



One Year In: City of Vancouver Contributions to Covid-19 Recovery and Council Covid-19 Recovery Committee (CCRC) Report Back to Council

Presented to Vancouver City Council
by Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager

April 27, 2021



The objective of this presentation is to update Vancouver City Council on the City's community and economic recovery contributions to date, and to report back on the Council Covid-19 Recovery Committee (CCRC) report.

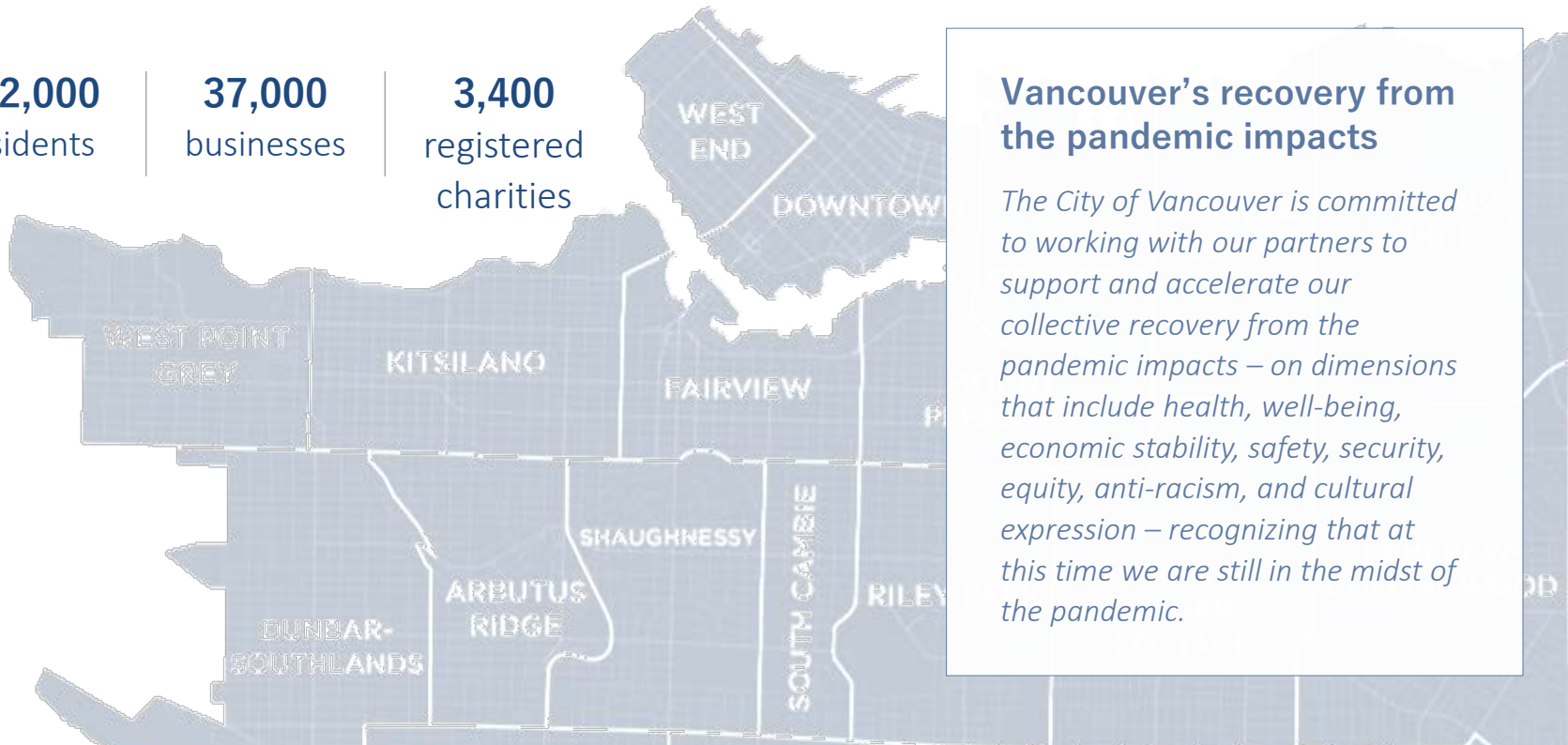


Vancouver, one year into the pandemic

632,000
residents

37,000
businesses

3,400
registered
charities



Vancouver's recovery from the pandemic impacts

The City of Vancouver is committed to working with our partners to support and accelerate our collective recovery from the pandemic impacts – on dimensions that include health, well-being, economic stability, safety, security, equity, anti-racism, and cultural expression – recognizing that at this time we are still in the midst of the pandemic.

