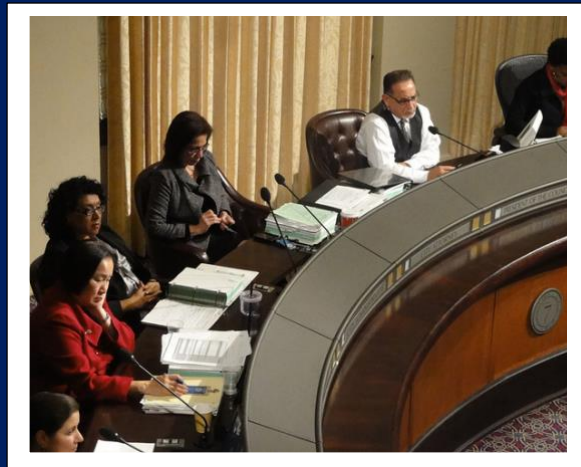


FINAL REPORT

“Action on systemic barriers to women’s participation in local government”

June 2020



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada



CANADIAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
INSTITUT CANADIEN DE RECHERCHES SUR LES FEMMES



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Action on systemic barriers to women’s participation in local government”

Background

With funding from Status of Women Canada (SWC), now Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), this project was one of six funded nationally under the theme, “Democratic Leadership: Empowering Women for Political Action.” Funding recipients were Women Transforming Cities (WTC) and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW). The project focused on two BC cities: Vancouver and Surrey.

The three-year project concentrated on four areas in which women participate in local civic life: as candidates and elected decision-makers; as participants in citizen-led municipal advisory bodies; as municipal employees; and as participants in city-led public engagement efforts. Project staff conducted quantitative and qualitative research for each of these areas to establish an evidence base of barriers women encountered, opportunities they experienced, and their recommendations for change and action for each of these areas. The focus was specifically on what cities as institutions can do to create more opportunities for women from diverse backgrounds to participate fully in these civic forums.

Approach

To develop an evidence base for recommending actions, project team members researched the literature on women’s participation in local government; conducted surveys and in-person interviews; talked to subject matter experts; and gathered data from Web-based sources. We also organized two public forums, one in Surrey and one in Vancouver, that brought together women who had run for and held elected office at the local level to share their experiences with interested women, some of whom were considering becoming candidates themselves.

Through a formal agreement with the City of Vancouver, project researchers were able to have access to otherwise inaccessible information that not only informed our research, but also enabled us to assist the City’s implementation of its *Vancouver: A City for All Women, Women’s Equity Strategy 2018-2028* by developing, administering, and analyzing the results from surveys

with City leadership personnel and former members of its advisory bodies, and sharing aggregate results with City staff.

Overview of Findings

- **Cities need explicit policies to increase the participation of diverse women (and we use the term here to mean *all* women in all their diversity) in all areas of civic life.**
 - ✓ Policies and strategies provide a basis for immediate action and for the development and improvement of both current and future policies and actions.
 - ✓ A city's reliance on descriptive representation, such as gender parity on a city council, is not enough. Gender equity and increased diversity on elected or volunteer bodies is unlikely to happen without policies specifically intended to counter pervasive sexism and prejudice.
- **Changes to electoral systems (proportional representation and/or wards) in conjunction with robust voter engagement and education strategies, are key to having elected bodies at the municipal level that are more representative of their cities' demographics.**
 - ✓ Surrey and Vancouver both have first-past-the-post and at-large electoral systems. They have done well in terms of achieving gender parity, and beyond, for their Councils. But those Councils are still overwhelmingly white in cities that have long been, and are becoming increasingly, diverse. And this pattern is true for cities across Canada.
 - ✓ Proportional representation systems, such as single transferrable vote, and cumulative voting have the potential to be effective at the local level in terms of encouraging participation of non-white voters, resulting in more diverse elected bodies, especially when combined with voter outreach initiatives.
 - ✓ District, or ward, systems do show advantages when it comes to electing women and people of colour. Critics of the at-large system in both Surrey and Vancouver have emphasized that the system is discriminatory and unusual for Canadian cities.
 - ✓ People of colour and Indigenous candidates are running in municipal elections in cities across Canada, but they are not receiving the votes. This is largely owing

to low voter turnout, and the unrepresentativeness of the members of the electorate who do vote. Robust voter engagement and education programs, conducted by cities in conjunction with community organizations, are crucial to turning out more and more diverse voters.

- ✓ The collection of disaggregated demographic data on voters is crucial for cities trying to understand who does and does not vote in civic elections. The analysis of these data can help focus voter engagement efforts on groups that tend not to vote, and who may need extra support to understand how to vote, and why it is important to their communities.

➤ **Activism and advocacy are important, but so is collaboration. Establishing an evidence base for policies and actions is critical both for cities, and for activists/advocacy organizations.**

- ✓ Cities need information, and advocacy groups need a solid and defensible evidence base to increase both their effectiveness and their credibility.
- ✓ Cities need to be held accountable and continuously pressed to fulfill their promises and implement their strategies when it comes to increasing the presence of diverse women in civic life. But this project has demonstrated that collaboration with cities, to gather data and do the analysis City staff might not have the time/resources/expertise to do, can be of mutual benefit by supporting and informing City policies and strategies, and by providing the evidence base needed for on-going evaluation and advocacy on the part of community groups.
- ✓ Collaborations among cities, advocacy groups, universities and research institutes, and community women—and that privilege all types of knowledge—are the most effective means to develop policies, programs, and actions to increase the participation of women in civic life.

➤ **Cities should adopt a gendered intersectional perspective across all departments and programs to inform gender and diversity policies and procedures.**

- ✓ Even strategies and practices that are considered to be “gender neutral,” “inclusive of all,” or “open to all applicants” often are not. For example, cities need to collect as much disaggregated data as possible for all public

engagement approaches, including in-person events. And cities need to regularly collect information on diversity among their employees to identify and address pay inequities, develop specific policies to make the workplace more welcoming, and to rectify underrepresentation of women and other diverse people in leadership positions and specific professions across City departments.

- ✓ Elected municipal officials and leadership staff need to lead by example in ensuring that City gender and diversity policies are given priority. City employees at all levels need to be informed and educated about City gender and diversity policies, their benefits, and why they are important, and included in their implementation.

Some Recommendations for Action

Both Surrey and Vancouver can point to the number of women on their City Councils as evidence that women's voices are being included in decision-making; Surrey has also had two female mayors. However, the two cities need to work toward more equitable representation of women from diverse backgrounds on their elected and advisory bodies. Vancouver has achieved measurable success in diversifying its advisory bodies through policies designed to increase participation based on gender and diversity criteria. Adoption of a similar approach in Surrey could lead to better representation on its advisory bodies, as well, resulting in more equitable representation of diverse women on bodies other than those specifically focused on "women's issues" or diversity. Both cities need to work on increasing participation of diverse people in their public engagement activities, including their on-line survey platforms, Talk Vancouver, and CitySpeaks (Surrey).

Achieving systemic change throughout a city's operations can be a slow process. Having a roadmap with clear objectives, such as Vancouver's *Women's Equity Strategy*, can help cities work toward measurable goals. We highly recommend that *all* cities develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure that women in all their diversities have an equal opportunity to participate fully in civic life.

Final Report: ***Action on Systemic Barriers to Women's Participation in Local Government***

1. Introduction

With funding from Status of Women Canada (SWC), now Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), this project was one of six funded nationally under the theme, “Democratic Leadership: Empowering Women for Political Action.” Funding recipients were Women Transforming Cities (WTC) and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW). The project focused on two BC cities: Vancouver and Surrey.

The project concentrated on four areas in which women participate in local civic life: as candidates and elected decision-makers; as participants in citizen-led municipal advisory bodies; as municipal employees; and as participants in city-led public engagement efforts. Project staff conducted quantitative and qualitative research for each of these areas to establish an evidence base of barriers women encountered, opportunities they experienced, and their recommendations for change and action for each of these areas. The focus was specifically on what cities as institutions can do to create more opportunities for women from diverse backgrounds to participate fully in these civic forums.

The sections that follow detail how we went about collecting information for these four focus areas, how we analyzed and interpreted our data, and what conclusions we reached based on our data analysis. We offer some evidence-based recommendations for preferred practice for each of the four focus areas, and an assessment for each city based on the extent to which they are addressing those preferred practices. We also outline the outcomes, outputs, and further actions that resulted from our research and analysis.

Our intent is that the findings and recommendations presented here will be useful to other municipalities wanting to work towards being more welcoming, inclusive, and equitable for all women in all areas of civic life.

2. Research Overview

Research Approach

The research approach followed in this project was informed by our literature review conducted in October 2017. A link to the literature review can be found here:

<http://www.womentransformingcities.org/systemic-barriers>

The literature review identified three types of barriers for women seeking participation in civic life: individual, structural, and systemic. Individual barriers include pay gaps between genders and ethnicities, women doing proportionally more housework and family care than men, women facing barriers to being promoted at work, and women lacking the social capital and political literacy that men often have. Two structural barriers were identified: political parties – both their presence and their absence, as varied research has pointed to both – and the electoral system, since first-past-the-post (FPTP) and at-large systems have been found to penalize female candidates. Systemic barriers include patriarchal cultural perceptions and gendered and racialized stereotypes about women, a masculinist political culture, and a lack of political will to address these systemic issues.

Our literature review also pointed out several gaps in the existing research. It noted that more research is needed on Canadian municipalities with high numbers of female elected representatives and leaders to determine what the municipalities are doing to produce those results. It also called for the collection of disaggregated data that account for greater intersections among female leaders like race, ethnicity, legal status, and class. Overall, an intersectional gender-based lens is needed in order to understand how intersecting identities and experiences affect women's experiences with civic participation. Much of the research already done into the barriers for women in civic life, in Canada and elsewhere, may consider gender or race, but does not use an intersectional approach.

This project therefore took a broad approach to gathering further data in our two pilot cities of Vancouver and Surrey. These cities were chosen since they each had examples of positive policies and practices that led to higher representation of women in some areas, but they also both had gaps. The City of Vancouver has taken a policy-heavy

approach that includes a requirement that City advisory committees must have at least 50% female and 50% diverse members; a recommendation that an intersectional lens be part of its Healthy City Strategy; a commitment from the Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions to develop a Strategic Gender Framework; and a Women's Equity Strategy passed by Council in 2018. However, these policies have not always resulted in significant improvements in terms of diverse women's¹ representation, and many have not been fully implemented despite commitments to do so. Conversely, the City of Surrey has had success with electing women as both Councillors and Mayors, achieving gender parity on several recent City Councils, and electing two recent female Mayors, but has not implemented policies to focus on ensuring that women representing the diversity of the City are included and represented in civic life.

Research Areas

This project focused on four areas of civic involvement: municipal advisory bodies, municipal political candidates and elected officials, municipal staff, and municipal public engagement policies and practices. Each of these four is key to fully assessing and understanding how a city is doing at representing and including women and their diverse needs in a holistic way.

A. Political Candidates and Elected Officials

When most people think about civic involvement, they think of political candidates and elected officials. While much Canadian and international research has focused on the diversity of candidates and elected officials at higher levels of government, relatively little research has focused on the municipal political level. A common solution proposed for increasing the number of women from diverse backgrounds in politics is for political parties to implement a quota for the candidates they run. However, most Canadian cities do not have political parties, which means this option is not possible. Vancouver and Surrey, our two pilot cities, do allow civic political parties to form and operate, making them anomalies in Canada. Most Canadian cities use ward systems to elect their councillors, while a few use at-large systems, including Vancouver and Surrey. Overall, past research has identified that more research is needed about the specific experiences of diverse women within the municipal political context and the effects of electoral

¹ When we use "diverse women" in this report, we mean "all women in all their diversity."

systems on the election of diverse women at the local level (Gidengil and Vengroff, 1997; Trounstein and Valdin, 2008; Tremblay and Mévellec, 2013).

B. Advisory Bodies

The term ‘advisory bodies’ in this report encompasses municipal boards, advisory committees, task forces, and working groups established by a city. Assessing women’s participation in advisory bodies is a key metric of the degree to which women are represented in civic decision-making. Depending on their specific structure and function in each local government, advisory bodies can help shape city policies and programs. It is crucial that these bodies are representative of the communities they serve.

Furthermore, serving on advisory bodies is often an important preliminary step before running for elected office for many women, since here women can learn about municipal policy-making, build their skills, and make the networks necessary to run for office (Seiferling, 2016).

C. City Staff

While many cities and governments can make claims about their values and their support for diverse peoples, understanding how they operate internally can show the extent to which they uphold those values. Studying cities as employers is therefore key to seeing how well diverse women are included in the workplace. The questions which we sought to answer here included: are promotions accessible? Is the workplace culture welcoming, supportive, and inclusive? How can cities as employers ensure staff with diverse needs are accommodated in the workplace?

D. Public Engagement

Finally, it is also important to study how a city engages the public. While elected officials, advisory body members, and staff can provide insights from their own (hopefully diverse) experiences, a city needs to thoughtfully engage with all residents in order to understand how to best provide services that meet peoples’ diverse needs. This includes studying both how a city proactively does outreach to its residents to seek their feedback, and how a city implements this feedback into policies and programs.

Intersectional Analysis

Using an intersectional lens is important in all aspects of policy and planning, and is especially relevant to our project. Identities and experiences like class, ethnicity, religion, ability, immigration status, and sexual orientation, among others, often intersect to pose more barriers for people, especially to attaining a position such as elected representative (Andrew et al., 2008). There still exists “an archetype of the Canadian elected official – male, White, middle-class, middle-aged, Christian, Canadian-born, and majority-language speaking” (Andrew et al., 2008, 255).

Originally developed by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality attempts to understand how multiple forces work together and interact to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion. As described by Olena Hankivsky (2014),

Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., ‘race’/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion). These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments and other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media). Through such processes, interdependent forms of privilege and oppression shaped by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy are created (Hankivsky, 2014, 2).

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) has developed a visual aid depicting intersectionality as a wheel (see below). In this visual, the innermost circle represents a person’s unique circumstances, the second circle represents aspects of individual identity, the third circle represents different types of discrimination and attitudes that impact identity, and the outermost circle represents larger forces and structures that work together to reinforce exclusion.



Figure 1: Intersectionality wheel. Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2009.

CRIAW further advocates for the use of Intersectional Feminist Frameworks (IFFs), which “offer alternative frameworks to viewing economic and social change which value and bring together the visions, directions and goals of women from very diverse experiences and different perspectives” (CRIAW, 2006).

In this project, we are focused on gender as the primary marker, since we are concerned with women in civic life. However, we take an intersectional approach by identifying the various identities of those we study and by researching how women of diverse backgrounds experience social and political structures differently. While some information is limited, our approach tries specifically to identify and investigate how ethnicity, class, gender identity, sexuality, disability, and immigration status interact with gender to affect how women in our two focus cities experience civic life.

3. Methodology

Overview

Our research methodology differed slightly in each of our two subject cities of Vancouver and Surrey. This was partly because of the above-mentioned differences in the two cities; for Vancouver, we were interested in understanding if and how the City's policy instruments had an effect. In Surrey, we were interested in determining if and how the lack of policy instruments had an effect. Our methodology also differed slightly because of different relationships with each city.

While initially the project team hoped to negotiate formal agreements with both cities for our research activities, we were able to achieve this only with Vancouver. As a city officially committed to improving the representation of women, the City of Vancouver was interested in our research and open to working together, and in 2018 we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City for many of our research activities.

Council's approval of *Vancouver: A City for All Women, Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028* (WES) (<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/womens-equity-strategy.aspx>) was also an opportune moment for us since we were able to identify key objectives of the WES that we could assist with through providing data collection and analysis. In Surrey, the City was proud of their electoral successes for women and did not see the need to implement more policies around gender. While our project team tried to come to an agreement with the City, they declined to participate formally in our project. Some of our data collection activities in Surrey therefore rely on publicly available data rather than on information provided by the City.

As noted in the previous section, this project focused on four areas of civic involvement: advisory bodies, political candidates and elected officials, staff, and public engagement. Through the following data collection instruments and initiatives, we attempted to cast as large a net as possible to capture self-identified women of many backgrounds and best understand their diverse experiences.

Methodology in Each Research Area

A. Political Candidates and Elected Officials

Our data collection on political candidates and elected officials relied on both quantitative and qualitative sources in both cities. First, we collected data on the percentages of female candidates who ran for office and who were elected to office in each city from 1996-2018. We looked at all municipal elected positions: Mayor, City Councillor, Park Commissioner (Vancouver only), and School Trustee. We used voters' guides, party websites, and other publicly accessible information to draw conclusions about gender and ethnicity in order to determine the diversity of each pool of candidates and elected officials.

To add context to these numbers, we interviewed four female candidates who had run for office in Vancouver, and five who had run for office in Surrey; some women had won their elections and some had not. Interviewees shared their successes, challenges, and ideas to reduce barriers for future female candidates. Further, in 2018, we held two public forums – one in Surrey in April, and one in Vancouver in June – for women who had run for office in each city to speak about their experiences. (Event reports from each of these forums can be found here: <http://www.womentransformingcities.org/systemic-barriers> and here: <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/page/publications-action-on-barriers> .) We also interviewed members of four political parties that operate in Vancouver, and four that operate in Surrey to understand their positions and policies around gender equity and diversity. These interview guides are included in of this report. We followed this with an analysis of all party and coalition platforms using their websites.

Further, we conducted research about the political and electoral context in which women operate. We conducted literature reviews about the effects of different electoral systems on women's chances of electoral success, the role of voter turnout on the electoral chances of diverse women, and the specific impacts for Indigenous women (though we found that intersectional analyses, particularly for Indigenous women, were lacking). We interviewed one staff member at the City of Vancouver who had been actively involved in designing and conducting the city's electoral

outreach to understand how the city attempted to engage voters, and what effect this may have had on political candidates and elections.

B. Advisory Bodies

In both cities, we spoke with past and current advisory body members to gain their insights into any challenges they experienced and ideas for making improvements.

In Vancouver, we created a survey for those who had recently served on City advisory bodies, focusing on 2016 – 2019. The City of Vancouver distributed our survey to past advisory body members on our behalf, as part of our MOU. Seventy-two respondents completed the survey in March and April, 2019. Respondents were asked about their experiences while serving on advisory bodies and to provide voluntary demographic information. Quantitative responses were statistically analyzed, and qualitative responses were analyzed by grouping like-responses together to draw out thematic similarities. Responses were anonymous and our project team analyzed the aggregated results to determine common responses and trends. We provided a short report of aggregate key results to the City of Vancouver.

We further created a more specific version of this survey for members of the City of Vancouver Women's Advisory Committee (WAC). This survey had similar questions to the general advisory bodies' survey, but included more specific questions about the barriers that exist for women as we believed WAC members would be well-informed about these topics. Eleven women completed this survey in March and April, 2019. Responses were anonymous and our project team analyzed the aggregated results to determine common responses and trends. We statistically analyzed quantitative responses, and qualitative responses were analyzed by grouping like-responses together to draw out thematic similarities.

At the end of each online survey, respondents could choose to share their contact information if they wanted to be contacted to do an interview to share more about their experiences. This was an optional question and was done through linking to a separate contact form so that respondents' names and identities could not be linked to their survey responses. Three people indicated they would like to be interviewed,

and we conducted short, semi-structured, in-person interviews with these former advisory body members in March and April of 2019.

The City of Vancouver further provided us with the names of a sample of their advisory body members from 2009-2018. Based on these data, we completed an analysis of the gender and visible ethnicity of these members, using publicly available information.² We did the same analysis for the 2019 members of these same advisory bodies to assess whether positive changes had occurred purely in descriptive representation.

In Surrey, we used a combination of internet research and semi-structured, qualitative interviews with key informants to gain insights into the membership and function of City advisory bodies. We examined the City of Surrey website, as well as available terms of reference for the City's advisory bodies, in order to understand which advisory bodies exist in the City and how they operate. Project researchers conducted interviews with four current or previous members of City advisory bodies, as well as with one City employee who worked in community planning and was knowledgeable about how the City conducts its engagement with advisory bodies. We also conducted quantitative analysis similar to that in Vancouver, where we assessed the gender and ethnic diversity of City of Surrey boards and advisory committees in 2018 and again in 2019.

C. City Staff

Our research on staff was considerably different in each city owing to the lack of City-provided information from Surrey.

In Vancouver, we conducted a survey for senior management at the City that inquired about City processes, policies, and practices to encourage a diverse workforce. We distributed the survey to senior staff via emails provided by the City, as part of our MOU. This survey was completed by 112 respondents in March and

² This project team acknowledges that gender and ethnicity are not defined by an individual's appearance and recognizes that we may have made assumptions that might have resulted in the misgendering or misclassification of some research participants' identities and backgrounds. We regret any errors.

April, 2019. Respondents were asked about their perspectives on diversity within the City's staff and their experiences with the City's diversity policies. Quantitative responses were statistically analyzed, and qualitative responses were analyzed by grouping like-responses together to draw out thematic similarities. Responses were anonymous and our project team analyzed the aggregated results to determine common responses and trends. We provided a short report on the responses to specific questions requested by City staff, ensuring that no respondents could be identified. We also held one interview with representatives from CUPE 1004, a union local representing outdoor workers at the City of Vancouver including engineers and construction workers.

We further assessed City of Vancouver policies, notably the WES and its specific goals regarding increasing diversity in the workforce. We were also able, as a result of our MOU, to review a report noting results from a series of three focus groups that the City held with senior staff. These focus groups were held in June 2019, included 65 participants among the three focus groups, and asked participants about the barriers for women in leadership and about what actions the City could take to encourage more women in leadership.

In Surrey, we relied upon publicly available information. We used the City website to obtain information on the percent of women in senior staff positions.

D. Public Engagement

Similarly, our analysis of public engagement activities differed between the cities.

Vancouver

In Vancouver, we used the City website to obtain information on the various public engagement programs. These include the online Talk Vancouver survey portal, Pop Up City Hall, Doors Open Vancouver, and the City's 3-1-1 contact service. We then spoke with one City staff member working in public engagement to determine how effective each of these programs had been at engaging diverse women. We also analyzed reports from a sample of Talk Vancouver surveys to gauge the extent to which the City was gathering and reporting on the diversity of the panelists, and how representative they are of the City's demographics.

Surrey

In Surrey, we conducted a survey with community organizations and individuals who had participated in various types of community engagement conducted by the City. In July 2018, we sent this online survey to 32 community organizations, eight of which responded, to ascertain their views on how the City engages with community groups. Responses were anonymous and our project team analyzed the aggregated results to determine common responses and trends. Quantitative responses were statistically analyzed, and qualitative responses were analyzed by grouping like-responses together to draw out thematic similarities. We conducted online research through publicly accessible information on the City's public engagement activities, and held one semi-structured interview with a city staff member working in community planning. We also reviewed the Terms of Reference and meeting minutes for the City's Public Engagement Task Force, established in January 2019.

4. Data Analysis

As noted, our project focused on four areas of municipal civic participation: candidates and elected officials, advisory bodies, city staff, and public engagement activities. This section provides an overview of our data analysis for each of these four sections, for each of our two study cities.

A. Political Candidates and Elected Officials

i. Quantitative Analysis

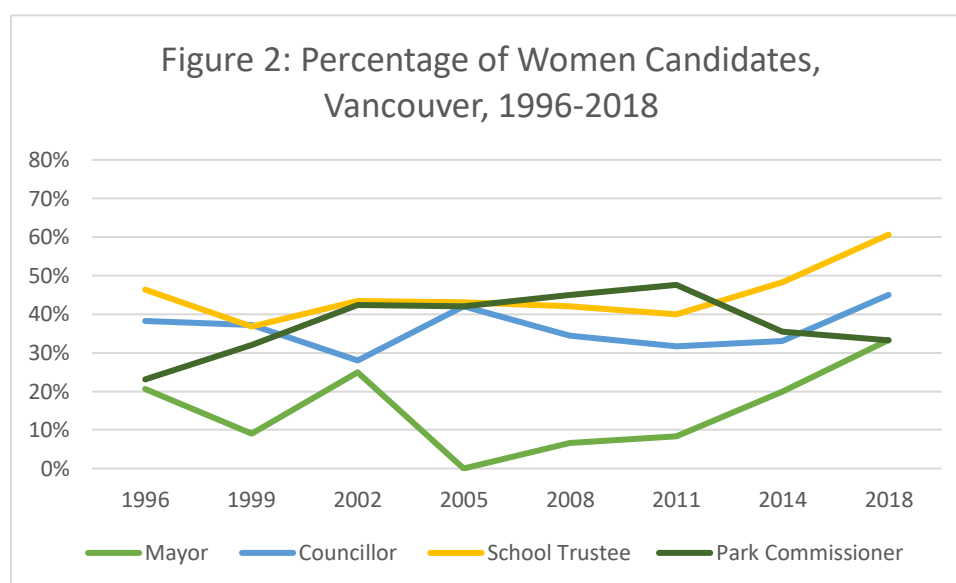
Female candidates

To begin assessing how well women have been represented as political candidates and elected officials in Vancouver and Surrey, we first looked at the quantitative data: the percentages of female candidates who ran for office and who were elected to office in each city from 1996-2018.

We assessed the proportion of female candidates who ran for elected office. We looked at all local government elected positions: Mayor, City Council, Park Commissioner (Vancouver only), and School Trustee. As noted in section 4 of this report, we used voters' guides, party websites, and other publicly accessible information to ascertain the gender of each candidate to the extent that we were able.

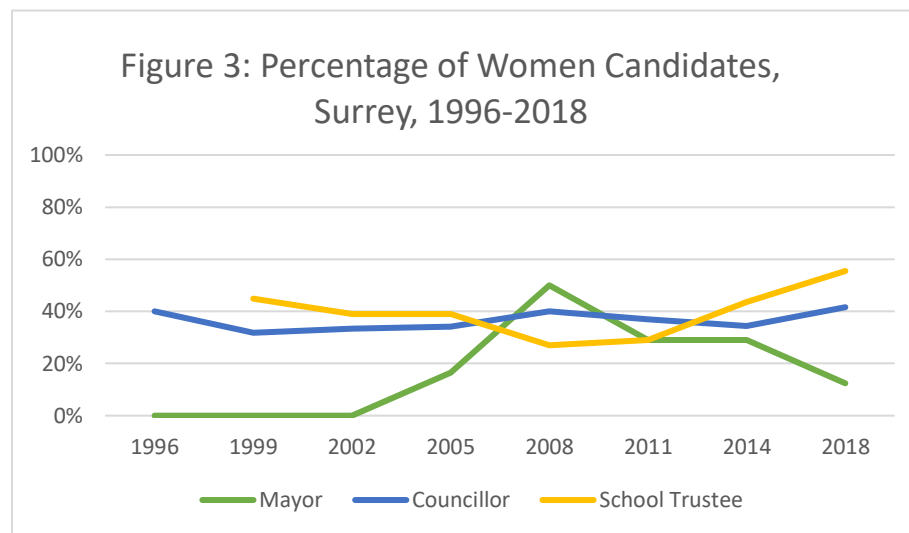
Vancouver

As noted in Figure 2 below, the proportion of women running for office in Vancouver has increased over time for all positions except Park Commissioner. Interestingly, the proportion of women running for Mayor and for City Councillor appear to have moved in an inverse relationship between 1999 and 2008: as more women ran for the Mayor position, fewer women ran for Councillor, and vice versa. This may speak to a lack of female candidates overall and a perception that there are only a few women who can run at any one time. The proportion of women running for School Trustee has had a fairly steady positive increase over time, though it started at a higher proportion than the other positions, since 46% of candidates in 1996 were women. This could be owing to a perception that the job of a School Trustee is more appropriate for women based on ideas about traditional gender roles relating to child care and parenting. The part-time nature of the role may also be easier for women with full-time work schedules or domestic responsibilities.



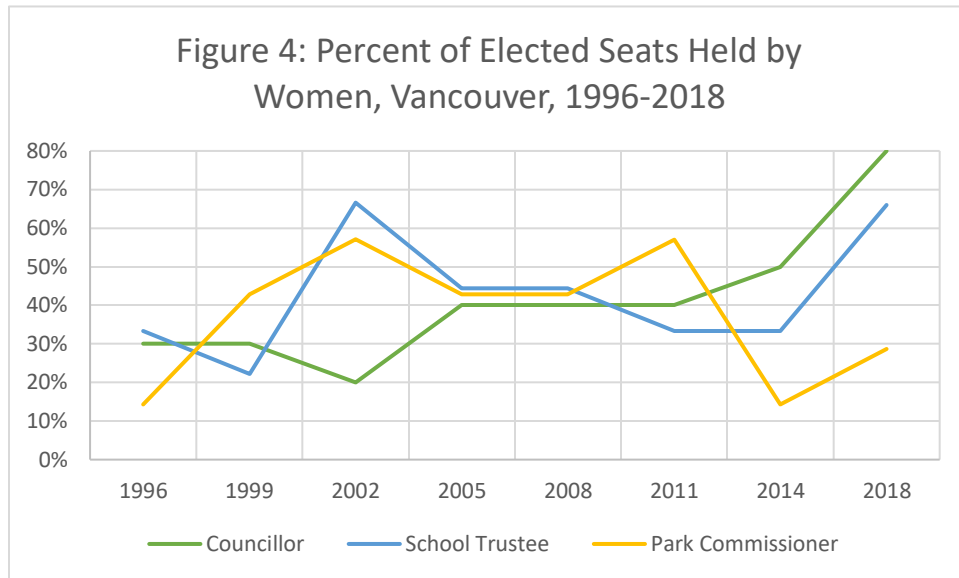
Surrey

In Surrey, shown below in Figure 3, we see a different story. The proportions of female candidates running for School Trustee and for Councillor have stayed relatively even over time (note that data for School Trustee candidates in 1996 were not available). Both increased slightly in the 2018 election, but it is too early to tell if this is a trend that will continue. The proportion of female mayoral candidates has varied considerably, moving from zero women from 1996-2002 to 50% in 2008. Here, it is important to remember that fewer mayoral candidates tend to run in total: in 1996 there were six mayoral candidates in Surrey (all male), and in 2008 there were only two mayoral candidates (of which one was female).



Vancouver

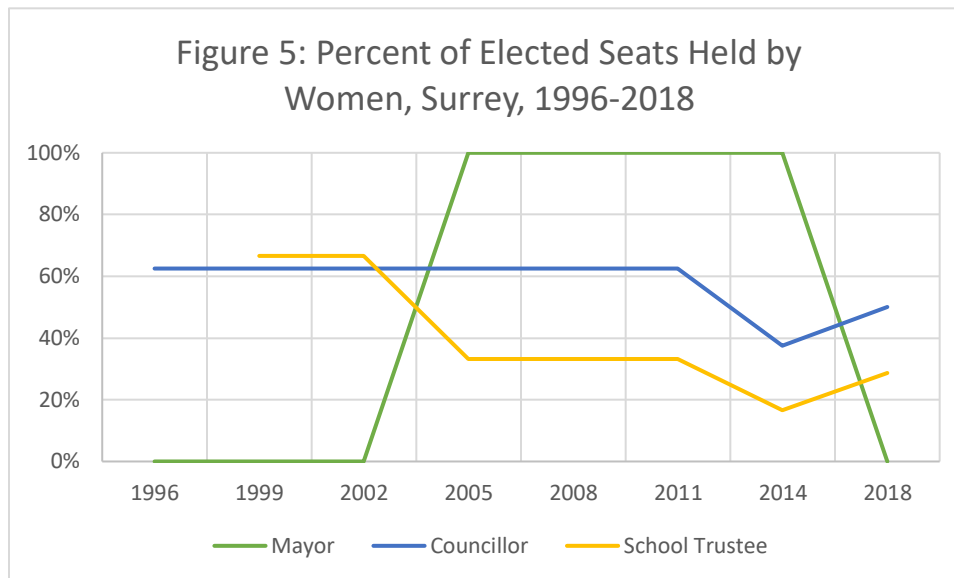
We then analyzed the proportions of women who were elected over the same time period. This refers to the total percentage of women who ran for each elected position who were successfully elected. In Vancouver (Figure 4 below), the proportions of women elected to Councillor, School Trustee, and Park Commissioner positions have fluctuated over time. There was a high point for women elected as School Trustees and Park Commissioners in 2002 – though this was a low point for women elected as Councillors – followed by a stable period until 2011. In 2014, there was a dip for all three positions, and the proportion of female Park Commissioners fell to its lowest point since 1996. The 2018 elections saw an increase in all three positions, though it is too early to tell if this trend will continue in the next election. Note that Vancouver has never had a female Mayor.



