



July 2022

Dear Regional District Chair

We are writing to you on behalf of the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Steering Committee. In 2019, you appointed a representative from your region to work jointly with other regional districts in the AVICC region to lead the development of a region-wide climate action plan. Over the past three years, we have made significant progress and are very close to completing a 2030 Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan (VICC-CLP) for the AVICC region which will enhance local efforts and drive deeper collaboration through the implementation period out to 2030.

Over the time we've been working on this plan, climate events and their impacts on our communities have intensified. From flooding, to fires, to pressure on our local infrastructure as local governments, we're really starting to feel the impacts of climate change at the local level. And we're all working hard to take action where we can on solid waste, electric vehicles, building retrofit programs, better transit, active transportation and other actions within local government jurisdiction. But we're mostly all working in isolation in our own regional districts without the opportunity for sharing practices and scaling up region-wide, across Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities.

That's why the VICC CLP-2030 plan is so important; it will increase staff and organizational capacity in local governments for both climate adaptation and mitigation. It will help ensure that each local government isn't reinventing the wheel, and that staff – particularly in smaller and more rural areas – have the support they need to deliver the programs and services in a cost-effective way that will be necessary over the next decades.

This letter is to update you on progress and to ask for your assistance to complete the project. To complete the VICC-CLP by April 2023 for presentation and adoption at the AVICC conference, we require \$156,400. Please see attached budget. We have confirmed with the Province that funding from the newly announced CleanBC Local Government Climate Action Program (see attached press release) can be allocated by local governments to help fund the completion of the VICC-CLP. Once funding is disbursed to local governments (we understand

this will be in fall 2022) we are asking your Board to allocate a population-based contribution to this important effort.

Area	Population	Amount Requested
Comox Valley Regional District	74,727	13,000
Capital Regional District	415,451	73,150
Cowichan Valley RD	91,913	16,000
Mount Waddington RD	10,839	1,900
Strathcona RD	48,150	8,400
Alberni/Clayoquot RD	33,521	5,900
Nanaimo Regional District	170,367	29,800
Qathet Regional District	13,942	2,400
Island Trust	1430	250
Sunshine Coast Regional District	32,170	5600
Total Request	892,510	156,400

Amount of request based per region population contribution of .175 per person

Though climate change impacts are experienced at a local level, we have found through our work that existing municipal and regional district governance structures can constrain climate action. This project demonstrates that not only is broader regional-scale planning possible and effective, it is also essential if we’re going to meet the needs of our residents now and in the future.

Background

At the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) meeting in April 2019, over 50 local elected officials gathered as part of an off-program, informal workshop to discuss the impending threat of climate change to our local governments, communities, and First Nations in the AVICC region.

Key areas of discussion included the lack of capacity for small and rural local governments and First Nations to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and the desire to learn from each other and share best practices. At that meeting, we posed the question: What would it be like – and what would it take – to create a climate mitigation and adaptation plan for our entire region?

There was a great deal of excitement and inspiration generated by this question. Coming out of that initial gathering, we struck a working group with nominees appointed by each regional district board in the AVICC region.

Context: Geographical Scope of the VICC-CLP Project

The Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region is comprised of 11 Regional Districts, 50 First Nations and 41 municipalities. The entirety of Vancouver Island and coastal mainland BC are the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. The region is shaped by its proximity to

water and includes approximately 40,000 islands of vastly different sizes and around 67 inhabited major islands, the largest of which is Vancouver Island.

Work to Date

Phase 1 Research and Data Collection

We realized early on, that in order to be successful, we needed to ground our plan in research and data. To that end, we initiated a partnership with a group of professors from the University of Victoria who are deeply committed to community-based research. Please see their letter attached.

In the fall of 2019, they undertook a “territorial analysis”, which examined the AVICC region holistically, for the first time. That publication reported on land use, energy use, economic and demographic trends, and our region’s vulnerability to climate change.

Building on this body of work, in spring 2020, they undertook a survey of local government staff and elected officials to understand current climate priorities, policies, capacities, and challenges. The survey had a 96% response rate (only two of 52 local governments did not participate). This voluntary, high-participation rate, in and of itself, speaks to the importance of climate change policy and practice to local governments in our region.

The survey findings can be summarized as follows:

- Municipalities and regional districts are overwhelmingly supportive of climate action
- Climate change hazards and impacts are already being experienced
- Wildfire and extreme rainfall were top hazards in municipalities of all sizes
- There are distinct regional differences in the impacts experienced
- There is a high level of support for climate mitigation policies and practices
- Climate change mitigation policies exist in all regional districts, across all sectors
- There is a high level of support for climate adaptation policies
- It is uncommon to have dedicated staff working on climate issues
- Barriers to action include a lack of financial resources and a lack of staff

We attach their report, “Territorial Analysis and Survey of Local Government Priorities for Climate Action: Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities,” for your information.

Phase 2 Engagement

Our steering committee also understood from the beginning that engagement was key to success. To build a ten-year climate adaptation and mitigation plan for the AVICC region, to address the gaps identified in the research, and to support local governments, communities and First Nations to prepare for the future, we needed full participation.

Much of the engagement to date has been done on a shoe-string budget with in-kind support from our local government staff, UVIC professors, the Climate Caucus, ourselves, and some funding from the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) at UVIC and the Real Estate Foundation of BC.

In November 2020, we hosted a day-long Community Resilience Summit for local elected officials and staff. BC government officials were also invited as observers. Over 150 elected officials and members of staff from across the VICC region engaged in a series of workshops and began the first steps of developing a Climate Action and Resilience Plan to 2030 for the island and coastal communities. The outcomes from that productive and inspiring day can be found in the attached report, “Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities: November 6th Resilience Summit Outcomes.” We hope you will find the document inspiring and note the direct alignment with many of your Board’s priorities.

In the spring of 2021, we held a day-long Youth Climate Summit to engage youth across our communities to get their input. We did this because youth are often left out of the policy development process even when – on issues like climate change – they are the ones who will inherit the impacts of the policy choices we make today. The Youth Summit Report is also attached for your information and inspiration.

In the spring and summer of 2022 we’re working with an Indigenous-led, Vancouver Island-based consultancy to undertake Indigenous engagement and seek Indigenous input towards the development of the plan. The engagement will be Indigenous-led and informed by consultation with each of the 50 First Nations in the AVICC region.

We are doing this to ensure that final 10-year plan is grounded in First Nations’ existing actions and priorities for climate mitigation and adaptation, and their preferred modes of collaboration going forward. Indigenous leadership is essential to advancing inclusive, effective climate action in the region. An Indigenous Climate Priorities Report will be created from this segment of engagement and published in the fall of 2022.

Phase 3 Next Steps and Funding Request

By the fall of 2022, the Indigenous engagement will be complete. At that time, our steering committee and UVIC research partners will have three robust streams of input that need to be turned into a comprehensive 10-year Climate Leadership Plan for the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities region.

Between June November 2022 and March 2023, we propose the following steps to ensure the completion, adoption, and implementation of the plan:

Fall 2022 – Workshop with steering committee members and UVIC researchers to integrate and prioritize actions from three input streams

Fall 2022 – Workshops with small group comprised of local government, youth and Indigenous participants to ground-truth the proposed goals and actions

Fall 2022 – Development of Terms of Reference to transition the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan Steering Committee to a Plan Implementation Standing Committee, comprised of local government staff, elected officials, youth, and First Nations representation

Fall 2022 - January 2023 – Technical analysis on any draft goals: viability of targets, locus of responsibility, draft plan development and circulation to local governments and First Nations for any final input

February 2023 – Plan finalization, graphic design etc.

March 2023 – Develop best practices guide for climate adaptation and mitigation planning at a large regional scale

April 2023 – Final presentation of plan to AVICC members at annual conference for adoption

April 2023 – Deliver final Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan and best practices guide for interregional and inclusive climate planning to provincial government

Recognizing that our ad hoc Steering Committee needs a home and project coordination as we move from the development of the VICC-CLP to implementation, we have partnered with the Community Energy Association (CEA) to act as the secretariat for VICC-CLP in Phase 3 and potentially beyond as we advance the project from planning to implementation.

CEA has extensive experience in climate planning, engagement, convening networks, advancing cross-regional collaboration, and driving project implementation with local governments and Indigenous communities. In addition to playing a convening and project support role, CEA is the fiscal agent for the project. CEA is a non-profit organization with charitable status that has been supporting communities with climate action for over 25 years and has staff based on Vancouver Island. See attached document outlining CEA's role.

The process of creating the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan has catalyzed a vast coastal region uniting local governments, youth and Indigenous communities to address climate challenges together. The VICC-CLP will create an action menu that will help smaller and more rural local governments and First Nations to take meaningful climate action and will increase staff capacity through shared development and delivery of key emissions reduction programs and adaptation measures.

We have been able to patch together resources and find time off the side of our desks to advance this project to this stage. We need your help to complete this project. We are seeking your Regional District's share of \$156,400 in funding to complete this work and have attached a budget for your consideration.

We are happy to share any further information you might require and we thank you in advance for your consideration and support.



Mayor Helps, Victoria,
VICC-CLP Steering Committee Co-Chair



Mayor Staples, Duncan,
VICC-CLP Steering Committee Co-Chair

VICC - Climate Leadership Plan Budget	Cash	In-kind		Total
Steering Committee Meetings		400	\$12,000	\$12,000
Phase 1 - Research and Data Collection	\$10,000	40	\$4,000	\$14,000
Phase 2 - Engagement	\$11,952	40	\$4,000	\$15,952
Local Government Resilience Forum	\$3,000	300	\$9,000	\$12,000
Youth Climate Forum	\$3,000	167	\$5,010	\$8,010
First Nations Survey and Engagement	\$46,000	30	\$900	\$46,900
Total Phase 2	73,952	537	\$34,910	\$108,862.00
Phase 3 - Synthesis/Analysis 8-10 Theme Areas				
Action Plan Forum (First Nations, Local Governments and Parnter/Stakeholders)	\$10,000	300	\$9,000	\$19,000
Plan Preparation	\$5,000	30	\$900	\$5,900
Project Management	\$30,000	50	\$1,500	\$31,500.00
Research & Planning	\$5,000	40	\$4,000	\$5,000.00
Engagment	\$15,000	30	\$900	\$15,000.00
Writing	\$25,000	40	\$4,000	\$25,000.00
Implementation	\$21,000	300	\$9,000	\$21,000.00
Travel/Accomodation	\$20,000			\$20,000.00
Meeting/ Engagment Rental Costs	\$5,000			\$5,000.00
Contingency (15%)	\$20,400			
Total Phase 3	\$136,000	790	\$29,300	\$165,300.00

<u>Total Request</u>	<u>\$156,400</u>			
Total Project	\$240,352	1767	\$80,210	\$320,562.00

*****In-kind time for University researchers valued at \$100/hour and other volunteers valued at \$30/hour.***

September 1, 2022

Dear Regional District Board Chair,

I write in support of the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan (VICC-CLP) on behalf of a team of researchers from the University of Victoria. We have been involved with VICC-CLP since its outset, participating in Steering Committee meetings and conducting research in support of the process. Our involvement was sparked and has been sustained by how innovative and important we feel the planning process is, and the potential we believe it has to galvanize collaborative climate action at a time when we so desperately need it. The project itself also offers an excellent example of and model for community-university collaboration towards solving pressing contemporary challenges.

We were initially drawn to VICC-CLP to explore its potential to help address the fundamental unevenness in capacity to develop and implement effective climate action across diverse and varied communities, including especially Indigenous and rural communities. There is evidence of the effectiveness of regional-scale climate planning in European contexts, but it is not an approach that has been attempted in Canada: the VICC-CLP offered the potential to explore whether and how such an approach might support or even catalyze climate action in our region.

Developing a shared vision for climate action at a regional scale has the potential not only to facilitate the sharing of resources and to help build capacity for communities to respond to the climate crisis, but also to empower the differentiated contributions each can make to building a resilient and climate-friendly region. Engaging seriously at a regional scale reveals the limitations of “one size fits all” solutions in relation to communities with different histories, economic and social structures, and geographical characteristics, and opens conversation about how these differences can enable supportive relationships that facilitate resilience across the region more widely.

An awareness of this potential, but also of the uniqueness of this region and planning context, led us to offer our support and research capacity to the VICC-CLP. Our contributions began with a territorial analysis of the region, highlighting both distinctiveness and points of commonality in the social, political, ecological and economic realities faced by communities in the region. This was followed by a survey of local governments to better understand current climate mitigation and adaptation goals and priorities, as well as barriers to more effective climate action. Throughout this research, we were able to engage students deeply into the research process, allowing them to build skills and understanding of the preconditions for and dynamics of climate action.

Following this, we engaged a wider range of students to help design, facilitate and participate in both the Resilience Summit and Youth Summits, again offering vital experience to our students while at the same time embedding their voices and contributions into the process. In this way, participation in the VICC-CLP process has helped build the skills and capacities of young people who will be grappling with these challenges for the duration of their working lives. It has also engaged them in collective action with others, helping to counteract feelings of hopelessness and despair that so many youth—and others—struggle within these times.

We are now at a crucial point in this process: many people from across the region have invested their time and energy to explore potentials for climate action as well as to articulate their hopes and priorities; it is now essential that we continue the important work by integrating these conversations and offering back to their communities a coherent framework for collaboration.