4%
unemployment
Pre-covid

7.8%
unemployment
At January 2021
(12.8% at August 2020)

↓ 26,600
jobs
Jobs in Vancouver,
Feb-Dec 2020
(↓ 45,000 Feb-Aug 2020)

↑ 26%
vacant office
space
From Q3 to Q4 2020
(↑ 39% Mar to Sept 2020)

97%
increase in
hate crimes
and racially
motivated
incidents
(2020 vs 2019)

717%
increase in
anti-Asian
hate incidents
(2020 vs 2019)

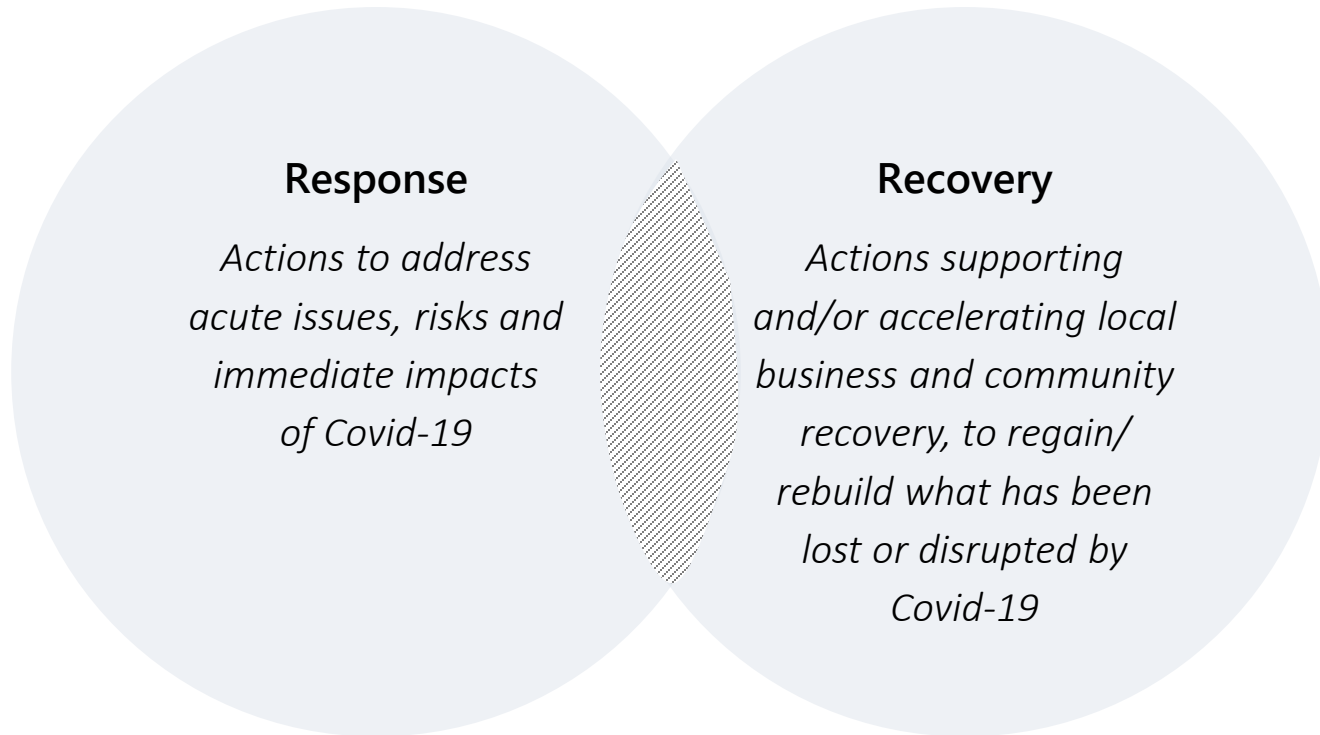
February 2021



Vancouver Economy Report

Signs of recovery,
but who is left behind?