Comparing the percentages of women who ran for office and women who were successfully elected, the proportion of women elected in Vancouver closely matches the proportion of women candidates. On average between 1996 and 2018, women candidates comprised 36% of Councillor candidates, 45% of School Trustee candidates, and 38% of Park Commissioner candidates. Meanwhile, women were elected to 41% of Councillor positions, 43% of School Trustee positions, and 37.5% of Park Commissioner positions, again on average throughout our data set. All of these proportions are also above the critical mass of 30% of elected women at which the UN says policy will begin to reflect the needs and experiences of women (United Nations Equal Opportunities Commission, 2003).

Surrey

By comparison, in Surrey the data are less linear, as shown in Figure 5 below. Since there is only one mayoral position, the percentage of women elected into this position has been either zero or one hundred. Surrey had two female Mayors from 2005 to 2014, and elected a male Mayor in 2018. The proportion of female Councillors was steady from 1996 to 2011, and then dipped down in 2014; it increased again in 2018, though it is too soon to tell if this will continue in the future. The proportion of women elected to School Trustee positions has fluctuated the most in Surrey, with the numbers drastically decreasing from 67% in 1999 and 2002 to 33% in 2005. Between 2005 and 2018, the percent of School Trustee seats held by women has followed a similar trajectory to that of Councillor seats, though 2005 represented a dip from 66% in the previous election in 2002 down to 33% in 2005.



The proportion of women elected in these positions in Surrey has matched, and in some cases exceeded the proportion of women who ran for these positions. On average between 1996 and 2018, women candidates made up 17% of Mayoral candidates, 36.5% of Councillor candidates, and 39% of School Trustee candidates (excluding 1996 for School Trustee data).

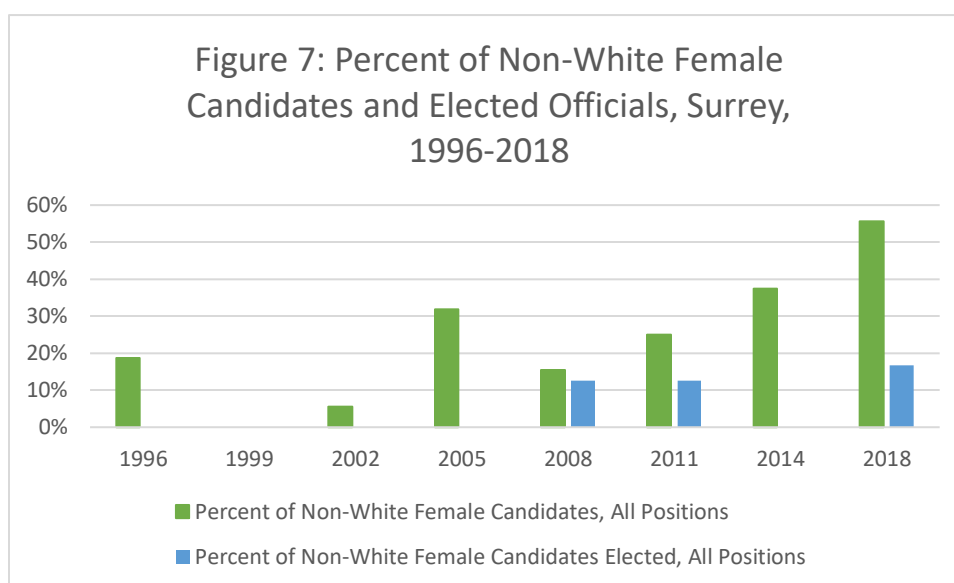
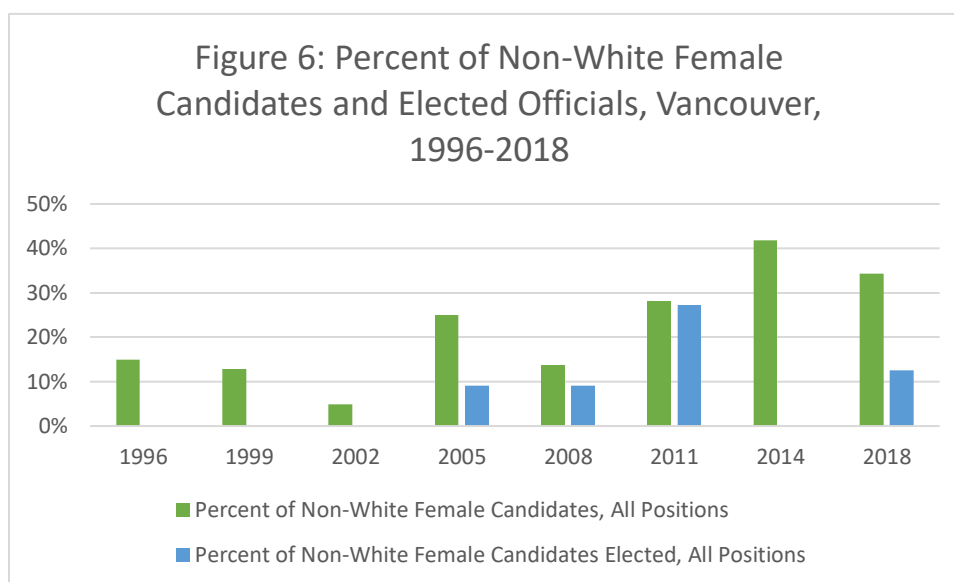
Comparatively, women were elected to 50% of Mayoral positions, 58% of Councillor positions, and 38% of School Trustee positions, again on average from 1996 to 2018, excluding 1996 for School Trustee data.

Diversity among female candidates

In addition to looking at the gender of these political candidates over time, we also used publicly accessible information to help us determine the ethnic backgrounds of candidates. This was a difficult process methodologically since ethnicity is not defined by an individual's appearance and should not be assumed. To determine these data, we searched for instances where each candidate self-identified as being from a particular racial and/or ethnic background. When no such self-identification or documentation was available, if the candidate appeared to be a person of colour, we noted them as "non-white;" if the candidate appeared to be white, we noted them as "white-appearing." If we could not find any photos or documentation about the candidates, we noted "don't know."

Figures 6 and 7 below show the percentages of non-white female candidates (which includes all categories other than "white," "white-appearing," or "don't know"). This refers to the percentage

of all candidates who ran for each position that our team could identify as female and non-white. The figures also show the percentages of those non-white female candidates who were elected. Both figures show the combined totals for all positions (for Vancouver: Mayor, Councillor, School Trustee, and Park Commissioner; for Surrey: Mayor, Councillor, and School Trustee).³



As Figures 6 and 7 demonstrate, the percentage of non-white female candidates in both cities has been extremely low, with an average over 1996-2018 of 22% in Vancouver and 24% in

³ Data are not available for School Trustees in Surrey from 1996, so Figure 7 is based on the data for only the Mayor and City Councillor positions.

Surrey. The majority of women running for office has therefore been white. Both cities have seen marked improvements over time in the numbers of diverse women candidates, though, with an increase in Vancouver from 15% in 1996 to 34% in 2018 (and a high of 42% in 2014), and an increase in Surrey from 19% in 1996 to 56% in 2018.

However, Figures 6 and 7 also reveal that very few non-white female candidates have been elected. In Vancouver, no non-white women were elected in the years of our dataset until 2005, when 9% of the non-white female candidates were elected. Since then there has been no clear trend, with an increase in 2011 to 27% of non-white candidates elected and a subsequent decrease to 0 non-white candidates elected again in 2014. In 2018, 13% of non-white female candidates were elected. Similarly, in Surrey, no non-white women were elected in our dataset years until 2008, when 13% were elected; this has increased only marginally to 17% in 2018.

ii. Qualitative Analysis

a. Interviews with candidates and elected officials

After our quantitative analysis, we sought to complement our findings with qualitative input from women who have run for office in our study cities of Vancouver and Surrey. As noted in Section 4 of this report, we interviewed nine women about their experiences running for office in either of the two cities.

In Vancouver, one woman we interviewed had run in two elections and won both times while the other three women had run several times each but not been elected. In Surrey, all five interviewees had not been elected, and had run between two and four times each. The women we interviewed were diverse in many ways: four interviewees identified as South Asian, one identified as Indigenous, one identified as Black and of mixed background, and one identified as a person of colour. One interviewee was transgender while the remainder did not note their gender identity.

The women we interviewed decided to run for office for a variety of reasons, but common among them all was a desire to enact positive change on issues they cared about. In Vancouver, all four women described feeling passionate about a particular topic – for example, children’s education, park naming processes, or improving city programming – and they felt that running for office was a way to further the change they could make in these areas. In Surrey,

three women spoke about volunteering and working on political campaigns prior to deciding to run for office themselves. One woman in each city described feeling that no other candidate was speaking about the issues they cared about, so they felt they had to run themselves. Five women in total noted that they were encouraged by others to run for office based on their previous work on the issues they were passionate about, and four women decided independently that they wanted to run.

The majority of our interview questions asked about women's experiences while running for office. Several themes emerged regarding barriers, both that interviewees had experienced themselves and that they saw other women experience. These are highlighted below:

- Campaign financing

The top concern identified by our interviewees was campaign financing, with eight interviewees discussing topics related to this theme. The high cost of running a campaign, struggling with taking time off from regular work in order to campaign, and difficulty fundraising were mentioned in this category.

Our interviewees found that getting funding to run for office as a woman was a challenge. As one woman described, "It's much more difficult for women to raise funds. People tend to give to male candidates more easily. That's been a challenge."

- Systemic sexism and racism

Six women we interviewed described facing sexism, racism, and other types of discrimination while campaigning, and further identified an understanding that these instances were part of larger unjust systems. Some women described intersectional experiences where their race, sex, and culture impacted their campaigns. Voters, political parties, and other candidates expressed surprise when these female candidates acted in ways that they deemed inappropriate for women, either in general or for their particular age, culture, or race. One candidate who first ran when she was 22 years old described experiences of ageism intersecting with gendered expectations. One South Asian woman described hearing from an older South Asian man that he preferred to vote for a man instead of her as a woman, though she was more qualified for the position. Another woman shared:

"I would say that [was] definitely a barrier for me, being a woman of colour, being South Asian....[T]he expectation is that during this time frame, my age, my phase of life, I'm

expected to be focused on getting married and having kids, and [politics] has been my primary focus.”

Another interviewee summed up the multiple issues she faced as a woman of colour while running:

My journey in politics was a journey of myself becoming “woke” because in popular culture at the time we didn’t have the vocabulary we do now around the ways race shows up in environments and how politics heightens it to such an extent. You’re either tokenized, because you’re the one we want to dress up and stand beside someone else to help them get elected, or you’re meant to speak on behalf of everyone who has the same colour skin as you, or you’re facing microaggressions and people treating you like you don’t have power.

- Anxiety and lack of confidence

Six women we interviewed shared that they and other women often experience anxiety, insecurities, and self-doubt in ways they feel men do not. One woman shared that “women sort of doubt themselves more and doubt their qualifications and skills. Men seem to have that problem less.” Another shared that while campaigning, “the ‘what is this, what is that, and I don’t have that, how are people going to look at me’ overpowered the decision [to run].”

This issue also intersected with the first theme of campaign financing since several interviewees talked about feeling insecure having to ask for money. As one woman noted, “[f]or women, we often ask in a pleading tone, almost apologizing about having to ask. We’re asking for an allowance rather than coming out and saying this is what I need to do and this is how to support me. We feel we don’t deserve money.”

- Family and community balance

Six interviewees shared experiences related to struggling to balance family and community responsibilities or expectations while running for office. The women described feeling that, as women, they were expected to continue raising their children actively and completing household and domestic work, often in addition to paid work, on top of their campaign duties. Juggling these responsibilities, especially if they felt pressure because of gendered expectations, was difficult. One woman described the trade-off she experienced during her campaign: “You know, I barely see these kids anymore. Right now, I’ve been so busy with

work and then from work I go to a meeting...and sometimes, it's like day after day after day that I don't see them. So, it's going to break a family if it's not strong and supportive."

- At-large voting system

Less prominent but still a running theme was the issue of the at-large voting system. Three women spoke about feeling the voting system itself constrained them in their campaigning. Several aspects of this topic were identified. First, because at-large systems mean candidates must campaign throughout a larger area, rather than in a smaller ward or district, some interviewees noted that this caused added work. In Surrey, one of our interviewees noted that running for municipal office was equivalent to running in nine provincial constituencies and felt that "ironically, without wards it's sometimes easier to get elected provincially than it is municipally." This burden was increased by the other barriers mentioned above such as struggling to balance work and life responsibilities.

Additionally, in at-large elections there tend to be more candidates, which means a longer list of names for voters to parse through in the voting booth. As one interviewee described, "[p]eople may not think they're racist, but when it comes to marking a name on a ballot people may be more likely to pick the type of name they recognize....So if you ever wondered what the barrier is, here's part of it, it's going to be easier for certain people to get elected over others, especially in our system in Vancouver."⁴

In addition to the above-mentioned themes, several other barriers were mentioned less frequently: a lack of existing representation from women in politics, difficulty with running a campaign overall, and media and social media criticism were each mentioned by two interviewees. Finally, two interviewees mentioned a key barrier that we had not seen discussed extensively in previous research: School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are often given less support than Councillor and Mayoral candidates. This occurs both by parties (who may give less funding, media time, or other types of support to their School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates), and by election organizers (who often leave School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates out of debates and other campaign events).

⁴ Some research has also suggested that voters, when presented with a longer list of candidates to choose from, including many people they have little information about, tend to vote based on implicit biases about race, gender, age, and other demographic factors. For more information, see Crowder-Meyer et al, 2015.

The other key question we asked of our interviewees was what factors helped them overcome barriers in their campaigns and, more broadly, what would help more women to run for office. Several themes emerged here as well:

- Family and community support

Eight interviewees identified that family and community support helped them during their campaigns. In many cases, this support was in the form of tangible help with day-to-day tasks. One woman indicated that during her first campaign “[her] friends were [her] volunteers and [her] volunteers were [her] friends.” Similarly, several of another woman’s friends played an important role in supporting her campaign for School Trustee, alerting her to key events, editing her speeches, and encouraging her to take pictures. A third woman shared that “having somebody come and help out with your kids, do your dishes, [or] do your laundry [is helpful]. You just don’t do it; it’s not the most important thing.”

In addition to direct supports, several women spoke about general support for their candidacy being important. One woman shared that family support helped her: “I come from a family of very strong women: my mother and my maternal grandmother. And although the odd question will come up here and there about my personal life, they were always very much like okay, you want to do this, we’re going to support you.” Two women spoke about receiving support and encouragement from their faith communities. Another woman shared that being able to talk about her experiences in a supportive group helped: “I had a group of women of colour that were in the same experience as me, not necessarily running for office but having the same experience in some way, and we would just talk about it. And this wasn’t really offered by anyone, it’s just something that happened. It really helped to talk about what was going on.”

- Party support

Similarly, having a supportive political party, or a slate of like-minded candidates to work with, was helpful for five women we interviewed. One woman shared that her party helped with the technical aspects of running like having a web presence, submitting paperwork on time, and ensuring she had a headshot for the media. They also assist with networking: “I don’t know anybody, and I get anxious about meeting people, so for them, they’ve been introducing me to other people they know.” Two other women cited the increased organizational and resource capacity of political parties and coalitions as the reason why they decided to run with slates: “If defeating an incumbent is hard enough, getting elected as

an independent is almost impossible. So, there are so many advantages just in terms of fundraising and organizational capacity just to be part of a slate.”

- Mentorship

Four women we interviewed identified that mentorship from other elected officials helped them while running for office. Three women shared they “shadowed” and learned from men in their political parties who had a long history of political experience. One reflected on her time campaigning with a male mentor: “He was an existing councillor and he was completely open to sharing all his knowledge and giving the utmost guidance when it came to us newbies and basically telling us exactly what to expect if we were to get elected.” Another woman shared that mentorship about how to fundraise was helpful for her, and shared that she “had amazing mentors. Women reached out to [her] and said ‘whatever you need I’m here.’”

- Electoral system change

Four women identified that changing the electoral system to a ward-based system would help more women run for office since it would make it easier for candidates to reach their community. One candidate described ward systems as more fair, noting that she would “like to see a system where you can only campaign in your own community, rather than having to campaign city-wide, which is very difficult.” Further, two candidates felt that a ward system would make elected representatives more accountable to residents. As one stated:

If we have a ward system, for example, the onus would be on each of the elected representatives in each ward to maybe hold a forum [on key issues], maybe hold a session where anybody who’s interested in the topic can come out. They can learn about it, they can give feedback, give their input and that elected representative would take it back to council and say this is what my constituents are saying.

- Previous political experience

Finally, a less prominent theme was that of previous political experience. Three women who had run for office multiple times mentioned that their previous candidacies primed them for later ones by teaching them about the process. For one woman, her first run was purely for the purpose of understanding campaigns so she would be more comfortable when she ran again in the next election. For the other two women, running helped them build their name recognition, which could put them in more advantageous positions to choose their party or

slate in the next election: “I have somewhat name recognition and I have strong numbers, so what that has done for me this time...when it came to choosing which team I wanted to be on this time, I was able to kind of call the shots on that.”

In addition to these four themes, the women we interviewed mentioned several other things that helped them in their campaigns and that they recommended would help other women candidates. These include:

- having flexible careers that allow them to take time off (two responses);
- being confident in knowing their candidacies are making a difference (two responses);
- getting a campaign office early on (one response);
- implementing tax receipts for citizens’ donations to political parties and candidates (one response);
- having publicly-funded elections to level the playing field for campaign financing (one response);
- cities creating advisory bodies to help candidates learn about campaigning (one response);
- cities offering funding to community organizations to provide training for candidates (one response);
- including school trustee candidates in all-candidate events (one response);
- holding elections earlier in the year so the evenings are not dark when women are out campaigning (one response);
- encouraging women to get involved in advisory committees as a first path into politics (one response);
- ensuring political parties run more female candidates (one response);
- implementing shorter election cycles since a four-year commitment as an elected official may be too much for some women (one response);
- implementing city-wide equity policies (one response);
- offering child care for elected officials (one response);
- implementing randomized or non-alphabetized ballots (one response);
- encouraging broad training and awareness around unconscious bias (one response);
- ensuring women practice healthy self-care (one response);
- and seeing more people of colour celebrated and acknowledged by cities (one response).

b. Forums in Vancouver and Surrey

To complement our one-on-one interviews, we also held public forums in both Vancouver and Surrey where women who had run for office shared their experiences. As noted in the Methodology section of this report, the reports from each of these events can be found on the websites of Women Transforming Cities (WTC), and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW). Some key highlights from the women who spoke at these events are included here.

In Surrey, six women who had run for office – five panelists and one keynote speaker – spoke about their motivations, the challenges they faced, and the factors that helped them overcome challenges. These women reinforced many of the above comments from our interviewees. Many women spoke about challenges balancing home-based work, child care, and/or paid work while running for office, and discussed sexism, racism, and gendered expectations that female candidates face in the public and in the media. One panelist who is transgender spoke about dealing with ignorance and bias from the public and from other candidates due to her being openly trans. Several also identified that women often feel they don't know enough to run for office, and mentioned that women often have to deal with more than one barrier when they enter politics. Several women of colour spoke about particular types of discrimination faced in their communities and about being tokenized by political parties because of their identities. The women agreed that things are slowly improving, and spoke about community and family support networks being invaluable.

In Vancouver, five female panelists similarly shared their experiences running for municipal office. Several panelists had dealt with sexism, racism, ageism, and other forms of discrimination when they ran for office. One panelist is Indigenous and one is South Asian, and both spoke about experiences of racism they had encountered while campaigning. Several women spoke about being motivated to run for office because they wanted to advocate for their children's needs. Many women identified campaign financing as a major barrier, and spoke about the gender wage gap which further contributes to women having more difficulty financing a campaign.

c. Interviews with political parties

In addition to speaking to women who had run for office, we also interviewed members of several political parties about their approaches to encouraging diverse women to join their teams. When we were not able to speak directly with a party representative, we examined each party's publicly available information – their website and campaign platform documents – to analyze their approach.

Vancouver

In Vancouver, we assessed the five major political parties as of the 2018 municipal election: the Green Party of Vancouver, the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE), Vision Vancouver, the Non-Partisan Association (NPA), and One City. We outline key points below.

- ***Green Party***

The Green Party displayed a good commitment to gender equity and diversity issues via their platform documents. The party said it is committed to Vancouver's Women's Equity Strategy (WES), said it seeks out diverse candidates both for its internal Board positions and for municipal elections, and aims to have 50% women in these positions. The party's platform in the 2018 election included commitments like implementing recommendations from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and establishing a gender-neutral evaluation system for the civil service to ensure pay and employment equity for women and girls. In our interview, the party displayed a clear understanding of intersectionality and barriers to civic participation for women.

In the 2018 election, 4 of the Green Party's 11 candidates were women (36.4%). At least two of the female candidates were white-appearing.

- ***Council of Progressive Electors (COPE)***

In our interview, COPE members showed a solid understanding of the root causes of the barriers women experience. COPE's representatives said they want to push for equity on City committees, work with unions on hiring equitable numbers of women, build more social housing, invest in public transit, ensure secure and well-paid jobs, and focus on women's rights overall. The party's 2018 platform noted commitments including

implementing \$10-a-day child care and other measures to universalize child care, using a gender lens and an anti-racism lens on City policies, providing supports for immigrant and migrant women, and implementing recommendations from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. COPE said it has a minimum quota for Indigenous women at all levels in the party, has an internal equity program whereby one of their party co-chairs is always a woman, and runs 50 per cent women candidates in elections.

In the 2018 election, 5 of COPE's 7 candidates (71%) were women. One woman was Indigenous, and the rest appeared to be white.

- *Vision Vancouver*

When Vancouver City Council passed the *Women's Equity Strategy*, it was under a Vision Vancouver-helmed Council. In our interview with two party representatives, the party said it was committed to using an intersectional lens in their platform, and also displayed an understanding of systemic barriers women experience like sexism, the at-large electoral system, the gendered burden of child care and domestic labour, campaign costs, and the political culture overall. Vision Vancouver's 2018 platform noted commitments including implementing a poverty reduction strategy and specifically addressing Indigenous poverty and homelessness, creating more affordable child care, ensuring the City prioritizes engagement with people who are underrepresented in City decision-making, and ensuring a sustained relationship with Reconciliation. Internally, the party passed a diversity policy and expressed a desire to increase the numbers of female staff and candidates.

In the 2018 election, 5 of the party's 9 candidates were women (55.5%). One woman was South Asian and the remainder appeared to be white.

- *Non-Partisan Association (NPA)*

In our interview, the NPA displayed a commitment to addressing inequalities for women but focused mainly on individual barriers as opposed to structural barriers. The party representative noted that the main barriers for women are a lack of confidence and the gendered burden of child care and domestic work. She also noted the party is fully committed to implementing the WES policy and using an intersectional approach in City

policies. However, the party had no formal policies or 2018 platform commitments related specifically to gender equity or an intersectional approach. Similarly, the NPA does not have a policy on running gender-equal slates or encouraging diversity in candidates; in our interview, the party displayed a desire to be an exciting option through their values and policy positions overall, which was felt to naturally attract women over time. The party noted that several of its multi-term City Councillors were women, which increases these women's political experience and skills, meaning the party may nominate a female Mayoral candidate in time.

In the 2018 election, 10 of the NPA's 19 candidates (52.6%) were women. One woman was Asian, and the rest appeared to be white.

- *One City*

One City proposed several measures related to gender and diversity equity. Their 2018 platform committed to sustained reconciliation through housing, Indigenous place name recognition, access to Vancouver parks, and Indigenous languages in schools, but did not note other commitments specifically relating to gender or intersectionality issues. However, their platform also proposed "that, in consultation with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and urban Indigenous communities, dedicated positions on the Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Parks Board, and City Council for Indigenous representation be established."

In the 2018 election, 4 of 5 One City candidates (80%) were women. One woman was a person of colour, and the others appeared to be white.

Surrey

In Surrey, we interviewed the four major political parties and slates as of the time of our data collection prior to the 2018 election: Surrey First (slate), Proudly Surrey (political party), Surrey Community Alliance (political party), and People First Surrey (political party).⁵ We outline key points below.

⁵ Another slate, the Safe Surrey Coalition, formed late in the 2018 election campaign and went on to win the majority of elected seats. The Coalition ran nine candidates, of which five were women, and won the Mayoral seat and seven of the eight Councillor seats. Figure 8 below includes the Safe Surrey Coalition in its capturing of

- *Surrey First*

Surrey First discussed the choice women may have to make between running for office and leaving what may be a well-paid job and a growing career elsewhere in order to run. The low pay of City Councillors, much less School Trustees, may not incentivize women to run. The party also identified further barriers for women including negative social media and media coverage, lack of confidence asking for campaign donations, and that donations to municipal campaigns are not tax-deductible. To encourage more women to run, Surrey First spoke about the importance of mentorship. In thinking of the 2018 election, the party felt the barriers they identified were already being addressed, and did not specifically commit to actions related to gender and diversity.

In the 2018 election, 3 of 9 Surrey First candidates (33.3%) were women. One woman was South Asian, and the other two appeared to be white.

- *Proudly Surrey*

In our interview with Proudly Surrey, the party demonstrated a clear understanding of both individual and structural barriers women experience. These included the gendered wage gap, the gendered burden of child care and domestic work, patriarchy, and inequality. The party further noted that “the people who participate in public consultation are even less representative of the population” and felt this is also a concern. Proudly Surrey began with white male candidates and understood this to be a problem but also did not want to tokenize women of colour by focusing on them specifically. The party also felt that if voter turnout could be increased and made to be representative of the City, public consultation was not necessary. In the 2018 election, the party promised to implement a pay equity office and a regulation office to audit municipal services.

In the 2018 election, 3 of 8 Proudly Surrey candidates (37.5%) were women. One woman was Black, one was Asian, and one was a person of colour.

- *Surrey Community Alliance*

The SCA identified several systemic barriers women experience, including discrimination against women of colour, the at-large voting system, and the lack of a gendered quota

percentage of female candidates per party, but the Safe Surrey Coalition was not included in our overall analysis for this project since they formed after we had completed our data collection.

system for candidates. The SCA noted a desire to reach out to more women and encourage them to run for the party. For the 2018 election, the SCA promised more inclusive public consultation and committees in order to broaden the voices the City hears from.

In the 2018 election, 1 of 5 SCA candidates (20%) were women, and the lone female candidate appeared to be white.

- *People First Surrey*

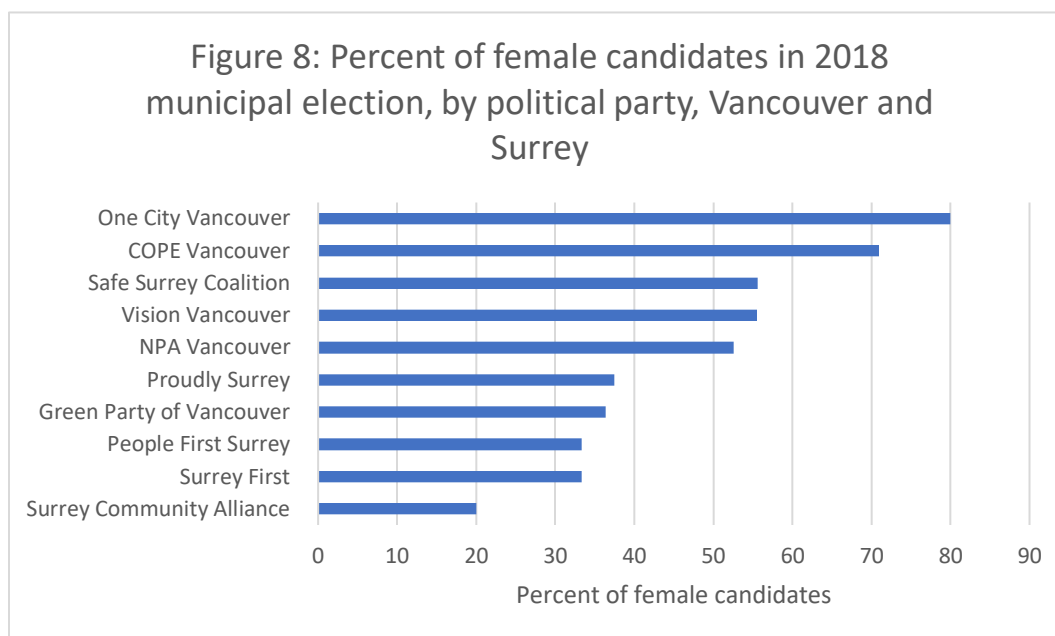
PFS did not feel that women experience particular or gendered barriers. Instead, the party noted that anyone who is not 'in' with the political elites may have trouble breaking into the circle. It also felt that men tend to accept opportunities quickly whereas women take more time to consider opportunities and may miss their chance. The party noted a desire to run candidates from diverse ethnic backgrounds and to have a balance of men and women⁶ but would not force these through quotas. PFS also has a policy whereby the founders pool their campaign contributions so that new candidates do not need to worry about a financial barrier to their campaigns. For the 2018 election, PFS committed to hold open houses with at least one City Councillor present at each.

In the 2018 election, 2 of 6 People First Surrey candidates (33.3%) were women. One was Asian and one was white-appearing.

Overall, Figure 8 below shows the percentage of female candidates in the 2018 election from each of the political parties we assessed in both Vancouver and Surrey.⁷

⁶ People First Surrey did not mention transgender, non-binary, or other-gender candidates.

⁷ Including Safe Surrey Coalition.



While the top two parties with the most female candidates did express explicit commitments to finding female candidates, Figure 8 also reveals that most parties ran a significant number of female candidates with or without an explicit commitment to do so. Every party or slate other than Surrey Community Alliance had more than 30% female candidates.

iii. Political and Electoral Context

Finally, in this section, we collected research about the political and electoral context in which women operate. Our report on this, “Voter Engagement, Electoral Systems, and Diverse Women’s Political Representation: A Brief Review,” can be found here: <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/page/publications-action-on-barriers>

This report investigates several key areas of research. It begins by comparing how well the diversity of Vancouver’s and Surrey’s elected officials match the diversity of their municipal populations. It then explores research into electoral participation (who votes and why), political representation (who gets elected and why), political representation and electoral systems, and what cities can do to create more diverse representation in local government.

B. Advisory Bodies

i. Quantitative Analysis

To study the gender diversity of City of Vancouver and City of Surrey advisory bodies, we first conducted a quantitative analysis of the makeup of the members.