Precisely because this framework will be somewhat unconventional—cutting across jurisdictions and scales of governance, as well as connecting diverse communities through shared values, priorities and commitments—it has unique potential to catalyze adaptation and mitigation efforts. It will offer opportunities for citizen and government involvement through pathways that are currently underutilized but that have tremendous potential for mobilizing co-benefits, while also highlighting the distinctive contributions communities are making and that can be enhanced. It will be built on and seek to support existing efforts, using their momentum to draw in a wider range of actors and offer solutions to those who currently lack the capacity to build these from the ground up.

Through our own research, our experiences with our students and in the Summits and ongoing engagement, it is clear that this process has already had important impacts: it has engaged new people into conversations about climate action, has built understanding within and across the region, has responded to and enhanced a broad and deep desire for more ambitious climate action, and has brought new opportunities and priorities for mitigation and adaptation to light. Perhaps most importantly, it has connected people from different parts of the region into shared conversations, building understanding across difference and responding to a broad and deep desire for more ambitious and more effective climate action. However, the real benefits will emerge when we are able to return to those who have engaged, and to communities more broadly, and offer them a vision and plan that helps them to see how their own communities can make meaningful and distinctive contributions to mitigation and adaptation.

We intend to continue our involvement with this process, and strongly urge you to offer the support needed to deliver on its potential. Please do not hesitate to be in touch if we can be of any further assistance.

With best wishes,



Dr. Kara Shaw, Associate Professor, School of Environmental Studies
shawk@uvic.ca

On behalf of the UVic team:

Dr. Astrid Brousselle, Professor and Director, School of Public Administration
Dr. Tamara Krawchenko, Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration
Dr. Katya Rhodes, Assistant Professor, School of Public Administration
Dr. Tara Ney, Associate Professor, School of Public Administration
+ numerous graduate and undergraduate students



SCOPE OF WORK for CEA as VICC CLP SECRETARIAT

August 2022

Thank you for inviting Community Energy Association to be the secretariat for the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan (VICC CLP). This scope of work is for coordinating the completion of the Plan by April 2023 and supporting the beginning stages of plan implementation. The intent is for the secretariat role to continue through multiple years of Plan implementation between 2023 and 2030.

Background

Community Energy Association is a non-profit organization with charitable status that has been supporting communities with energy planning and climate action for more than 25 years. CEA traces its roots to a 1995 MOU between UBCM and Province of BC establishing the Energy Aware Committee, which incorporated into the Community Energy Association in 2004. We are a recognized thought-leader and the only organization in BC dedicated exclusively to supporting communities with climate action research, planning, capacity building, and implementation.

Our team of more than 30 staff are distributed across BC and have existing and accelerating momentum engaging local governments, regional governments, Indigenous communities, and Modern Treaty Nations on climate action. We have specific expertise in advancing proven solutions that align with Clean BC targets and regional goals. Our networks of staff and elected officials offer a unique opportunity to move quickly to support collaborative implementation.

CEA supports communities through:

- **Research and Planning** – Energy and emissions inventories and modelling, action planning, and prioritization, online interactive [climate action planner](#) tool, and sectoral strategies such as retrofit strategies or e-mobility plans. Research and guides on best practices, emerging technologies, and other topics relevant to local governments and Indigenous communities. Recently CEA completed or is working on Climate Plans for Esquimalt, View Royal and Colwood.
- **Coaching, Networks, and Education** – CEA coordinates 4 staff [peer networks](#) on various topics and two newly formed regional sub-networks, [BC Climate Leaders](#) programming and networks for elected officials, including the BC Climate Leaders Playbook and the Climate Leaders Institute, and developed and delivers the Community energy management certificate through BCIT.
- **Implementation** – Coordination of multi-year and multi-partner [implementation projects](#), including cross-regional EV charging networks (including the [Mid-Island network](#)), design and delivery of retrofit concierge programs, including Retrofit Assist and the Kootenay Clean Energy Transition, organics diversion and processing projects, and collaborative industry capacity building on the Energy Step Code and retrofits.

Role of Secretariat

The VICC CLP secretariat will be a dynamic role that responds to the guidance of the Steering Committee, while adding expertise, leadership, coordination, and professional capacity to this successful and exciting initiative. As local governments enter an election period, it is critical for VICC CLP to have a home base that will continue to foster regional collaboration through the election and beyond. Specific duties of the secretariat during the period of plan completion may include, but are not limited to:

- **Convening** – CEA will coordinate meetings of the elected official steering committee as well as a staff working group to guide the final development of the Plan. The meetings will continue monthly with a break at election time. Meeting coordination will include agenda-setting in collaboration with co-chairs, preparing meeting notes, and creating a short (one to two page) report out after each meeting for Steering Committee members to share with their regional district boards. CEA will create a member's only webpage which will grow over time to include best practices, case studies, policy templates and other materials relevant to VICC CLP members, and will post meeting notes and other resources.

Note: CEA is already supported financially for a VICC staff network via an existing agreement with BC Hydro (valued at \$20,000) and has partial funding for regional coordination of elected officials with support from BC Hydro, Real Estate Foundation, and Vancity Credit Union until the end of March 2023 (valued at approximately \$5,000).

- **Member Support and Orientation** – Following the election, CEA will work with the returning elected officials on the steering committee to confirm the members of the steering committee and support recruitment of new members as needed. The scope of this work will depend on the number of returning VICC-CLP steering committee members and on whether the co-chairs are re-elected. CEA will also conduct outreach to local government staff and convene the region-wide staff working group so that staff are aware of the project and can get involved.
- **Resource Management and Collaboration** – As noted above, CEA will create a members-only webpage for a resource library and links, on the same page where we will post meeting agendas and notes. If desired, CEA will set up and manage an on-line discussion forum, possibly using Earth.net or another messaging platform such as Slack, depending on member preference.
- **Procurement and Contract Management** – CEA can manage procurement for contractors, including through requests for proposals or sole-sourcing.
- **Fundraising and Fiscal Management** – CEA will support the Steering Committee with funding requests with regional districts and municipalities, make connections with key contacts at the staff level, and receive and disperse funds from regional districts and local governments on behalf of the VICC CLP Steering Committee. CEA will also seek funding support from other sponsors including during the plan implementation phase. As a non-profit organization with charitable status, CEA can access grants from foundations and has strong relationships with various funders.
- **Implementation Coordination and Project Management** – Plan implementation is the ultimate goal. Subject to a Steering Committee decision once the plan is adopted by the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities in April 2023, CEA will support successful, accelerated, and collaborative climate action implementation across the region. Implementation coordination can include:

- Identifying priority actions for individual local and regional governments and First Nations and convening sub-groups for collaborative implementation
- Providing expert guidance and support such as policy review, template development, and linkages to subject-matter experts
- Coordinating shared industry, public and stakeholder engagement, including through the creation of template outreach materials, social media and web content
- Fiscal management and procurement as outlined above

CEA will compile annual implementation progress reports utilizing our upcoming Climate Action Dashboard as well as reflections from the elected and staff working groups.

Climate Leadership Plan Completion

We understand that Alderhill has been contracted to conduct engagement with First Nations and then create an engagement summary from the First Nations engagement. CEA is well positioned to support Alderhill with Plan completion should that be desired by the Steering Committee. There are various options for the scope of the Plan, from a light-touch that would involve compiling and summarizing the engagement results and updating the Goals document through to a full plan with inventories, modelling, and action prioritization. CEA can draft a separate scope for assisting with the completion of the Plan if desired by the Steering Committee and we look forward to collaborating with Alderhill and the UVic team of researchers.

Secretariat Fees

CEA brings existing funding resources to support most of the convening duties. The role of the secretariat can be scaled up and down as the project requires and will increase during the implementation phase. In year one it is estimated that the costs will be approximately \$50,000. CEA has \$25,000 in existing funding to put towards this work. CEA would be responsible for working with the steering committee to fund plan implementation and help to secure match funding to support the work as it scales.

Thank you!

Thank you for the opportunity to support the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan, from plan completion through to multi-year implementation to 2030. We congratulate the Steering Committee on the successful collaboration to date, including with the UVic team, high local government participation, the youth summit, and engaging Alderhill for First Nations engagement. We look forward to working with you to accelerate collaborative and impactful implementation in the years ahead during this decade of climate action.

Sincerely,



Maya Chorobik
Director of Climate Leadership
Community Energy Association
mchorobik@communityenergy.bc.ca

Territorial Analysis and Survey of Local Government Priorities for Climate Action: Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities



Document produced for the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan Steering Committee (VICC CLP SC) by: Tamara Krawchenko, Katya Rhodes, Kimberly Harrison, Katherine Pearce, Kara Shaw, Astrid Brousselle, Tara Ney, Catriona Mallows (University of Victoria).

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Introduction

Territorial Acknowledgement

The authors respectfully acknowledge that the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region is located upon the traditional unceded territories of many different Indigenous peoples. Although every effort is made to use unbiased data, much of the data is not framed to adequately reflect Indigenous realities.

The climate change challenge

Climate change is a complex and ongoing challenge that communities across the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region (VICC) are tackling through a range of approaches. By 2050, it is anticipated that British Columbia will experience:

- Temperature increases of 1.3 to 2.7 °C;
- Increases in average annual rainfall from 2% to 12%, with summers being increasingly drier;
- Loss of glaciers resulting in changes to fish habitat, declining quality and storage of drinking water; and
- Continued rising sea levels along most of B.C.'s coast, more frequent wildfires and rainfalls (Province of British Columbia, 2020).

These environmental changes will have wide-ranging effects, from more frequent and severe heat waves and a greater propensity for forest fires to major disruptions in agricultural growing conditions. Climate change impacts all sectors of society and the economy now and in the future.

Our communities are connected in tackling this challenge. The Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (VICC) region is already experiencing unique climate changes.

The **Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan Steering Committee** (VICC CLP SC) has been convened by three Vancouver Island Mayors—Lisa Helps (Victoria), Josie Osborne (Tofino), Michelle Staples (Duncan)—in order to help catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation throughout the region. The VICC CLP SC includes representatives from each of the regional districts on the island and the Sunshine Coast to produce a plan that will catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation throughout the coastal region.

This report summarises the findings of *Territorial Analysis and Survey of Local Government Priorities for Climate Action: Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities*. Please note that the Territorial Analysis (Part 1) covers the full VICC region, while the Survey (Part 2) covers Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast.

Why coordinate at the regional scale?

British Columbia has been at the forefront of actions to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation and there is widespread support for these efforts. Communities big and small across the province have adopted a range of initiatives and there are a growing number of regional plans that aim to scale up these efforts and to promote co-ordinated actions. Climate change impacts are experienced at a local level, yet existing municipal and regional district governance structures can constrain climate action plans, making planning at a broader regional scale essential.

Regionally-scaled planning can help municipalities and Regional Districts to:

- Pool knowledge and map and understand functionally connected territories;
- Share expertise and build capacity;
- Share the costs of environmental assessments and other upfront planning needs;
- Co-ordinate and scale-up investments in adaptation and mitigation efforts;
- Speak with a common and louder voice to upper level governments about the region's unique needs and priorities; and
- Mutually support communities of all sizes to meet their climate goals, with larger administrations supporting smaller ones.

It is for these reasons that the VICC CLP SC has been convened. The VICC CLP SC shares a clear vision and priorities for its work, suggesting the potential for rapid collective progress. Collaborative planning at this scale thus offers a potential to build consensus and poly-benefits for climate action, including a shared regional vision to guide that action effectively and rapidly.