Report of the Council COVID Recovery Committee

Committee of the Whole:

Mayor Kennedy Stewart
Councillor Rebecca Bligh
Councillor Christine Boyle
Councillor Adriane Carr
Councillor Melissa De Genova
Councillor Lisa Dominato
Councillor Pete Fry
Councillor Colleen Hardwick
Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung
Councillor Jean Swanson
Councillor Michael Wiebe

Submitted to:
Sadhu Johnston, City Manager, City of Vancouver
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager, City of Vancouver
July 31, 2020

- Initiated via Council motion, May 2020
- Committee of the whole of Council
- Presentations by ~ 25 experts and stakeholders on a selected set of recovery-related themes from May-July 2020

CCRC core questions

1. What steps can the City of Vancouver take to support businesses re-opening and residents returning to work and play in the city?
2. How can we plan recovery from COVID-19 to create a new, better normal that leaves our city better off, including advancing action on other emergencies such as housing affordability and climate?
3. Specifically, how can the City of Vancouver's COVID-19 Recovery Plan help to:
 - a. Rebuild a more resilient and sustainable local economy with a specific focus on small business and local jobs;
 - b. Foster a healthier and more just and people-friendly city;
 - c. Increase resiliency city-wide to prepare for future waves of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies; and
 - d. Advance goals of service excellence, sustainable and green practices, and housing affordability.
4. What recovery plan actions can the city take within our powers and capacity and what do we need to advocate for with senior governments?
5. What practices have we adopted as a result of the pandemic that we should consider amplifying to improve service delivery and urban planning?

CCRC speakers, June and July 2020

Economic Recovery and Complete Communities

- Small Business BC: **Tom Conway**, CEO, and **Sarah Clark**, VP Strategic Projects
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business: **Muriel Protzer**, Sr Policy Analyst, **Samantha Howard**, Sr Director
- Vancouver Economic Commission: **Eleena Marley**, Acting CEO, **Meg O'Shea**, Program Manager
- Tourism Vancouver: **Ted Lee**, Acting CEO
- Exchange Inner City Vancouver: **Alisha Masongsong**, Acting Director
- Canadian Urban Institute: **Mary Rowe**, CEO
- Loco BC: **Amy Robinson**, Executive Director

Municipal Government Roles and Responses

- The Honourable **Hedy Fry**, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Central
- **Spencer Chandra Herbert**, Member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly for Vancouver-West End
- The Honourable **Jody Wilson-Raybould**, Member of Parliament for Vancouver Granville
- **Jenny Kwan**, Member of Parliament for Vancouver East
- **Don Davies**, Member of Parliament for Vancouver-Kingsway
- **Michael Lee**, Member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly for Vancouver-Langara