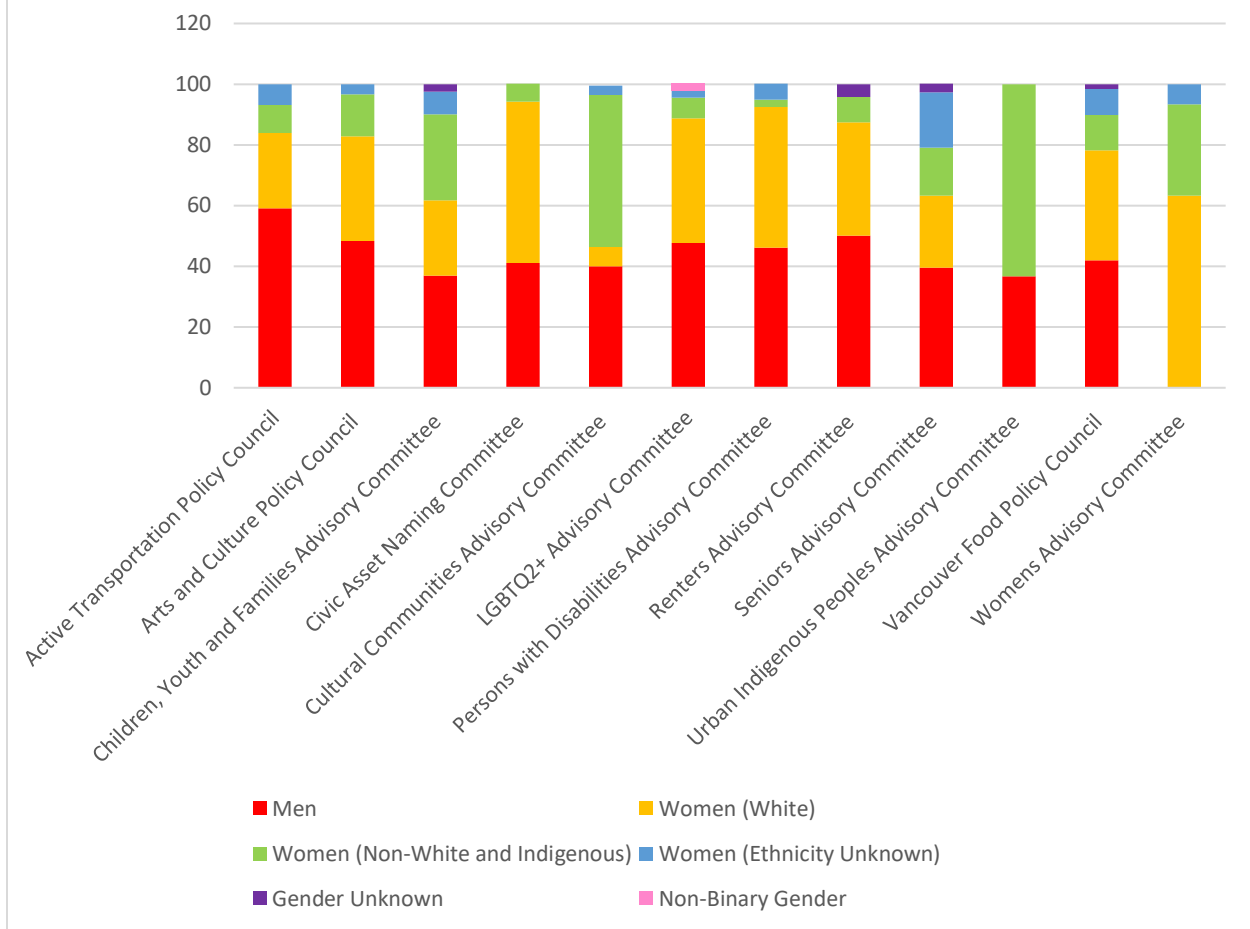
Vancouver

In Vancouver, this analysis was based on advisory body membership over the past ten years, provided to us by City staff under the terms of our MOU. We wanted to assess how well the City is including representation from diverse women in the bodies advising the City on policy and practice. The data we received were a sample of membership from 2009-2018 that does not delineate in which year each person was a member of each advisory body. This is important to note because in April 2016 Vancouver City Council passed a motion mandating that the number of women appointed to City advisory committees must be equal to or greater than 50% (Vancouver City Council, 2016). As such, we would have liked to assess the number of women on advisory committees before and after the initiation of this motion, but this was not possible.

However, we can still make general and careful conclusions about the representativeness of advisory bodies in the City of Vancouver based on our data. Figure 9 below shows the gender and diversity of advisory body members from 2009-2018 from our data. In the data we were given, there were differing numbers of committee members per committee, ranging from 17 to 81 names per committee over the ten-year span. To equalize the comparisons between committees here, Figure 9 shows the proportions of members of different gender and ethnic backgrounds rather than the numbers of members.⁸

⁸ Note that the categories used in Figure 9 and subsequent charts in this section do not aim to represent all possible aspects of gender and ethnic diversity, but rather the categories for which we were able to obtain data based on our samples. In-depth ethnic data for all women were not available, so we rely on the imperfect categories of “white” and “non-white and Indigenous.”

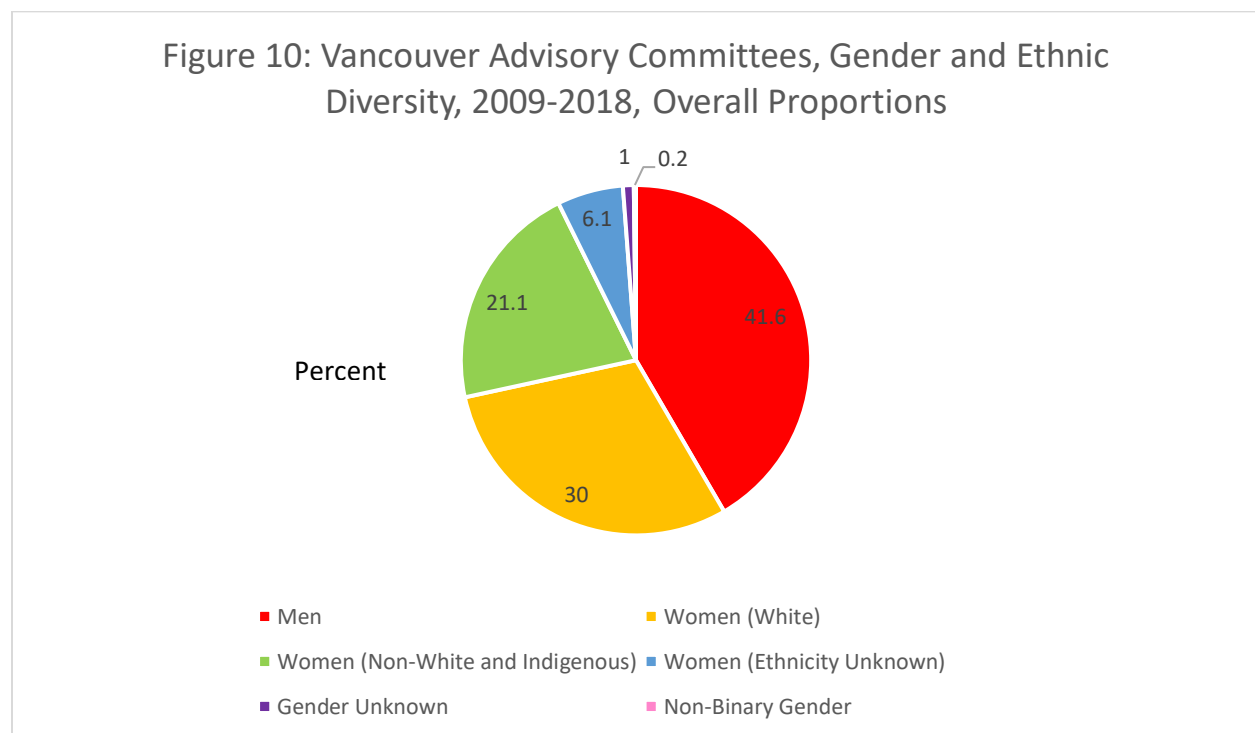
Figure 9: Vancouver Advisory Committees, Gender and Ethnic Diversity, 2009-2018, Proportions per Committee



As Figure 9 demonstrates, every advisory committee had a high proportion of male members during the 2009-2018 period except for the Women's Advisory Committee. The committees with the most men include the Active Transportation Policy Council (59% men), the Renters Advisory Committee (50%), the Arts and Culture Policy Council (48.3%), the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee (47.7%), and the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (46.2%). Similarly, every committee has had a high proportion of white female members except for the Urban Indigenous Peoples Advisory Committee and the Cultural Communities Advisory Committee. The committees with the most white women include the Women's Advisory Committee (63.3%), the Civic Asset Naming Committee (53%), and the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (46.2%).

Women from non-white backgrounds, including Indigenous women, made up a significant proportion of members in only the Urban Indigenous Peoples Advisory Committee (63.2%) and the Cultural Communities Advisory Committee (50%). Both of these committees are specifically for those from non-white backgrounds, so the high proportions here are simply because there are no white members. Those with a gender other than male or female comprise a small proportion, making up only 2.3% of members in the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee – a committee specifically designed to include those from gender-diverse backgrounds – and no other committee had members of a gender other than male or female.

Overall, men made up a high proportion of all committee members in this dataset (41.6%), as shown in Figure 10 below. White women were not far behind at 30% of all committee members, and non-white women composed 21.1%. However, when looking just at gender, women as a group were a majority of all members at 57.2%.

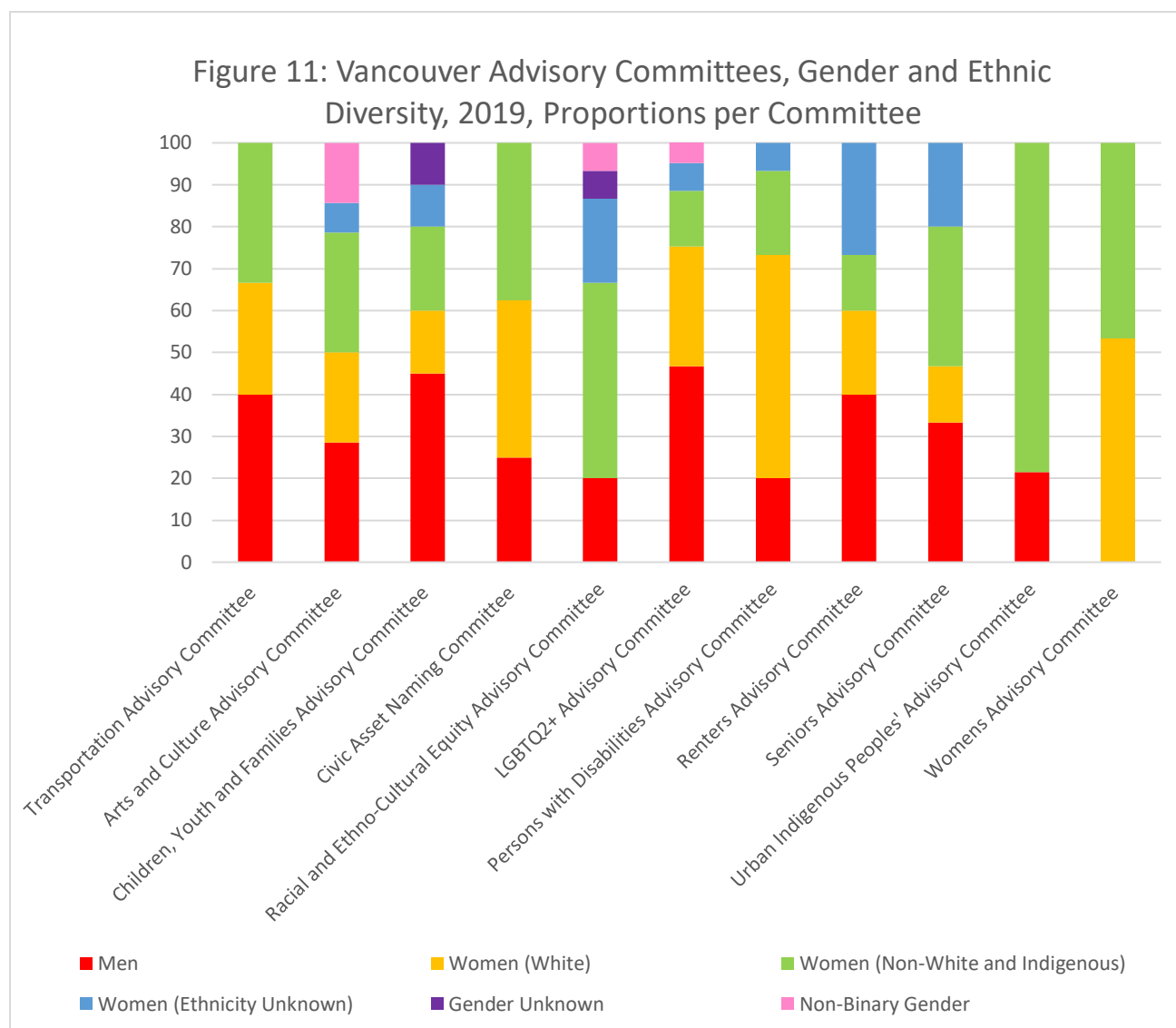


Following this assessment of advisory body members from 2009-2018, we collected data on the 2019 memberships of the same committees. Several committees had their names changed, but these committees are comparable to those of the 2009-2018 dataset.⁹ Importantly, in this time period the City of Vancouver introduced the Diversity on Advisory Bodies policy to increase the representativeness of their advisory bodies. Implemented in March 2019, this policy builds on the 2016 gender equity policy and mandates that every advisory body's membership must be composed of at least 50% people from equity-seeking groups¹⁰ as well as at least 50% women (City of Vancouver, 2019).

Therefore, assessing the 2019 makeup of City of Vancouver advisory bodies will reflect the impacts of both the 2016 and 2019 policy changes. Figure 11 below shows the proportions of gender and ethnic diversity in committee membership in 2019. In 2019, the number of members per advisory body ranged from 8 to 20, with an average of 14.6 members.

⁹ Note that the Vancouver Food Policy Council did not post their 2019 membership at the time of this data analysis and as such is missing from the 2019 analysis here.

¹⁰ The City of Vancouver defines equity-seeking groups as “communities that face significant collective challenges in participating in society as a result of barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, marginalization that could be created by attitudinal, historic, social and environmental barriers based on the intersections of age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation and transgender status, etc.” (City of Vancouver, 2019)

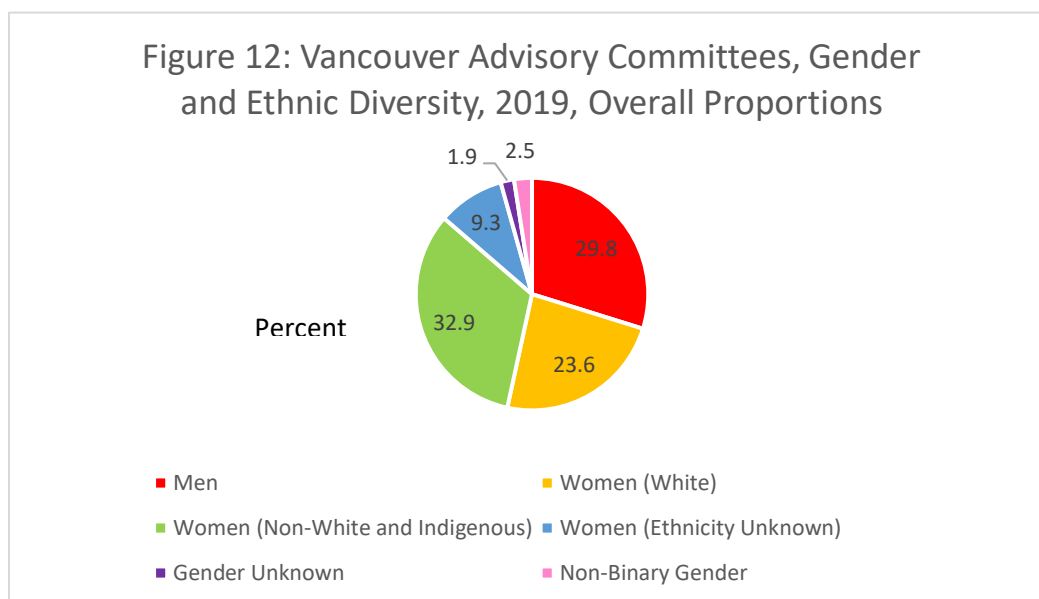


As Figure 11 demonstrates, the makeup of advisory bodies in the City of Vancouver became more diverse in 2019 when compared to our dataset from 2009-2018. Men were still a high proportion of members on some committees, including the Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee (45%) and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee (46.7%), but do not make up more than 50% on any committee. Similarly, white women are a high proportion of the members of the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee (53.3%), and the Women's Advisory Committee (53.3%), but these are the only two committees where white women represent over 40% of members in 2019 (compared with four committees with more than 40% white women in the 2008-2019 period).

The proportion of members from diverse backgrounds increased in 2019. Women from non-white and Indigenous backgrounds still made up high proportions of the Urban Indigenous Peoples Advisory Committee members (78.6%) and the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Advisory Committee members (46.7%), as in 2009-2018, but were also over the critical threshold of 30% of members of the Women’s Advisory Committee (46.7%), the Civic Asset Naming Committee (37.5%), the Transportation Advisory Committee (33.3%), and the Seniors Advisory Committee (33.3%), which are increases from 2009-2018. There was also more gender diversity represented on committees in 2019, with non-binary members represented on the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (14.3%), the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee (6.7%), and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee (6.7%).

Overall, in 2019 there was greater representation of members from diverse backgrounds on committees that are not solely focused on diversity. Seeing higher proportions of gender and ethnic diversity on committees such as the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, the Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee, and the Renters Advisory Committee shows that these committees will include the perspectives of a broader range of community members.

Figure 12 below shows the overall proportions of gender and ethnic diversity in these City of Vancouver advisory bodies in 2019.



As Figure 12 shows clearly, the makeup of Vancouver’s advisory bodies overall was much more diverse in 2019 than in the 2009-2018 period. The largest proportion of members is non-white and Indigenous women at 32.9%, compared to 21.1% in 2009-2018. Men made up only 29.8%

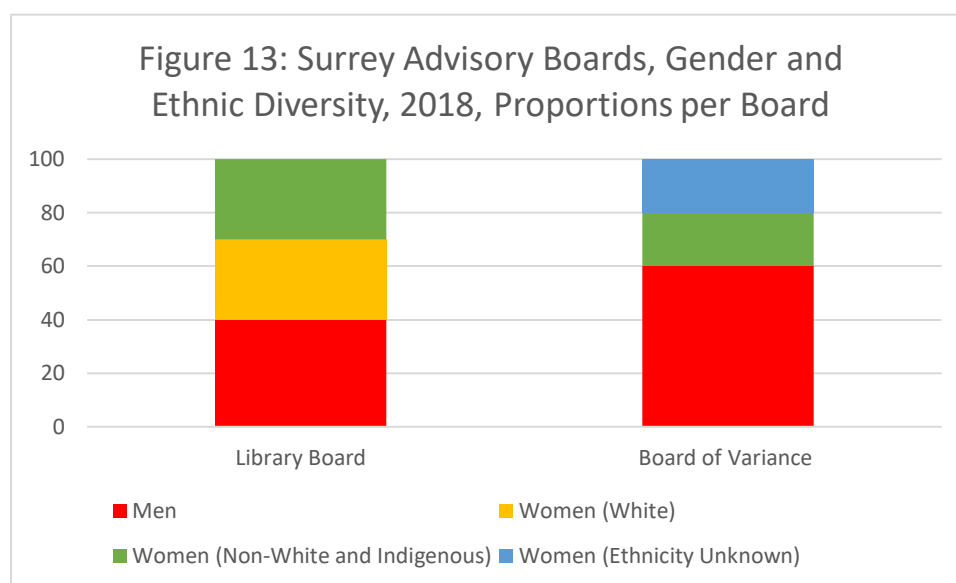
of members, compared to 41.6% in 2009-2018. The proportion of white female members also decreased to 23.6%, down from 30% in 2009-2018. Members with non-binary genders increased to 2.5% of membership, up from 0.2% in 2009-2018. This is a significant improvement for the City of Vancouver and displays the impact of their policies to increase the diversity of committee membership. Looking just at gender, women as a group composed the majority of members at 65.8%, which is an increase from 57.2% in 2009-2018.

Surrey

In Surrey, similar analysis was done of the gender and ethnic diversity of the City's advisory bodies using publicly available data. In Surrey we were not able to obtain deep historical data, but instead assessed the diversity of advisory bodies as of our data collection periods in spring-summer 2018 and again in spring 2019.

First, Surrey has two boards that provide advisory guidance to the city. Boards are legislated bodies whose members are appointed by Council after a public application process, and their members may include members of the community as well as members of Council.

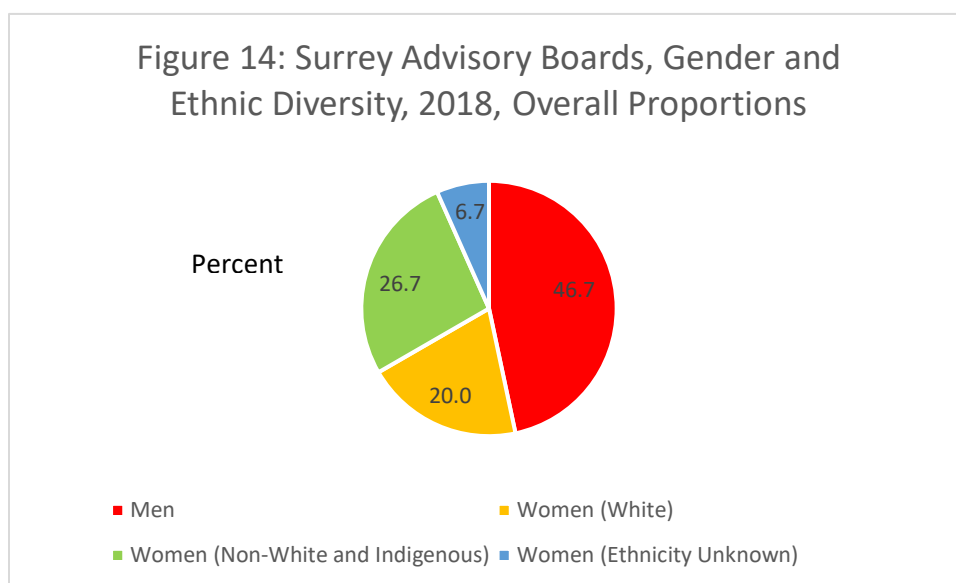
Figure 13 below shows the gender and ethnic diversity of these two boards as of 2018. The Library Board had 10 members in 2018 while the Board of Variance had 5 members.



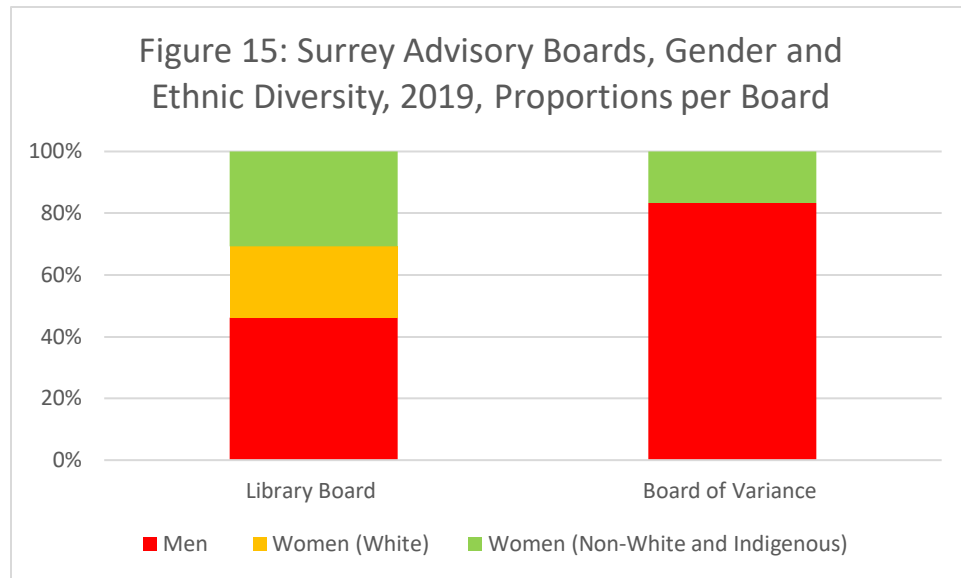
As of 2018, men made up 40% of the members of the Library Board and 60% of the members of the Board of Variance. White women were 30% of the members of the Library Board, and had no representation on the Board of Variance. Non-white and Indigenous women were 30%

of Library Board members and 20% of Board of Variance members, and we were not able to determine the ethnicity of 20% of women on the Board of Variance. No members identified as a gender other than male or female.

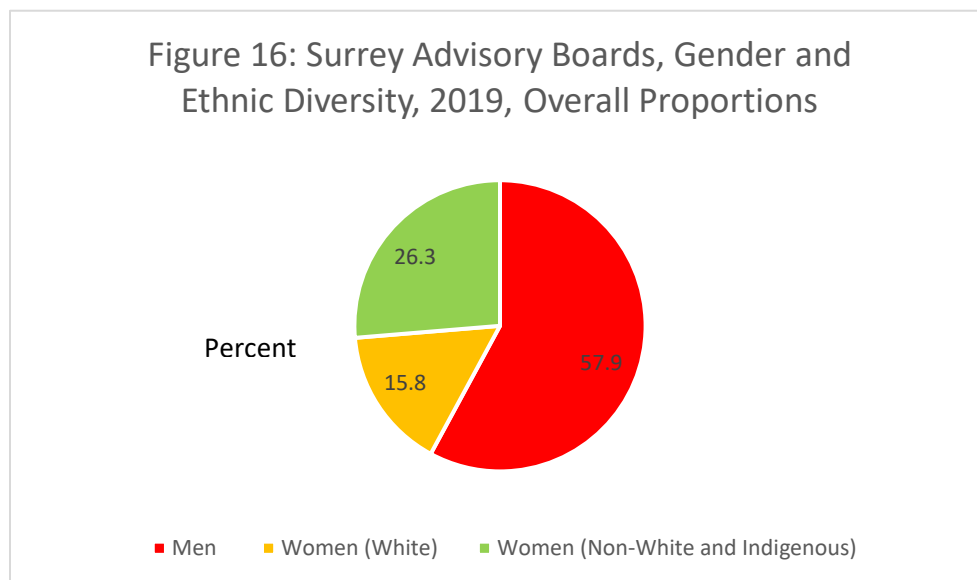
Looking at the two boards together, Figure 14 below demonstrates that board membership was made up of 46.7% men and 26.7% non-white and Indigenous women. White women were 20% of members. Women whose ethnic identity we did not know were 6.7%.



In 2019, these two boards became even less diverse, as shown in Figure 15 below. The Library Board had 13 members in 2019 and the Board of Variance had 6 members. Men were 46.2% of members of the Library Board and 83.3% of members of the Board of Variance. These are both increases compared to 2018. White women made up 23% of Library Board members (compared to 30% in 2018) and still had no representation on the Board of Variance (as in 2018). The proportions of non-white and Indigenous women remained somewhat stable, moving from 30% in 2018 to 30.7% in 2019 on the Library Board and from 20% in 2018 to 16.6% in 2019 on the Board of Variance.

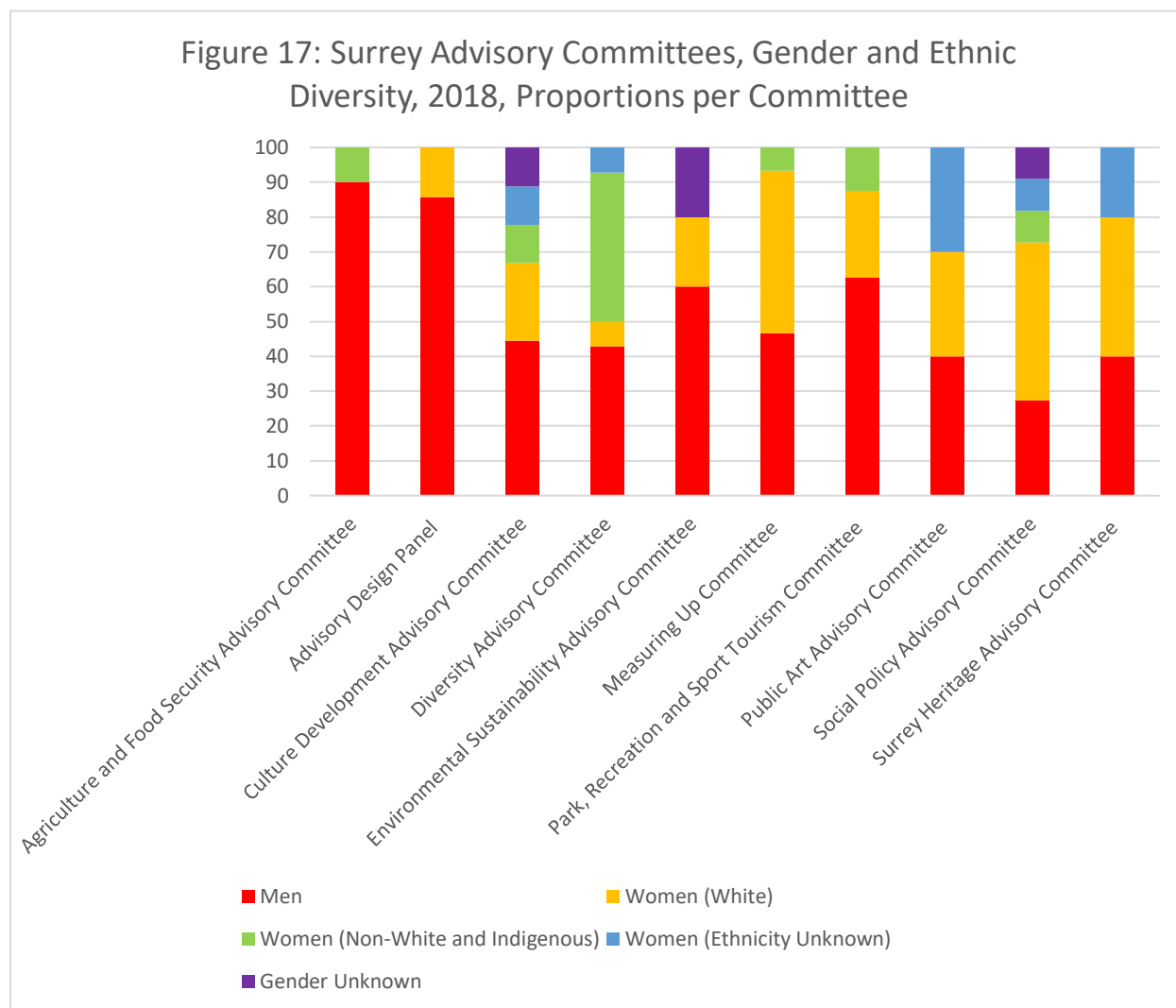


Unsurprisingly, the overall proportions of the two boards together shows an increase in male members (from 46.7% in 2018 to 57.9% in 2019), a decrease in white female members (from 20% in 2018 to 15.8% in 2019), and a steady state for non-white and Indigenous female members (from 26.7% in 2018 to 26.3% in 2019). This is seen in Figure 16 below.



Similarly, we analyzed the City of Surrey’s advisory committees in 2018 and 2019. The City of Surrey had twelve active committees as of 2018 on which community members (rather than only councillors) serve. Figure 17 below shows the gender and ethnic makeup of these committees as of 2018, excluding two committees for which data were unavailable: the Seniors

Advisory Committee and the Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee. The number of members per committee in 2018 ranged from 5 to 15, with an average of 10.6 members per committee.

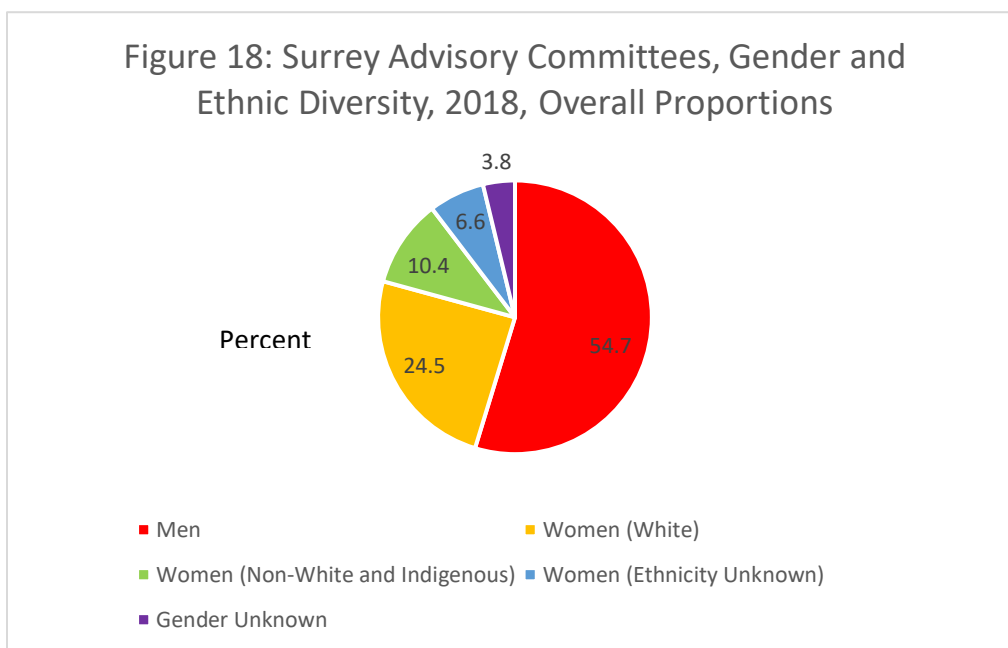


As demonstrated in Figure 17, men dominated several committees including the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee (90%), the Advisory Design Panel (85.7%), the Park, Recreation and Sport Tourism Committee (62.5%), and the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (60%). White women also had a strong presence on the Measuring Up Committee (46.7%), the Social Policy Advisory Committee (45.5%), and the Surrey Heritage Advisory Committee (40%).