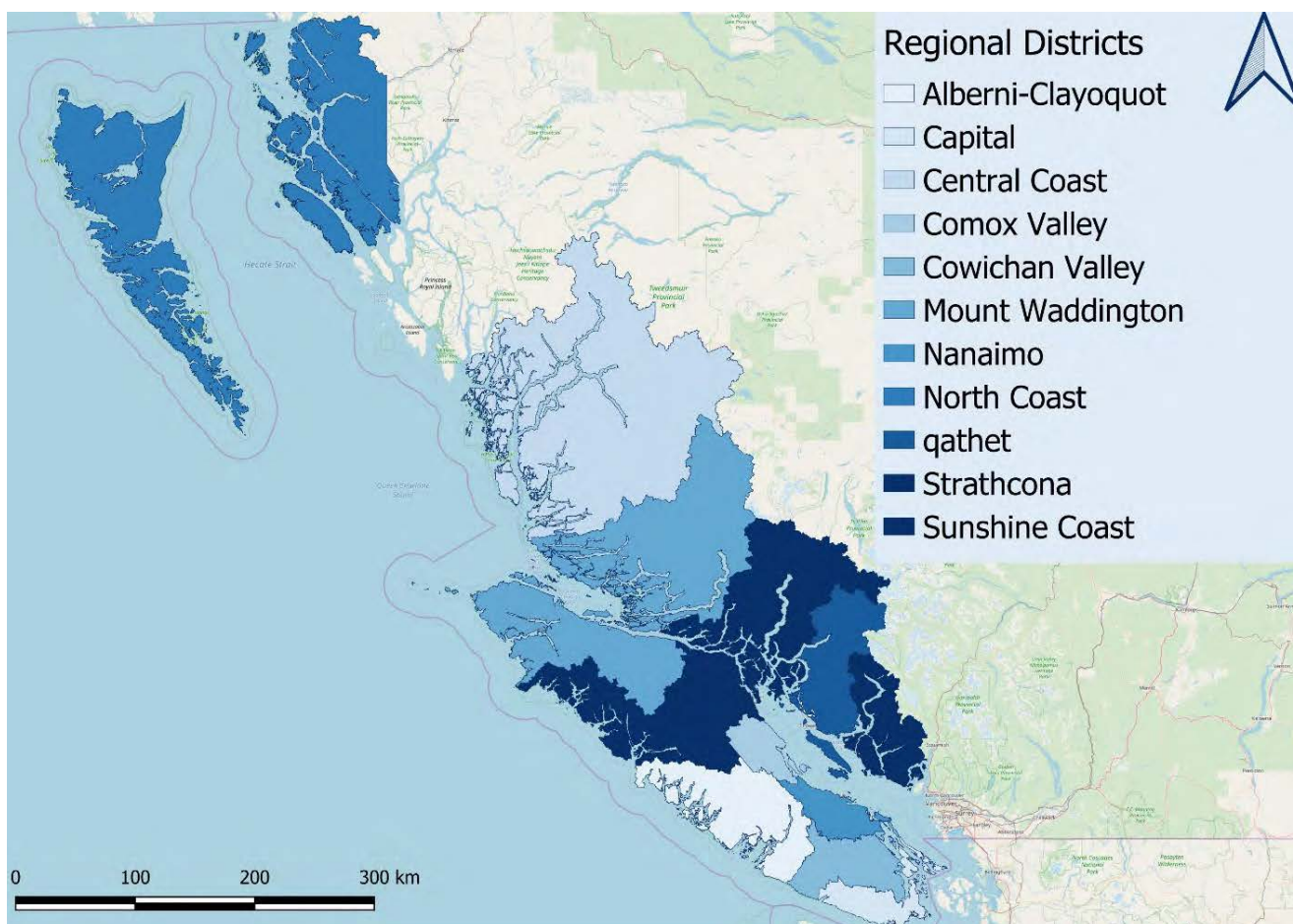


Cyclists on the Galloping Goose, Victoria, Catriona Mallows

Part 1. About the region

The Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region is comprised of 11 Regional Districts, 89 First Nations Reserves and Indian Government Districts, and 41 municipalities (Figure 1). The entirety of Vancouver Island and coastal mainland BC are the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples. The region is shaped by its proximity to water and includes approximately 40,000 islands of vastly different sizes and around 67 inhabited major islands, the largest of which is Vancouver Island. Many communities rely on connections to water for both transportation and livelihoods. Given the prevalence of coastlines, sea level changes pose risks as does the prospect of more frequent and severe storms. The mainland part of the region north of Vancouver is coastal and mountainous, with many areas having limited accessibility. In this region land transport connections flow east-west towards the Pacific. Coastal routes are the lifeblood of communities.

Figure 1 Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Regional Districts



Source: British Columbia Data Catalogue. <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/d1aff64e-dbbe-45a6-af97-582b7f6418b9> & <https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/nts-bc-coastline-polygons-1-250-000-digital-baseline-mapping-nts#edc-pow>

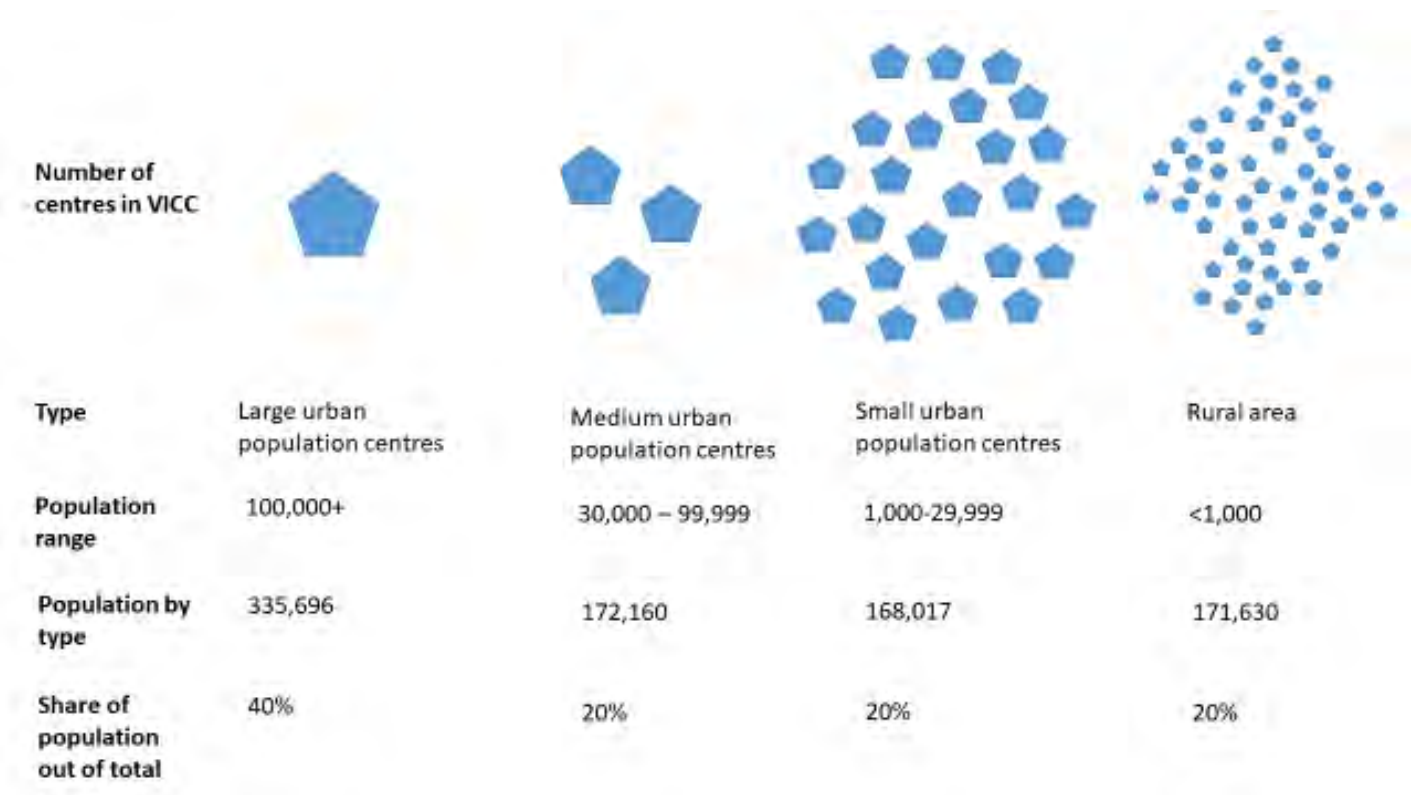
Much of the region is low density, characterised by small communities—rural-urban connections are critical to this region

“Small islands have a more obvious finite land base and natural resources and any climate impacts will have a greater impact to our communities.”

– Islands Trust

The vast majority (80%) of the VICC population resides in small to large population centers, while the remaining 20% live in what can be defined as rural areas—i.e., those without a population centre (Figure 2 Urban Hierarchy by Population Centre, VICC, 2016). However, despite this definition, rurality is best understood along a gradient of more connected and dense places to less connected and dense ones. Smaller communities and rural areas may access services and labour markets in larger population centres; at the same time, these communities provide many resources and amenities that larger communities consume and enjoy, and are also a source of employment. Rural-rural connections are equally important. Across VICC, the nature of these connections and interrelationships are a key character of society and economy.

Figure 2 Urban Hierarchy by Population Centre, VICC, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada; Population Centre and Rural Area Classification 2016 & Population Centre Profiles, 2016 Census

The unique geography of VICC creates both opportunities and challenges

VICC is a complex terrain with landcover ranging from Alpine areas to Wetlands. The variety of landforms create great topographic relief, resulting in various climatic shifts and ecosystem changes. There is an abundance of precipitation resulting in rich rainforests flanking the coast. Much of the VICC is covered by forest: 45% of VICC is classified as old forest (140 years or older); 14.7% is young forest (less than 140 years old) and large tracts of the forest have been designated for logging.¹ Approximately 7.5% of the total land of VICC is either recently or selectively logged, providing revenue and jobs for the region.²

Coastal British Columbia is known for its rich ecosystems, and many areas within the VICC region have been placed under protection in the form of Protected Areas and Marine Protected Areas. Protected Areas of all types are important to the VICC region in many ways, not only are they crucial for protecting wildlife and ecosystems, but also to preserve areas of important cultural significance.



Tahsis 7, Sarah Fowler

VICC is well connected to population centres, but some rural areas are at risk

Though VICC is physically expansive, the vast networks of roads, ferry routes, and air travel connect people and trade. There are 16 highways, 73 ferry routes, 12 airports and numerous aerodromes and seaplane landings. Connectivity is most concentrated in the southern reaches of VICC, linking population centres to the mainland and Vancouver. The four largest population centres in VICC (Victoria, Nanaimo, Courtenay, and Campbell River) are the most connected, with several highways and ferry terminals boasting high traffic thoroughfare daily. The northern communities, such as Bella Coola and Prince Rupert, are more isolated from the rest of the territory, as the only vehicle access is through the two highways which terminate at these cities or the ferry services. Some of the more rural reaches of VICC have fewer links to depend on, which creates a vulnerability especially when storms or other hazards threaten to block or wash out the local roads.

Population centers in the south are growing, while many rural areas are shrinking

The Regional Districts of VICC have a wide range of population growth in the ten-year period from 2006-2016, ranging from an increase of 12.3% to a decrease of -7.8%. The Regional District of Nanaimo has grown the most in the ten-year period while the Comox Valley and Capital Regional Districts had the second and third highest population growth respectively. The three districts with the highest growth rates from 2006-2016 all correspond to districts with large or medium population centres. The only other regional district with a medium population centre is the Strathcona Regional District, which falls in the middle of the range with population growth of 6.3% over 2006-2016. Between 2006-2016, a mix of urban and rural census subdivisions (CSDs) experienced population growth: Langford at 57.3%, Central Coast A at 47%, and South Saanich 1 at 44%. Those CSDs that have seen the greatest population declines over the 2006-2016 period are largely rural and remote.

There is a large and growing senior population across the VICC

The average age of population in the VICC region is 44.8 years; this is above the provincial average of 42.3. The dependency ratio (the ratio of the young and working age versus seniors 65+) is 72% in the region and 63.2% across the province.³ Thus, the VICC has an older age profile than that of the province as a whole.

Certain CSDs within VICC are experiencing changes in age balances more acutely than others; during the ten-year time span of 2006-2016, the Southern Gulf Islands experienced a -14% and -21% decrease of young and working age cohorts, while simultaneously having an increase of seniors by 51%. Even more profound are the changes found in the CSD of Sunshine Coast D: the youth population decreased by -23%, the working age population decreased by -10%, and the senior population increased by 97%. These examples illustrate the more extreme cases of changing population demographics within VICC.

An uncertain economic climate

The BC economy overall has experienced solid growth and a favourable labour market climate. Following strong momentum in 2019, BC was forecast to lead economic growth in Canada in 2020 (Government of British Columbia, 2019). However, the COVID-19 crisis has brought great uncertainty; economic growth forecasts for all provinces have declined with many forecasting negative growth in 2020. The TD Bank has forecast BC's economic growth at 0.5% for 2020 (on par with Ontario).

The VICC has a services-dominated economy—which in the short term is vulnerable to the impacts of COVID 19

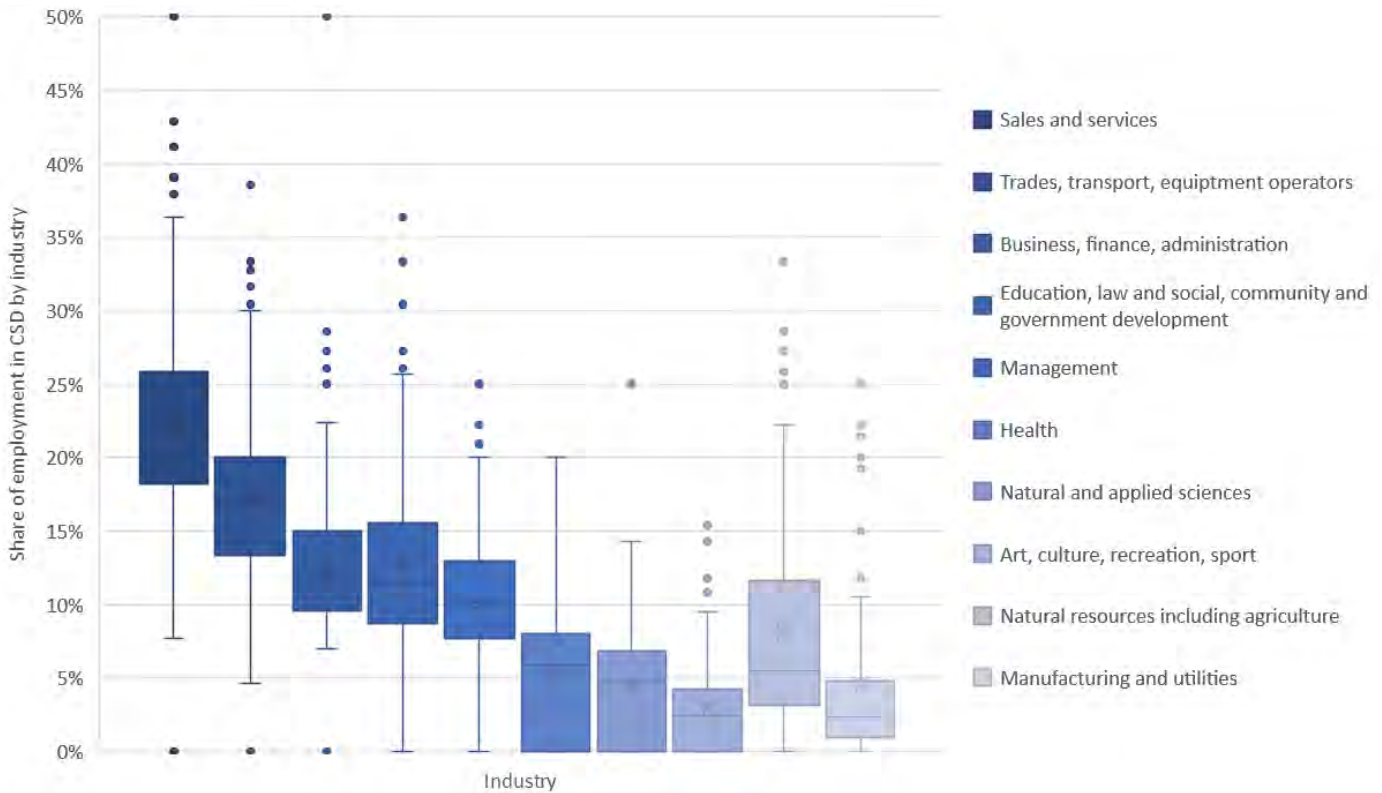
Like the province as a whole, the VICC has a services dominated economy. Across the VICC, 87% of all occupations are service-based (CHASS, 2020). The largest services sectors by occupation are sales and services, trades and transport, and business, finance and administration. Some areas, especially those closest to population centres, are almost entirely services-based. The impacts of COVID-19 and negative price shocks have harmed all economic sectors, however they have been particularly harmful to services sector industries like tourism which are an important economic contributor across the VICC and the rest of BC. In 2018, the tourism sector in BC contributed \$8.3 billion to GDP, which is higher than that of the mining (\$5.2 billion), oil and gas (\$4.9 billion) and agriculture and fishing industries (\$3.2 billion).