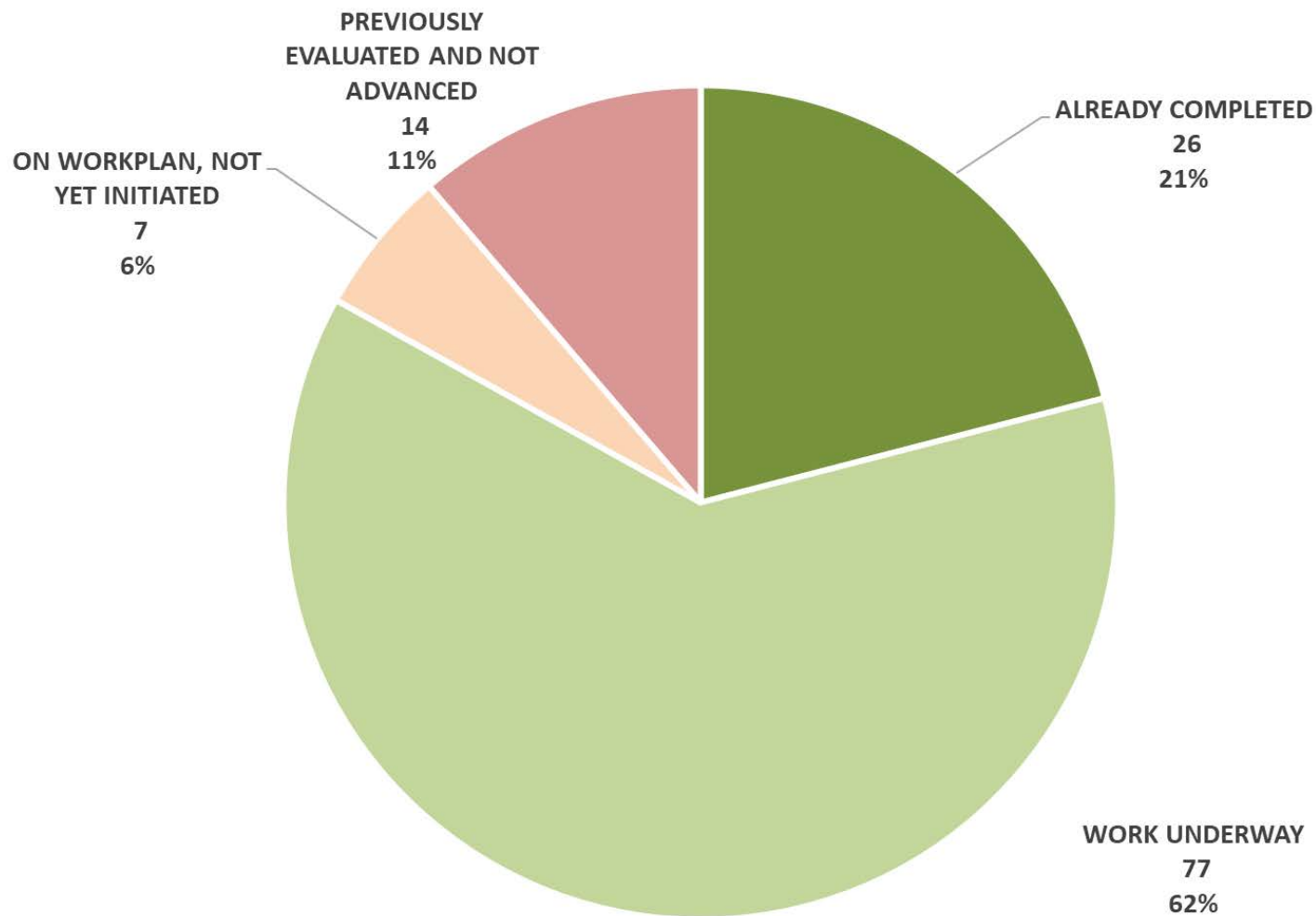
Housing and Homelessness

- **Leilani Farha**, former UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing
- **Rob Turnbull**, CEO and President, Streethome
- **Jill Atkey**, CEO, BC Non-Profit Housing Association
- **Jim O'Dea**, Co-founder, Terra Housing
- **Robert Brown**, Founder and Vice President, Project Generation, Catalyst Community Development Society


Climate Emergency

- **Karen Tam Wu**, B.C. Director of Pembina Institute, and member of B.C. Climate Solutions Council
- **Dale Littlejohn**, CEO of BC Community Energy Association and UBCM Special Committee on Climate Action member
- **Neal Carley**, General Manger, Parks and Environment, Metro Vancouver, **Roger Quan**, Director, Air Quality and Climate Change, Metro Vancouver
- **Conor Reynolds**, Division Manager, Air Quality and Climate Change Policy, Metro Vancouver

CCRC speakers' recommendations, staff response



See Council report Appendix D for details

An aerial photograph of the Vancouver waterfront at dusk. The scene captures the city's skyline, including the Granville Island Public Market in the foreground, the Vancouver Harbour Bridge, and numerous high-rise buildings. The water is filled with boats, and the sky is a mix of blue and orange hues from the setting sun. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular background in the upper right portion of the image.

City of Vancouver COVID-19 Economic and Community Recovery Program established May 2020

→ *Program comprised of a number of focused work components to support and accelerate our local economic and community recovery during/ following the COVID-19 crisis*

Economic and Community Recovery Program, seven workstreams

A.
Business
Recovery

Deputy City Manager

B.
Community
Recovery /The
Vancouver Plan

GM, PDS

C.
Non-Profit & Social
Enterprise Recovery
Support

GM, ACCS

D.
Disproportionately
Impacted
Populations
Recovery Support

GM, ACCS

INDIGENOUS RECOVERY

E.
Development &
Permit Process
Improvements

GM, DBL, GM, PDS and
GM, Engineering
Services

F.
Senior
Government
Advocacy

Director,
Intergovernmental
Relations

G.
Stimulus-Funded
Projects

GM, FRS

Theme no. 1
**Core municipal
services supporting
recovery**



Core municipal services supporting recovery

1. Enabling safe access to parks and recreation
2. Enabling safe access library services
3. Focusing fire inspections
4. Strategies for senior government stimulus funding
5. Advocacy, Safe Restart Program funding
6. Advocacy, federal support for Canada's large urban cities
7. Advocacy, provincial support for BC's large cities