Non-white and Indigenous women were only a significant proportion on the Diversity Advisory Committee (43%), a committee specifically focusing on representing diverse voices. On all other committees, non-white and Indigenous women did not make up more than 12.5% of membership. This suggests that diverse women's voices are seen as important in conversations about diversity, but not as much in conversations about other City policy matters.

Speaking generally, committees related to land use, such as the Agriculture and Food Security Advisory Committee and the Park, Recreation and Tourism Committee, tend to be dominated by men. Committees related to art and social issues, however, tend to be dominated by women. Exceptions include the Culture Development Advisory Committee and the Measuring Up Committee where membership of men and women is nearly equal.

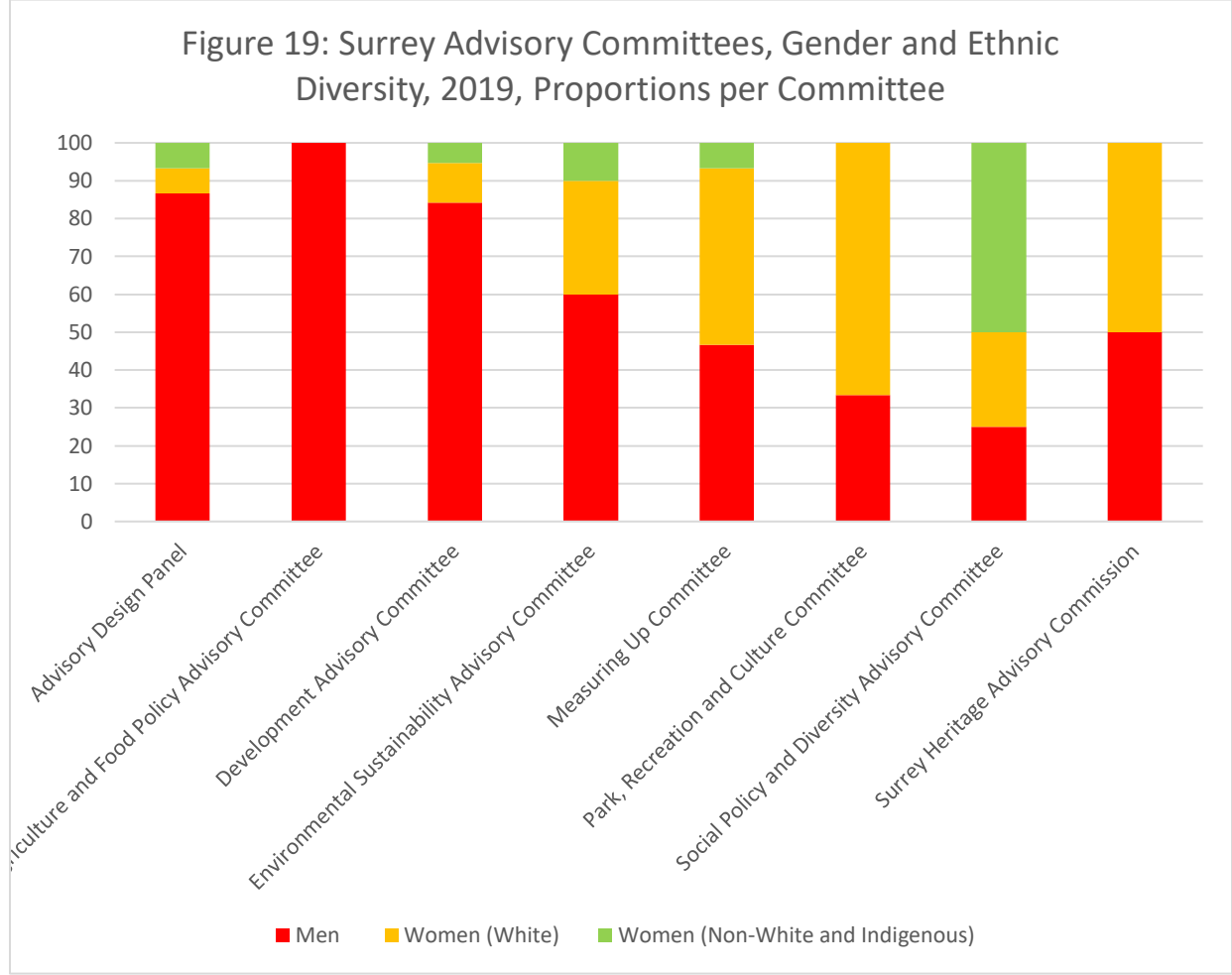
Looking as well at the overall proportions, men are the slight majority of all committee members. Figure 18 below shows that 54.7% of committee members are men, 24.5% are white women, and non-white and Indigenous women are only 10.4%. Looking just at gender, women as a group are 41.5% of members. As in Vancouver, parity between men and women is close, but taking a more intersectional approach reveals that women who are not white are still underrepresented.



In 2019, we again analyzed advisory committees membership. Data were available for many of the same advisory committees as in 2018, though some had changed names. The Diversity Advisory Committee and the Social Policy Advisory Committee were collapsed into one

committee for 2019, the Social Policy and Diversity Advisory Committee. We were unable to collect data for the Culture Development Advisory Committee or the Public Art Advisory Committee. We were however able to obtain data for the Development Advisory Committee..

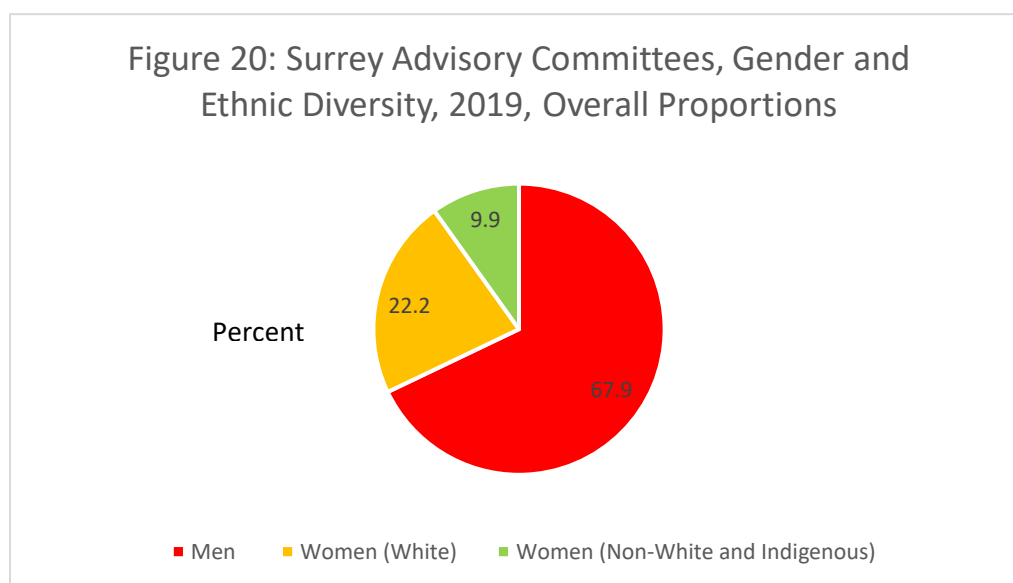
Figure 19 below shows the gender and ethnic diversity of the 2019 advisory committees. In 2019, the number of members per committee ranged from 2 to 19 members, with an average of 10.1 members. Compared to 2018, most committees are less diverse. Men made up the same or a higher proportion of members of the Advisory Design Panel (85.7% in 2018 and 86.7% in 2019), the Agriculture and Food Policy Advisory Committee (90% in 2018 and 100% in 2019), the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (60% in both years), the Measuring Up Committee (46.6% in both years), and the Surrey Heritage Advisory Committee (40% in 2018 and 50% for 2019).



In fact, the only committee that saw a reduction in the proportion of male members (and therefore an increase in female members) was the Social Policy and Diversity Advisory

Committee; however, since this committee is the result of collapsing two committees into one, this likely does not show progress. In 2018, the Diversity Advisory Committee had 42.9% men, 7.1% white women, and 42.9% non-white and Indigenous women, and the Social Policy Advisory Committee had 27.3% men, 45.5% white women, and 9.1% non-white and Indigenous women. When these committees were collapsed into one in 2019, the combined committee had 25% men, 25% white women, and 50% non-white and Indigenous women. Furthermore, the issue remains that this is the only committee specifically mandated to represent members from diverse backgrounds. This suggests that participation of women from diverse backgrounds on advisory committees, other than those specifically about diversity, is not actively sought out.

The overall proportions of the committees in 2019 underscore these imbalances, as shown in Figure 20 below. Men made up 67.9% of all committee members (compared to 54.7% in 2018). White women were 22.2% of all members (compared to 24.5% in 2018) and non-white and Indigenous women made up 9.9% of all members (compared to 10.4% in 2018). As a group, women made up only 32.1% of all committee members.



Overall, these quantitative analyses in both cities show the difference that intentional policies with quotas for membership can make. In the absence of specific policies ensuring representation from under-represented groups – namely, racially diverse and Indigenous women – in all decision-making spaces, cities experience a pattern where some advisory bodies are heavily dominated by men (usually those having to do with land use and city planning) while others are dominated by women (usually those having to do with arts and culture, social issues,

and diversity). Ideas about what topics are and are not in women's realm to address are heavily gendered.

ii. Qualitative Analysis

To add context to our quantitative analysis, we also conducted qualitative research with members of advisory bodies in both Vancouver and Surrey.

Vancouver

In Vancouver, we conducted two surveys with current and former advisory body members, as noted in the Methodology section of this report. As mentioned there, the general Advisory Bodies Survey (ABS) was completed by 72 people who had been members of Vancouver advisory bodies, most between 2016 and 2019, and the Women's Advisory Committee Survey (WACS) was completed by 11 respondents. We were able to send these surveys to committee members through our MOU with the City of Vancouver.

A full report on the results of these two surveys is included as Appendix 5. Below, key results are highlighted which pertain to the barriers advisory body members experienced and the recommendations they proposed.

Both surveys asked participants why they were motivated to serve on an advisory body. Most ABS respondents said they had a desire to be involved in City processes (46 responses) and a desire to change or shape City policy on an issue (45 responses). The same two responses were the top ones from the WACS (with 8 and 7 responses, respectively), along with having prior experience with or interest in the advisory body's scope of work (7 responses). Figures 21 and 22 below show these results.

Figure 21: WACS: What motivated you to apply to serve on this committee?

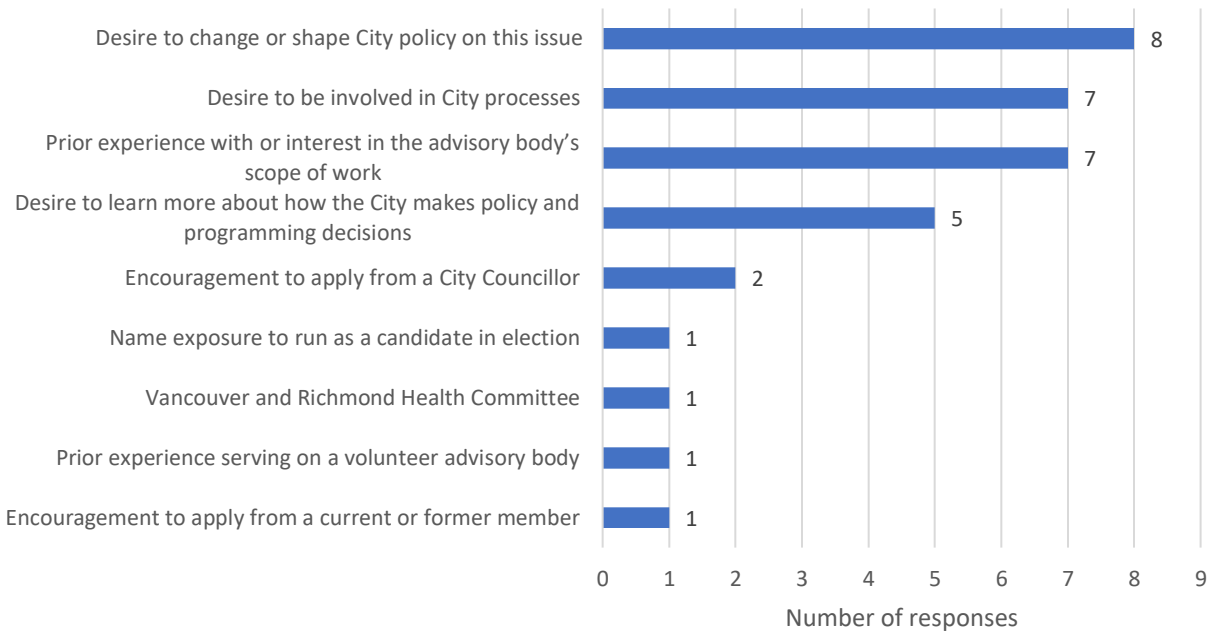
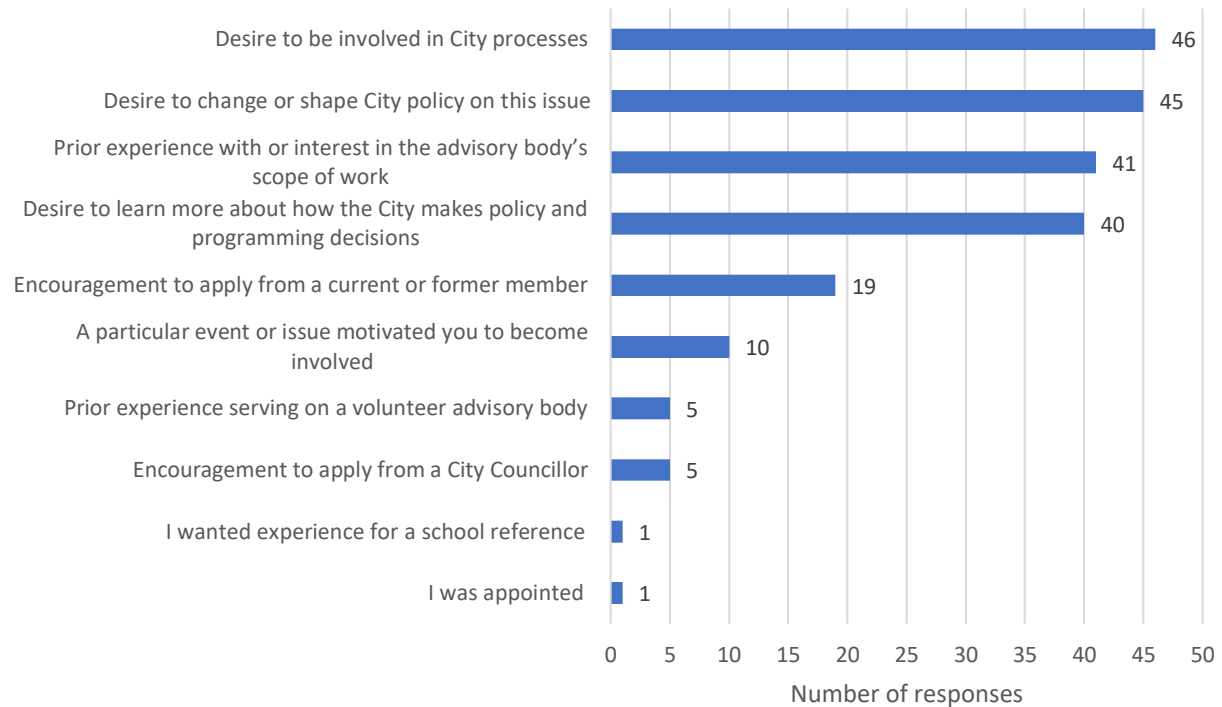
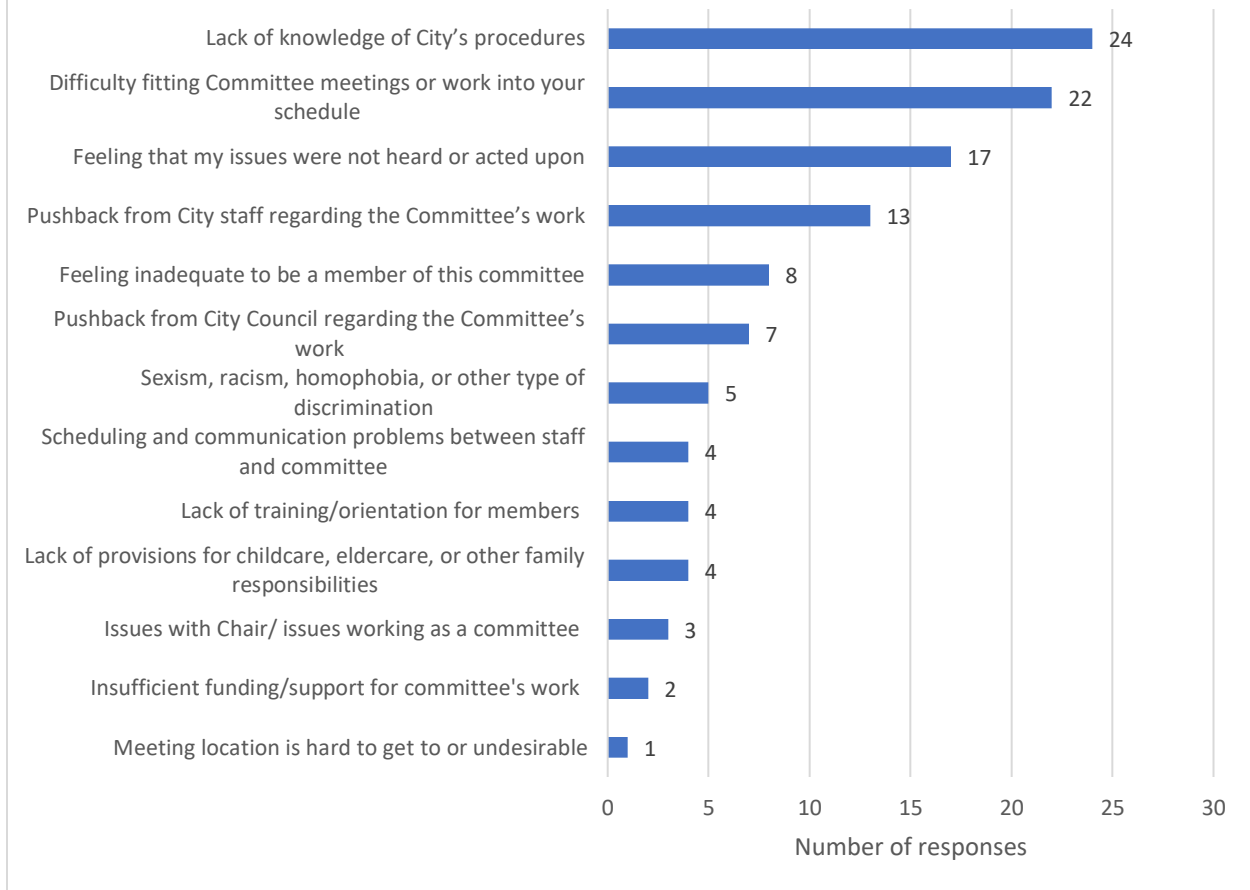


Figure 22: ABS: What motivated you to apply to serve on an advisory body?



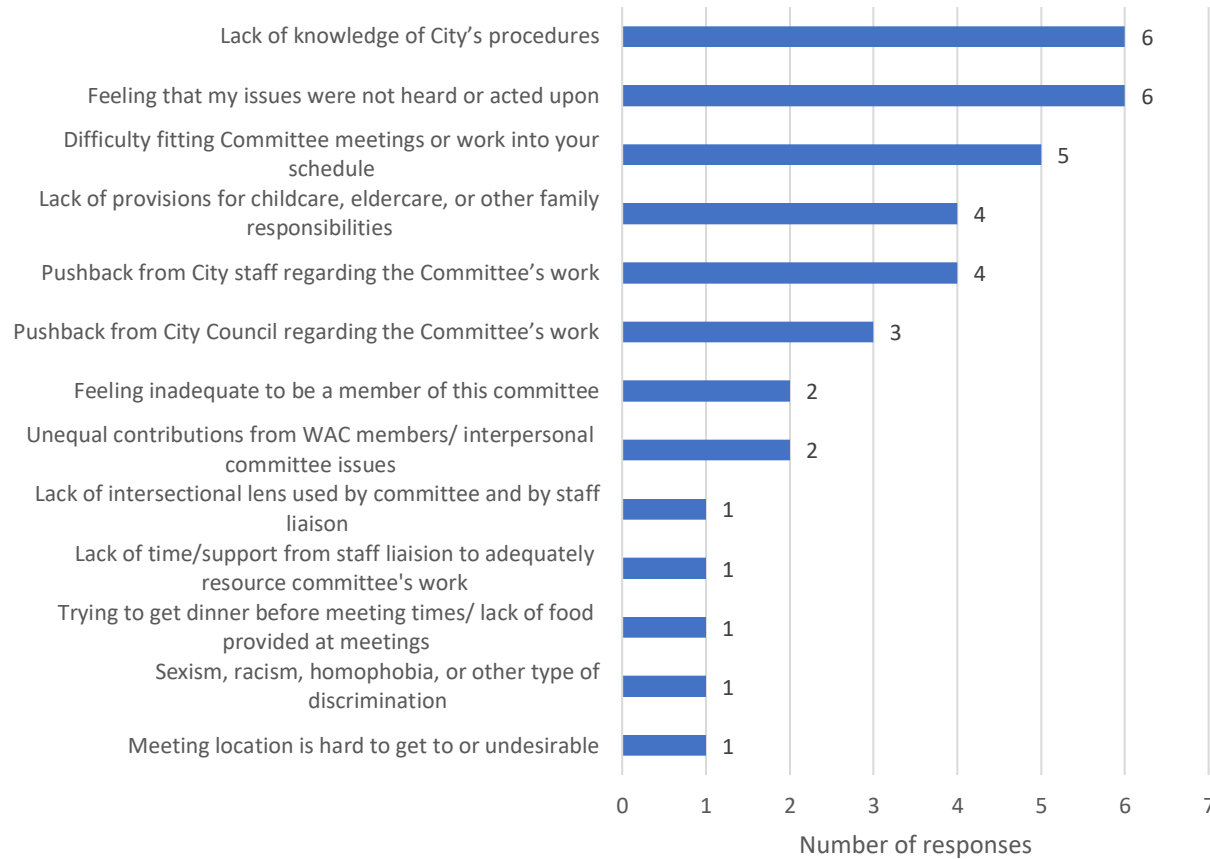
Respondents were then asked about any challenges they experienced while serving on the advisory body. The top difficulties that respondents in the ABS identified were lack of knowledge about City procedures (24 responses), difficulty fitting Committee meetings or work into respondents' schedules (22 responses), and feeling that their issues were not heard or acted upon (17 responses). Figure 23 shows these results.

Figure 23: ABS: Have you experienced any of the following challenges during your time serving on City of Vancouver advisory bodies?



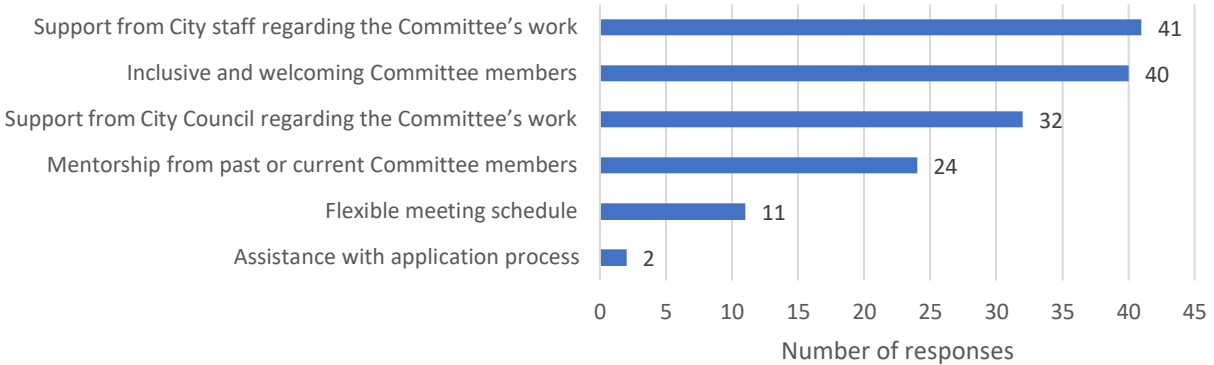
Similarly, as shown in Figure 24 below, the most common responses in the WACS centred on respondents' lack of knowledge of City procedures (6 responses) and respondents feeling like their issues were not heard or acted upon (6 responses), followed closely by difficulty fitting Committee meetings or work into respondents' schedules (5 responses).

Figure 24: WACS: Did you experience any of the following challenges during your time on the Women's Advisory Committee?



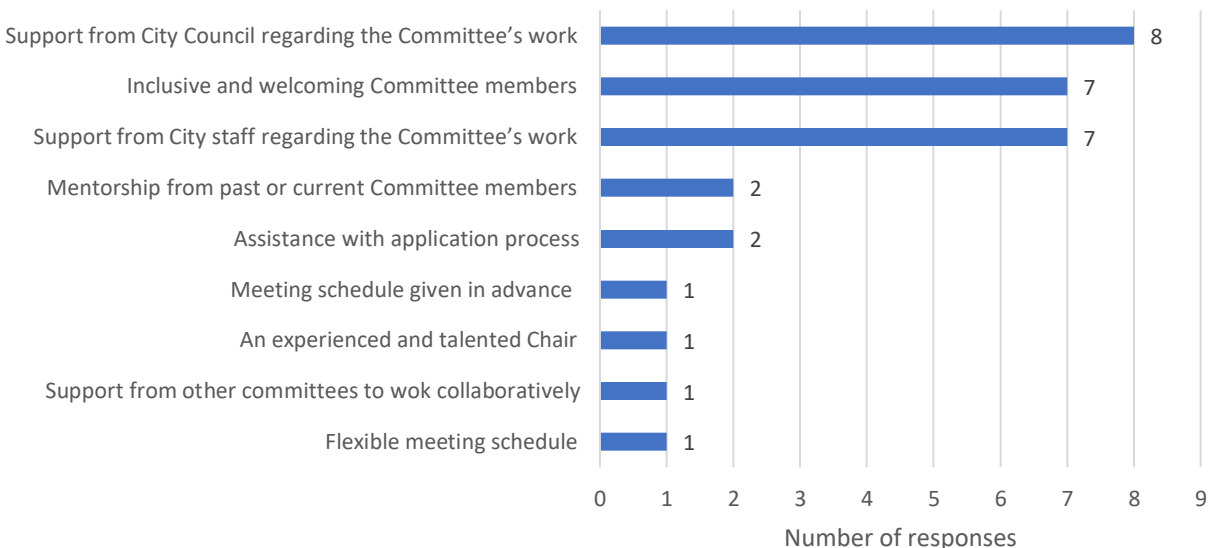
Both surveys asked respondents what was helpful to them during their time serving on advisory bodies. ABS respondents said that support from City staff regarding the Committee's work (41 responses) and inclusive and welcoming Committee members (40 responses) were the top two helpful experiences they had while serving on committees. Figure 25 below shows all responses.

Figure 25: ABS: Have you found any of the following to be helpful while serving on City of Vancouver advisory bodies?



Similarly, support from City Council regarding the Committee's work (8 responses), inclusive and welcoming Committee members (7 responses), and support from City staff regarding the Committee's work (7 responses) were most helpful according to WACS respondents. Two WACS respondents specifically mentioned key City Councillors and Park Board Commissioners as being helpful supports for them.

Figure 26: WACS: Did you find any of the following to be helpful while serving on the Women's Advisory Committee?



Next, respondents were asked for their perspectives on what barriers might exist that discourage diverse women from being involved in civic life in Vancouver. Most ABS respondents (36 of 58 responses, 62%) said they believed there are barriers, and 10 of the 11 WACS respondents (91%) agreed that these barriers exist.

Tables 1 and 2 below show survey respondents' thoughts as to what these barriers are, coded into themes. A similar top barrier was identified by both the ABS and WACS respondents: predominance of white people in leadership roles / underrepresentation of marginalized peoples (ABS, 10 responses), and lack of diversity in the membership (WACS, 5 responses). Many other common barriers identified also had to do with the lack of representation from marginalized groups, such as structural inequality overall, the inaccessibility of meetings (in terms of the meeting location not being conducive, lack of child care, and lack of meals provided), and lack of outreach to underrepresented groups by the City.

Table 1: ABS: Please describe what you think the barriers are.	Count
Predominance of white people in leadership roles / underrepresentation of marginalized peoples	10
No child care	9
Structural inequality overall	7
Bullying, sexism, racism	6
Women still doing the bulk of domestic/ childcare work	5
Not seeing their community members already involved	4
No transit reimbursement	4
Gender pay gap - no capacity for additional unpaid work	3
Procedures that stifle and make folks feel unwelcome	3
No honorariums	3
No translation services	3
Not knowing these opportunities exist	2
Never had a woman mayor	1
No meals offered at meetings	1
No training to encourage new participants	1
Lack of available meeting space	1
Lack of supports for those with physical disabilities	1

Table 2: WACS: Please describe what you think the barriers are.	Count
Lack of diversity in the membership	5
Time of meetings is not accessible for those with children	3
No child care provided at meetings	3
Lack of gender equality and representation	3
Lack of appropriate outreach strategies	2
Lack of information on how to get involved	2
Location of meetings (City Hall) is inaccessible for some	2
Structural barriers in general	1
Lack of meaningful engagement from staff/Council	1
Fear of harassment	1
Political jargon that is inaccessible for most people	1
No meals provided at meetings	1

Finally, respondents were asked what they thought would help more women to become involved in civic life in Vancouver. Both the ABS and the WACS respondents agreed that outreach would help the most (20 ABS responses, 3 WACS responses). Several other top recommendations from both surveys dealt with reducing barriers to attending meetings, such as by providing child care during meetings, rotating meeting schedules, and providing honoraria for people to attend. Tables 3 and 4 below include the full responses, again coded into themes.

Table 3: ABS: Based on your experience, what would help more women to become involved in civic life in Vancouver?	Count
More active City outreach/ encouragement for those from underrepresented communities	20
Provide child care during meetings	10
Mentorship for women	9
Rotate meeting times to accommodate those with different schedules	5
Provide honorariums	4
Make it clear how advisory bodies have an impact on policy	3
More women in leadership positions.	3
Pay for transportation to attend meetings	2
Encourage more civil discourse about politics	2
Provide training on diversity and dealing with oppression.	2
Get youth involved in civic life from an early age	1
Electoral reform - switch to a ward system	1
Provide meals at meetings	1
Provide translation.	1
Provide training on city processes.	1
Address discrimination and oppression broadly.	1
Women being more independent	1

Table 4: WACS: Based on your experience, what would help more women to become involved in civic life in Vancouver?		Count
Outreach		3
Anti-oppression training for advisory committees		2
Demonstrated outcomes of intersectional policy and planning at the City		2
Provide child care		2
Reasonable meeting hours to accommodate family		2
Campaigns to show benefits of civic participation		1
Commitment from parties to change their internal culture		1
Information/ webinars on how to run		1
Welcome atmosphere		1
City research/engagement on which needs are not being met		1
Hold meetings in community spaces		1
More women need to start from the bottom of the ladder		1
More clarity on what the committee is for and what expertise is required		1

Overall, when it comes to barriers and solutions for ensuring diverse women are represented in civic life, respondents highlighted several themes:

- Advisory body members want to be involved in City processes and help shape their community.
- Advisory body members need to feel that their work is making a difference and should be able to see a clear link between their work and City policies and procedures.
- City procedures and rationale must be made clear to advisory body members.
- Committee meetings should be at times that suit members' schedules, or should be flexible to accommodate various schedules. This could also include providing child care, transportation honoraria, or other forms of support to reduce barriers for participation at meetings.
- Support from City staff and councillors is extremely important in ensuring a positive relationship between the City and the advisory body members.
- Structural inequalities, including the overrepresentation of white people in leadership roles, is a major barrier.
- Cities should ensure active outreach to underrepresented groups, and could consider offering mentorship for women from underrepresented groups.

