Director of Living in Liberation  
Storytelling Project

PULCHÉRIE MBOUSSI  
Directrice Générale,  
ISSAMBA CENTRE.ca

ARIEL REYES  
Co-Founder and Managing Director, Iyé

BECCA BLACHUT  
Marketing Manager,  
Downtown Victoria BIA

NINA GROSSMAN  
Communications Coordinator, Greater  
Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness

SARAH POTTS  
City Councillor, City of Victoria

MAGGIE KERR-SOUTHIN  
Co-chair, Community Engagement  
and Communications Working Group,  
Greater Victoria Coalition to  
End Homelessness

BRUCE LIVINGSTONE  
PWLLE Steering, Greater Victoria  
Coalition to End Homelessness

LEONARD JAMES  
Person with lived experience, Greater  
Victoria Coalition to end Homelessness

DANIEL SANDS  
Person with lived experience

MALCOLM SWORD  
Outreach, Independent

DARRIN MURPHY  
Outreach Worker, Greater Victoria  
Coalition to End Homelessness

JEFF TURNER  
Security Manager, Cushman and  
Wakefield Asset Services

THERESA PALMER  
Business Owner, Out Of Ireland  
Irish Importers

JUAN PORTILLA  
Store Manager, Patagonia Victoria

TERI HUSTINS  
Board Chair, Downtown Victoria BIA

NICOLE AND JAMES SALTHOUSE  
Owner/manager, Mango's Boutique

KATJA VERKERK  
Shop Assistant, O'Keeffe's  
Automotive Service Ltd.

KAMEL HAMDAN  
Jr. Project Manager, Technologies  
division at Houle Electric

BHUPINDER DULKU  
**Associate, Investment Strategy  
& Risk at BCI**

AISHA AMIJEE  
**President, Voice of Muslim Women**

ZARA CHAUDHRY,  
**Student, University of Victoria**

AMAL KHAN  
**Development Coordinator, HeartPress**

ZAHEERA JINNAH  
**Assistant Teaching Professor, School of  
Social Work, University of Victoria**

CHRYSTAL LYNN-WOYTOWICH  
**Make-up artist**

ASIYAH ROBINSON  
**Community Engagement Coordinator,  
Victoria Forum**

EMMA RICHARD  
**Graphic facilitator**

RORY TOOKE  
**Manager of Sustainability & Asset  
Management, City of Victoria**

RHIANNON MOORE  
**Zero Waste Outreach Coordinator  
at City of Victoria**

MALCOLM MACLEAN  
**Community Planner at City of Victoria**

MARGOT THOMADIS  
**Planner, Islands Trust**

MARC CITTONE  
**Senior Community Planner,  
City of Victoria**

LAUREN KLOSE  
**Senior Planner, City of Victoria**

DR. TREVOR HANCOCK  
**Public health physician and health  
promotion consultant.  
Founder, Healthy Cities and  
Communities movement. Co-founder,  
Canadian Association of Physicians for  
the Environment and the Canadian  
Coalition for Green Health Care**

DR. ASTRID BROUSELLE  
**Director and Professor, School of  
Public Administration,  
University of Victoria**

MELINA LABOUCAN-MASSIMO  
**Founder, Sacred Earth Solar.  
Co-founder and Healing Justice  
Director, Indigenous Climate Action**

KARA SHAW  
**Associate Professor and Acting  
Director of the School of Environmental  
Studies, University of Victoria**

ROBIN POLLARD  
**Student, Environmental studies  
and Indigenous studies**

SOLANGE LAVI DORSAINVIL  
**Student**

ELI ANDERSON  
**Student**

COLIN SPARKS  
**Student**

CALLA COWAN  
**Student**

NARINDER DHAMI  
**Founder, New Power Labs**

RUTH MOJEED  
**CEO, The Inclusion Project**

NORA BUTZ  
**Welcoming City Task Force member,  
City of Victoria**

DANIELA DOS SANTOS PINTO  
**Welcoming City Task Force member,  
City of Victoria**

KAREECE WHITTLE-BROWN  
**Welcoming City Task Force member,  
City of Victoria**

TRISH QUINN  
**Welcoming City Task Force member,  
City of Victoria**

SHARMARKE DUBOW  
**Councillor, City of Victoria**





# Victoria

Vital Conversations for  
Our Shared Future

*A Canadian Urban Institute  
Collaboration, April 2022*