While the services sector is dominant, communities across the VICC also have important goods-based economies including the forestry, agriculture, and energy sectors. Goods-based industries are especially important in the northern halves of Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii, as well as the mainland sections of the North Coast. BC's largely mountainous topography is not amenable to agriculture and the sector is relatively small; the smallest among Canadian provinces second only to Newfoundland. However, some of the province's prime agricultural areas are in the VICC such as Comox, Sayward and Cowichan valleys, Saanich Peninsula, Nanaimo lowlands, Alberni Valley, Powell River lowlands and many Gulf Islands. Farms in these areas tend to be smaller and specialized: the region accounts for only around 2% of total provincial farmland but 15% of total farms (Government of British Columbia, 2011).

“The speed with which all levels of government and community responded to [the COVID-19] health crisis demonstrates the possibility, should the climate emergency be considered with a similar sense of urgency. There is a substantial opportunity for investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation as part of a green economic stimulus package.”

– Saanich

Figure 3 Share of Employment by Industry, CSD, VICC, 2016



Note: Occupational categories by industry according to single digit National Occupational Classification codes, NOC.
 Source: Statistics Canada; 2016 Census Labour Data, Accessed via Canadian Census Analyser (CHASS, 2020).

On average, residential GHG emissions have declined across the VICC

Residential GHG emissions from utilities and solid waste across the VICC decreased by 3% between 2007-2017 (Figure 4). At the lowest end, Prince Rupert has the greatest decrease in GHG emissions, at -48%, as well as having the lowest per capita residential utilities emissions for 2017 at 0.14 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) (CAS, 2019). Port Edward, another northern community, has a decrease of -20% (CAS, 2019). However, not all northern communities are experiencing decreases in emissions; Masset and Queen Charlotte (Charlotte) on Haida Gwaii both have increases over the decade. This is likely a reflection on the remoteness of the islands, and is reflected in other island communities such as the Gulf Islands, which also are experiencing an increase in emissions. Another disparity is the difference within the Sunshine Coast communities; Gibsons and Sechelt are among the top five communities with the largest decreases, yet Sechelt Band Indian Government District is in the top five communities with the largest increases in utilities and solid waste emissions (CAS, 2019).

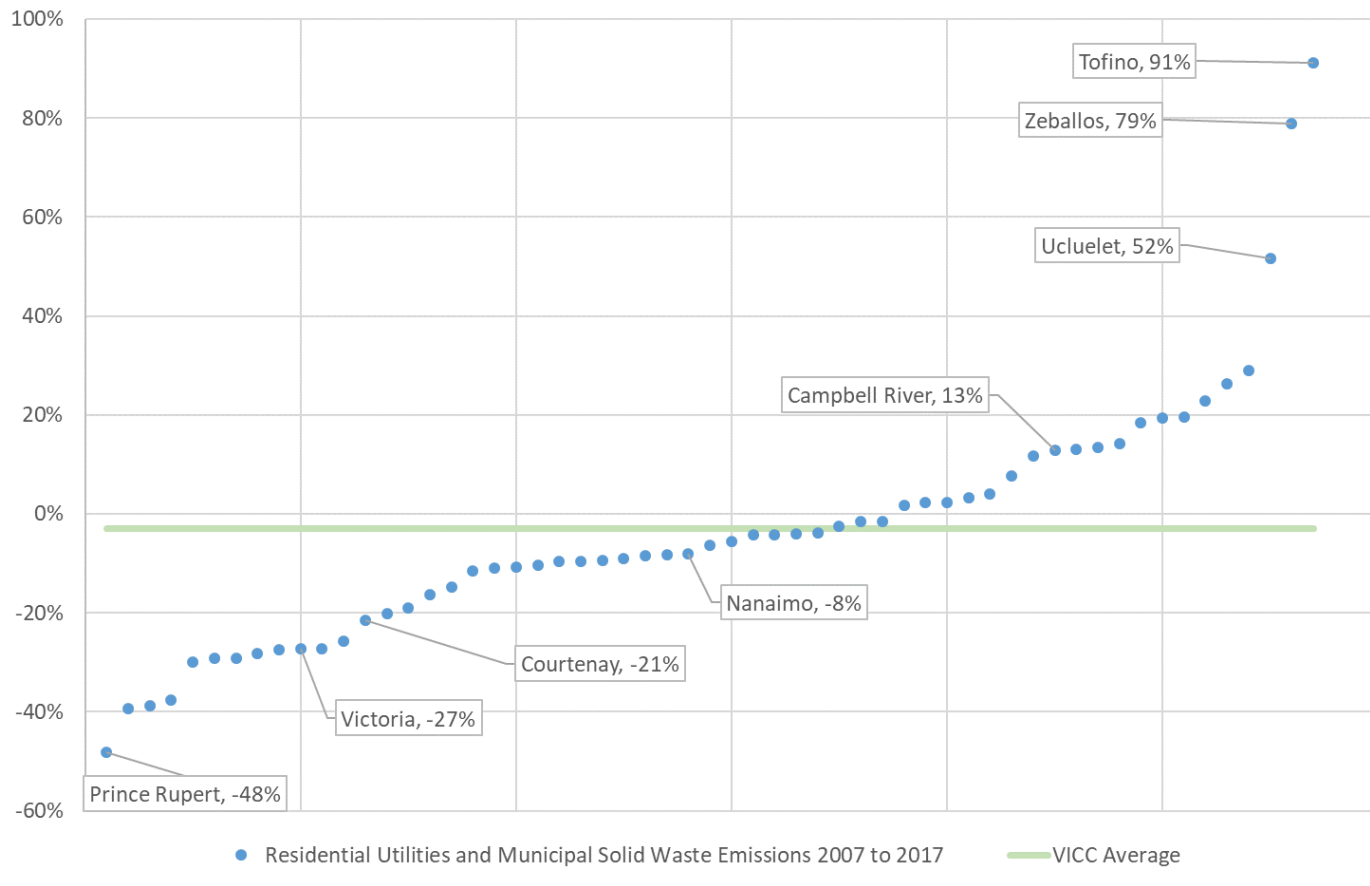
The community which had the highest residential emissions per capita in 2017 was Tahsis, at 7.40 tCO₂e; but they also have among the lowest commercial and industrial GHG emissions per capita (at 0.13 in 2017) (CAS, 2019). More rural and isolated communities tend to have higher emissions because they do not have the capital to invest in the same scale of projects as more urban areas do, and often have to rely on diesel generators for much of their energy. These generators are not only high in emissions, but also in cost - a heavy burden for smaller communities. Higher energy demands may also be related to their location in colder climates.

The medium and large population centres of VICC all have changes below the territorial average, ranging from -8 to -27% (CAS, 2019). The decrease in tCO₂e reflects the ability for urban areas to invest in greener infrastructure, low-emissions public transportation, and sustainable energy. These urban areas have had the ongoing opportunity to make such changes and investments and the data reflects the effectiveness of some of these initiatives.

PHOTO: Tahsis 6, Sarah Fowler



FIGURE 4 Percent Change in Residential Utilities and Solid Waste Emissions, per capita tCO₂e, 2007 to 2017

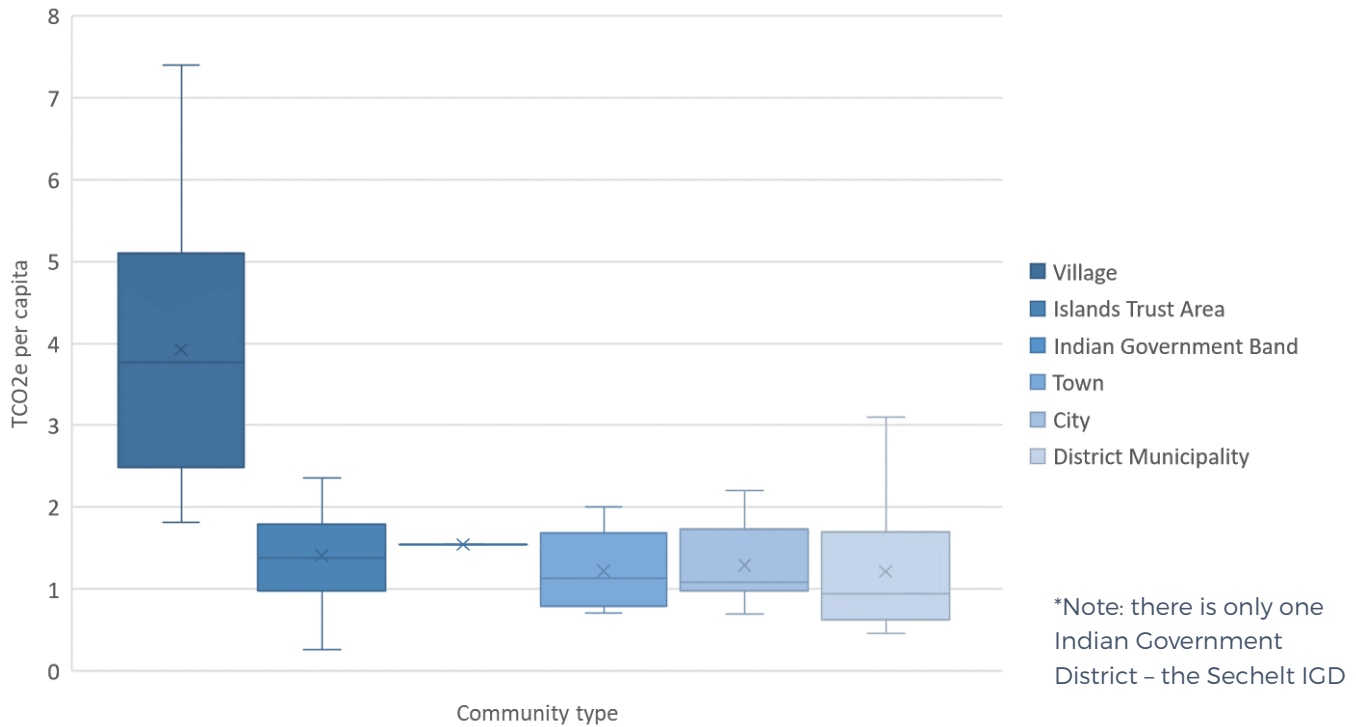


Source: Government of British Columbia Climate Action Secretariat (2019). BC utilities energy data at the community level. BC landfill waste data at the community level

Rural communities have the highest GHG emissions on average

Figure 5 Tonnes of Residential GHG Utilities and Solid Waste Emissions per capita, by Community Type, VICC, 2017 further illustrates the disparity between smaller communities and urban areas; the rural communities (villages) of VICC have the highest average residential GHG emissions in 2017, and includes places such as Tahsis, Zeballos, Masset, and Port Clements. These areas are all very remote in comparison to the population centres of VICC, and do not have access to the same connectivity or capital resources. Villages also display the largest range in emissions, indicating that some communities have invested in cleaner energy options, and others do not have that ability yet.