We also interviewed three former advisory body members who completed our survey and chose to share their contact information with our research team. As noted in the methodology section of this report, these interviews took place in March and April of 2019.

We interviewed one former member of the Women's Advisory Committee, one former member of the Children, Youth and Family Advisory Committee, and one former member of the Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee. In general, five key themes emerged which are in line with the survey conclusions above:

- To educate the City and non-profit organizations about how to bring more diverse women into public life, representatives from these groups should be invited to advisory committee meetings to ask questions and better understand the experiences of advisory committee members.
- The role of advisory committee members should be clear and structured.
- The application and recruitment process for advisory body members should be open, universal, and transparent.
- While recruiting advisory body members, priority must be given to people who are committed and serious about making a difference through their membership.
- To increase the number of diverse women in advisory bodies and in public life, more awareness programs, funds, and support from the City as well as family, friends, and the community are needed.

Surrey

In Surrey, our approach to learning from advisory body members was different. As noted in our Methodology section, we conducted interviews with four current or previous members of

City advisory bodies, as well as one interview with a City employee who worked in community planning and was knowledgeable about how Surrey conducts its engagement with advisory bodies.

The City of Surrey does not have a Women's Advisory Committee, and there is no committee with a specific mandate to support diverse women's voices. Several committee members come from community organizations with such a mandate, however, such as Surrey Pride (represented on the Diversity Advisory Committee), Pacific Community Resources Society (Social Policy and Diversity Advisory Committee) and the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre (Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee).

One interviewee noted that the City used to provide meals at committee meetings when the meeting was held during a meal time, but currently provides only refreshments. The interviewee further noted that remuneration for child care and transportation is not available which is a barrier for many women.

In addition to the advisory committee and boards noted in the quantitative section above, the City of Surrey has several arms-length committees which work on specific projects. Those included in our consideration were:

- Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group

We interviewed one former member and one current member of the Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group (VWGWG). The VWGWG differs from municipal advisory committees in that it is a project-based group and was described by one interviewee as a way to “collaborate and use resources effectively to achieve common goals.” The purpose of this group is not, as stated by both interviewees, to influence policy.

The VWGWG is governed by an executive committee of six individuals who organize the leadership groups. Membership on the executive committee is determined by a nomination process that one interviewee said made a focused effort to include women with diverse backgrounds. The VWGWG also invites Indigenous elders to meetings and sends notices on upcoming events to local community groups like DiverseCity and Sources. The VWGWG also produced a resource guide which is available in five languages. However, one interviewee noted that the group could do more to reach out to the South Asian community, which “is a bit more isolated.” One interviewee also worried that due to the “ad-hoc nature of the group,” it could disappear at any point, as it is not a permanent fixture in City processes.

The group is organized by a paid staff person, which both of our interviewees cited as key to the group’s success. Meetings are held “where the women actually come [from],” according to one interviewee, which has included transition houses and various local organizations’ offices. Meals are provided, though transportation and child care supports are not. For meetings where vulnerable and marginalized women are speakers, the VWGWG provides participants bus tickets and meals, while participants

in the group's "opioid dialogues" are provided honoraria which is a "huge deal for women that are street entrenched," according to one of our interviewees.

- Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (SUILC)

The purpose of the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee is to "[increase] the visibility of the Indigenous population health profile" in Surrey and find solutions for Indigenous people, as informed by the committee's five-year plan. The SUILC was formed by a then-sitting City Councillor and the Executive Director of a local community organization, the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre. Though supporting the needs of Indigenous women and girls is not "an explicitly stated goal," a number of the SUILC's subcommittees have undertaken work that will benefit women. We interviewed one current member of the SUILC.

Our interviewee felt that Indigenous women and girls have not been identified as an organizing issue by the SUILC due to an expectation from the non-Indigenous community that the SUILC would work with the Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group to address that issue.

The group does not have a formal recruitment process, and our interviewee noted she would try to recruit members through relationships she develops. Often, these are with individuals or groups that have an interest in a particular issue that affects Indigenous people. Our interviewee stated that of those at the table, the majority are women, and the majority of Indigenous people in Surrey are women as well, which she believes works to the table's advantage: "I think that's really positive because they bring with them an understanding of struggle, things that are challenging for families or individuals trying to make a good life here."

Our interviewee also noted that the SUILC was able to obtain external funding to function and plan for its first five years, but that "...the City of Surrey itself has contributed very little to this issue" including very little funding.

Finally, our interviewee said the SUILC is not currently having an impact on City policies and processes:

Our table is trying to find solutions for Indigenous people, but has not committed to engaging funders or government to examine bureaucratic barriers to equitable participation. There's a fairly strong resistance, mostly from the greater community, not from the table itself...my role now, I feel like, has been pushing the table to be less token[izing] and more meaningful so that we can make long-term, sustainable changes that will last long beyond when we're here.

Overall, over interviewees had these recommendations for the City of Surrey on how to improve advisory body recruitment and practices:

- An increased presence of women-serving organizations (particularly those that support immigrant and Indigenous women) would help inform policy development so that it includes a gender equity lens.
- Members from underrepresented groups should be present on advisory bodies outside of the culture, diversity, and Indigenous-specific committees so that policy would also represent the intersectional way in which women experience the world.
- Child care and transportation reimbursements should be provided to help increase women's participation in advisory committees.
- To create culturally safe spaces for Indigenous women, learning has to be a two-way street and there must be cross-cultural growth among groups.

Further, several of our interviewees were supportive of the City of Surrey creating a Women's Advisory Committee, similar to the City of Vancouver. This committee should be permanent, so that it could not be dissolved by a future City Council. A paid staff person should be hired to organize the committee, rather than leaving the organizational tasks to the unpaid Chair of the committee who may or may not have the time and capacity to do so. The membership should be diverse, and meetings should be a safe and supportive place for women to share their experiences.

C. City Staff

i. Quantitative Analysis

The third section of our data collection focused on city staff. Our objective was to learn about the diversity of the City of Vancouver's and the City of Surrey's staff demographics as well as understand the barriers that may prevent cities as employers from having a more diverse staff population.

Vancouver

In Vancouver, we first collected quantitative data about the composition of City staff. The City of Vancouver's Women's Equity Strategy, "Vancouver: A City for All Women, Women's Equity Strategy, 2018-2028 (WES)" was passed by City Council in January 2018. In addition to including goals and objectives to increase women's equity in several areas throughout City policies, the WES also included statistics about the gender and diversity of the City as a baseline from which to measure future progress.

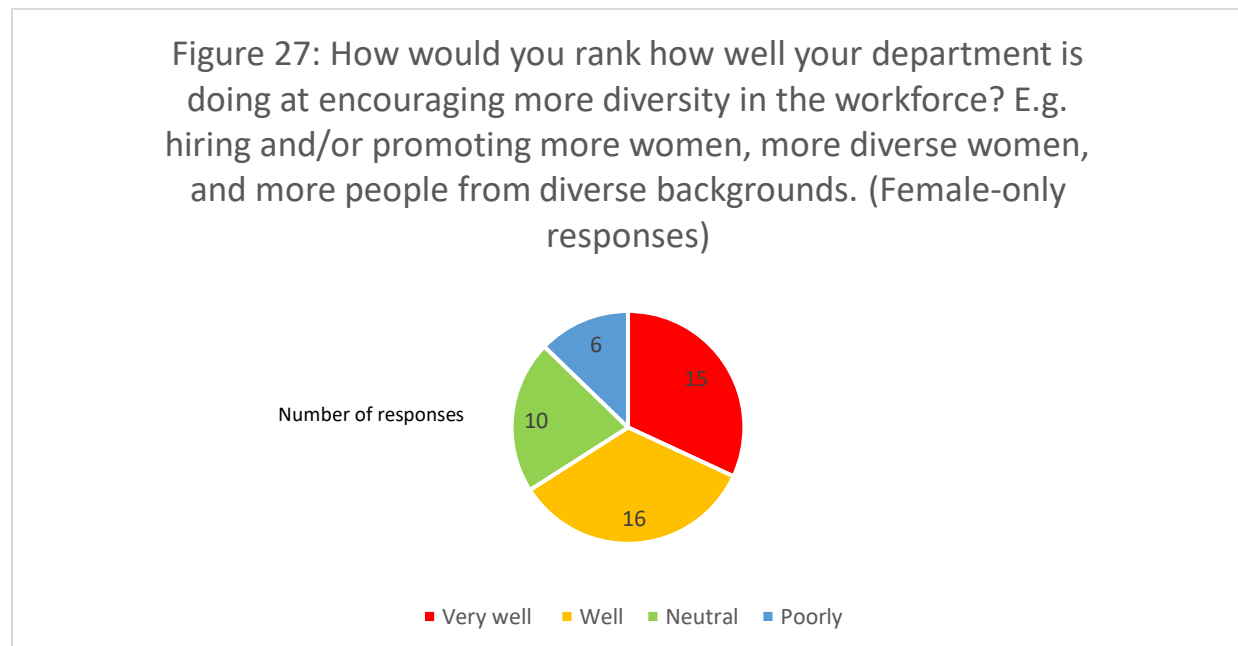
As of November 2017, women comprised 37% of senior management positions within the City of Vancouver's staff. Women also comprised 30% of engineers, technicians and engineering assistants, 34% of information technology-relation positions, 4% of firefighting positions, and 15% of trades and operations positions (City of Vancouver, 2018).

We also collected data from city staff themselves through our survey distributed to senior staff. This was possible because of our MOU with the City of Vancouver. Our reports on the results of this survey are included in Appendix 8; we produced one analysis on the general survey results from all respondents, and one focusing just on the responses from women. Key results relating to staff members' experiences are highlighted below.

As noted in the Methodology section of this report, this survey was distributed via email invitation to 313 senior staff at the City of Vancouver. Of the 112 respondents to the survey, 47

identified as women (42%). The majority of female respondents¹¹ were Managers (22 of 47 women or 47%, the same proportion of general survey respondents that were Managers). 63% of female respondents identified as having North American – Canadian origin, and 30% identified as having Western/ Northern European ancestry.¹²

Respondents were asked to rank how well their department was doing at encouraging more diversity in the workplace. Sixty-six percent of female respondents said that their department was doing well or very well, compared with 71% of respondents in the general survey results. The female-only responses are shown in Figure 27 below.



Respondents could also share comments for this question. The most common comments both in the general responses and the female-only responses emphasized that there are already many women in senior positions, though it depends on the department. The most common comment in the general survey responses was that the City’s workforce is already diverse (21

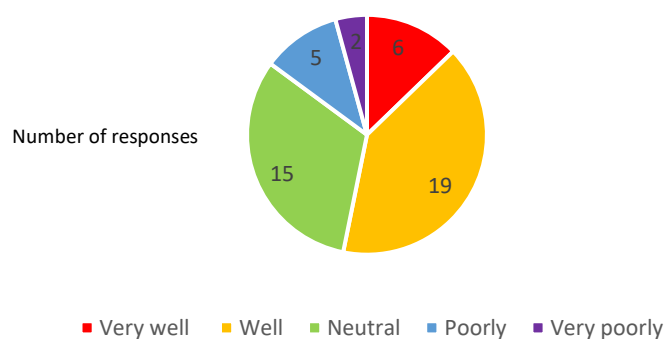
¹¹ Note that in our reports we use “female” to refer to “woman” or “women,” though we understand that the term “female” can be interpreted as referring to a biological interpretation of gender. This is not our intention. Our materials asked research participants to self-identify their gender if they were comfortable doing so.

¹² For the staff survey, we used the same ethnicity categorizations as the City of Vancouver uses in their public engagement processes.

responses), and the most frequent comment in the female-only responses was that there are more women than men in senior positions (6 responses). Small numbers of comments in both survey analyses suggested ways their department could improve.

Similarly, respondents were asked to assess how well the City of Vancouver overall was doing at encouraging more diversity in the workforce. Fifty-three per cent of female respondents said the City overall is doing well or very well at encouraging greater diversity in the workforce. This is the same percentage as the general survey results. Comments similarly noted that respondents felt the City's workforce is already diverse, with a small number of comments suggesting what more could be done. Interestingly, while about the same number of women said that their department was doing well or very well (16 responded 'well' and 15 responded 'very well'), many fewer women said that the City overall was doing very well (19 responded 'well' and 19 responded 'very well'). These female-only responses are noted in Figure 28 below.

Figure 28: How would you rank how well the City overall is doing at encouraging more diversity in the workforce? E.g. hiring and/or promoting more women, more diverse women, and more people from diverse backgrounds. (Female-only responses)



When asked if they think there are barriers to having a more diverse workplace, 38 of 47 (80.9%) of female respondents said yes, compared to 68% who said yes in the general survey

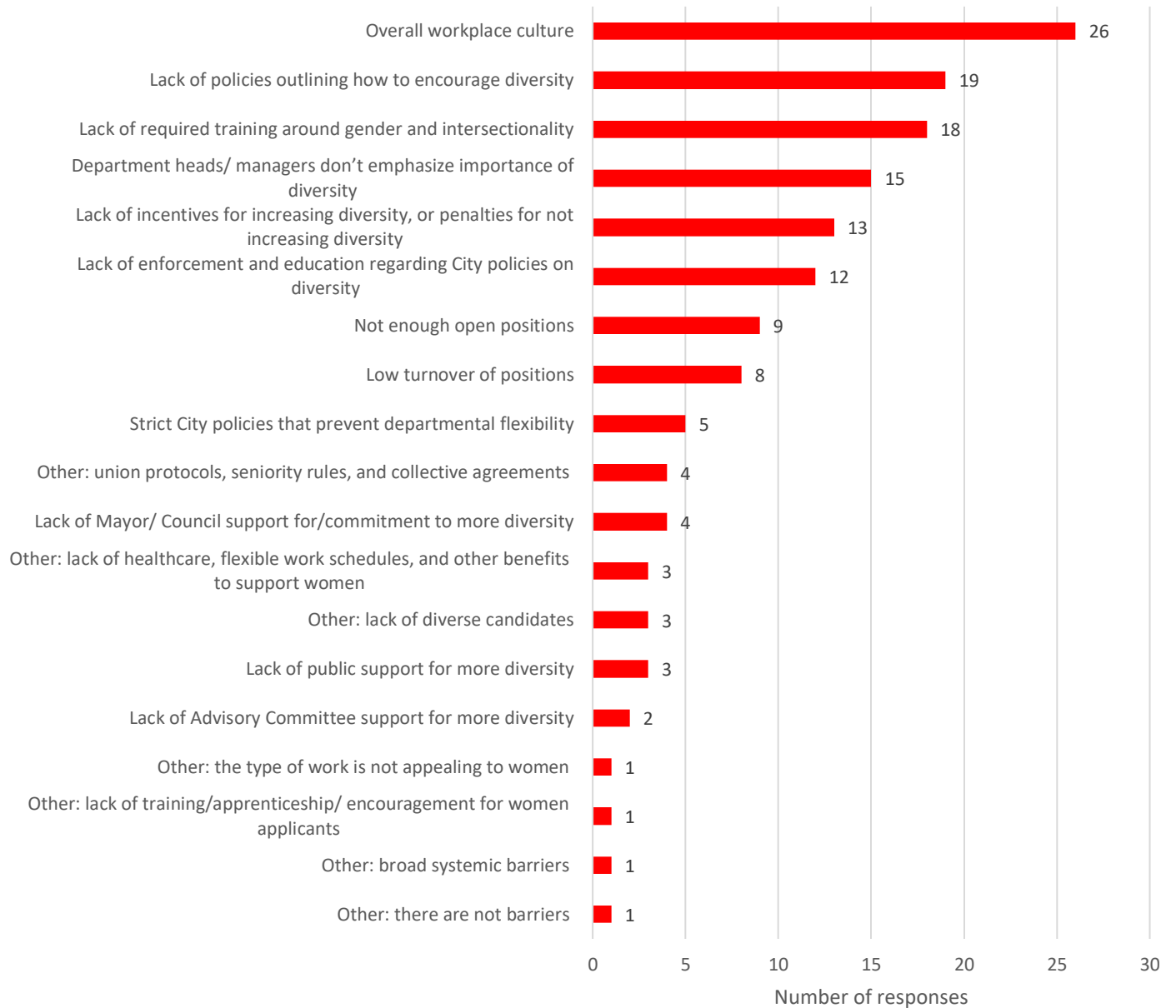
results. Clearly, more women than men felt there were tangible reasons why their workforce was less diverse than it could be.¹³

In the general survey, the comments respondents gave for this question included a sense that women are not interested in traditionally male-dominated sectors and this is why there are fewer women (13 responses) and that City policies around diversity exist but changes in practice do not (12 responses). In the women's results, the top comments were that cultural norms are slow to change (10 responses) and that there is bias against women in senior roles (8 responses). Women identified 14 types of barriers in their comments to this question, whereas respondents in the general survey identified 15 types of barriers through their comments. This indicates that women gave the majority of these responses. Comparatively, in the female-only responses, women shared 3 responses indicating that there are no barriers, and in the general results there were 4 "no" responses given, meaning women also comprised the majority of respondents saying there are not barriers.

We also proposed a number of possible barriers in hiring or promoting more diverse staff and asked respondents if indeed these were barriers. These proposed barriers came from our project literature review as well as what we thought may be similar barriers for female staff members as the barriers we identified from speaking with female political candidates and elected officials. The top barriers identified by women were overall workplace culture (27 selections), lack of policies outlining how to encourage diversity (19 selections), and lack of required training around gender and intersectionality (18 selections). These female-only responses are shown in Figure 29 below.

¹³ Note that of the survey respondents who did not identify as cisgender women, 27 respondents identified as cisgender men, eight respondents selected "prefer not to say," and one identified as non-binary/ gender diverse. Therefore, while not all of the non-female survey respondents were men, we know the vast majority of them were men.

Figure 29: Which of the following do you see as barriers to hiring or promoting more diverse staff at the City? (Female-only responses)



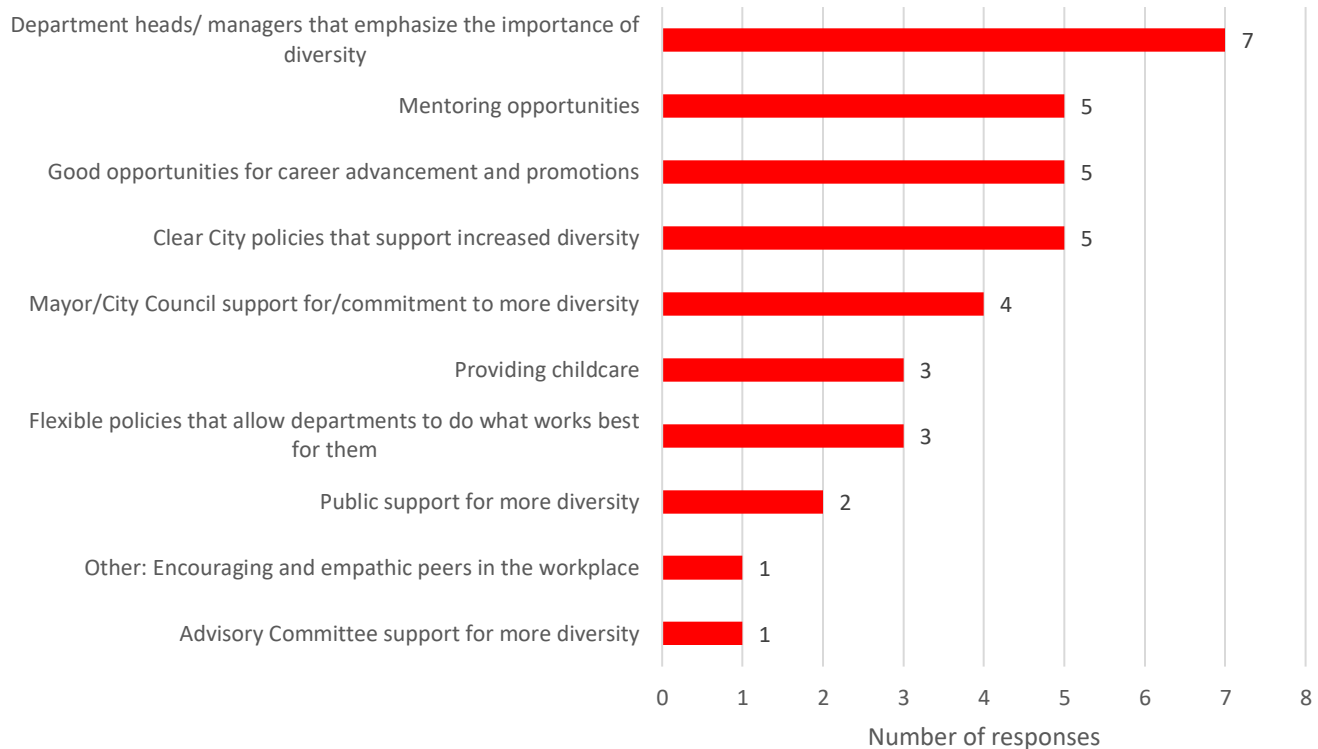
These results aligned with the general survey results, in which overall workplace culture received 39 selections, lack of policies outlining how to encourage diversity received 32 selections, and lack of required training around gender and intersectionality received 26 selections. This also means that women were driving the frequency of these responses in the general survey results. Women gave 69% of responses regarding workplace culture, 59% of

responses regarding lack of policies on diversity, and 69% of responses regarding lack of training on gender and intersectionality.

As a follow up, respondents were asked if they had experienced any of these barriers themselves. Of the female respondents, six said they had experienced a lack of sufficient health benefits and flexible work arrangements, six said they had experienced issues with the workplace culture overall, and six also said they had not personally experienced barriers. These comments also closely align with those of the general survey results. Workplace culture was named as the second most prevalent barrier in the general survey results (9 responses), meaning women submitted two-thirds of those responses (6 responses). Thirteen respondents in the general survey said they had not experienced barriers, meaning 46% of these were women's responses. The top response in the general survey results was that people knew there were barriers but had not experienced them personally (13 responses).

Next, respondents were asked about the City of Vancouver's strengths in hiring or promoting more diverse staff. These were also response options that we posed to respondents, based on our literature review and on hypothesized best practices for improving workplace diversity and respect. The top four responses were the same in both the women's responses and the general survey responses: The importance of leadership from department heads and managers received 7 votes from women and 17 votes overall in the survey (41% women's responses), and mentoring opportunities received 5 votes from women and 13 votes overall (38% women's responses). Opportunities for career advancement also received 5 votes from women and 14 votes overall in the survey (36% women's responses). Clear City policies that support increased diversity came second in the overall responses with 16 votes, and received 5 votes from women (31% women's responses). The women's responses are shown in Figure 30 below.

Figure 30: Which of the following do you see as the City's strengths in hiring and/or promoting more diverse staff?
(Female-only responses)



Respondents were also asked to share their ideas on what should be done to encourage more diversity in the City of Vancouver's workforce, especially in leadership and management positions. This was an open-ended question in which respondents could offer their own suggestions. Again, the most common responses shared were similar in both the general responses and the female-only comments. The top comment in the female-only responses was training and mentorship (11 responses), and this was also referenced in the second and third top comments of the general survey results (11 responses for investing in development and training, and 9 responses for coaching and mentorship). The second-place comment in the female-only survey was flexible work schedules and health benefits that suit family lives (6 responses), and this was the fifth-place result in the general survey (8 responses). The top response in the general survey, however, was that nothing is needed as enough is already being done (12 responses).

We then asked respondents a number of questions about their familiarity with the City's *Women's Equity Strategy* (WES) which includes specific goals around increasing the diversity of staff, particularly in senior roles (City of Vancouver, 2018). Most female respondents said they were very or vaguely familiar with the *Women's Equity Strategy* (30 of 47 respondents, or 64%). This is higher than in the general survey results where 55% were very or vaguely familiar.

Respondents were asked how the two WES goals related to staff leadership and representation would affect their departments. These goals are to 1) immediately increase new hires for Senior Management roles to 50 per cent women, and 2) increase by 2020 the proportion of female new hires in under-represented occupations by at least 5 per cent over 2017 levels (City of Vancouver, 2018). The majority of all respondents said these two goals would impact their departments: 81% in the female-only survey results said that goal one would affect their department, and 73% said that goal two would affect their departments. In the general survey results, 70% of all respondents said goal one would affect their department and 75% said goal two would affect their department.

Respondents could choose to share comments for this question. In the top two comments from the female-only survey results, six women said that implementing these goals would enable the department to mentor, train, and promote women, and six women said implementing these goals would have no effect since their department was already doing well on increasing staff diversity. In the top two comments from the general survey results, twelve respondents also said that implementing these goals would have no effect since their department is already working on increasing diversity, and twelve respondents expressed concern that achieving these goals could mean hiring unqualified or underqualified people.

Finally, respondents were asked if they had further thoughts or recommendations to share. Fifty-eight respondents in the general survey results shared further thoughts (including female respondents) and these are summarized in Table 5, below. While there is a mix of perspectives, most comments indicate a greater need for awareness, education, training, and mentorship.

Table 5: Do you have any further thoughts to share on staff diversity in your day-to-day work at the City?		Count
There needs to be more awareness/ education.		14
I'm concerned about going 'too far' with encouraging diversity.		8
The City is doing well when it comes to diversity.		7

We need training/mentoring/networking for female staff so they can move up.	5
We need more diversity beyond gender (disability, parenthood, ethnicity)	5
Finding qualified diverse candidates is a problem.	4
We need to foster a strong and understanding workforce culture, with people from any background.	3
We need more support from senior management.	3
We need to improve diversity from the university/ secondary education level.	2
Branch Managers need more support for addressing this issue.	2
Men need to be part of the solution.	1
Workload needs to be manageable, not 24/7, to attract women.	1
We need to use gender-inclusive language.	1
We should be able to promote/hire from outside the City, not just internally.	1
Diversity can enhance the productivity of businesses.	1
We need to apply a gender equity lens across all City policy and planning.	1
The unions need to support diversity more.	1
City needs to cover birth control/ improve benefits package.	1
There needs to be action on this from a strategic committee.	1
We need an ombudsperson.	1
This is a generational issue - current senior people are mostly white men, but new leaders will eventually replace them from this generation who are more diverse.	1

Overall, the results of the staff survey indicate that most City of Vancouver senior staff members believe that achieving a diverse and welcoming workplace is important. However, staff differ on how much more action is needed from the City, with some respondents recommending specific policies and programs to implement, and other respondents believing enough was being done.

We also spoke with representatives from one union representing outdoor workers at the City of Vancouver. This interview with CUPE 1004 occurred in August 2018. CUPE 1004 holds 21 collective agreements for workers such as engineers and construction workers.

The CUPE 1004 representatives noted that barriers remain for women, particularly in the trades. They noted that Engineering is the largest work group at the City of Vancouver, but that women made up only 2% of workers in that department. Our interviewees felt that women often experience a negative work environment in the trades. Many women leave the trades which results in fewer women in senior leadership in those professions. They further noted that two years prior the City had changed its recruitment program to include a gender and ethnicity lens, but that they had not noticed a change in the proportion of women entering their workforce as a result of this change. When asked what would help, our interviewees suggested investments

into training programs for women, greater resources toward equity policies at the City of Vancouver, and more robust apprenticeship programs for women at schools such as BCIT.

At the time of our interview, the CUPE 1004 representatives felt the City was not on track to achieve their leadership and representation goals included in the *Women's Equity Strategy*. They believed that the pace of change, both structurally and culturally, within the City's workforce is slow. However, they were hopeful that change could occur, and appreciated the City's work to identify and implement solutions.

Our union interviewees proposed several recommendations for the City of Vancouver:

- Create direct relationships with schools like BCIT to increase recruitment opportunities through job fairs and other programs.
- Provide mentorship opportunities for new female employees, and provide ongoing training for all workers about equity and workplace culture.
- Ask current female staff what would help improve their workplace.

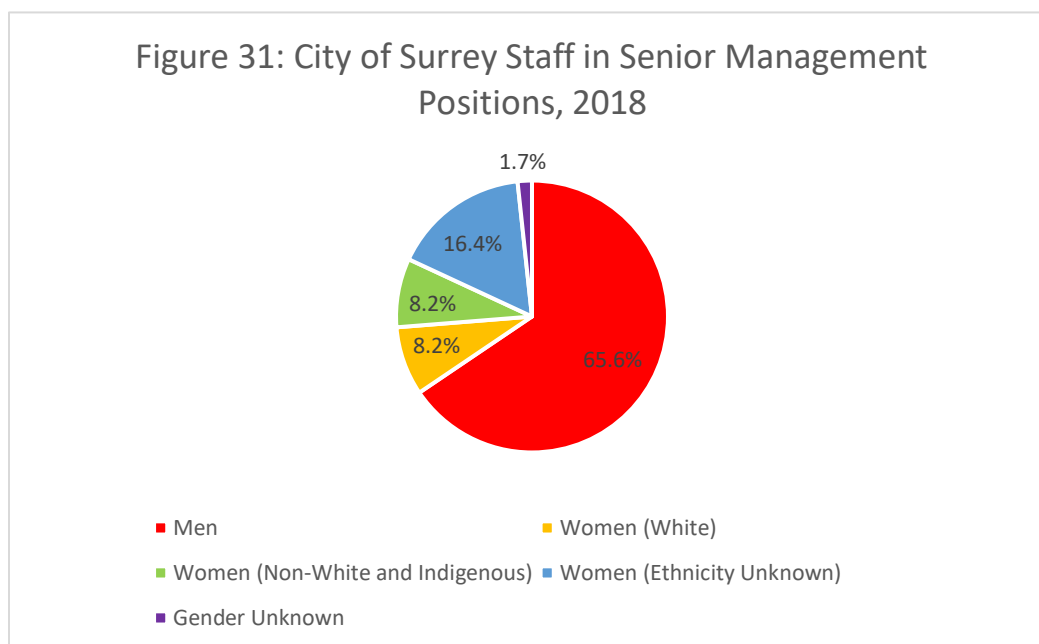
Surrey

In Surrey, we similarly gathered information about the composition of the City's senior staff. Because the City of Surrey had not recently prepared their own gender and diversity analysis of senior staff, we did our own analysis using publicly available information. In fall 2018 we conducted a scan of the City of Surrey's web pages. In this analysis we included the City Manager and the senior staff members in Planning and Development; Engineering; Finance; Corporate Services; Parks, Recreation and Culture; Investment and Intergovernmental Relations; Public Safety; and Library Services, as well as the department heads of the RCMP detachment and Fire Department.

We applied a similar process to that used in our analysis of advisory body members; we used publicly-available information to determine the gender and ethnic background of these senior staff members, to the extent that information was available.

According to Human Resources staff, as of June 2017, women made up 60% of the City's workforce, though the majority of senior leadership staff was male. Based on our analysis of publicly available data from 2018, the City of Surrey had 61 senior staff members, of which 20

were women. Men made up 65.6% of senior staff, and women were 32.8%. We could not determine the gender of one staff person. Of the women, ethnic diversity was present: white women and non-white women (including Indigenous women) each made up 8.2% of senior staff. However, we could not determine the ethnic background of 16.4% of the female senior staff members, which limits our ability to understand the true diversity of the City of Surrey's senior staff.



Since we did not have a partnership with the City of Surrey, we could not conduct further research with city staff to add context to these data points.

ii. Qualitative Analysis

In Vancouver, we were able to add further context to the above quantitative results with qualitative input. Unfortunately, in Surrey we were not able to conduct qualitative analysis with city staff.

As part of its Women's Equity Strategy, and particularly the included goals for staff leadership and representation, the City of Vancouver conducted focus groups with senior staff and shared a report of the aggregate results with us, as part of our MOU. Though we were not privy to the

process or raw data for this activity, we can make conclusions from the report's results. This report is included in Appendix 9, and below key results are highlighted.

As noted in our methodology section, the City of Vancouver held three focus groups in June 2019 with 65 senior staff members. The questions asked were:

- What are the barriers for diverse women aspiring to, or currently in leadership roles?
- What strategies and actions would help to hire, retain, and develop more women in positions of leadership?
- What actions can the City take during Phase 2 of the Women's Equity Strategy that would have the most impact?

Participant feedback was anonymized, and the report includes five high-level themes rather than individual comments. These themes, and a sample of the responses coded to fall under each, are below.

1) CEO Commitment and Management Cascade¹⁴

This theme refers to vocal commitments and decisions from leadership to create a diverse workforce. Participants shared many recommendations for the City of Vancouver under this theme, including: visibly champion a commitment to equity and diversity; support and sponsor employee resource groups; be role models for work/life balance; and create an Ombudsperson role to deal with issues regarding equity among staff.