See Council report Appendix C for details



Our core municipal programs and services support recovery

- The great majority of City services contribute to/support pandemic recovery
- Libraries and community centres have mostly fully resumed services
- Public service desks limited operation, have been largely replaced with digital services
- Civic theatres limited restart
- Most/all City services have pivoted to address Covid response and recovery

Theme no. 2
Supporting
Vancouver's
Businesses and the
Local Economy



Supporting Vancouver's businesses and the local economy

1. Business support and liaison
2. Rent assistance program for City tenants
3. Electronic permit processing and inspections
4. Digital public hearings
5. Temporary expedited patio program
6. Temporary liquor licencing pre-approvals
7. Room to Load Program
8. Single-use item ban deferment
9. Continuity of property use inspection services
10. Property tax due date extension

See Council report Appendix C for details

Supporting Vancouver's businesses and the local economy, continued

11. Employment Lands and Economy Review quick start actions
12. Civic theatres limited restart
13. Local business collaboration, convening, data and research
14. Responding to street disorder
15. Supporting our cultural non-profit agencies
16. Open With Care campaign
17. Restore the Core/Bring Back Main Street
18. Advocacy, Digital Main Street and ShopHERE
19. Advocacy, an expanded provincial property tax deferral program
20. Advocacy, split assessment through a commercial sub-class

See Council report Appendix C for details

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council direct staff to report back on the feasibility of a permanent Business Communications and Support Portal with the goal of a one stop shop for local business owners, local non-profits, social enterprises, and self-employed individuals including artists in that:

- i) Consolidates and streamlines different city services
- ii) Becomes a one stop online platform for all licenses associated with a business address, including business planning, engineering, fire, police, and waste management
- iii) Supports a concierge system that allows business owners a single point of contact when working with the city;
- iv) Is more flexible, especially with respect to emergency services
- v) Will align with the support work of the "Business Support Project"; and
- vi) Provides options for a scaled business license program and incentives for business that meet our city priorities

FURTHER THAT staff report back on the feasibility of a business registry to identify the availability of retail spaces and local businesses to incentivize the use of these spaces for popups, art and other uses, and enterprises and business incubators;

FURTHER THAT staff consider and report back on establishing a Business Advisory Taskforce, to build on the Mayor's Small Business Tables and identify the needs of the broader business community.

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to work with the Business Support Commission and other business associations to expand the city's business network of support services.

Business support and liaison

- Business Communication and Support portal established April 2020, single point of contact for business support and feedback to the City
- March 2020 – March 2021: Received over 19,000 business inquiries to 311, website accessed over 3,000 times
- June 2020 Council motion to advance business support and liaison



Temporary Expedited Patio Program

- For restaurants and cafes, fees and permits waived, straightforward permits issued in 2-5 business days
- Original program extended to October 2021
- Changed *Zoning Bylaw* to allow breweries, wineries and distilleries to operate outdoors
- To October 2020, 415 temporary patio permits
 - 336 on public property, 79 on private property
 - 213/336 applied to extend permits into winter
 - 24 incremental applications for winter patios
- Currently advancing summer 2021 TEPP permit renewals, April – October 2021