FIGURE 5 Tonnes of Residential GHG Utilities and Solid Waste Emissions per capita, by Community Type, VICC, 2017



Source: Government of British Columbia Climate Action Secretariat (2019). BC utilities energy data at the community level, BC landfill waste data at the community level

Energy use is by far the highest emitting sector for BC

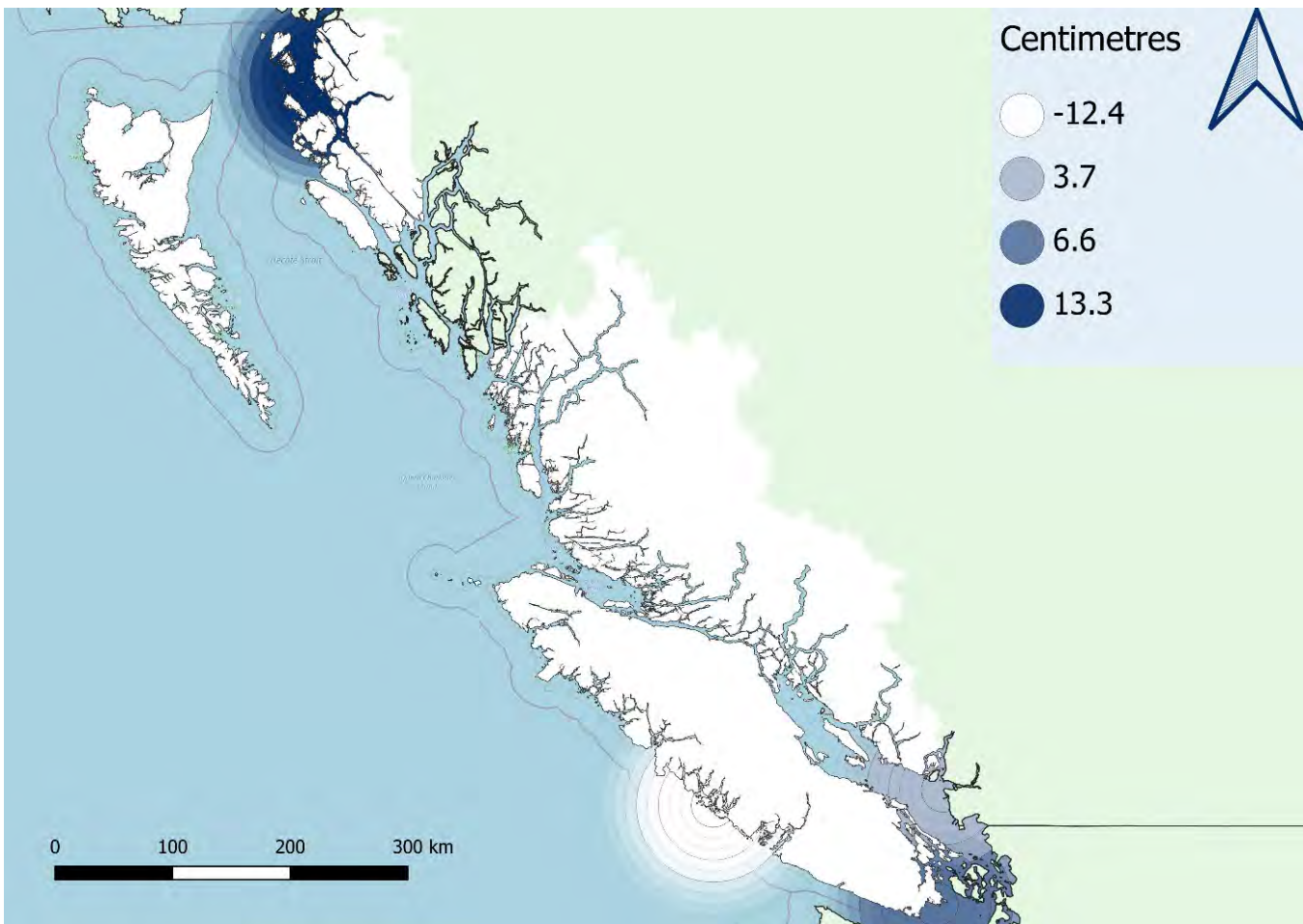
Although there are no further sectoral and sub-sectoral emissions data available for VICC, the Provincial Inventory can provide blanket characteristics for the region, drawing on the provincial trends. Energy is the largest sectoral contributor to total emissions, making up 81% of total BC emissions in 2017. The four other sectors, Industrial Processes and Product Use, Waste, Agriculture, and Afforestation and Deforestation, are all very similar in numbers, accounting for 6%, 5%, 4%, and 4% of total emissions respectively.

Transportation encompasses 50% of energy sector emissions. The VICC is heavily reliant on transportation in several ways; the region imports many of its goods (especially food) from other parts of BC by way of ferry systems and large transport trucks. Road Transportation makes up 34% of BC’s energy emissions. Also, the rurality of VICC lends itself to an increased transportation sub-sector, as it requires significant travel to reach many of the remote and rural communities of the region. Oil and Gas Extraction is the next highest energy emitter at 14%, and Manufacturing Industries at 10%; both are part of the Stationary Combustion Sources sub-sector which is the second largest and accounts for 41%. These are not as dominant in VICC. Agriculture and Forestry are relatively low emitters, accounting for only 1% of the total energy emissions in BC.

As a coastal territory, the changes in the ocean pose a serious threat to communities within VICC

Sea level rise varies across the VICC. In Prince Rupert the average sea level rise was 0.13m/century, and 0.06m/century in Victoria, while in Tofino the average sea level dropped at -0.12m/century (BCMoE, 2016). At first this may seem counter-intuitive, but there is a simple explanation; due to the isostatic rebound from the last glaciation, parts of Vancouver Island are rising at ~0.25m/century, while other areas are not moving (to a significant degree) (BCMoE, 2016).

FIGURE 6 Observed Change Sea Level, Centimeters per Century, Coastal BC, 1910-2014



Sources: BC sea level data (Government of British Columbia, 2020c); US cartographic file (US Census Bureau, 2020); BC cartographic file (Government of British Columbia, 2020b).



The implications of sea level rise within VICC are vast, including:

- Flooding, especially beaches, wetlands, coastal dunes, and waterfront properties;
- More frequent extreme high-water occurrences, impacting property, infrastructure (docks, wharves, port facilities), especially in Prince Rupert;
- Salinification of agricultural lands from intrusion of saltwater into groundwater aquifers and;
- Wave changes, including magnitude and direction, as well as storm waves and surges (BCMoe, 2016).

In addition to sea level rise, the oceans are also experiencing an increase in temperature. From 1971 to 2010, the ocean surface increased on average by 0.11°C/decade globally (IPCC, 2014). In BC, sea surface temperatures (SSTs) have increased since—although trends vary depending on areas, data availability, and seasons 1935 (Talloni-Álvarez, Sumaila, Le Billon, & Cheung, 2019). In the southern region of BC, sea surface temperatures have increased 0.56 degrees Celsius per decade since 1935, and are expected to increase by 3 degrees Celsius by the end of the 21st century (Talloni-Álvarez et al. 2019, 166). The increasing amount of CO₂ entering the ocean is altering the pH of the water, making it more acidic (Canadian Climate Forum, 2017). Nearshore and coastal waters on BC’s coast are particularly vulnerable to acidification, as freshwater inputs from rivers, glacial meltwater and sea-ice melt decrease the ability for coastal waters to buffer CO₂ (Bush & Lemmen, 2019, 399).

VICC is experiencing rising temperatures, putting vulnerable populations at a higher risk

Globally, temperatures have increased on average by 0.85°C/century, while BC on average has experienced increases on average of 1.4°C/century from 1900-2013 (BCMoe, 2016). Due to the complex geography of VICC, there are variations in the average temperature increases. The southern coastal reaches of VICC have experienced increases of 0.8°C/century, while more northern areas, such as Prince Rupert, have experienced increases of 1.1°C (BCMoe, 2016).

Heat waves are expected to happen more often in urban areas, because the built environment (paved roads, buildings, other infrastructure) retains heat more so than the natural environment (BCMoe, 2016). In Victoria, between 1951-1980, there were usually only 3 days a year which reached temperatures above 30°C, but within this century that is expected to increase more than four-fold, to 13 days per year (BCMoe, 2016).

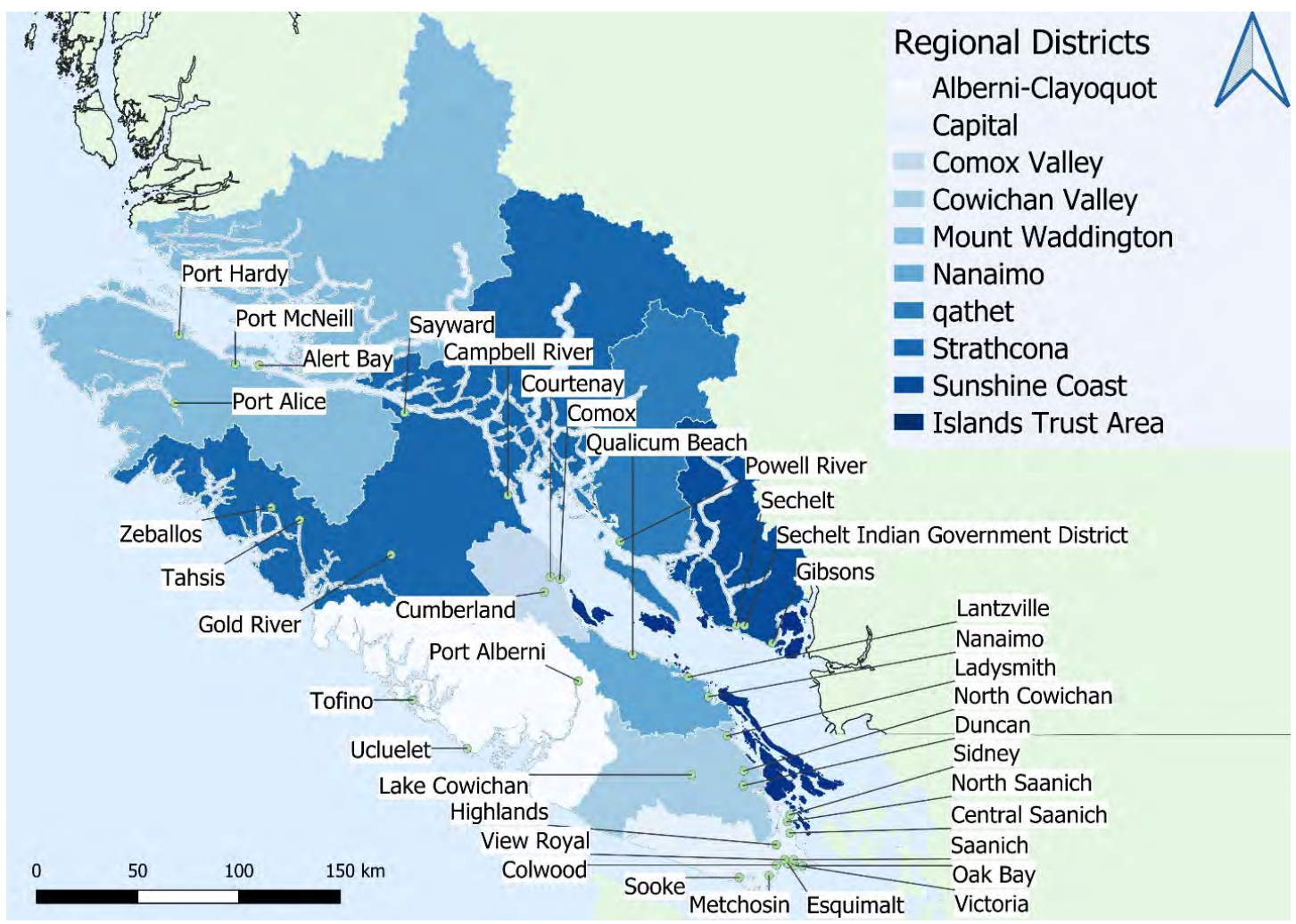
“Cumulative/
compounding
impacts will
become
increasingly
challenging to
address.”

– Capital Regional District

Part 2. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Policies and Priorities

An understanding of the various climate impacts and policy priorities across the region is a key part of the regional climate planning process. This survey identifies the key climate impacts, policies, priorities, barriers, and opportunities that currently guide decision-making about climate change mitigation and adaptation in the region. A total of 106 government officials, including 69 elected representatives and 35 staff from 38 municipalities and 10 regional districts participated in the survey resulting in a 96% response rate. Only two municipalities did not participate in the survey (i.e., Langford and Parksville); all regional districts completed the survey. Multiple individuals from each local government were invited to participate in the survey, with responses for a single municipality or regional district aggregated into one complete response.

FIGURE 7. Regional districts and municipalities participating in the survey



Municipalities and regional districts are overwhelmingly supportive of climate action

The survey found that both municipalities and regional districts are overwhelmingly supportive of climate action: 100% of municipalities and regional districts answered that climate change mitigation and adaptation are “important” or “somewhat important” to their community.

An analysis of open-ended responses found that the top five common themes of motivation to act include: (1) public and/or political demand; (2) science and data on climate change, including observable impacts from changing weather patterns such as increased storms, droughts, and wildfires; (3) concern about sea level rise; (4) preparation for the future and concern for future generations; and (5) support and funding from senior levels of government. Several municipalities referenced their declarations of climate emergency and mentioned emissions reductions targets and/or climate action committees that have been established. Regional districts were particularly likely to mention senior government funding and support as an enabling factor in being motivated and able to take action

Climate change hazards and impacts are already being experienced

Virtually all municipalities and regional districts are already experiencing hazards and impacts related to changing weather patterns caused by climate change. The unique island and coastal geography of the region influences the types of hazards and impacts that are experienced

“Climate change is a public and therefore political priority. CRD and Islands Trust emergency declaration is spurring action. Climate change impacts such as forest fires and drought are already being felt here.”

– Islands Trust

in this area compared to other regions of the province. A ‘hazard’ refers to the potential occurrence of a natural or human-induced physical event or trend or physical impact that may cause loss of life, injury, or other health impacts, as well as damage and loss to property, infrastructure, livelihoods, service provision, ecosystems, and environmental resources. “Impacts” refer to effects on natural and human systems of extreme weather and climate events and of climate change. Impacts generally refer to effects on lives, livelihoods, health, ecosystems, economies, societies, cultures, services, and infrastructure due to the interaction of climate changes or hazardous climate events occurring within a specific time period and the vulnerability of an exposed society or system.