2) Transparency and Indicators Tracking

This theme includes comments referring to setting and keeping clear inclusion targets, sharing the results, and holding leaders accountable. Recommendations shared by participants here include: address inequalities in pay grades; ensure transparent job qualifications, selection, evaluation, and accountability; undertake reviews of classifications/pay bands across different units and organizations; and implement performance-based development plans, rather than development plans based on hours worked.

3) Women's Leadership Development

¹⁴ "Management cascade" refers to how organizational goals and policies are communicated through the various levels of management, e.g., from senior management through mid-level managers to employees.

In this theme, comments deal with formal training opportunities and support networks for women. Recommendations include: create tailored professional development programs for women; ensure that mentorship and sponsorship opportunities exist for leadership planning and succession planning; ensure networking opportunities, both internally and externally; and rethink and develop 'leadership' differently.

4) Diversity-enabling Infrastructure

This theme includes comments about employer policies and structures such as flexible work schedules, extended leave policies, and back-to-work programs. In this theme, participants recommended: ensure flexible work options to accommodate life transitions (such as parental leave and elder care); ensure organizational/ departmental support for telecommuting and working part-time or reduced hours; offer a comprehensive employee benefits package including birth control; build/ create nearby child care, with priority for city staff who have children; and ensure safe and respectful workplaces.

5) Inclusive Mindsets

Finally, the last theme refers to staff training to address bias and other unconscious discrimination that may occur among the workforce. Participants recommended: refocus the message to be on equity, not just on women; reframe the Women's Equity Strategy so that it is not perceived as affirmative action for women; involve men in the conversation; offer training on a gender equity lens and on unconscious bias; and hold leaders accountable for creating a culture of respect.

These results are in line with our survey results from City of Vancouver senior staff. Overall, there is a combination of clear recommendations for specific policy changes – including parental leave, greater flexibility in work schedules, and a comprehensive benefits package – and feelings that focusing solely or too much on the inequalities for women can lead to resentment or tokenization, either real or perceived.

D. Public Engagement

i. Quantitative Analysis

For our analysis of public engagement strategies, we wanted to understand both the strategies cities are using to engage with their residents and the representativeness of the residents who participate in the engagement strategies.

Vancouver

As part of its Engaged City initiative, the City of Vancouver uses a variety of approaches to involve the public in City decision-making that affects residents. The core values and principles that guide its public engagement efforts are described on the City's website

<https://vancouver.ca/your-government/how-we-do-community-engagement.aspx> and are themselves guided by the core values and spectrum of public participation outlined by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) <https://iap2canada.ca/foundations>.

In Vancouver, we began in April 2018 with an analysis of reports from *Talk Vancouver*, the City of Vancouver's main public engagement tool <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/public-consultation.aspx>. *Talk Vancouver* is an online survey platform whereby people who live or work in the City of Vancouver can sign up to complete surveys about City plans and policies. The City began using the platform in 2013. *Talk Vancouver* panelists receive email notifications when a new survey is available and can choose to participate in each survey.

We wanted to assess how representative the *Talk Vancouver* panel is overall, as well as how representative the survey results are for the *Talk Vancouver* surveys. When *Talk Vancouver* participants, both members and non-members, complete their online profiles, they are required to answer demographic questions about themselves including age, gender, ethnic affiliation, whether they rent or own, postal code, if they have children or not, income, education, and language spoken most often at home. Based on this information, we can get a sense of the diversity of the overall panel.

At the time of our analysis in April 2018, 51% of *Talk Vancouver* panelists identified as female. The total number of members in the panel was 15,187 people. (This information was provided by City of Vancouver staff under the terms of our MOU.) Additionally, the City of Vancouver periodically produces publicly available reports about the diversity of its panel overall, and the most recent report available at the time of our research, from August 2017 (City of Vancouver, 2017) noted further demographic information such as:

- 88% of panelists lived in the City of Vancouver.
- 20% of panelists owned businesses in the City.

- 15% of panelists were under age 30, 52% were between 30 and 49, 28% were between 50 and 69, and 5% were age 70 or above.
- 43% of panelists identified their ethnic origins as European, 41% identified as Canadian, 11% identified as Chinese, 5% identified as American, 3% identified as South Asian, 3% identified as another Asian group (Filipino, Thai, Vietnamese), 2% identified as First Nations, and 2% identified as Latin or South American.
- 25% of panelists had children under the age of 18.
- 14% of panelists had a household income of under \$40,000, 14% had a household income between \$40,000 and \$60,000, 13% had a household income between \$60,000 and \$80,000, 12% had a household income between \$80,000 and \$100,000, 18% had a household income between \$100,000 and \$150,000, 16% had a household income of over \$150,000, and 13% preferred not to say.
- 51% of panelists owned their homes, 45% of panelists rented, and 4% selected 'other.'¹⁵

A few data points are of particular note from these overall panel demographics. First, the vast majority of panelists (80%) were aged between 30 and 69.¹⁶ Second, the majority of panelists gave their ethnic affiliation as European or Canadian backgrounds (43% and 41% respectively). Third, though the income distribution of panelists was somewhat even, the largest proportion of panelists (18%) was in the income bracket of \$100,000 to \$150,000 in annual household income, which is much higher than the median household income of \$72,662 as reported in the 2016 Census for the City of Vancouver.

The demographics of the panelists who respond to each survey differ, as panelists can choose which survey(s) to respond to. The City of Vancouver produces a report on the results of each survey, which includes demographic information for participants. To determine the representativeness of the survey results, we collected a sample of reports from *Talk Vancouver* surveys, focusing on topics of the most breadth and impact to the City overall. The survey reports differ in how well they note the demographic information of participants. Below is an assessment of the demographic results, as well as our assessment of how well the demographic information was captured, for each of the survey reports we sampled. Importantly, in this assessment, we were not assessing the policy outcomes of these public engagement

¹⁵ Note that many of response options for these Talk Vancouver demographic questions were not mutually exclusive, so percentages may not total 100%.

¹⁶ For comparison, the 2016 Census Profile for the City of Vancouver provides the following percentage of total population breakdown by age groupings: 0-14 (14.7%); 15-64 (69.6%); 65+ (15.7%); 85+ (2.1%).

activities, but instead were assessing the extent to which the surveys reflected the diversity of the City of Vancouver resident population.

Table 6: Assessment of Select Talk Vancouver Survey Reports, 2017		
Survey Report	Description of Engagement	Assessment of Demographic Information
Housing Vancouver Engagement Strategy, July 2017	<p>Public consultations consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Talk Vancouver surveys (one for Vancouver residents and one for those who work/play in the region but don't live in the City) Two public events (launch event and The Big Conversation event) Engaging with City of Vancouver Advisory Committees (Renters' Advisory Committees, Seniors' Advisory Committee and representative from Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, and Children Youth and Families Advisory Committee) Targeted consultations: staff were available at 8 open houses and received feedback from key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk Vancouver Survey 1, Vancouver Residents: gathered data on # of respondents, rent/own/insecurely housed, housing type, family type, age, income. Gender: 56% female, 40% male, 1% transgender, 1% other/none of the above, 3% prefer not to say. Talk Vancouver Survey 2, non-Vancouver Residents: gathered data on # of respondents, place of residence, tenure type, family type, income, age. No data on gender. <i>Big Conversation</i> event: 175 participants. 48% attending a City event for the first time. Data on tenure type, age, family type. No data on gender. Advisory Committees: no data on gender of participants.
Vanniversary Survey, April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathered various info. from panel members on how they celebrate living in Vancouver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gathered gender (56% male, 42% female, 2% prefer not to say), as well as: place of residence, age, length of residence in City of Vancouver
Parks and Recreation Master Plan: VanPlay Phase 1 Engagement Report, August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement with VanPlay process: 20 opportunities for feedback (surveys, meetings, and social media) 17,150 people engaged in total 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of participants were adults, 50% children VanPlay survey: collected stats on place of residence, City, age, household type, and gender: 58% women (35% men, 5% prefer not to say, 1% transgender, 1% did not identify with the given options) Also have breakdown of some survey results by gender and presence of children in the household.

Table 6: Assessment of Select Talk Vancouver Survey Reports, 2017

Survey Report	Description of Engagement	Assessment of Demographic Information
		<p>Findings:</p> <p>Women more likely to prioritize community centre facilities, community centre programs, swimming pools, and natural areas than men.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Women prioritize social connections and community belonging higher than men ○ For the future, women want new and expanded amenities, access to dog parks and off-leash areas, and aquatic facilities more than men ○ Barriers to enjoying parks and rec facilities: timing of programs/events, cost, access by public transit, crowded facilities, location of amenities and facilities, and facility and program availability are bigger barriers for women. Interestingly, men more likely to say there are no barriers (40% of men, 29% of women) ○ Women emphasize need for improving accessibility for people with disabilities more often than men
VanSplash Survey, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey: responded to by over 4,500 people • Two public outreach events at Kitsilano beach and New Brighton Pool over a summer weekend in July 2016 (July 23rd and 24th) • 5 stakeholder group workshops, over 60 stakeholder groups represented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Female 67%, male 29%, none of the above 1%, prefer not to say 3% ○ Also collected data on age, primary language spoken at home, area of residency, mode of transportation, if they have children, if they have someone with a disability in their home ○ Also includes age breakdown of gender responses
2017 Budget Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canvassed people using Talk Vancouver survey, online Insights West poll, and 3-question survey asked of 311 callers • Also did face-to-face outreach travelling budget roadshow, meetings with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk Vancouver survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ weighted to reflect most recent census data for age, gender, and residential zones for residents. ○ Gender: 54% female, 46% male ○ Includes data on age, residential zone, ethnicity • 311 callers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No gender or other demographic data gathered

Table 6: Assessment of Select Talk Vancouver Survey Reports, 2017

Survey Report	Description of Engagement	Assessment of Demographic Information
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No gender or other demographic data gathered • Stakeholder workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No gender or other demographic data gathered • Open-ended questions: service satisfaction survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No gender or other demographic data gathered • Insights West survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 1,327 residents, with weighting on age, gender, and region to ensure profile matched City profile ◦ NO gender breakdown, though, or other demographic details • Business owners survey: includes gender. 57% male, 35% female, 6% prefer not to say, 1% transgender, 1% none of the above; also includes ages, residential zone of business, ethnicity.
Women's Equity Strategy Engagement, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey: sent via Talk Vancouver, and advertised on City social and external media; announced during IWD 2017 event (attendees at this event could complete the survey via tablets on hand); given to participants at the public forum session on this (see below); and distributed internally to City's internal communication networks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Care was given to ensure this survey went beyond normal channels and audiences. ◦ The City's Public Engagement Team assisted with survey throughout , including 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online survey: demographic questions asked about gender, postal code, area you live in, own/run a business, age, ethnic origin, household type, if you work/volunteer with an organization that provides services/support for women/girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Also asked how they heard about the survey; can use this info to ascertain how to communicate to people in the future; 76% of respondents heard about it from Talk Vancouver panel ◦ Respondents also invited to attend an in-person event ◦ Results analyzed with the lens of gender as well ◦ Gender breakdown: 1171 women, 424 men, 9 other/none, transgender 2 and 34 prefer not to say (n=1638) • Public forum: no data gathered about demographics of attendees • Presentation to Women's Advisory Committee: no demographic data, other than identifying all participants as women

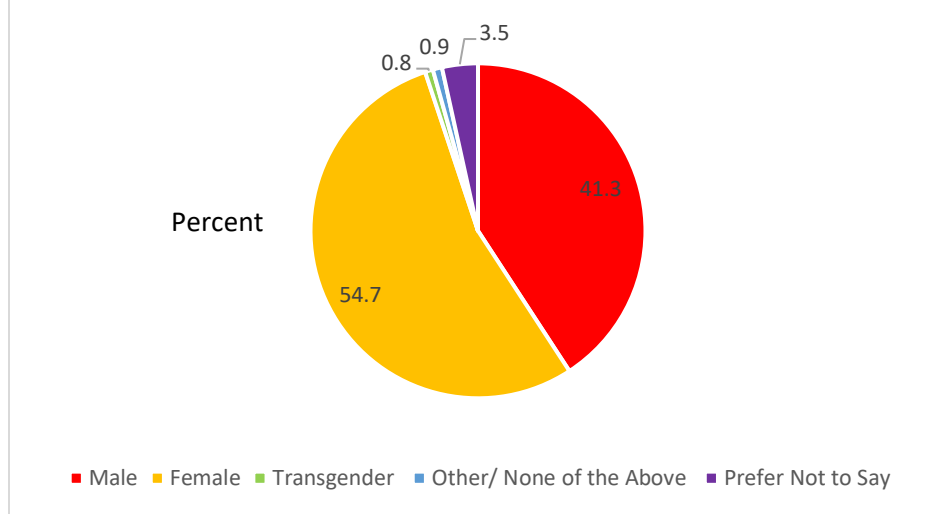
Table 6: Assessment of Select Talk Vancouver Survey Reports, 2017		
Survey Report	Description of Engagement	Assessment of Demographic Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compilation of results • 2017 IWD event: 45-50 people attended to give feedback in person. Childminding and refreshments provided. Facilitation provided in English and Cantonese • Presentation to Women's Advisory Committee to gather their feedback 	

As Table 6 above shows, the methodology for the sampled surveys differed significantly. In some cases, very detailed information was gathered on participants' demographic characteristics, with great care to make public engagement opportunities accessible to those of different backgrounds (such as by holding engagements through multiple media and in multiple locations, or by providing translation into multiple languages). In other cases, very little detail was provided about outreach to diverse people and who actually participated in activities. The City does not typically collect data on participants at in-person public events/ forums.

However, information on gender was available for most of the sampled surveys. Based on the seven surveys in Table 6 for which gender information was available for participants, Figure 32 below shows the average gender breakdown among these seven surveys. This Figure reveals that women comprised slightly more than half of the proportion of participants in these sampled surveys.¹⁷

¹⁷ Note that the gender categories used in Figure 32 are those used in the Talk Vancouver materials, not our categorizations.

Figure 32: Gender Breakdown of Participation in Select Talk Vancouver Survey Reports, 2017



Surrey

In Surrey, we conducted a survey with community organizations and individuals who had participated in City public engagement activities. This digital survey was sent to 32 community organizations across the City of Surrey, eight of whom completed the survey over its seven-day period of activity. This survey collected demographic data on respondents' gender, age, ethnic origin, membership in the LGBTQ2S+ community, household income, language primarily spoken at home, education, and presence of a disability.

The majority of survey respondents were women (75%). Half of respondents indicated the main ethnic origin of their ancestors was North American-Canadian, as seen in Figure 33 below. Though the majority of respondents indicated they speak English most often at home, those who speak Punjabi, Arabic, Hindi and Korean are also represented, as seen in Figure 34. Respondents from various age categories completed the survey, though no respondents were below the age of 25 or above age 64, as Figure 35 shows. (This lack of younger and older participants reflects the fact the respondents were all members and employees of non-profit organizations and of working age.)

Figure 33: Main Ethnic Origin of Surrey Public Engagement Survey Participants, 2018

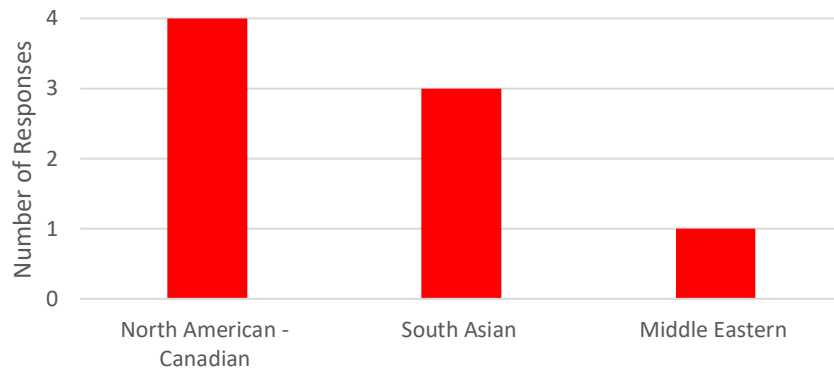


Figure 34: Language Primarily Spoken at Home of Surrey Public Engagement Survey Participants, 2018

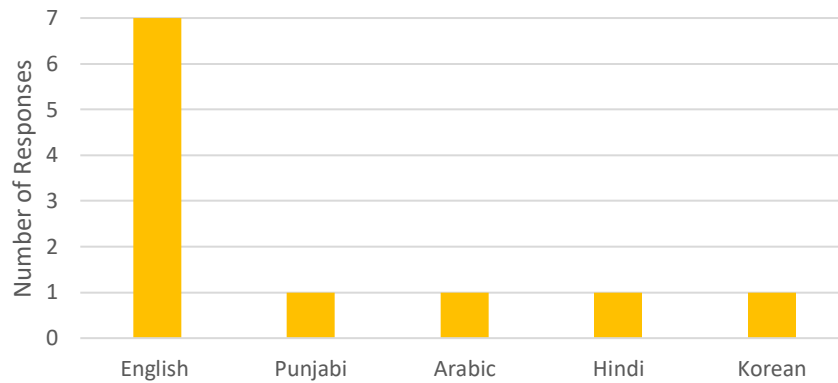
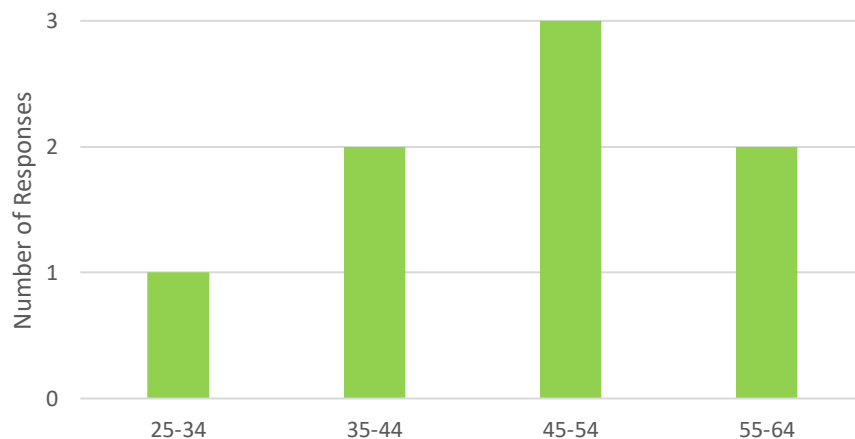
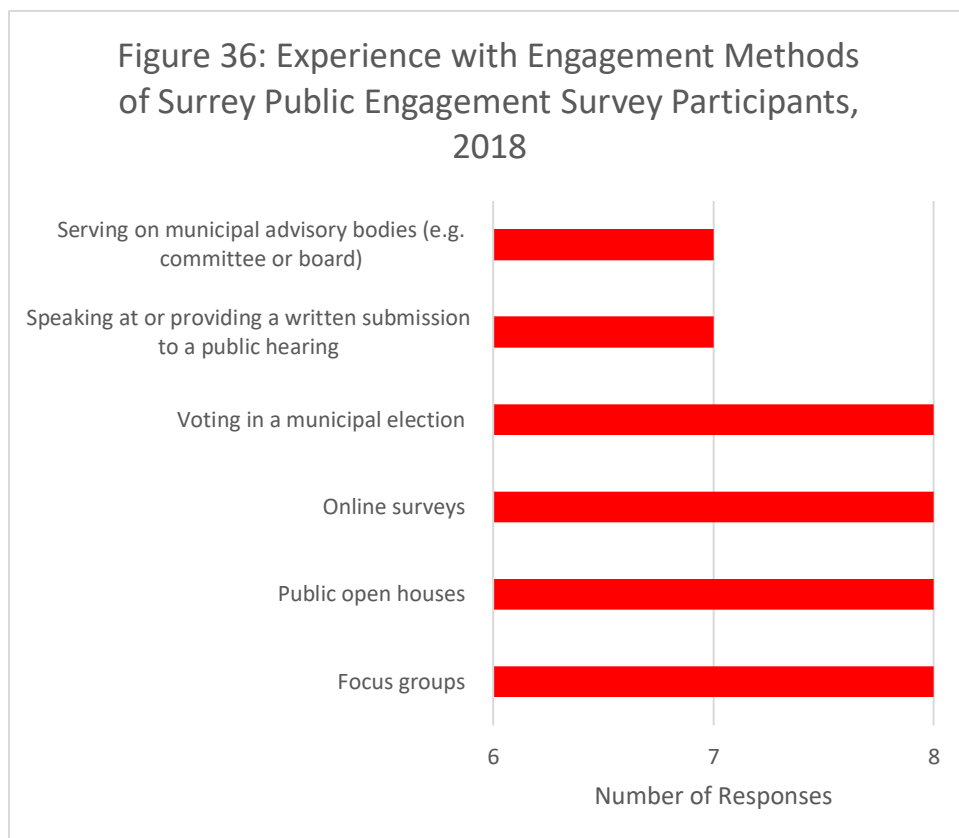


Figure 35: Age of Surrey Public Engagement Survey Participants, 2018



Half of respondents had completed a university graduate program, with three holding an undergraduate degree and one possessing a high school diploma. Half of respondents also reported a household income of between \$100,000 and \$149,999 while two indicated a household income of between \$40,000 and \$59,999.

Respondents had the most experience participating in focus groups, public open houses, online surveys, and voting in a municipal election; all respondents reported engaging with the City in each of these ways, as shown in Figure 36 below. However, the vast majority of respondents had also served or were currently serving on municipal advisory bodies and/or had spoken at or provided a written submission at a public hearing.



Meaningful contributions?

The majority of respondents believed their comments had meaningfully contributed to municipal decisions and/or policies. One male indicated he had presented both to Council and to various City departments which had been responsive to his ideas. One individual stated their contribution made “somewhat” of an impact, while one noted they are not sure if their

contributions made a difference (both these respondents were women of colour). One of these respondents noted that “it often feels like input is requested too late in the process to change anything substantive.”

Barriers

Respondents were also asked about whether they believe there are barriers to women participating in public engagement activities. The vast majority of participants indicated they do not believe so. One respondent noted that “we are asked for input and listened to and we have some strong women leaders in our City.” Another respondent, though she stated there are no barriers to participation, noted that “women are busy [and] often don’t have time to participate.” The sole respondent who indicated there are barriers to participation stated that meetings are often at times when women are at work or completing other tasks. This person contended that “some women may not be comfortable speaking out in mixed gender settings.”

Finally, when asked how the City of Surrey could encourage greater participation from women, respondents shared a variety of suggestions. Two individuals suggested providing consultation processes in multiple languages. Two respondents suggested showcasing people who participate in consultation activities, as these people tend to be passionate about their communities. Providing incentives and doing more to publicize events were also suggested.

One respondent indicated that to reach marginalized communities, the City could “[go] to them - their households or community centres” while one indicated the City should create more women-only spaces for feedback. One individual also suggested specifically engaging with minority communities and sharing information about consultation activities with women’s groups.¹⁸

ii. Qualitative Analysis

To further contextualize these findings, we conducted our own assessments of the public engagement tools used in both cities.

¹⁸ These recommendations echo those included in the City for All Women Initiative’s guidelines for creating public engagement consultations that are inclusive of diverse women. See City of Ottawa (2006).

Vancouver

We conducted an overview and assessment of the City's scope of public engagement tools. Our main findings are summarized below.

- *Talk Vancouver*: an online portal where City of Vancouver residents and business owners can complete surveys about City policies and programs. Email invitations to Talk Vancouver panelists are distributed once or twice per month, and panelists can select surveys to respond to. While demographic information about panelists is collected, demographic questions are not standardized among all surveys, as discussed above.
- *Doors Open Vancouver*: an initiative held from 2014-2017, where key Vancouver buildings and historic sites not otherwise available to the public were open and staffed by City staff to help Vancouverites learn about the City's history. Although in 2014 alone, *Doors Open Vancouver* had over 8,600 visits to more than 20 buildings, no demographic data were collected about the diversity of attendees.
- *Pop-Up City Hall*: an initiative held in 2016 where City staff would offer City services at various locations around the City to increase access to services for residents who may experience barriers like mobility, language, or time constraints and who would not normally come to City Hall. Target demographics were 18-to-35-year-olds, newcomers and new immigrants, and urban Indigenous peoples. In all, 66 events were held in 2016 that recorded 14,235 "interactions" with participants. However, an "interaction" was defined as any contact with City staff, and could range from 30 seconds to 5-7 minutes. Demographic data on participants were not collected, beyond noting that translation into languages other than English was provided if needed.
- *3-1-1 Service*: a phone number that residents can call to be connected to any City service. This is not explicitly a public engagement tool, but it is a lower-barrier way for anyone to call and be easily connected with services they seek. The service is available in over one hundred languages.

In addition to the above list, the City of Vancouver also allows residents to provide feedback on City policies and programs via speaking at a City Council meeting, sending feedback to the Mayor and Council, and/or following and interacting via social media (City of Vancouver, 2020a).

The main conclusion we drew from this analysis of the City of Vancouver's scope of engagement activities was that the City engages with its residents in multiple and diverse ways,

and often aims to include those who tend to be underrepresented in public engagement activities. However, the lack of comprehensive and consistent collection of demographic data for most activities undermines the efficacy of these efforts.

Surrey

Similarly, in Surrey we collected information on the City's scope of engagement activities. The City of Surrey uses a variety of methods to engage with residents such as open houses, public meetings and focus groups, social media, advisory bodies, and steering groups (City of Surrey, 2018). The City also conducts more than 200 digital "Open Community Surveys" annually (City of Surrey, 2018). Residents are also invited to join CitySpeaks, an online platform that alerts residents to new surveys based on their interests and provides members with data from completed surveys (City of Surrey, 2018). (CitySpeaks is similar to Talk Vancouver.)

CitySpeaks was formed in 2013. As of September 2019, CitySpeaks panel membership was just under 5,000, with approximately 50 new members joining monthly. Participants must be a Surrey business owner or taxpayer and over 16 years of age. Users must login and provide some personal information. The intent of CitySpeaks is "to embrace interactive engagement and support two-way learning and dialogue." The City uses CitySpeaks to increase the City's capacity for engagement, reduce reliance on external consultants, and validate data. The City owns the data received from CitySpeaks (September 9, 2019 Minutes, Public Engagement Task Force).

On average, the City conducts two to three CitySpeaks panel surveys per month. Topics are focused around City strategies, policy direction, or through panel member suggestions. By September 2019, there had been 850 open surveys and 130 panel surveys with an average 40% response rate for CitySpeaks members.

However, staff had concerns about how reflective the panel members are of the City's demographics, and wanted to see more equitable representation of the diversity of Surrey's population. The largest demographic groups represented on CitySpeaks are females, ages 51 to 65, South Surrey residents, and individuals with a British background. Statistics from the 2016 census for South Surrey reveal that 72% of residents were Caucasian, as compared with 42% for the City of Surrey as a whole; 84% reported they spoke English at home, compared to 66% for the City; 83% were homeowners compared to 71% for the City; and South Surrey had

the highest average household income (\$115,119) of the seven communities that compose Surrey (City of Surrey Community Profiles, 2016 Census Data, South Surrey).

An example of why the lack of representivity on the CitySpeaks panel is a concern is the survey sent out in February 2019 that both panelists and members of the public could respond to. Entitled, *Surrey Communications & Community Engagement Survey, 2019*, the survey was one of the first steps in the City's evaluation and revamping of its public engagement strategy, which is discussed in detail in the following section. (The full report on the survey results is available at <https://www.surrey.ca/city-government/13146.aspx>.)

The survey asked respondents to comment on their level of civic pride; how well they thought the City was doing in reaching out and connecting with its citizens; their interactions with City services; and questions concerning respondents' use of interactive media, and how they accessed news about the City. During the one-month period that the survey was active, 838 panel members responded, as well as twenty members of the public who were not panel members (i.e., "Open Community" respondents). The report does not contain any demographic information on who these respondents were, but given the overall make-up of the CitySpeaks panel, the extent to which this survey reflects the demographic composition of the City is very questionable.

If we assume that the CitySpeaks panel consisted of approximately 5,000 members at the time of the survey (see above), the 838 respondents represent only about 17% of panel members compared with the average response rate (cited above) of 40%. The twenty Open Community survey responses constitute too small a sample to be statistically significant. The responses to some questions were also questionable in terms of their usefulness: For example, the question that asked, "What type of job do you think the City is doing at reaching out, listening to and connecting with residents?" which all 858 respondents answered, resulted in 34% of respondents reporting that the City was doing an "excellent" or "very good" job, while 44% answered "neutral" and 22% said "poor or very poor." It is difficult to draw any real conclusions from the results of this particular question.

The Public Engagement Task Force

In January 2019, the City formed the Public Engagement Task Force Committee (PETF) composed of two councillors appointed by the mayor, and seven senior-level staff from City

departments.¹⁹ These include: Community Planning; Parks, Recreation and Culture; Transportation; Marketing and Communications, Surrey Libraries; Engineering; Civic Facilities; and Strategic Initiatives and Corporate Reports. The mandate of the PETF is to review best practices in project and process-based community engagement with a focus on moving beyond traditional public consultation to more innovative and unique solutions. The Task Force will review existing practices in Surrey, receive input from engagement specialists and participants and explore options for future public engagement customized for Surrey (PETF Terms of Reference).

The PETF was formed because the City recognized that the various departments within the City conducted public engagement activities largely independently, though there was a significant amount of coordination between some departments. A role of the PETF was to identify which engagement activities were being used and to what effect. Committee members determined that their focus would be on project-based engagement which “has a definitive timeline, involves input from stakeholders and requires a decision in the outcome. Examples include developing strategic plans, land use plans and new facilities.” Meeting minutes indicate that, as in Vancouver, the work and recommendations of the PETF would be guided by the public engagement core values developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (Minutes of April 25, 2019).

The PETF identified the following as the top challenges associated with community engagement approaches used by the City:

- Lack of consistency across departments;
- The need to increase diversity among participants;
- Limited resources;
- Concerns about the representativeness of community organizations and residents’ associations;
- A lack of adequate time to carry out initiatives.

The PETF’s role was “to develop a Public Engagement Strategy that will serve as a framework for how the City and subsequently, how each department conducts engagement.” The PETF recommended that a Request for Proposals (RFP) be developed to solicit proposals from

¹⁹ The PETF Terms of Reference and the minutes of meetings from April through September 2019 can be found at : <https://www.surrey.ca/city-government/29295.aspx>

community engagement specialists for the development of the Strategy (Minutes of April 25, 2019).

The PETF reviewed a number of different engagement activities conducted by various departments at the City, and identified strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned. The PETF found the following to be approaches that were the most effective:

- Planning for engagement;
- Using different formats of engagement;
- Setting targets, monitoring, measuring and adjusting as needed to meet targets;
- Engaging in different languages, such as translating key documents;
- Advertising in non-English media and using multi-lingual ambassadors;
- Going to the public by hosting events at locations where people are in the community;
- Growing recognition within the city of the benefits of meaningful engagement;
- Incorporating education into the process so residents can make more informed decisions and carry this new knowledge forward to the next project;
- Collaboration between departments; and
- Closing the loop by reporting back what was heard and demonstrating how input was incorporated into the outcome.

The successful proponents to develop the Public Engagement Strategy, architectural firm HCMA,²⁰ developed a three-phase plan focusing on outreach to “seldom heard voices” including:

- Indigenous peoples
- Youth
- Cultural communities
- People of Colour
- Newcomers to Canada
- Diverse family structures [extended family households?]
- People on low income / unhoused

²⁰ <https://hcma.ca/about/#perspectives>

- Diverse abilities
- And the general public

The goal was “to explore existing experiences with engagement and why some residents are not engaging (PETF Minutes of September 9, 2019).”

Women were not explicitly included in this list, though HCMA on behalf of the City held a meeting on March 5, 2020 at the Surrey Women’s Centre. An attendee at the meeting reported that the facilitators largely used the event to talk about the City’s Public Engagement Strategy, and to invite the women to participate in the City’s online survey to provide their comments and ideas. The on-line survey was set to close March 15, 2020.

The majority of the consultants’ Phase II plan (scheduled for January through April, 2020), which included analyzing input and research; preparing a draft Strategy and toolkit; reviewing and gathering feedback; and refining the Strategy and toolkit, are presumably on-hold as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, at least in terms of face-to-face engagement events.