OPEN WITH CARE



BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS OF BC

Open With Care campaign

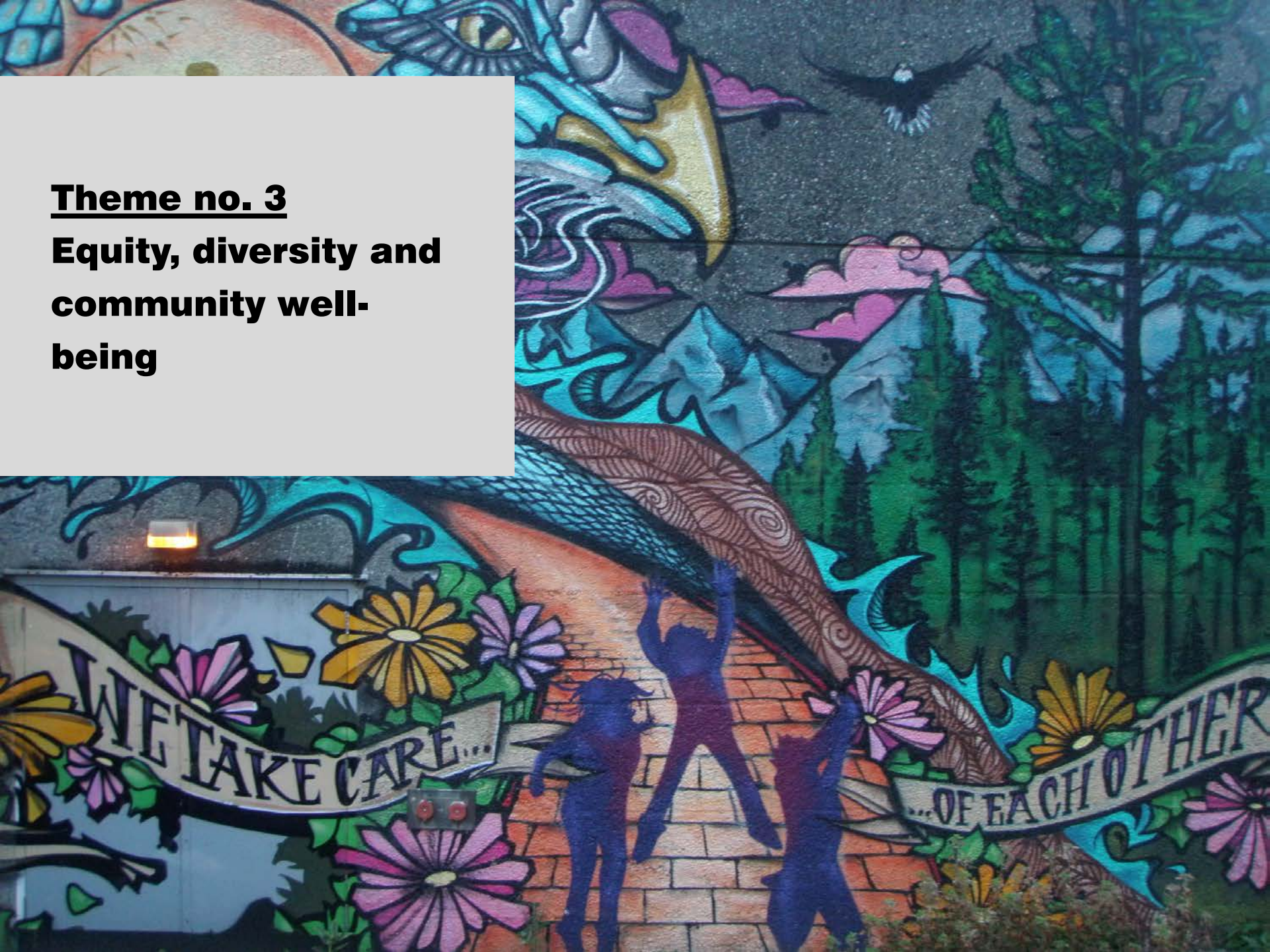
- Provided design and translation services to the Business Associations of BC Open With Care campaign, encouraging Vancouverites to shop local as businesses reopened, with customer/staff safety top of mind
- Posters, buttons, and floor decals among materials translated into Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Punjabi, Tagalog, and Vietnamese
- Promoted on City website
- Materials available online to download



Electronic permit processing and inspections

- Virtual meetings and document review, electronic payments, virtual design staff review meeting decisions
- Virtual Urban Design Panel and Development Permit Board meetings
- Initiated virtual open houses for rezoning applications ... three-week period for public to ask questions, response within two business days, replacing a single three-hour in-person event
- As of March 2021, 69 virtual open houses, over 60,000 visits

Theme no. 3
**Equity, diversity and
community well-
being**



Equity, diversity and community well-being

1. Supporting our social and non-profit agencies and childcare operators
2. Alcohol consumption pilot project
3. Bus transit priority measures
4. Making Streets for People Program
5. Support for people disproportionately impacted by Covid-19
6. Supporting recovery of non-profit agencies and social enterprises
7. Supporting MVAEC in its work with Urban Indigenous communities
8. Supporting women through the recovery
9. Overdose response
10. Responding to encampments
11. Advocacy, enhanced services for SRO and non-market housing units

See Council report Appendix C for details



Making Streets for People Program

- **Slow Streets** – Over 40 km of designated routes to give people more space to exercise/hang out, interim traffic calming measures installed along three routes in 2020, two additional locations are planned for Spring 2021
- **Room to Move** – Space for business customers, pedestrians and bus passengers (Beach Avenue, Granville Street)
- **Room to Queue** – Space for lineups outside businesses and agencies
- **Repurposed street space** – To allow more walking, rolling and cycling and support transit recovery, e.g., interim design for Beach Avenue, 14 pop-up plazas, various parklets, extended sidewalks and bus priority measures on four corridors