All except for one municipality indicated that they have experienced hazards related to climate change with wildfires, extreme rainfall, sea level rise, storm surges, extreme winds, and droughts being the key hazards. Municipalities and regional districts identified additional hazards other than those listed in multiple choice responses including tsunamis, earthquakes, heating tank oil spills, air quality, and pandemics. Tsunamis and earthquakes were the most frequently mentioned “other” hazards.

Wildfire and extreme rainfall were top hazards in municipalities of all sizes

Hazards were identified as more prevalent in large municipalities than small and medium sized municipalities. Although heat waves were not a top hazard overall, they were identified as more of a problem in urban areas, and are a top concern in two out of three of the largest urban municipalities. Landslides stood out as being more a concern for small municipalities as compared to medium and large municipalities, which may relate to the remote nature of many of the smallest municipalities.



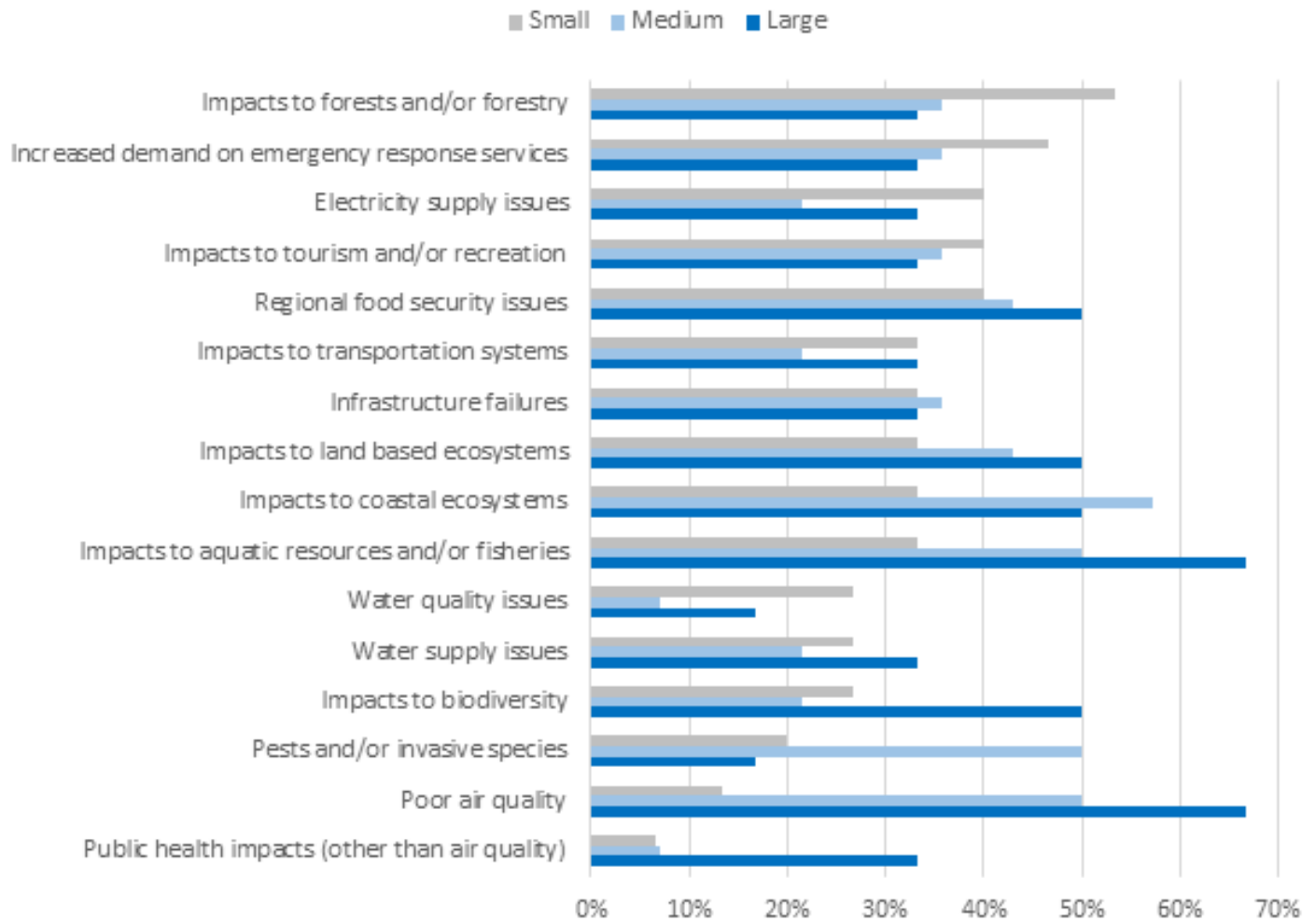
Russel Road washed away from heavy rain, Sunshine Coast, Donna McMahon

There are distinct regional differences in the impacts experienced

Small municipalities were more likely than mid-sized and large municipalities to identify impacts to forests and forestry, emergency response resources, electricity supply, tourism/recreation, and water quality. The impacts that are important to small communities reflect to some extent the closer linkage and dependency on natural resources, especially the importance of forestry. The demand on emergency response services may be a bigger problem for these small municipalities due to their smaller administrative capacity and the remoteness of many small communities.

Medium and large municipalities were more likely to identify impacts to aquatic resources, coastal ecosystems, and land-based ecosystems as a top impact compared to small municipalities. Large municipalities were the most likely to identify impacts to biodiversity compared to smaller municipalities. Air quality and health impacts were the least frequently chosen for small municipalities, but medium and large municipalities are much more affected by poor air quality and other types of public health impacts as compared to small and medium sized municipalities. These differences are even more pronounced when examining only the largest urban municipalities, all three of which indicated poor air quality as a top impact, with two out of three indicating other public health impacts.

Figure 8. Comparison of climate change Impacts by size of municipality

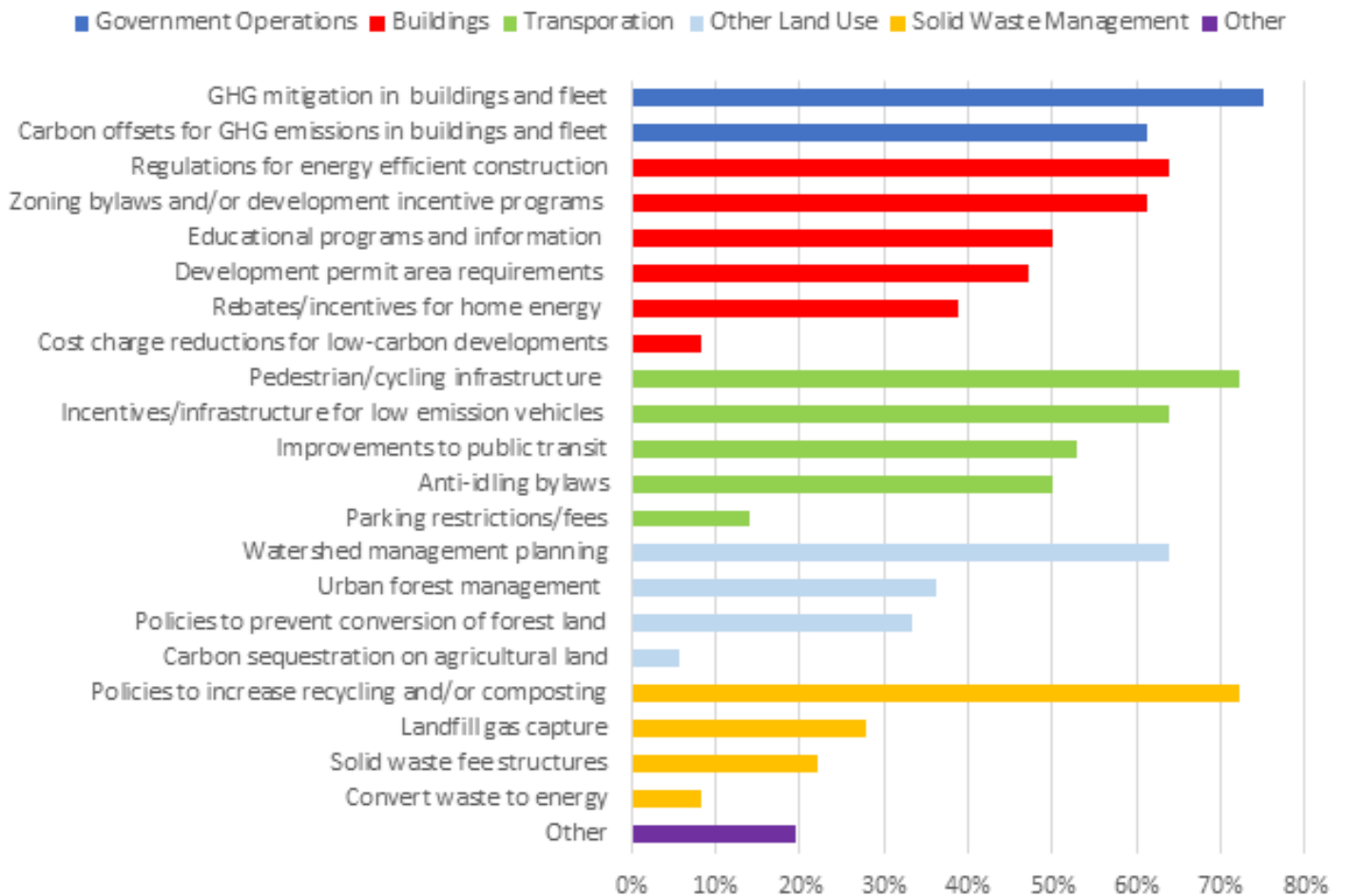


There is a high level for support for climate mitigation policies and practices

Municipalities and regional districts overall are highly supportive of taking action to mitigate climate change, and almost all have mitigation policies in place. Some of the most frequently mentioned priorities for climate change mitigation include: land use planning, green infrastructure, public transit, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, building standards including civic buildings, fleet management, tree and forest conservation, and general community emissions reductions.

Municipalities and regional districts have implemented mitigation policies across a range of sectors, including government operations, buildings, transportation, land use, and solid waste management. Policies exist in almost all municipalities (Figure 9. Municipal mitigation policies by sector); only two indicated they have no mitigation policies currently in place. Most policies are investment-like policies, followed by regulations and incentives. The most frequently selected policy options included GHG mitigation in buildings and fleet (75%), pedestrian/cycling infrastructure (75%), and policies to increase recycling and/or composting (72%). Respondents were given the choice to indicate other policies not included in the list of options. They identified policies such as asset management, flood/sea level rise impact and mitigation studies, use of bio-diesel or renewable natural gas, investments in urban forest/tree planting, public education, corporate catering related to lower impact food choices, and establishing environment committees.

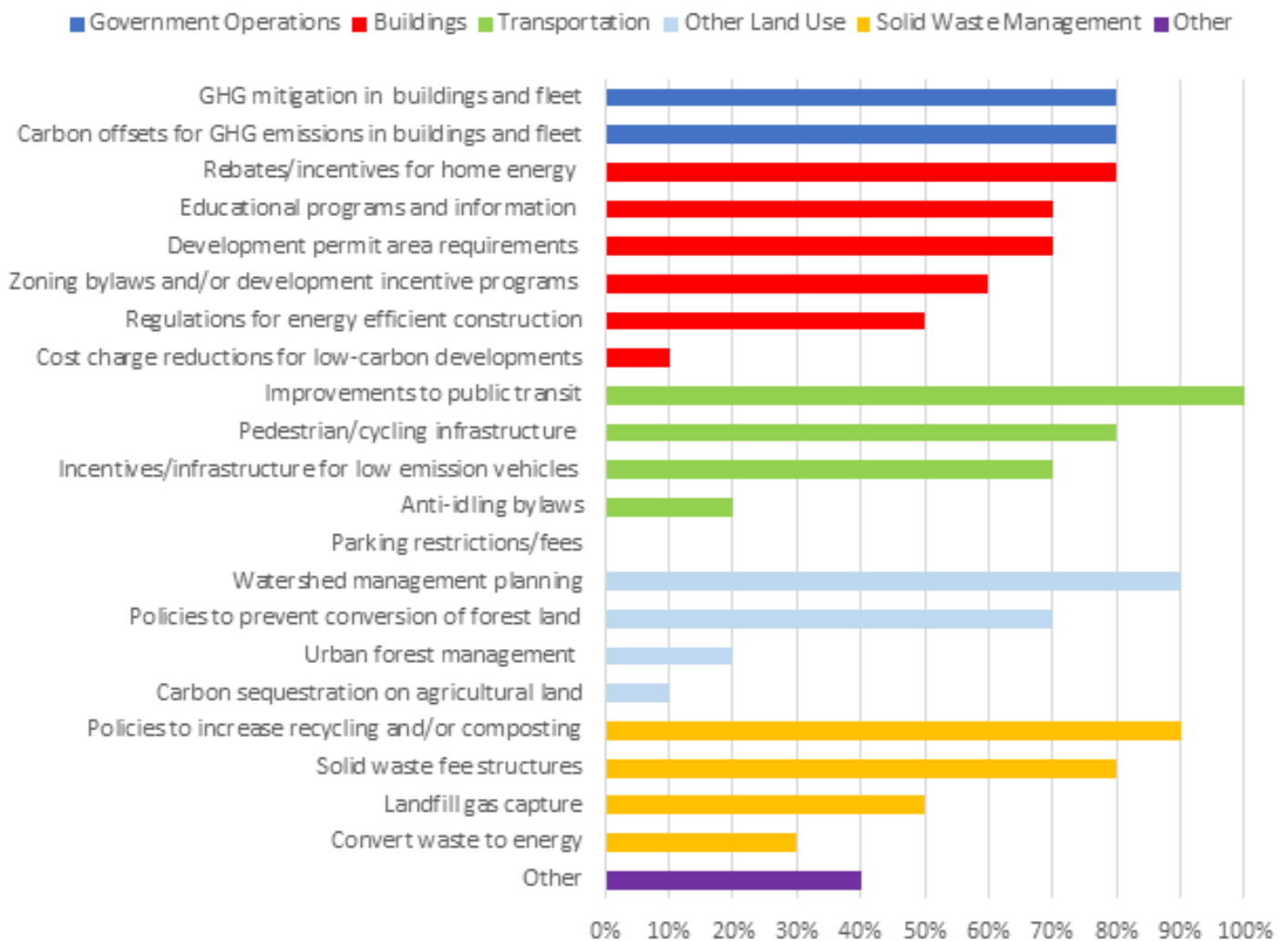
FIGURE 9. Municipal mitigation policies by sector



Climate change mitigation policies exist in all regional districts, across all sectors

Regional districts tend to have a higher number of mitigation policies in place compared to municipalities (average of 13 versus 9 for municipalities). The most frequently implemented policies in regional districts included improvements to public transit (100%), watershed management planning (90%), and policies to increase recycling and/or composting (90%). Differences in jurisdiction explain some of the differences in policies between regional districts as compared to municipalities; for example, regional districts tend to have more policies in the area of solid waste management. “Other” policies indicated by regional districts included water conservation measures, heat recovery, biosolids/woodwaste composting, integration of mitigation into plans including Official Community Plans and regional growth strategies, urban containment boundaries, emission reduction targets, and protection of Douglas fir.