Interviews with staff in both cities

To follow up this general information about each city’s activities and guiding principles, we conducted semi-structured in-person interviews with one key staff member in each city who was deemed to be knowledgeable about the City’s public engagement strategies and activities.

Vancouver

In Vancouver, we spoke with Paul Hendren, from the City of Vancouver Office of External Relations & Protocol, who helped to develop and led the City’s strategy to increase voter engagement leading up to the 2018 municipal election ²¹. From our interview, we gained several key insights into how the City of Vancouver approached engagement for that election, particularly as a result of the recommendations of relevant City advisory bodies, which speaks to the interplay between advisory bodies, voting patterns, and broader public engagement.

²¹ The full report on the City’s engagement strategy and its implementation, and the post-election polling results, including a demographic profile of voters, can be accessed here:
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20190515/documents/pspc3.pdf>

Mr. Hendren spoke about the challenges the City faces in engaging residents (in this case, specifically engaging them to vote on election day), particularly when they do not feel represented in the City's work: "There are a lot of factors that play into [voter turnout]...We do the information about when, where, and how to vote...and try to connect it back to people's lives, but for people who don't believe in the political system or politicians any more that's really tough."

However, for the 2018 election the City of Vancouver invested in enhanced outreach activities to encourage residents to vote. These initiatives included the following:

- Distributing more information regarding how and when to vote;
- Establishing an outreach team that was culturally diverse and multi-lingual;
- Starting outreach earlier in the year by holding community events beginning in the spring and summer;
- Giving out 'swag' (City of Vancouver-branded items, such as shopping bags or pens) to people who visited the City's table or booth;
- Sending monthly emails through a voter information newsletter that residents could sign up for;
- Working with community influencers to spread the messages to their own communities as trusted voices;
- Working with school groups to do student voting programs and get youth involved in elections; and
- Utilizing games such as quizzes to engage residents at events.

Mr. Hendren himself was seconded temporarily to lead the electoral outreach, as that staff position had not existed before.²²

The City also created a fund for community groups to support 'get-out-the-vote' events. According to Mr. Hendren, the target demographics were:

"the groups that we know are underrepresented in our voting process, [including] Indigenous people, new Canadians who have been in the country for less than 10 years, as well as low income and homeless individuals....With these groups it's

²² As of September 2019, the City was actively recruiting an Election Outreach Manager as a permanent position (City of Vancouver 2019B).

important to have people from within their community and organizations they already trust doing the outreach.”

Mr. Hendren shared that, before they began these enhanced engagement activities, the City sought feedback from its advisory bodies: “I talked to our advisory committees to get their feedbacks, and we sent a survey out to local non-profits and civic agencies to get their feedback before starting. [We asked] who they serve through their organizations and what they feel the barriers are for their [constituencies]. [We also asked] what types of outreach and engagement and activities they think will be effective for each of them?”

In particular, the City used recent recommendations from the Independent Election Task Force (IETF), which operated from 2016-2020. The IETF recommended that the City provide grants to community groups for electoral outreach. From our interview with Mr. Hendren, we learned that the IETF recommendations made a tangible impact on how the City created its outreach plan leading up to the 2018 election.

The City also contracted a polling company to conduct analysis on the outcomes of these enhanced initiatives. This work was done through exit surveys as people were leaving voting locations, an online panel, telephone surveys, and “some intercept surveys that we did mostly to reach people in [the] Downtown Eastside...who [couldn’t be reached] online or by telephone.” Mr. Hendren shared that the company surveyed over 2000 people and that the data “showed that people felt very informed when it came to when...the election is, where [they could] vote, [and]how...to find City information on [the candidates and the election].”

For the post-election survey, the City collected demographic information including “gender, ethnicity, language, income, home ownership, experience with voting, municipal, federal, provincial, have you voted before, [and] education level.”

Mr. Hendren expressed disappointment that voter turnout did not increase in 2018. He noted that in the 2014 election, voter turnout was 44%, and in 2018 it was 39%. However, he said he believed the City was on the right track: “I think in terms of response from the people and organizations we worked with [it] was very positive. I think [the City’s voter engagement and outreach] should be expanded on and continued.”

Surrey

In Surrey, we interviewed Patrick Klassen, Community Planning Manager for the City. Mr. Klassen provided insights about several aspects of the City of Surrey's engagement activities, including how the scale of public consultation is determined, how opportunities are advertised, what data are collected, and how underrepresented communities are included.²³

Mr. Klassen indicated that a project's size dictates the scale of consultation required. Large-scale projects, like the City's recent Parks, Recreation and Culture 10 Year Strategic Plan, require several months of consultation pre-planning to determine the audiences the City wants to reach, how they would do so, and their targets and deadlines: "In that particular example we had idea fairs at libraries and recreation centres. We had much more targeted world café style workshops. We had pop-up booths at malls and parks and other City events and...and we also had online surveys...."

This scale of this project required a phased outreach strategy. In Phase 1, staff sought to "gather big ideas;" in Phase 2 they sought to refine these and establish direction; and in Phase 3 staff confirmed their direction with the community.

For smaller projects such as a small-site development application, the City would use a more localized process to engage residents. This could include an open house and a survey, and would be an example of the minimum end of the consultation spectrum.

Mr. Klassen stated that, in order to extend the reach of consultation activities, staff depend on their relationships with community groups to leverage community contacts:

"In the past we've had workshops that are thematic so ... [for example] we would directly consult with specific environmental groups or social advocacy groups. If it's a policy or a land use plan that pertains to certain neighbourhoods, we would certainly reach out to those community associations and community groups or business improvement association groups that represent those interests there."

Staff have also hired project ambassadors to connect with more difficult-to-reach groups, such as youth. To inform the recent parks and recreation strategic plan, youth ambassadors were paid to visit parks, schools and locations frequented by young people and to engage them there.

²³ Note that this interview was conducted in the summer of 2018 before the City initiated the Public Engagement Task Force Committee's work.

Mr. Klassen noted that this tactic was successful in connecting a group whose voices are rarely heard in public engagement activities.

Engagement opportunities are advertised in local newspapers, on posters in public spaces, via area-specific mail-outs, and on digital billboards. However, Mr. Klassen indicated that, in his view, the most effective way to reach people is through social media: “We would often employ a social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram and that’s how we actually generate a large amount of traffic [to the project website].” Mr. Klassen also argued that, while digital methods such as this are effective, advertising activities are most successful when they use a blend of media.

For City-wide policies, Mr. Klassen shared that the City makes an effort to consult across the municipality, with a focus on town centres and more urban areas. This approach could include a workshop in each community or an open house, depending on the scale of the project. For area-specific plans, the City “wouldn’t expect people to come to [them]” but would host activities in these neighbourhoods.

Mr. Klassen explained that engagement approaches can also differ based on location. Those activities held in more urban areas might include a party in a park where City staff ask residents to provide feedback, or could be held in busy locations like a library or mall “where [City staff] know people will be.” For consultation in greenfield areas, tactics tend to be more traditional: “...some of our... more suburban or greenfield locations, where there’s not as much amenities or opportunities to have more dynamic interesting consultation, we often default to more typical, ‘just come to the rec centre, Multipurpose Room 3’ and have an open house.”

However, Mr. Klassen specified that he believed that approaches should be consistent across the City, so that “everyone is given the same opportunity and we’re not catering to certain populations just based on location.” Instead, engagement strategies should be based on the “need and scope of the project.” Mr. Klassen further noted that all locations must be in proximity to transit and that the City would not “have an open house or public workshop in an area that’s inaccessible by transit because that would effectively exclude people.” When asked if the City provides bus tickets to participants, Mr. Klassen stated that they do not, but noted that this is an interesting idea, and that “those types of ideas are really great and sometimes you just get lost in not thinking about [new ideas].”

Mr. Klassen did note that if consultation events occur during a mealtime, the City will provide food, and with refreshments if the events fall outside of these times. At times, they have, provided onsite childcare to ensure participants could bring their children to activities.

Regarding data collection, Mr. Klassen stated that, wherever possible, the City gathers demographic data on public engagement participants. However, some media are more effective for that work, such as digital surveys. The City also prefers to provide information on those who participated in a project's development, regardless of the scale, as this approach helps provide validity to the subsequent policy or decision-making rationale: "If the consultation is just a single cohort and yet it's a policy that pertains to everyone, then that is perhaps less relevant than if it is more representative of the actual demography of the City....[Y]ou wouldn't want an affordable housing policy or something of that nature to just basically come from Caucasian males that are 60 and over. That data set would be pretty much invalid."

When asked to comment on the gender diversity of participants as a whole, Mr. Klassen indicated that the City has "strong participation from women" and that, in general, women slightly outnumber male informants. However, this proportion can differ, depending on the topic of the consultation: "It's interesting, with land use planning we actually have a tendency to get closer to the 55% male participation rate. When it comes to policy or recreational planning, or cultural planning or more policy-related pieces, not the use of land, then it's usually the inverse, it's usually a higher percentage of women."

When asked if the City of Surrey approaches all consultation using a gender equity lens, Mr. Klassen admitted, "I don't think we do." He indicated that this approach or shortcoming is not purposeful and that the City will sometime use a gender equity analysis, depending on the project:

"If we have policies that pertain specifically to gender equity or to one gender or where we're looking for specific feedback, there are some tools you can use. They're limited, but for example you can target based on gender, age, demography, whatever on social media and in fact we've done that in the past for some programs where we've noticed that we are getting responses...that are disproportionately male or older males."

Mr. Klassen reported that in the past, the City of Surrey used Facebook advertisements to target underrepresented residents, such as non-white women or youth. These ads typically direct

groups towards an online survey. As Mr. Klassen noted, online surveys are the easiest method to use when trying to capture responses that reflect the City's demographics.

Mr. Klassen further indicated that the City's policy prohibiting the translation of materials—a practice that the City is reviewing, as we have seen above—prevents them from providing formal translation services; as a result, online surveys and other consultation materials are only available in English. However, as part of the consultation process for the parks and recreation strategic plan, the City hired two paid ambassadors fluent in Punjabi to reach out to this community, particularly to its senior members. Mr. Klassen also indicated that the City does not provide sign language translation.

When discussing how the City connects with its urban Indigenous population, Mr. Klassen addressed how the City consults with Surrey's land-based First Nations:

“We have a protocol where we...reach out to their Chief or their administrators.... But for all intents and purposes,...I guess they choose maybe not to participate and to be totally honest, we don't really go above and beyond to try and provide unique consultation. It's more that they have a tendency to get bundled into the broader consultation program.”

When seeking to reach Indigenous residents who do not belong to these nations, the City relies on direction from its Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee (UILC). Mr. Klassen and his staff also depend on the *All Our Relations* strategy developed by the UILC to guide their actions.

Summary: Public engagement in Vancouver and Surrey

Both cities are currently undertaking review, evaluation, and revamping of their public engagement strategies and actions. Preferred practice in public engagement is constantly changing and improving as practitioners develop better understandings of what works effectively (and what does not) when designing community outreach and engagement activities for diverse populations. Cities need to review their policies and practices regularly to ensure that they are keeping pace with the changing body of knowledge.

Vancouver and Surrey both rely heavily on surveys conducted on-line and on a group of panelists that are invited to respond to surveys on a variety of topics on which the City wants to solicit comment. The representivity of the panels in each City vary—Talk Vancouver is somewhat more demographically diverse than Surrey's CitySpeaks—but both tend to skew

towards panelists who are older (30-69), higher income, homeowners, and those who speak English at home. Women represent over half of the panel members in each city, but the voices of diverse women do not appear to be as well represented as those of white women. In sum, while these platforms are valuable for soliciting input and for allowing a better understanding of who the respondents are, they are just one tool that cities can use when soliciting public comment. A variety of approaches should be used in order to include those whose opinions are often left out, whether as part of regular outreach activities, or as part of more specific efforts such as voter engagement.

5. Promising Practice Recommendations


Based on our data analysis in the four thematic areas above, we have compiled a list of recommendations for local governments. These are based on policies and programs in our study of the cities of Surrey and Vancouver, as well as on our literature reviews and examination of practices in other cities. The promising practice recommendations are generally applicable to any local government looking to increase the civic participation of diverse women.

For ease of use, we formatted these recommendations into a checklist of promising practices. Local government staff, elected officials, or residents can use the below checklist to begin to understand how their city is doing when it comes to engaging diverse women. This checklist should not be used as a mathematical tally; it is not as simple as counting checkmarks and using that number to give the local government a grade. Instead, we hope this checklist can be used as a way to begin the conversation and indicate clear policies, programs, and institutional structures which local governments can consider implementing.

This preferred practice matrix is in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Recommendations for Action: Checklist for Local Governments

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented in elected positions within municipal governments.</i>	✓
Candidates and Elected Officials	1. Establish a proportional representation electoral system.	
	2. Establish a district (ward) system to replace municipal at-large system.	
	3. Establish a permanent elections task force to collect data on city voting patterns, and to conduct background research on the relationship between electoral systems (at-large versus district [ward]) and the election of women, racialized, and Indigenous people.	
	4. Develop and implement a robust and inclusive electoral outreach and education program pre-election to increase involvement of underrepresented groups in civic elections (e.g., Indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, youth, people of colour).	
	5. Collect disaggregated post-election data on voting patterns (demographics of who did/didn't vote) to establish benchmarks and measure success of outreach/education efforts.	
	6. Work with civic parties to ensure all potential candidates have access to information/training about what is involved in becoming a candidate; hold information and training sessions specifically for women candidates; and ensure financial resources are available to support campaign expenses including developing leadership skills and Networks.	
	7. Ensure that School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are included in all-candidates forums during elections.	
	8. Ensure all elected positions receive adequate pay (living wage).	
	9. Offer child care for elected officials during evening and weekend work- related responsibilities.	

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented on all city advisory bodies; city has a permanent women's advisory committee, and diverse women play a leading role on that committee.</i>	
Advisory Bodies	1. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) as a committee of council.	
	2. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee as a permanent committee of Council.	
	3. Establish a process whereby the Women's Advisory Committee can evaluate city policies and programs.	
	4. Give women's advisory bodies a say in how members are chosen to ensure a diverse representation.	
	5. Ensure that all city advisory bodies are composed of at least 50% women.	
	6. Conduct active outreach to groups that have been underrepresented on city advisory bodies. This could include recruitment and outreach activities by current and/or past members.	
	7. Provide various options for people to apply to serve on advisory bodies. The application process should include alternatives to resumes in order to privilege lived experience and knowledge, assistance with applying, and applications should be accepted via mail-in/ drop-off at City Hall, drop off at collection sites at community centres, as well as online.	
	8. Collect optional demographic information from applicants as part of the application process for membership on advisory bodies, and select members who represent the demographic makeup of the city.	
	9. Be clear about what skills, expertise, and experience are being sought when advertising for new advisory body members, and transparent about how decisions about membership are made.	
	10. Provide orientation training so that new members fully understand the advisory body's mandate, how city procedures work, and how to track the effect they have on city policies and programs.	
	11. Offer mentorship opportunities for women and new members of advisory committees.	
	12. Implement a flexible meeting schedule for advisory bodies, including varying the times and locations of meetings, and have access to supports to accommodate members' needs, most importantly, childcare.	
	13. Provide ongoing training for advisory body members, including anti-oppression and anti-racism training, and facilitation and conflict resolution training should be available when requested.	
	14. Give advisory bodies the ability to report directly to city council, but retain enough autonomy to be able to undertake critical evaluation of city policies and practices.	
	15. Ensure that advisory bodies are sufficiently resourced, e.g., staff and council support, and financial resources, to carry out their work.	

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women make up 40-60% of mid-level and senior management positions within city staff; cities are working toward 40-60% women's representation in professions where they have historically been, and are still underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).</i>	✓
Cities as Employers	1. Create an office that focuses on gender intersectional equity and inclusion in all municipal staff hiring and promotion decisions.	
	2. Ensure there are clear measures to implement and measure, not just set, goals for diversity in hiring.	
	3. Broaden requirements in some job postings to recognize desired knowledge and skills rather than focusing just on credentials and strict educational requirements.	
	4. Develop an employment equity policy of actively recruiting and promoting women especially in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).	
	5. Ensure that women make up at least 50% of all leadership and management positions within city staff.	
	6. Work with unions representing municipal workers on how to encourage more diversity in hiring while respecting seniority rules.	
	7. Ensure adequate work supports for employees with children (e.g., parental leave, health plans that include family planning, flexible work schedules).	
	8. Implement training/mentorship programs for new staff.	
	9. Ensure that all staff in management positions receive GBA+ training (at the minimum) to develop awareness of unconscious bias in hiring, promotion, and personnel management decisions.	
	10. Collect on-going disaggregated data on the makeup of the workforce in terms of women/equity groups, especially in leadership positions where they have historically been underrepresented (even though the city may not be legally required to do so). This would also facilitate a pay equity audit to identify any disparities based on gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and other factors.	

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women have equal opportunities to be involved in city-led public engagement and consultations on specific issues; are equitably represented among respondents to online survey instruments used by the city to elicit input on policies, programs, and projects; and have equal access to and attendance at open houses, neighbourhood consultations, and other public events.</i>	✓
Public Engagement	1. Employ a gendered intersectional lens to all community engagement programs and processes to ensure as great a diversity of participation as possible.	
	2. Involve community members at the beginning of a process (e.g., the design of a new development; the development of a new city policy) rather than later in the process when important decisions have already been made.	
	3. Collect on-going public input rather than limiting community involvement to specific and non-recurring events (e.g., open houses, visioning sessions, focus groups, etc.)	
	4. Ensure that diverse women are appropriately informed in a timely fashion about public forums & other engagement activities.	
	5. Ensure that community engagement activities are held in locations that are accessible and convenient to groups whose input is being sought and at times that do not exclude young families, seniors, or diverse women from participating.	
	6. Provide child-care and/or activities for children at public engagement events to enable parents to attend and fully participate, and to include the voices of children and youth in city planning processes.	
	7. Ensure that any materials used at community engagement events are in plain/clear language—and in multiple languages, if required—avoiding jargon, acronyms, highly technical terminology, etc.	
	8. Provide translation services at all public meetings where appropriate.	
	9. Collect voluntary disaggregated demographic data at public engagement events (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, income, ethnic background, education, housing status, language(s) spoken at home, etc.) and as part of online surveys designed to gather public input, and keep track of numbers of attendees.	
	10. Keep careful records of what people said, whose ideas were included in the product of the process, whose ideas were acted upon, and whose ideas were not (i.e., tracking influence rather than just mere participation).	
	11. Communicate back to the public on the results of engagement activities, so those who participated know what impact their participation had.	
	12. Consider providing women-only spaces and opportunities for participation.	
	13. Offer grant money to community organizations to hold public forums and engagement activities in marginalized communities.	

6. Assessment of Study Cities

Finally, in our analysis, we conducted an assessment of each of our study cities using our preferred practices matrix. In this section we include the matrix from Table 6, filled in for each city, as well as descriptions as to how we conducted these assessments for each of the four study areas.

A checkmark indicates that we have sufficient data to be confident that a city is meeting that particular practice. The lack of a checkmark can mean either that a) we have sufficient data to be confident that a city is not meeting a practice, or b) we do not have sufficient data to make a determination. The descriptions that follow each table will indicate which of these factors determined our assessment for those preferred practices that are lacking a checkmark.







A. Promising Practice Assessment, City of Vancouver

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented in elected positions within municipal governments.</i>	✓
Candidates and Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a proportional representation electoral system. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a district (ward) system to replace municipal at-large system. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a permanent elections task force to collect data on city voting patterns, and to conduct background research on the relationship between electoral systems (at-large versus district [ward]) and the election of women, racialized, and Indigenous people. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a robust and inclusive electoral outreach and education program pre-election to increase involvement of underrepresented groups in civic elections (e.g., Indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, youth, people of colour). 	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect disaggregated post-election data on voting patterns (demographics of who did/didn't vote) to establish benchmarks and measure success of outreach/education efforts. 	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with civic parties to ensure all potential candidates have access to information/training about what is involved in becoming a candidate; hold information and training sessions specifically for women candidates. 	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure financial resources are available to support campaign expenses including developing leadership skills and networks. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are included in all-candidates forums during elections. 	N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all elected positions receive adequate pay (living wage). 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer child care for elected officials during evening and weekend work-related responsibilities. 	

1. **Establish a proportional representation electoral system:** The City of Vancouver has a first-past-the-post electoral system.
2. **Establish a district (ward) system to replace municipal at-large system:** The City of Vancouver has an at-large system. The current Mayor, Kennedy Stewart, campaigned in 2018 on electoral reform, including replacing the at-large system with a ward-based system (Smith, 2019), but as of this report, no action has been taken in this direction.
3. **Establish a permanent elections task force to collect data on city voting patterns, and to conduct background research on the relationship between electoral systems (at-large versus district [ward]) and the election of women, racialized, and Indigenous people:** While the City of Vancouver did have an elections task force from 2016-2020, it is not a permanent task force. In 2019, the task force also recommended creating a permanent elections task force (Independent Election Task Force, 2019). We should note that, as of September 2019, the City was looking to recruit an Election Outreach Manager, which is a positive step toward making this a permanent position, as opposed to a temporary secondment of staff.
4. **Develop and implement a robust and inclusive electoral outreach and education program pre-election to increase involvement of underrepresented groups in civic elections (e.g., Indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, youth, people of colour):** The City of Vancouver undertook this preferred practice prior to the 2018 civic election. We give them a check mark here with the assumption that the City's outreach efforts will continue, and expand, for future elections.
5. **Collect disaggregated post-election data on voting patterns (demographics of who did/didn't vote) to establish benchmarks and measure success of outreach/education efforts:** The city did undertake collection of these data following the 2018 municipal election, and has expressed an intention to continue this practice for future elections.
6. **Work with civic parties to ensure all potential candidates have access to information/training about what is involved in becoming a candidate; hold information and training sessions specifically for women candidates:** Our research indicates that the City of Vancouver has provided information and training sessions to candidates considering running for office.
7. **Ensure financial resources are available to support campaign expenses including developing leadership skills and networks:** The City of Vancouver does not provide financial resources or public funding to political candidates.




- 8. Ensure that School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are included in all-candidates forums during elections:** Many all-candidates forums are held by community groups, not by the City of Vancouver. Looking at the 2018 election, we could not find city-affiliated all-candidates forums so we cannot grade the City of Vancouver on this metric.
- 9. Ensure all elected positions receive adequate pay (living wage).²⁴** The living wage for Metro Vancouver in 2019 (the most recent calculation as of this report) is \$19.50 per hour (Living Wage for Families Campaign, 2019). As of 2019, the Mayor of Vancouver received an annual salary of \$174,258 (\$83.77 per hour for 40 hours of work per week) and City Councillors received an annual salary of \$86,266. The role of City Councillor is meant to be part-time, which would equate to \$82.90 per hour for a 20-hour-per-week schedule (though many Councillors work more hours than this). As of 2019, Vancouver Park Board Commissioners received \$17,598 per year, which equates to \$16.92 per hour for a 20 hour per week schedule (City of Vancouver, 2020c). Unfortunately, while most elected positions in the City of Vancouver are paid above a living wage, Park Commissioners are not and therefore the city does not receive a check mark for this item.
- 10. Offer child care for elected officials during evening and weekend work- related responsibilities:** The City of Vancouver does not currently offer this.

²⁴ School Board Trustees set their own pay which comes from the general operating funding for their district. The amount, in part, is based on the number of students, and is considered more a stipend than a salary. Trustees do receive an additional amount as an allowance for expenses.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented on all city advisory bodies; city has a permanent women's advisory committee, and diverse women play a leading role on that committee.</i>	
Advisory Bodies	1. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) as a committee of council.	
	2. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee as a permanent committee of Council.	
	3. Establish a process whereby the Women's Advisory Committee can evaluate city policies and programs.	
	4. Give women's advisory bodies a say in how members are chosen to ensure a diverse representation.	
	5. Ensure that all city advisory bodies are composed of at least 50% women.	
	6. Conduct active outreach to groups that have been underrepresented on city advisory bodies. This could include recruitment and outreach activities by current and/or past members.	
	7. Provide various options for people to apply to serve on advisory bodies. The application process should include alternatives to resumés in order to privilege lived experience and knowledge, assistance with applying, and applications should be accepted via mail-in/ drop-off at City Hall, drop off at collection sites at community centres, as well as online.	
	8. Collect optional demographic information from applicants as part of the application process for membership on advisory bodies, and select members who represent the demographic makeup of the city.	
	9. Be clear about what skills, expertise, and experience are being sought when advertising for new advisory body members, and transparent about how decisions about membership are made.	
	10. Provide orientation training so that new members fully understand the advisory body's mandate, how city procedures work, and how to track the effect they have on city policies and programs.	
	11. Offer mentorship opportunities for women and new members of advisory committees.	
	12. Implement a flexible meeting schedule for advisory bodies, including varying the times and locations of meetings, and have access to supports to accommodate members' needs, most importantly, childcare.	
	13. Provide ongoing training for advisory body members, including anti-oppression and anti-racism training, and facilitation and conflict resolution training should be available when requested.	
	14. Give advisory bodies the ability to report directly to city council, but retain enough autonomy to be able to undertake critical evaluation of city policies and practices.	
	15. Ensure that advisory bodies are sufficiently resourced, e.g., staff and council support, and financial resources, to carry out their work.	

1. **Establish a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) as a committee of council:** The City of Vancouver has a Women's Advisory Committee which reports directly to Council.
2. **Establish a Women's Advisory Committee as a permanent committee of Council:** The City of Vancouver's Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) is not a permanent committee.
3. **Establish a process whereby the Women's Advisory Committee can evaluate city policies and programs:** Based on our project research with past and present members of the City of Vancouver WAC, there is not a clear mechanism whereby the WAC can evaluate city policies and programs.
4. **Give women's advisory bodies a say in how members are chosen to ensure a diverse representation:** Based on our project data, WAC members do not have a say in how members are chosen.
5. **Ensure that all city advisory bodies are composed of at least 50% women:** The City of Vancouver's 2016 policy ensures that all advisory bodies will have at least 50% women. As of our analysis in 2019, the City of Vancouver's advisory committees had 65.8% female members overall.
6. **Conduct active outreach to groups that have been underrepresented on city advisory bodies. This could include recruitment and outreach activities by current and/or past members:** Based on our project data, there is not active recruitment of this type undertaken by the City of Vancouver.
7. **Provide various options for people to apply to serve on advisory bodies. The application process should include alternatives to resumes in order to privilege lived experience and knowledge, assistance with applying, and applications should be accepted via mail-in/ drop-off at City Hall, drop off at collection sites at community centres, as well as online:** Based on our project data, the application process for City of Vancouver advisory bodies is quite rigid and requires an applicant to apply on-line or in-person at City Hall at the City Clerk's office. This can be a barrier for those lacking computer skills or internet access, or for whom a trip to City Hall would be physically difficult or intimidating.
8. **Collect optional demographic information from applicants as part of the application process for membership on advisory bodies, and select members who represent the demographic makeup of the city:** The City of Vancouver's 2019 policy will ensure that equity-seeking groups make up at least 50% of advisory body membership. This also necessitates asking for voluntary demographic information from applicants.

9. **Be clear about what skills, expertise, and experience are being sought when advertising for new advisory body members, and transparent about how decisions about membership are made:** Past and present advisory body members we spoke with did not feel that either the skills being sought or the decision-making process about new members was made clear.
10. **Provide orientation training so that new members fully understand the advisory body's mandate, how city procedures work, and how to track the effect they have on city policies and programs:** Based on our survey results with past members of City of Vancouver advisory bodies, we believe the city is meeting this metric, though improvements could be made in enabling advisory body members to track their influence on city decisions.
11. **Offer mentorship opportunities for women and new members of advisory committees.** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is not meeting this metric.
12. **Implement a flexible meeting schedule for advisory bodies, including varying the times and locations of meetings, and have access to supports to accommodate members' needs, most importantly, childcare:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver does not offer flexibility in meetings schedules and locations, and does not offer support for childcare.
13. **Provide ongoing training for advisory body members, including anti-oppression and anti-racism training, and facilitation and conflict resolution training should be available when requested:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver does not yet offer this as a general policy.
14. **Give advisory bodies the ability to report directly to city council, but retain enough autonomy to be able to undertake critical evaluation of city policies and practices:** Based on our project data, this was not generally the case in the City of Vancouver, so we cannot give the city a check mark for this item. Some past and present members of the Women's Advisory Committee specifically mentioned the inability to report directly to Council as an impediment to their effectiveness in influencing city policies.
15. **Ensure that advisory bodies are sufficiently resourced, e.g., staff and council support, and financial resources, to carry out their work:** In our surveys with past advisory body members in the City of Vancouver, lack of sufficient resources to carry out work was not raised as a high-priority gap or weakness among respondents. We therefore give the City a check mark for this item.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Women make up at least 50% of mid-level and senior management positions within city staff; cities are working toward 50% women's representation in professions where they have historically been, and are still underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).</i>	
Cities as Employers	a. Create an office that focuses on gender intersectional equity and inclusion in all municipal staff hiring and promotion decisions.	In Progress
	b. Ensure there are clear measures to implement and measure, not just set, goals for diversity in hiring.	In Progress
	c. Broaden requirements in some job postings to recognize desired knowledge and skills rather than focusing just on credentials and strict educational requirements.	In Progress
	d. Develop an employment equity policy of actively recruiting and promoting women especially in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).	
	e. Ensure that women make up at least 50% of all leadership and management positions within city staff.	In Progress
	6. Work with unions representing municipal workers on how to encourage more diversity in hiring while respecting seniority rules.	N/A
	7. Ensure adequate work supports for employees with children (e.g., parental leave, health plans that include family planning, flexible work schedules).	In Progress
	8. Implement training/mentorship programs for new staff.	
	9. Ensure that all staff in management positions receive GBA+ training (at the minimum) to develop awareness of unconscious bias in hiring, promotion, and personnel management decisions.	
	10. Collect on-going disaggregated data on the makeup of the workforce in terms of women/equity groups, especially in leadership positions where they have historically been underrepresented (even though the city may not be legally required to do so). This would also facilitate a pay equity audit to identify any disparities based on gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and other factors.	In Progress

- 1. Create an office that focuses on gender intersectional equity and inclusion in all municipal staff hiring and promotion decisions:** The City of Vancouver does not have such an office yet. However, as part of our MOU with the City of Vancouver, we met with

City staff in February 2020 and they informed us that this office was being established for Phase 2 of the Women's Equity Strategy. This item is therefore in progress.

2. **Ensure there are clear measures to implement and measure, not just set, goals for diversity in hiring:** At the February 2020 meeting, city staff informed us that clear implementation measures were being developed for Phase 2 of the Women's Equity Strategy. This item is therefore in progress.
3. **Broaden requirements in some job postings to recognize desired knowledge and skills rather than focusing just on credentials and strict educational requirements:** At the February 2020 meeting, city staff reported that differing requirements would be developed for Phase 2 of the Women's Equity Strategy. This item is therefore in progress.
4. **Develop an employment equity policy of actively recruiting and promoting women especially in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting):** The Women's Equity Strategy includes a policy goal of increasing the proportion of women in underrepresented positions.
5. **Ensure that women make up at least 50% of all leadership and management positions within city staff:** The City of Vancouver Women's Equity Strategy noted that women comprised 37% of senior staff positions as of the most recent analysis. The City is therefore very close, and though it is not yet reaching this threshold, we consider this item in progress since the *Women's Equity Strategy* is intended to achieve this, once implemented fully.
6. **Work with unions representing municipal workers on how to encourage more diversity in hiring while respecting seniority rules:** We do not have robust data on this topic. However, CUPE 1004 interviewees suggested some promising pilot projects that the union could undertake with the City, so we are hopeful that those discussions will produce some positive results.
7. **Ensure adequate work supports for employees with children (e.g., parental leave, health plans that include family planning, flexible work schedules):** In our February 2020 meeting with City staff, we learned that the city is working on allowing more flexibility in staff work schedules. We also learned that the city has implemented a breastfeeding policy for staff. Though Vancouver is not yet fully meeting this recommendation, we consider this to be in progress.
8. **Implement training/mentorship programs for new staff.** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is not doing this.