Supporting our social and non-profit agencies and childcare operators

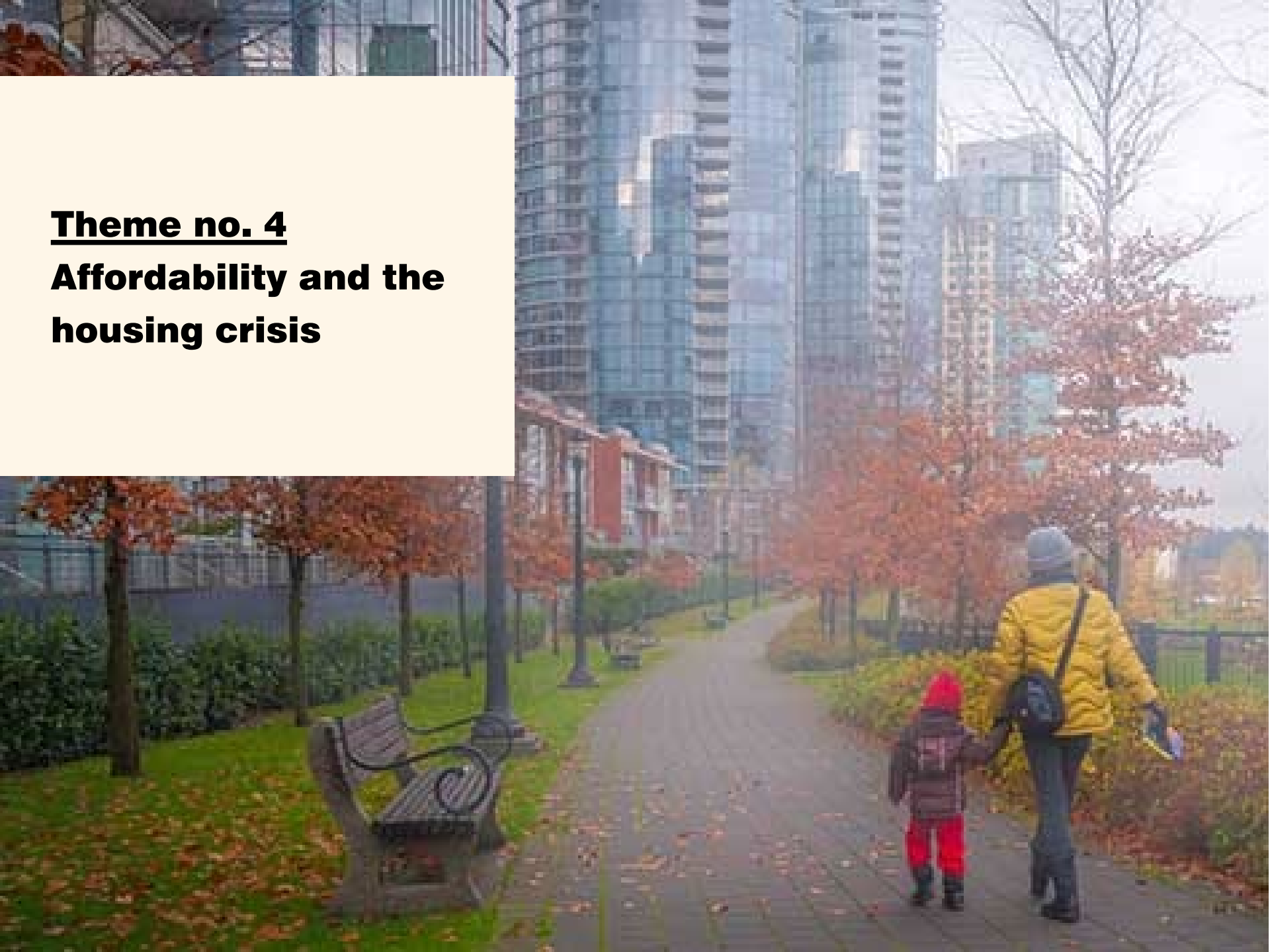
- 601 grants/\$24.1 million to support the the most impacted communities
- Procured \$26.5 million in goods and services from non-profits and social enterprises in 2020
- Supported youth in sports returning to play through \$140,000 grant funding
- Advancing the Special Enterprise Pilot Program (SEP), \$500,000 to support heritage and community-serving businesses, non-profits and social enterprises in Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside



Support for people disproportionately impacted by Covid-19

- Increased homelessness outreach to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness – income, housing and supports
- Translated select City materials into five languages and into plain language, outreach to non-English speakers
- Opened WISH shelter site for sex workers, expanded DTES Women’s Centre
- Temporary parklet to support community-managed alcohol program
- Additional washroom trailers

Theme no. 4
**Affordability and the
housing crisis**



Affordability and the housing crisis

1. Investment in emergency Covid housing
2. Expedited permit processing
3. Covid-19 Housing Response and Recovery Plan
4. Senior government funding

See Council report Appendix C for details



Affordable Housing

- **Senior government funding.** \$51.5 million Rapid Housing Initiative funding acquire ~ 106 affordable housing units, \$6.5 million federal Reaching Home Program funding
- **Investment in emergency Covid-19 housing.** \$30 million allocated to Emergency Covid-19 relief for unsheltered Vancouver residents in October 2020
- **Expedited permit processing.** Expediting regulatory processing for affordable housing

Theme no. 5
**Action on climate
change**



Action on climate change

1. Climate Emergency Action Plan
2. Investment in climate emergency projects
3. Funding opportunities for climate-related projects
4. Supporting transit ridership

See Council report Appendix C for details

HOW WE MOVE

To move around the city differently, to get people and goods around in a climate-friendly way.

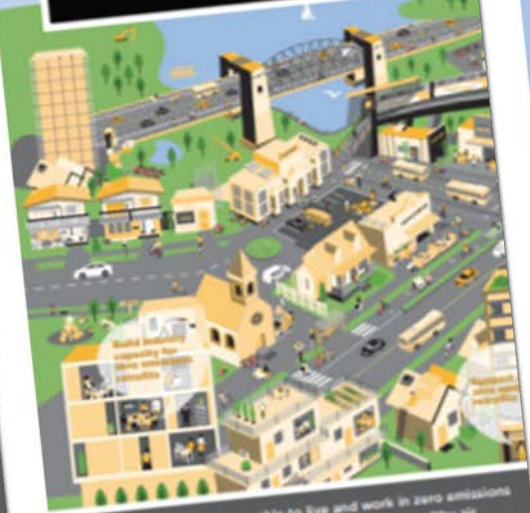


By 2030, low-cost sustainable transportation options will be easy, and reliable. People can get to work, school and other destinations without needing to rely on gas and diesel vehicles. There will be less congestion and pollution.

By 2030, we're aiming for:

HOW WE BUILD AND RENOVATE

We need to build and renovate differently. We have to construct and operate Vancouver's buildings in a climate-friendly, healthy, and resilient way.



By 2030, people will be able to live and work in zero emissions buildings, and benefit from the comfort, quiet, healthy air, and lower energy costs they offer.

By 2030, we're aiming:

HOW WE CAPTURE CARBON

We need to capture carbon pollution. By burning fossil fuels, we have put too much carbon into our atmosphere and it is causing climate change. We can make a difference by capturing carbon in forests, wetlands, and soils.



In 2021, we will establish a target for how much carbon Vancouver will capture and investigate the best pathways to get us there.

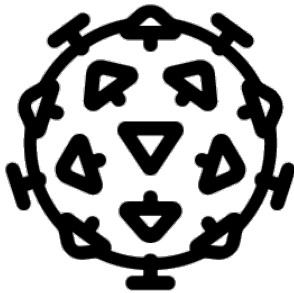
Vancouver is already capturing carbon with our urban forest, which added 150,000 trees from 2010-2020, and through restoring our natural shorelines, like at New Brighton Park.

To capture our share of carbon recommended by the IPCC to limit warming to 1.5°C, we will need to capture and store 1.5 Gt of CO2 annually. To capture our share of carbon recommended by the IPCC to limit warming to 1.5°C, we will need to capture and store 1.5 Gt of CO2 annually.

Looking forward ...

Municipal services, programs and initiatives

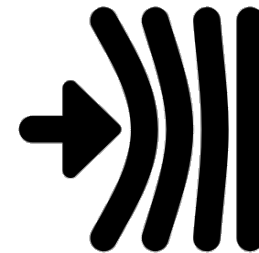
Response



Recovery



Resilience



End