FIGURE 10. Regional districts’ mitigation policies by sector



Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure have the highest support

When asked about community support for different policy types, respondents indicated the highest level of support for investments in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure (69%), GHG mitigation in civic buildings & fleet (69%), and improvements to public transit (67%). In regional districts, the policies with the highest support included pedestrian & cycling infrastructure, rebates/incentives for home energy upgrades, and watershed management planning (100% each). Government investment and incentives, as well as voluntary actions tend to receive higher support than regulations and pricing.

“Our staff is at capacity with existing work. We need more staff to manage new projects such as climate adaptation planning or even to finish the work on the list now.”

– Cumberland

It is uncommon to have dedicated staff working on climate issues

In terms of capacity, the majority of municipalities and regional districts do not have dedicated staff working on climate issues. Only 32% of municipalities and 40% of regional districts indicated that they have dedicated climate staff. Although the majority of municipalities do not have dedicated climate staff, four small municipalities do: Tofino, Ucluelet, Highlands, and Sechelt Indian Government District. Larger municipalities are more likely to have climate staff, with the four largest municipalities indicating that they all have dedicated staff. Regional districts with climate staff indicated they have between 1 to 4 staff.

There is a high level of support for climate adaptation policies

Similar to mitigation, municipalities and regional districts are overall highly supportive of taking action to help their communities adapt to climate change, and almost all have adaptation policies in place. Some of the top priorities for climate change adaptation mentioned in open-ended comments included emergency management planning, land use planning, infrastructure upgrades, green infrastructure, forest management and conservation, watershed management, asset management, water conservation, urban forests, food security and local food production, civic building standards, air quality, and planning for sea level rise. All regional districts and all but three municipalities have adaptation policies.

Support for adaptation policies varies

In municipalities, the most supported policies included storm water management (77%), emergency management planning (71%), and food security programs (71%). In regional districts, the policies with the most support included emergency management planning (100%), integration of adaptation into OCP/plans (100%), and lot level resiliency such as shade structures, rain gardens, rain barrels etc. (90%). One respondent noted that it is very difficult to gauge community support for the various policy options. Also, it was noted that in the case of regional districts, support can vary widely between communities.

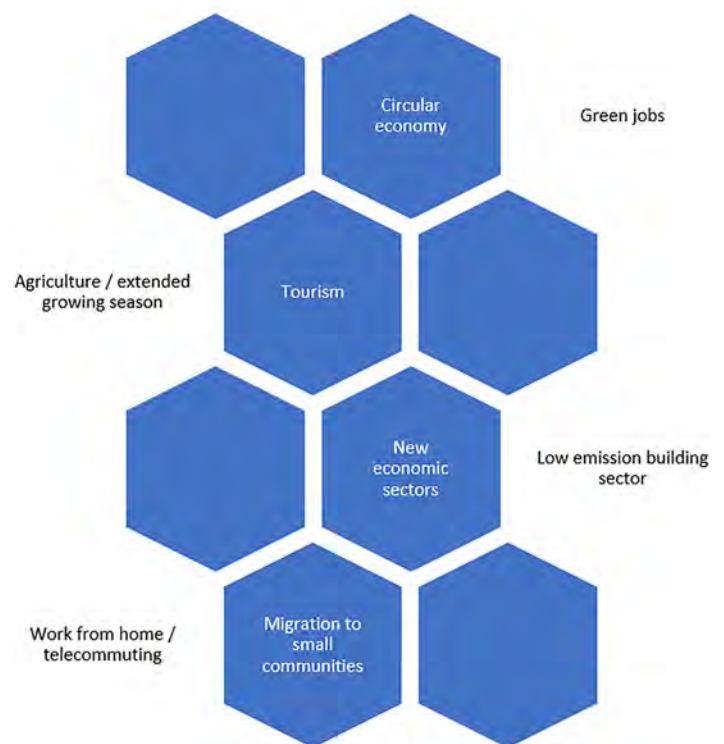
Barriers to action include a lack of financial resources and a lack of staff

Despite high levels of support for climate change mitigation and adaptation, local governments face a number of barriers to action, with lack of financial resources indicated as the top barrier for both municipalities and regional district. The second major barrier for municipalities is lack of staff capacity. Small municipalities face additional barriers including lack of expertise and limited data. Regional districts also tend to face additional barriers as compared to municipalities, struggling with limited authority and feeling a stronger lack of senior government support.

Opportunities for Climate Action: Green growth, clean energy, new jobs, rural vitality

Although responding to climate change is a huge challenge and local governments face a number of barriers to climate action, the climate crisis also presents opportunities for the future. Almost half (49%) of municipalities see new opportunities for their community as the climate changes; another 17% answered “maybe.” Among regional districts, 70% anticipate new opportunities and 30% answered “maybe.” Some examples of opportunities mentioned by respondents include building a circular economy, green jobs, benefits to agriculture including an extended growing season, tourism, new economic sectors such as the low emissions building sector, work from home/telecommuting opportunities, and increased migration to small communities, such as those in the VICC region.

Figure 11 Opportunities for climate action



Our shared future

Nearly all communities in the VICC region are already experiencing hazards and impacts related to changing weather patterns caused by climate change and most expect these hazards and impacts to continue and/or worsen into the future. Both municipalities and regional districts are overwhelmingly supportive of climate action, with 100% of local governments surveyed answering that climate change mitigation and adaptation are

either important or somewhat important to

their community. The vast majority of municipalities and all regional districts also indicated that their communities are supportive of implementing mitigation and adaptation policies. Most municipalities and all regional districts have implemented policies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the numbers and types of policies varying by geography and by size of municipality. Despite these high levels of support for climate action, local governments face multiple barriers, particularly related to lack of financial resources and staffing capacity.

A lack of funding is a major barrier to local governments when it comes to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Limited authority and lack of senior government support were also important barriers, especially for regional districts, and survey respondents called for more regulatory and financial support from senior levels of government. This support could help build essential low-carbon infrastructure and fund community-level modelling projections to assess localized climate change impacts as well as the impacts of various policies on GHG emissions and costs to choose among most effective and efficient municipal and regional climate policies.

“Remarkable response to COVID by all levels of govt and by the public suggests we are capable of rising to the climate challenge. COVID has reinforced concerns about and is encouraging changes to address self-sufficiency (e.g., reliance on imported food and tourism).”

– Islands Trust

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Notes

ⁱ The government of BC's land use data may overestimate the share of old growth forest by including low productivity bog and subalpine forests; they should thus be interpreted with a note of caution (Ancient Forest Alliance, 2016). Furthermore, there is no commonly accepted definition of an old growth forest but that "most of B.C.'s coastal forests are considered to be old growth if they contain trees that are more than 250 years old. Some types of Interior forests are considered to be old growth if they contain trees that are more than 140 years old" (Government of British Columbia, 2020a). A report by Price et al. (Price, Holt, Bio, & Daust, 2020) on BC's old growth forest disaggregates old growth forest by different sizes and across different ecosystems (biogeoclimatic variants) and productivity classes. By their assessment, the vast majority (80%) of old growth forest in BC is comprised of small trees and only 3% of BC's remaining forests support large trees (Price et al., 2020).

ⁱⁱ Recently logged timber is that which was harvested within the past 20 years, or older if tree cover is less than 40% and under 6 metres in height. Selectively logged timber does not have a defined timeline, it is determined by viewing aerial imagery (areas where the practice of selective logging can be clearly interpreted on the Landsat TM image and TRIM aerial photography).

ⁱⁱⁱ Dependency ratio calculated according to Stats Can age groups of 0-19, 19-64, and 65+.

Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities: November 6th Resilience Summit Outcomes



Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate
Leadership Plan (VICC-CLP) Steering Committee
viccclp.com

We respectfully acknowledge that the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region is located upon the traditional unceded territories of many different Indigenous peoples.

Our climate change challenge

Climate change is a complex and ongoing challenge facing communities across the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region (VICC). By 2050, it is anticipated that British Columbia will experience:

- Temperature increases of 1.3 to 2.7 °C;
- Increases in average annual rainfall from 2% to 12%, with summers being increasingly drier;
- Loss of glaciers resulting in changes to fish habitat, declining quality and storage of drinking water; and
- Continued rising sea levels along most of B.C.'s coast, more frequent wildfires and rainfalls.

Climate change will impact all sectors of society and the economy now and in the future. Communities large and small, rural and urban have adopted a range of initiatives and there are a growing number of regional plans that aim to scale up these efforts to promote co-ordinated actions. Climate change impacts are experienced at a local level, yet existing municipal and regional district governance structures can constrain climate action plans, making planning at a broader regional scale essential. This is why we need to plan at a Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities wide scale.

Our communities are connected in tackling this challenge. Our overarching goal is for all our climate actions to increase community resilience across the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities region, which in turn will better prepare our communities to navigate climate challenges.



The plan

The **Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan Steering Committee** (VICC CLP SC) was convened by three Vancouver Island Mayors—Lisa Helps (Victoria), Josie Osborne (Tofino), Michelle Staples (Duncan)—to catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation throughout the region. The VICC CLP SC includes representatives from each of the regional districts on the island and the Sunshine Coast (urban and rural), working together to produce a regional plan that will catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation projects and activities throughout the coastal region.

This shares the outcomes and a preliminary set of goals and actions that were jointly developed with participants in the VICC's Community Resilience Summit which took place on November 6th 2020. Over 150 elected officials and members of staff from across the VICC region engaged in a series of workshops to begin the first steps of developing a Climate Action and Resilience Plan to 2030 for the island and coastal communities. Two additional engagement opportunities will contribute to the development of the plan: a youth climate summit and an opportunity for Indigenous-informed Indigenous engagement.

Equity and Social Justice

Equity and social justice principles strive for a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognized and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair. This includes: Accessibility (what programs or services are truly accessible, particularly to those without financial means) and Choice (who has agency to choose and what impacts the ability to choose?).

GOAL 1:

A social justice and equity lens must be placed on all climate change decision making

- Develop a social justice charter in order to ensure that the VICC's work is grounded in a vision of climate justice and equity.
- Establish an enabling a space for those with lived experience to contribute, creating an accountability structure to inform what is meant by 'equity & social justice', developing a clear picture of the impacts, etc.
- Ensure that actions/policies/etc. distribute the benefits of climate mitigation and adaptation. This may include reducing energy poverty and rent/demovictions with retrofit policies, designing sliding scales for financial incentives, defining and supporting food security, access to housing, expansion of public transit, and eliminating the unequal burdens caused by climate change.

GOAL 2:

By 2021 there is a framework established to ensure that the voices at the planning and decision making tables that develop this Island and Coastal Community Climate Strategy are diverse and inclusive

- **Diversify voices and facilitate equal participation:** de-stigmatize those in the community needing support, encourage youth voices and participation, remove barriers for youth, BIPOC, LGBTQ, and women to have a say at the table and get into leadership positions, and design policy for all working and/or planning tables that clearly identifies who has to be represented.
- **Identify and invite diverse groups/voices to participate:** measure equity and set goals (who is involved, are our systems changing to be representative of and responsive to diversity in community?), exploring language and engagement practices.

- **Improve engagement and diversity:** Set expectations for participation, identify facilitators, educate students, develop training in intersectional equality and accessibility, provide education about climate justice, increase opportunities for public engagement, remove financial barriers to participation and secure funding to support participation.