- 9. Ensure that all staff in management positions receive GBA+ training (at the minimum) to develop awareness of unconscious bias in hiring, promotion, and personnel management decisions:** At our February 2020 meeting, we learned that the City had introduced GBA+ training for all senior staff as well as ensuring Human Resources staff received training on unconscious bias.
- 10. Collect on-going disaggregated data on the makeup of the workforce in terms of women/equity groups, especially in leadership positions where they have historically been underrepresented (even though the city may not be legally required to do so). This would also facilitate a pay equity audit to identify any disparities based on gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and other factors:** The City of Vancouver is planning to collect disaggregated data in May, 2020, with a report to be prepared later in 2020. Though the City has not yet completed this item, we consider this to be in progress.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women have equal opportunities to be involved in city-led public engagement and consultations on specific issues; are equitably represented among respondents to online survey instruments used by the city to elicit input on policies, programs, and projects; and have equal access to and attendance at open houses, neighbourhood consultations, and other public events.</i>	✓
Public Engagement	1. Employ a gendered intersectional lens to all community engagement programs and processes to ensure as great a diversity of participation as possible.	In Progress
	2. Involve community members at the beginning of a process (e.g., the design of a new development; the development of a new city policy) rather than later in the process when important decisions have already been made.	✓
	3. Collect on-going public input rather than limiting community involvement to specific and non-recurring events (e.g., open houses, visioning sessions, focus groups, etc.)	✓
	4. Ensure that diverse women are appropriately informed in a timely fashion about public forums & other engagement activities.	
	5. Ensure that community engagement activities are held in locations that are accessible and convenient to groups whose input is being sought and at times that do not exclude young families, seniors, or diverse women from participating.	✓
	6. Provide child-care and/or activities for children at public engagement events to enable parents to attend and fully participate, and to include the voices of children and youth in city planning processes.	
	7. Ensure that any materials used at community engagement events are in plain/clear language—and in multiple languages, if required—avoiding jargon, acronyms, highly technical terminology, etc.	✓
	8. Provide translation services at all public meetings where appropriate.	✓
	9. Collect voluntary disaggregated demographic data at public engagement events (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, income, ethnic background, education, housing status, language(s) spoken at home, etc.) and as part of online surveys designed to gather public input, and keep track of numbers of attendees.	✓
	10. Keep careful records of what people said, whose ideas were included in the product of the process, whose ideas were acted upon, and whose ideas were not (i.e., tracking influence rather than just mere participation).	
	11. Communicate back to the public on the results of engagement activities, so those who participated know what impact their participation had.	
	12. Consider providing women-only spaces and opportunities for participation.	

	13. Offer grant money to community organizations to hold public forums and engagement activities in marginalized communities.	✓
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1. **Employ a gendered intersectional lens to all community engagement programs and processes to ensure as great a diversity of participation as possible:** At our February 2020 meeting, we learned that the City of Vancouver is piloting its intersectional framework to be part of all policy and planning, and will implement it in Phase 2 of the Women's Equity Strategy. We therefore consider this item to be in progress.
2. **Involve community members at the beginning of a process (e.g., the design of a new development; the development of a new city policy) rather than later in the process when important decisions have already been made:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is following this metric through asking for input at all stages of a process, particularly via Talk Vancouver.
3. **Collect on-going public input rather than limiting community involvement to specific and non-recurring events (e.g., open houses, visioning sessions, focus groups, etc.):** The City of Vancouver's Talk Vancouver panel is ongoing, so we give the City a check mark for this item.
4. **Ensure that diverse women are appropriately informed in a timely fashion about public forums and other engagement activities:** Based on our project data, the City is not undertaking specific outreach to ensure diverse female residents are informed about engagement opportunities.
5. **Ensure that community engagement activities are held in locations that are accessible and convenient to groups whose input is being sought and at times that do not exclude young families, seniors, or diverse women from participating:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver holds events and engagement opportunities throughout the City to engage various residents, and at venues that are accessible by transit.
6. **Provide child-care and/or activities for children at public engagement events to enable parents to attend and fully participate, and to include the voices of children and youth in city planning processes:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is not providing child care or activities for children at engagement events.
7. **Ensure that any materials used at community engagement events are in plain/clear language—and in multiple languages, if required—avoiding jargon, acronyms, highly**

technical terminology, etc: Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is committed to producing materials in multiple languages. Further, the City of Vancouver's communication strategy for public engagement notes that "[t]he language of all written communications is clear, concise, objective, and free of technical jargon" (City of Vancouver, 2020d).

- 8. Provide translation services at all public meetings where appropriate:** Based on our interview with Paul Hendren, we believe the City of Vancouver provides translation when needed.
- 9. Collect voluntary disaggregated demographic data at public engagement events (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, income, ethnic background, education, housing status, language(s) spoken at home, etc.) and as part of online surveys designed to gather public input, and keep track of numbers of attendees:** Based on our assessment of its public engagement tools, the City of Vancouver does not collect consistent and robust demographic data about participants at in-person public engagement events. They do collect this information as part of their Talk Vancouver panel survey.
- 10. Keep careful records of what people said, whose ideas were included in the product of the process, whose ideas were acted upon, and whose ideas were not (i.e., tracking influence rather than just mere participation):** Based on our project data, public input is noted and reported upon, but is not tracked as to how much the outcomes of the process are influenced by all input.
- 11. Communicate back to the public on the results of engagement activities, so those who participated know what impact their participation had:** Talk Vancouver panelists receive email notifications when a report about the results of a survey is made public, so in this way participants are informed of the outcomes of their feedback. However, panelists are not informed as to City Council debates and decisions as well as staff implementation of the items on which they provided feedback.
- 12. Consider providing women-only spaces and opportunities for participation:** Based on our project data, the City of Vancouver is not implementing this preferred practice.
- 13. Offer grant money to community organizations to hold public forums and engagement activities in marginalized communities:** The City of Vancouver did this with voter engagement leading up to its 2018 election, so we give the city a check mark on this item. This model should be applied to all engagement initiatives between elections, as well.

B. Promising Practice Assessment, City of Surrey

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented in elected positions within municipal governments.</i>	✓
Candidates and Elected Officials	1. Establish a proportional representation electoral system.	
	2. Establish a district (ward) system to replace municipal at-large system.	
	3. Establish a permanent elections task force to collect data on city voting patterns, and to conduct background research on the relationship between electoral systems (at-large versus district [ward]) and the election of women, racialized, and Indigenous people.	
	4. Develop and implement a robust and inclusive electoral outreach and education program pre-election to increase involvement of underrepresented groups in civic elections (e.g., Indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, youth, people of colour).	
	5. Collect disaggregated post-election data on voting patterns (demographics of who did/didn't vote) to establish benchmarks and measure success of outreach/education efforts.	
	6. Work with civic parties to ensure all potential candidates have access to information/training about what is involved in becoming a candidate; hold information and training sessions specifically for women candidates.	
	7. Ensure financial resources are available to support campaign expenses including developing leadership skills and networks.	
	8. Ensure that School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are included in all-candidates forums during elections.	N/A
	9. Ensure all elected city positions receive adequate pay (living wage).	✓
	10. Offer child care for elected officials during evening and weekend work- related responsibilities.	

- 1. Establish a proportional representation electoral system:** The City of Surrey's electoral system is first-past-the-post.

2. **Establish a district (ward) system to replace municipal at-large system:** The City's electoral system is at-large.
3. **Establish a permanent elections task force to collect data on city voting patterns, and to conduct background research on the relationship between electoral systems (at-large versus district [ward]) and the election of women, racialized, and Indigenous people:** The City of Surrey does not have such a task force.
4. **Develop and implement a robust and inclusive electoral outreach and education program pre-election to increase involvement of underrepresented groups in civic elections (e.g., Indigenous peoples, immigrant groups, youth, people of colour):** Based on our project data, the City does not undertake a specific electoral outreach and education program like this.
5. **Collect disaggregated post-election data on voting patterns (demographics of who did/didn't vote) to establish benchmarks and measure success of outreach/education efforts:** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey does not collect disaggregated data on voting patterns.
6. **Work with civic parties to ensure all potential candidates have access to information/training about what is involved in becoming a candidate; hold information and training sessions specifically for women candidates:** From our project data, specific outreach to political parties to ensure candidates have information, particularly for female candidates, was not mentioned as an initiative the City undertakes.
7. **Ensure financial resources are available to support campaign expenses including developing leadership skills and networks:** From what we could determine, the City of Surrey does not offer financial supports or public funding to candidates.
8. **Ensure that School Trustee and Park Commissioner candidates are included in all-candidates forums during elections:** Similar to Vancouver, there do not seem to be official City of Surrey all-candidate forums, so this item is not applicable to the City of Surrey.
9. **Ensure all elected positions receive adequate pay (living wage):** As mentioned above, the 2019 living wage for Metro Vancouver was \$19.50 per hour (Living Wage for Families Campaign, 2019). As of November 2019, the Mayor of Surrey received \$146,990 annually (\$70.69 per hour for 40 hours of work per week), and City Councillors received \$74,996 annually (\$71.80 per hour for a part-time schedule of 20 hours per week) (McElroy, 2019). The City of Surrey does not have an elected board of Park Commissioners. The City is meeting the living wage threshold for all elected positions for which it is responsible.

10. Offer child care for elected officials during evening and weekend work- related

responsibilities: Based on our project data, the City of Surrey does not offer child care for elected officials.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women are equitably represented on all city advisory bodies; city has a permanent women's advisory committee, and diverse women play a leading role on that committee.</i>	✓
Advisory Bodies	1. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) as a committee of council.	
	2. Establish a Women's Advisory Committee as a permanent committee of Council.	
	3. Establish a process whereby the Women's Advisory Committee can evaluate city policies and programs.	
	4. Give women's advisory bodies a say in how members are chosen to ensure a diverse representation.	
	5. Ensure that all city advisory bodies are composed of at least 50% women.	
	6. Conduct active outreach to groups that have been underrepresented on city advisory bodies. This could include recruitment and outreach activities by current and/or past members.	
	7. Provide various options for people to apply to serve on advisory bodies. The application process should include alternatives to resumés in order to privilege lived experience and knowledge, assistance with applying, and applications should be accepted via mail-in/ drop-off at City Hall, drop off at collection sites at community centres, as well as online.	✓
	8. Collect optional demographic information from applicants as part of the application process for membership on advisory bodies, and select members who represent the demographic makeup of the city.	
	9. Be clear about what skills, expertise, and experience are being sought when advertising for new advisory body members, and transparent about how decisions about membership are made.	
	10. Provide orientation training so that new members fully understand the advisory body's mandate, how city procedures work, and how to track the effect they have on city policies and programs.	✓
	11. Offer mentorship opportunities for women and new members of advisory committees.	
	12. Implement a flexible meeting schedule for advisory bodies, including varying the times and locations of meetings, and have access to supports to accommodate members' needs, especially childcare.	✓

	13. Provide ongoing training for advisory body members, including anti-oppression and anti-racism training, and facilitation and conflict resolution training should be available when requested.	
	14. Give advisory bodies the ability to report directly to city council, but retain enough autonomy to be able to undertake critical evaluation of city policies and practices.	
	15. Ensure that advisory bodies are sufficiently resourced, e.g., staff and council support, and financial resources, to carry out their work.	

1. **Establish a Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) as a committee of council:** The City of Surrey does not have a Women's Advisory Committee.
2. **Establish a Women's Advisory Committee as a permanent committee of Council:** Since the city does not have a WAC, it is also not meeting this preferred practice.
3. **Establish a process whereby the Women's Advisory Committee can evaluate city policies and programs:** Since Surrey does not have a WAC, it is also not meeting this preferred practice.
4. **Give women's advisory bodies a say in how members are chosen to ensure a diverse representation:** Since Surrey does not have a WAC, it is also not meeting this preferred practice.
5. **Ensure that all city advisory bodies are composed of at least 50% women:** Our project data revealed that as of 2019, the City of Surrey's advisory committees had 32.1% female members overall and its boards had 42.1% female members overall. On average this is 37.1%, slightly below our preferred practice threshold.
6. **Conduct active outreach to groups that have been underrepresented on city advisory bodies. This could include recruitment and outreach activities by current and/or past members:** Based on our project data, though informal recruitment may happen if current or past members try to recruit new members, there is not a formal effort to reach out to underrepresented populations.
7. **Provide various options for people to apply to serve on advisory bodies. The application process should include alternatives to resumés in order to privilege lived experience and knowledge, assistance with applying, and applications should be accepted via mail-in/ drop-off at City Hall, drop off at collection sites at community centres, as well as online:** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey's application process seems to differ for various committees and boards, and is sometimes informally done. In this way, the options for applying seem to be wider, so we give the City a check mark on this item.

8. **Collect optional demographic information from applicants as part of the application process for membership on advisory bodies, and select members who represent the demographic makeup of the city:** Based on our project data, we conclude the City of Surrey is not collecting demographic information and selecting members to represent the diversity of the City.
9. **Be clear about what skills, expertise, and experience are being sought when advertising for new advisory body members, and transparent about how decisions about membership are made:** Based on our project data, the skills and expertise sought are not made entirely clear to applicants, and decision-making processes are also not transparent.
10. **Provide orientation training so that new members fully understand the advisory body's mandate, how city procedures work, and how to track the effect they have on city policies and programs:** Based on our project data, orientation was not identified as an issue or gap among our interviewees. We therefore give the City a check mark for this item.
11. **Offer mentorship opportunities for women and new members of advisory committees:** Based on our project data, there are not formal mentorship opportunities or avenues for women serving on advisory bodies.
12. **Implement a flexible meeting schedule for advisory bodies, including varying the times and locations of meetings, and have access to supports to accommodate members' needs, especially childcare:** Based on our project data, the City has been known to hold meetings at various times and locations to suit members' needs for some advisory groups, so we give the City a check mark for this item. However, the City does not provide support for transportation costs or childcare.
13. **Provide ongoing training for advisory body members, including anti-oppression and anti-racism training, and facilitation and conflict resolution training should be available when requested:** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey does not offer this.
14. **Give advisory bodies the ability to report directly to city council, but retain enough autonomy to be able to undertake critical evaluation of city policies and practices:** Based on our project data, the City's advisory committees and boards do not report directly to Council.
15. **Ensure that advisory bodies are sufficiently resourced, e.g., staff and council support, and financial resources, to carry out their work:** Based on our project data,

advisory bodies receive inconsistent amounts of funding and staff support and therefore are not all sufficiently resourced.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women make up at least 50% of mid-level and senior management positions within city staff; cities are working toward at least 50% women's representation in professions where they have historically been, and are still underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).</i>	✓
Cities as Employers	1. Create an office that focuses on gender equity and inclusion in all municipal staff hiring and promotion decisions.	
	2. Ensure there are clear measures to implement and measure, not just set, goals for diversity in hiring.	
	3. Broaden requirements in some job postings to recognize desired knowledge and skills rather than focusing just on credentials and strict educational requirements.	
	4. Develop an employment equity policy of actively recruiting and promoting women especially in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting).	
	5. Ensure that women make up at least 50% of all leadership and management positions within city staff.	
	6. Work with unions representing municipal workers on how to encourage more diversity in hiring while respecting seniority rules.	
	7. Ensure adequate work supports for employees with children (e.g., parental leave, health plans that include family planning, flexible work schedules).	
	8. Implement training/mentorship programs for new staff.	
	9. Ensure that all staff in management positions receive GBA+ training (at the minimum) to develop awareness of unconscious bias in hiring, promotion, and personnel management decisions.	
	10. Collect on-going disaggregated data on the makeup of the workforce in terms of women/equity groups, especially in leadership positions where they have historically been underrepresented (even though the city may not be legally required to do so). This would also facilitate a pay equity audit to identify any disparities based on gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and other factors.	

- 1. Create an office that focuses on gender equity and inclusion in all municipal staff hiring and promotion decisions:** The City of Surrey does not have a management position or office that deals specifically with diversity and inclusion.
- 2. Ensure there are clear measures to implement and measure, not just set, goals for diversity in hiring:** The City of Surrey does not collect statistics on diversity within City

staff which would be necessary for the measurement and setting of goals for diversity in hiring.

3. **Broaden requirements in some job postings to recognize desired knowledge and skills rather than focusing just on credentials and strict educational requirements:** Based on our project data, the City does not seem to be working in this direction.
4. **Develop an employment equity policy of actively recruiting and promoting women especially in occupations where they are underrepresented (e.g., engineering, firefighting):** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey does not have such a policy.
5. **Ensure that women make up at least 50% of all leadership and management positions within city staff:** According to our project data, women were 32.8% of senior staff at the City though the city workforce overall is about 60% women.
6. **Work with unions representing municipal workers on how to encourage more diversity in hiring while respecting seniority rules:** We could not gather robust data on this.
7. **Ensure adequate work supports for employees with children (e.g., parental leave, health plans that include family planning, flexible work schedules):** Since we could not gather robust data on this, we are unable to assess this practice.
8. **Implement training/mentorship programs for new staff:** We could not gather robust data on this.
9. **Ensure that all staff in management positions receive GBA+ training (at the minimum) to develop awareness of unconscious bias in hiring, promotion, and personnel management decisions:** We could not gather robust data on this.
10. **Collect on-going disaggregated data on the makeup of the workforce in terms of women/equity groups, especially in leadership positions where they have historically been underrepresented (even though the city may not be legally required to do so). This would also facilitate a pay equity audit to identify any disparities based on gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and other factors:** The City does not appear to collect data on this.

Focus Area	<i>Desired Outcome: Diverse women have equal opportunities to be involved in city-led public engagement and consultations on specific issues; are equitably represented among respondents to online survey instruments used by the city to elicit input on policies, programs, and projects; and have equal access to and attendance at open houses, neighbourhood consultations, and other public events.</i>	✓
Public Engagement	1. Employ a gendered intersectional lens to all community engagement programs and processes to ensure as great a diversity of participation as possible.	
	2. Involve community members at the beginning of a process (e.g., the design of a new development; the development of a new city policy) rather than later in the process when important decisions have already been made.	✓
	3. Collect on-going public input rather than limiting community involvement to specific and non-recurring events (e.g., open houses, visioning sessions, focus groups, etc.)	✓
	4. Ensure women are appropriately informed in a timely fashion about public forums & other engagement activities.	
	5. Ensure that community engagement activities are held in locations that are accessible and convenient to groups whose input is being sought and at times that do not exclude young families, seniors, or diverse women from participating.	
	6. Provide child-care and/or activities for children at public engagement events to enable parents to attend and fully participate, and to include the voices of children and youth in city planning processes.	✓
	7. Ensure that any materials used at community engagement events are in plain/clear language—and in multiple languages, if required—avoiding jargon, acronyms, highly technical terminology, etc.	
	8. Provide translation services at all public meetings where appropriate.	✓
	9. Collect voluntary disaggregated demographic data at public engagement events (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, income, ethnic background, education, housing status, language(s) spoken at home, etc.) and as part of online surveys designed to gather public input, and keep track of numbers of attendees.	✓
	10. Keep careful records of what people said, whose ideas were included in the product of the process, whose ideas were acted upon, and whose ideas were not (i.e., tracking influence rather than just mere participation).	In Progress
	11. Communicate back to the public on the results of engagement activities, so those who participated know what impact their participation had.	

	12. Consider providing women-only spaces and opportunities for participation.	✓
	13. Offer grant money to community organizations to hold public forums and engagement activities in marginalized communities.	

1. **Employ a gendered intersectional lens to all community engagement programs and processes to ensure as great a diversity of participation as possible:** Based on our research findings, the City of Surrey is not using an intersectional lens in its public engagement work.
2. **Involve community members at the beginning of a process (e.g., the design of a new development; the development of a new city policy) rather than later in the process when important decisions have already been made:** In our interview with City staff, we were told that the City engages with residents at the beginning of a process and welcomes their full feedback.
3. **Collect on-going public input rather than limiting community involvement to specific and non-recurring events (e.g., open houses, visioning sessions, focus groups, etc.):** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey offers several opportunities for residents to engage on a continuous basis such as their Open Community Surveys and CitySpeaks programs.
4. **Ensure women are appropriately informed in a timely fashion about public forums and other engagement activities:** Based on our project data, the City of Surrey does not take measures to specifically focus on women's inclusion.
5. **Ensure that community engagement activities are held in locations that are accessible and convenient to groups whose input is being sought and at times that do not exclude young families, seniors, or diverse women from participating:** The City of Surrey invites all demographics to attend events and other engagement opportunities, but not does not alter its usual approach to ensure that those from diverse communities can participate. (This may change as a result of the evaluation of the City's public engagement strategy that is currently underway.)
6. **Provide child-care and/or activities for children at public engagement events to enable parents to attend and fully participate, and to include the voices of children and youth in city planning processes:** The City does offer child care for children at public engagement events if needed.

7. **Ensure that any materials used at community engagement events are in plain/clear language—and in multiple languages, if required—avoiding jargon, acronyms, highly technical terminology, etc.:** We could not gather adequate data on this.
8. **Provide translation services at all public meetings where appropriate:** City staff informed us that the City has a policy of not translating materials into languages other than English, but can provide verbal interpretation at some in-person events. The City therefore receives a check mark for this item, though we recommend that a change in policy to ensure that written as well as verbal communications can be available to those who use languages other than English.
9. **Collect voluntary disaggregated demographic data at public engagement events (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, income, ethnic background, education, housing status, language(s) spoken at home, etc.) and as part of online surveys designed to gather public input, and keep track of numbers of attendees:** Our research indicates that demographic data are collected mainly through online surveys, and is generally not collected at in-person events.
10. **Keep careful records of what people said, whose ideas were included in the product of the process, whose ideas were acted upon, and whose ideas were not (i.e., tracking influence rather than just mere participation):** Based on our project data, though the City notes residents' input, it does not track their influence. The City has expressed a commitment to doing this, though, as part of the revamping of their public engagement strategy, so we have given them an In Progress.
11. **Communicate back to the public on the results of engagement activities, so those who participated know what impact their participation had:** The City's CitySpeaks platform alerts members when data is available from completed surveys, so we give the City a check mark for this metric. However, members are not informed specifically about City Council debates and decisions as well as staff implementation of the items on which they provided feedback.
12. **Consider providing women-only spaces and opportunities for participation:** The City is currently developing a Public Engagement Strategy, and has recently held meetings at a women-only venue as part of its public consultations on that strategy. Events at women-only venues were also part of the engagement activities of the Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group.
13. **Offer grant money to community organizations to hold public forums and engagement activities in marginalized communities:** Based on our project data, the City

does not typically offer grants to community organizations. However, we were not able to obtain robust data on this.

7. Summary and Conclusions

The preceding presentation of project data, analysis, and findings is data-rich. We have outlined recommendations for cities based on our research, and made progress toward an evaluation of the strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvements in each of our focus areas for each city.

The following are some of the conclusions that have emerged from an overview of our research and suggestions for actions:

1) Cities need explicit policies to increase the participation of diverse women in all areas of civic life. A comprehensive gender equity strategy is especially valuable by providing a framework for integrating a gendered intersectional approach across all city departments, policies, and actions.

- a. Policies and strategies may not include everything that might be needed or that advocates would like to see, but they provide a basis for immediate action and for the development and improvement of both current and future policies and actions. Examples include the Vancouver *Women's Equity Strategy*; gender and diversity policies the City has put in place to ensure that advisory bodies are more representative; and employment and promotion policies to increase the numbers of women in leadership roles and in occupations where they are underrepresented.
- b. A city's reliance on descriptive representation, such as gender parity on a city council, as a way of encouraging more female candidates does not guarantee a continuation of that pattern. Nor will it lead to increased diversity on elected or volunteer bodies in the absence of a strategy specifically intended to mitigate pervasive sexism and prejudice.

2) Changes to electoral systems (proportional representation and/or wards) in conjunction with robust voter engagement and education strategies, are key to

having elected bodies at the municipal level that are more representative of their cities' demographics.

- a. The two study cities have done well in terms of achieving gender parity, and beyond, for their Councils. But those Councils are still overwhelmingly white in cities that have long been, and are becoming increasingly, racially and culturally diverse. And this pattern is true for cities across Canada.
- b. Proportional representation at the municipal level may require authorization from higher levels of government. Pro rep systems, such as single transferrable vote, and cumulative voting²⁵, have the potential to be effective at the local level in terms of encouraging participation of non-white voters, resulting in more diverse elected bodies, especially when combined with voter outreach initiatives.
- c. District, or ward, systems do show advantages when it comes to electing women and people of colour. Both Vancouver and Surrey, with their at-large systems, have done well in terms of electing white women to their Councils (and as Mayor, in Surrey), but diverse women continue to be underrepresented, as do diverse candidates of all genders. Critics of the at-large system in both cities have emphasized that the system is discriminatory and unusual for Canadian cities. But, as political scientists have pointed out,²⁶ ward systems are not the sole answer to the problem: Looking across Canada, having candidates from diverse backgrounds on tickets, even in cities with ward systems, has not resulted in many of them being elected. People of colour and Indigenous candidates are running, but they are not receiving the votes. This is largely owing to low voter turnout, and the unrepresentativeness of the members of the electorate who do vote.
- d. Robust voter engagement and education programs, conducted by cities in conjunction with community organizations, are crucial to turning out more and more diverse voters.
- e. The collection of disaggregated demographic data on voters is crucial for cities trying to understand who does and does not vote in civic elections. The analysis of these data can help focus voter engagement efforts on groups that tend not to

²⁵ For a helpful discussion of proportional representation at the local level, see Donovan and Smith (1994).

²⁶ See, for example, Erin Tolley (2018).

vote, and who may need extra support to understand how to vote, and why it is important to their communities.

3) Activism and advocacy are important. Collaboration is, as well. Establishing an evidence base for policies and actions is critical both for cities, and for activists/advocacy organizations.

- a. Cities need information, and advocacy groups need a solid and defensible evidence base to increase both their effectiveness and their credibility.
- b. Cities need to be held accountable and continuously pressed to fulfill their promises and implement their strategies when it comes to increasing the presence of diverse women in civic life. As this project has demonstrated, collaboration with cities, to gather data and do the analysis City staff might not have the time/resources/expertise to do, can be of mutual benefit by supporting and informing City policies and strategies, and by providing the evidence base needed for on-going evaluation and advocacy on the part of community groups.
- c. The City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) in Ottawa, and the Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) are good Canadian examples of women's organizations that enjoy both autonomy and close City connections and support, and provide crucial research and analysis that guide City actions. They also maintain close connections to diverse community women who contribute lived experience and local knowledge to the evidence base. These connections enable on-going evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of City policies from the perspectives of those on whom they are focused.
- d. Collaborations among cities, advocacy groups, universities and research institutes, and community women—and that privilege all types of knowledge—are the most effective means to develop policies, programs, and actions to increase the participation of women in civic life.

4) Cities should adopt a gendered intersectional perspective across all departments and programs to inform gender and diversity policies and procedures.

- a. Even strategies and practices that are considered to be “gender neutral,” “inclusive of all,” or “open to all applicants” often are not. For example, cities

need to collect as much disaggregated data as possible for all public engagement approaches, including in-person events. This is easier for on-line surveys, but statistics for both Vancouver and Surrey reveal that, while women are the majority of panel members in both cities, data for other factors such as socio-economic level, education, ethnic or cultural background, and Indigeneity indicate that all groups are not equally represented on these on-line panels.

- b. Cities need to regularly collect information on diversity among their employees to identify and address pay inequities, develop specific policies to make the workplace more welcoming, and to rectify underrepresentation of women and other diverse people in leadership positions and specific professions across City departments.
- c. City employees at all levels need to be informed and educated about City gender and diversity policies, their benefits, and why they are important, and included in their implementation. Elected municipal officials and leadership staff need to lead by example in ensuring that City gender and diversity policies are given priority.

8. Outcomes and Outputs/Actions

The following outcomes and outputs have been mentioned throughout this report, but we enumerate them here for easier reference:

1. Outcome: Forums in Surrey and Vancouver, Spring/Summer 2018

Outputs: Two reports on the proceedings. In addition to the information generated about opportunities and barriers experienced by women running for office, the forums enabled women who may be considering becoming candidates themselves to meet and learn from women who have run, and in some cases held, elected office.

In Surrey, the forum built on a strong pattern of mentoring of women by women with political and elected experience. Attendees commented that this was the first opportunity they had had to come together and learn from each other as women candidates and potential candidates. They also commented that they were encouraged in their own political aspirations by the experiences described by the strong, resilient, and dedicated women who served on the panel.

In Vancouver, the diverse women who spoke about their experiences as candidates and electeds at the local level included those who had served on City Council, and two women who were candidates for Mayor in the upcoming election in October 2018. Following the panel discussion, attendees broke into groups to identify topics of importance for women that they wanted candidates and parties to address in their platforms and as elected decision-makers.

2. Outcome: Formal partnership with City of Vancouver through Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

As a result of the MOU, negotiated with the City over several months, we were able to obtain data not otherwise available (e.g., names of previous members of advisory bodies, data on participants in on-line public engagement surveys, access to senior leadership staff, aggregated results from forums held with women senior leadership staff) for our own research purposes.

Outputs/Actions: We were also able to assist the City with its implementation of Phase 1 of its *Women's Equity Strategy* and to inform Phase 2 by conducting a survey on its behalf with City senior leadership staff and by providing the City with aggregate results on questions the City deemed of particular relevance to its objectives. We also provided the City with a report focusing specifically on women's responses to the survey. We shared aggregate results on our surveys with former members of advisory bodies with the City, as well.

3. Outcome: Surrey women's summit

In February 2019, the project sponsored a women's summit, *Women Shaping Surrey: Toward a Women-friendly City*. Project staff presented research findings for Surrey, and some examples of women's advocacy organizations in Ottawa, Edmonton, and Barcelona using videos that showcased those organizations' work (the PowerPoints can be accessed here: <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/page/publications-action-on-barriers>). Following the presentations, during a facilitated discussion, a core group of attendees resolved to form a women's advocacy group for Surrey. Project staff met with members of the organizing group at a follow-up meeting in early March 2020. During a facilitated discussion, members of the organizing group considered some possible forms that a women's advocacy group could take. The group decided upon a name, Women's

Council Advocating for Surrey (WCAS). Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis has disrupted the process of forming this group, but project staff have volunteered to help the group get started and organized past the end of the project in mid-April. The goal of WCAS is to form an advocacy group that would bring the issues and amplify the voices of the diverse women of Surrey to City Council with the ultimate goal of having the group become a permanent committee of Council.

4. Outputs: Literature reviews

The purpose of the two literature reviews was a) to give an overview of the identified barriers to women's involvement in local governance and strategies to overcome those barriers; and b) to focus specifically on the effect of electoral systems and voter engagement on the opportunities for not just women, but also for women from diverse backgrounds (women of colour, and Indigenous women), in particular.

5. Outputs: Preferred practice recommendations and assessment tool

We intend that the preferred practices assessment tool presented in Section 6 above be used by other cities or community organizations for their own purposes of evaluating their city's policies and practices. It is not intended to be prescriptive. It is a tool that can be easily expanded and/or the practices changed as appropriate to the context and objectives of the users. It is a place to start the discussion of what cities need to do to make their elected bodies more representative, their advisory bodies more diverse, their workplaces supportive, welcoming, and equitable, and their public engagement efforts more innovative, inclusive, accessible, and accountable.

6. Outputs: two-page information handouts written in plain language

As part of our dissemination of project findings, the two-pagers are intended for wide distribution and accessibility and will be available on the websites of Women Transforming Cities <http://www.womentransformingcities.org/> and the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/en/page/publications-action-on-barriers>. There are four documents, each summarizing major findings and preferred practices for each of the project's focus areas.

9. Next Steps

- a.** Vancouver Women's Summit, *Women Shaping Vancouver: Dare to Run, Lead, and Diversify Cities*, originally scheduled for March 2020, was postponed because of large group meeting restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The event has been re-scheduled for October 2020, if such gatherings are allowed, or could take another form such as a webinar or other electronic format. The goal of the summit will be to educate and mobilize members of the Vancouver women's movement, and engage with local government. The anticipated outcome will be the establishment of a group of women who want to work together on a campaign centered on gender issues, including: intersectional electoral reform; engagement and mobilization of diverse women to vote and run for elected office; and to inform and support the efforts of the City in taking a gendered intersectional lens on City of Vancouver structures.
- b.** Further work with the Surrey Women's Council Advocating for Surrey (WCAS). This group had just begun to form in early March 2020. Two project staff members and a community engagement and facilitation specialist will continue to work in a volunteer capacity with this group as needed to help the members determine their goals and objectives, organizational structure, and relationship to the City of Surrey.

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