GOAL 3

Indigenous priorities must be centered within the planning and implementation process

- Recognize and acknowledge reconciliation and Indigenous knowledge in planning and decision-making from the beginning. Reconciliation involves recognition of history and centering Indigenous priorities within the planning process.
- Meaningfully include Indigenous Peoples in decision-making and consultation, including fair compensation for their involvement. Incorporate UNDRIP/DRIPPA/Truth & Reconciliation into the work. First Nations must have a say in decisions about their land.
- Recognise colonization and actively work towards decolonizing practices of government.
- Protect ecosystems and lands, particularly with regards to First Nations food systems.

It is important that a diversity of voices inform decision making.

The unique opportunities and barriers facing First Nations communities, as well as the ongoing traditional relationship with the land, mean that First Nations must be participants in the process. It is also important to understand the unique circumstances and needs of different populations, including children, youth, families living on lower incomes, renters, and those living on the edge, recognising that there are differences in how people can manage when a crisis occurs.

Healthy Communities and Social Resilience

Resilience is the ability to *persist, adapt, and transform*, and is a characteristic of healthy communities. We need to work together to prioritize and foreground this to senior levels of government as part of Climate Mitigation and Adaptation planning. In everything we do we must support the health and well-being of our most vulnerable populations; this will increase overall community resilience and a community's ability to better withstand the shocks and disruption that climate change will bring.

GOAL 1:

By 2030 everyone across the VICC has access to adequate health and wellbeing supports as per the social and ecological determinants of health

- Establish a VICC housing corporation to achieve economies of scale in building new zero emissions affordable housing.
- Set up opportunities for health professionals, elected officials and municipal staff to work together and share best practices; enhance information sharing through community health networks.
- Facilitate development of health and wellness hubs (e.g. recreation centres, food banks) where community groups collaborate with health professionals.
- Support all communities to incorporate the social determinants of health into local decision-making.
- Take a Health in All Policies approach to municipal (land use) planning.
- Island Health, BC Housing and the First Nations Health Authority develop a VICC wide partnership to address unmet needs.

GOAL 2:

By 2030 all communities on VICC use a common measurement of wellbeing and there is a 50% improvement from when we started measuring in 2022

- Determine the most suitable and EASIEST way to measure that is also culturally appropriate and incorporates Indigenous ways of knowing.
- Work through Community Health Networks (an existing entity focused on social determinants of health) to implement the wellbeing measurement function.
- VICC communities agree to using a common wellbeing measurement by Dec 31, 2021, to be used going forward.

- VICC communities will start measuring wellbeing (using the agreed-to measurement), and provide an initial report by Dec 31, 2022.
- Following the first set of reports, VICC communities will agree on which metric(s) to focus on collectively.

GOAL 3:

By 2030 we have a VICC wide emergency management plan with actions that achieve 100% resilience and address the needs of priority populations.

- Establish a VICC wide emergency management and resilience planning body/table to develop an Emergency Management Plan for the VICC region.
- Ensure that the VICC emergency management plan explicitly incorporates the needs of vulnerable populations and uses an equity lens.
- Advocate to Emergency Management BC for a broader scope in the emergency planning process that incorporates people who are already homeless or displaced in emergency management plans.
- Engage impacted people through participation in the planning process and in Emergency Response debrief sessions.
- Connect residents VICC wide to share best practices on social resilience and emergency preparedness at the street or neighbourhood level.

All of the actions to achieve these goals require a culture shift and transformation from the way projects are funded to the way we develop policy.

Targets and benchmarks are critical to keep progress on track and hold ourselves accountable to the linkages between the health of people and the health of the environment. Buy-in and involvement from other community stakeholders (fire, police, hospitals, VIHA, etc.) will be critical to the success of these actions.

Food Security

Healthy food systems and ecosystems are the foundations of healthy communities. Food security entails universal access to safe, healthy, culturally-appropriate food all year around and across the region. An overarching goal is the achievement of food sovereignty, in which communities are taking an *active* role in co-managing their food systems to ensure that these systems express their values.

GOAL 1:

By 2022, all communities have access to resources to support embedding food policy into their policies and practices, and region-wide forums exist to support and scale up these actions

- Support every community to incorporate food (sovereignty/ security) into their planning and policies.
- Develop resources to inform leadership and staff about how this can be done.
- Establish forums for sharing community knowledge, advice, successes, and templates, and for identifying and lobbying for policy changes at other levels of government that would support this work.



GOAL 2:

We have complete local food systems that include infrastructure for production (growing, harvesting and processing), distribution and access by 2030, including the local knowledge and capacity to support them

- Support local growing and harvesting capacity, including access to lands and waters (develop land registries; innovative land-sharing programs; lobby for local access to and benefit from marine resources; develop research, training and knowledge transfer resources, etc.).
- Support local and regional processing and distribution capacity, at both household and regional scale (develop and support community kitchens; processing, storage, and distribution facilities; farmers markets, etc.).

- Enhance capacity by increasing learning and knowledge transfer about food systems, both to increase food literacy and to support those seeking to build careers, companies or organizations in sustainable food systems (reinvigorate farmers' institutes; develop new and expand existing educational programs to support food entrepreneurship and to braid local and Indigenous knowledge of food systems into courses and degrees).

GOAL 3:

Land and water-based ecosystems essential to food production are protected and restored region-wide by 2030

- Ensure ALR land is protected, and this is embedded in OCP and RGS language.
- Ensure that food systems are part of all land use planning and management.
- Advance the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and co-management agreements for important growing and harvesting areas, for marine as well as terrestrial species.
- Support and expand Indigenous Guardian Programs and other regional, place-based monitoring and stewardship initiatives that inform adaptation and serve as early warning systems for food safety.
- Develop systems for integrated community-based monitoring of productive ecosystems, and use this to shape adaptive management; ensure these processes consider connections and cumulative effects.
- Embed shoreline protection and restoration in OCPs to enhance "common" harvesting areas (with adequate monitoring for safety and to prevent overharvesting).

To be resilient, food systems need to be supported and organized across a variety of scales (household, neighborhood, community, regions) and they both require and support healthy lands and waters.

They also have the potential to help mitigate climate change and increase the resilience of communities to adapt to it. Prioritizing healthy lands and waters in all actions is essential. We need to recognize, respect, and develop synergistic relationships across First Nations' and Settler approaches to food systems. We can build upon the extraordinary variety of work that is already underway towards enhancing local, sustainable and resilient food systems.

Building resilient economies

A resilient economy is diverse, inclusive, and has the capacity to adapt and innovate.

We need to think regionally as we build economies that transition from unsustainable resource extraction and carbon dependant industries to resilient regional economies that support responsible energy use and can generate *more* employment and deliver *higher* returns.

GOAL 1:

By 2030 all municipalities in the VICC will invest in clean, renewable energy industry to diversify the economy and create jobs in the region

- Grand plan for municipalities and regional districts to electrify fleets:
 - Senior government commit to eliminate fossil fuels;
 - Support clean industry and tech, and research and development; and
 - Incentivize energy retrofits.
- Determine barriers to such investments:
 - Incentivize rural/urban/indigenous partnerships;
 - Incentivize revisions of OCPs to align with this goal; and
 - Work with provincial government to incentivize funding approaches.

GOAL 2:

By 2030 incentivize small businesses and rural communities through investing in tourism, innovation, and internet access

- Incentivize and support for cottage/small business industry start ups.
- Support Island Coast Economic Trust to start climate-related economic investment.
- Ensure funding is not administratively onerous.
- Invest in sustainable tourism (e.g. Forest Bathing).
- Invest in First Nation-led and owned tourism.
- Facilitate regional networking and regional project.

GOAL 3:

Develop policy framework for measuring success of resilient economies (emphasis on triple bottom line)

- Coordinate all local governments to use common framework to measure prosperity and economic resilience:
 - Monitor support in various programs;
 - Be sure communities have resources to do this work;
 - Create platform to share results;
 - Adopt triple bottom line framework; and
 - Train local governments to apply framework.

We have a vision for a greener, smarter, and more inclusive economy.

Environmentally sustainable businesses that use clean and renewable energy are fundamental to building resilient economies that can regenerate rapidly after stress, and will often improve their situation compared to the pre-shock world.



Circular Economy

A circular economy aims to eliminate waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate natural systems. In order to minimise the use of resource inputs and the creation of waste, pollution and carbon emissions, products of non-biological “technical materials” such as metals, plastics and synthetic chemicals are kept cycling in the economy through the design of systems that facilitate reuse, sharing, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling. Organic based biological materials are managed to ensure that at end-of-life they are properly decomposed to return nutrients to the environment to support the regeneration of natural systems.

GOAL 1:

Reduce 50% of food waste and divert 100% of organic material from landfill and incineration and by 2030

- Increase food waste reduction education for residential and commercial.
- Coordinate with forestry, restaurants and grocery stores to create new collection streams
- Ban organics from co-mingled waste streams.
- Establish organics processing infrastructure at all scales – rural, small and large municipalities.
- Capture forestry and industrial waste in the accounting of waste organic material.
- Refine regulations to improve quality of composted materials and their distribution.
- Develop local food production and supply chains.



GOAL 2:

Reduce per-capita disposal of material and consumer good waste to 150kg (85% Diversion) by 2030

- Increase and highlight re-use, repair, rental and sharing skills and services.
- Advocacy for right to repair.
- Regulations to decrease packaging waste/ban single-use items.
- Expand and reform extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs - recovery standards and percentage of recycled materials, incentives for redesign to support circularity.
- Increase access to recycling for rural communities through strengthening EPR programs and service levels.
- Address Industrial, Commercial & Institutional and Construction & Demolition waste streams.

GOAL 3:

Re-localize supply chains and increase local circular business

- Establish VICC circular procurement policy and systems.
- Increase skills training for trades and local resource manufacturing and food production.
- Establish hubs for re-use, sharing and repairing.
- Maximize local food chain capacity and remove regulatory and capacity barriers, such as over-restrictions of FoodSafe meant for large industrial food processing but penalizing small, local suppliers.
- Develop educational campaign promoting local services and products.
- Examine supply management.
- Incentivize and support circular business development.

There is great potential for impact.

According to a 2009 US EPA study, 50% of total Green House Gas emissions result from the provision of food and goods (products and packaging). These emissions are accrued at each step of the item's value chain from material extraction, production, transportation, consumption and disposal. By systemically addressing how we manage materials by reducing extraction of raw materials, re-localizing supply chains, designing materials for re-use, repair and recycle, and reducing waste, large reductions in GHG emissions across sectors can be achieved – by some estimates, up to 2/3rds of the emissions in the provision of food and goods.



Resilient Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise; infrastructure resilience is the ability to reduce the magnitude and/or duration of disruptive events. The effectiveness of a resilient infrastructure or enterprise depends upon its ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and/or rapidly recover from a shock.

GOAL 1:

Resilient Water Management

- Develop plans to assess capacity, durability and redundancy of water management systems regarding runoff, drinking water and non-potable water under potential climate change scenarios.
- Collaborate to identify capacity, jurisdiction, treatment, existing water uses, etc.
- Develop a common model of risk assessment.
- Integrate an understanding of systems, both natural and built, into water management.
- Ensure preparedness of existing systems.
- Develop integrated watershed management.

GOAL 2:

Resilient transportation Infrastructure for all modes of transportation

- Identify modes of transport, hubs, corridors, safety nets.
- Institute broad collaborative planning.
- Develop a united front to lobby province.
- Free electrified transit.
- Shared roads for all modes.
- Lobby to change MOTI's operating principles, road definitions.
- Lobby TC public transportation infrastructure.
- Improve data sharing.

GOAL 3:

Identify Infrastructure needs (both new and replacement) and funding

- Develop plans to assess risks and redundancy of infrastructure for transport of people, goods, resources, etc. under potential climate change scenarios.
- New building planning should be multifunction.
- Increase capacity to deal with as much waste processing locally as possible, including recycling, salvage, etc.
- Identify and upgrade existing infrastructure.
- Develop integrated plans on how to recover / rebuild after major events.
- Develop new funding models (new taxation tools), criteria that support the development of resilient infrastructure.
- Planning for collapse.

We need new ways of working to support infrastructure resilience.

We need flexible and scaleable projects. We need to support and celebrate the leaders and champions and to develop community education and consultation. We need better resources and information sharing. We need to collaborate with industry, trades, communities, volunteer groups (e.g. streamkeepers), First Nations, labour unions and youth.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure incorporates both the natural environment and engineered systems to provide clean water, conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide a wide array of benefits to people's health and wellbeing. Green infrastructure solutions can be applied at the scale of a building through to the broad landscape. Examples of green infrastructure practices at a local level are permeable pavements, green roofs, and rainwater harvesting systems while across a landscape the preservation and restoration of an interconnected network of natural and semi-natural areas is key.

GOAL 1:

By 2030, embed the use of sustainable, renewable materials and permeable living surfaces into all new and retrofit built infrastructure to achieve 100% increase from 2020 levels

- Think of roads as pathways for the whole community and design for mixed-use active transport, reduced impermeability, and protection and restoration of natural assets.
- Expand the use of green roofs, carbon sequestering materials in building supplies, rain gardens, bioswales etc. in new builds and retrofits.

GOAL 2:

By 2030 ecosystem-based management underpins all land use in VICC to maintain and restore healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and to optimize the rebuilding of carbon stores

- Expand the protection and restoration of natural areas and ecological features.
- Develop water sustainability plans for all watersheds.
- Ensure local communities and First Nations are part of forest management decision making.
- Design and manage for ecological connectivity on the local and regional scale.

GOAL 3:

By 2030, VICC local governments will have integrated natural amenity accounting

- Develop VICC-wide data inventory of natural assets and amenities.
- Ensure that natural amenity accounting is developed with key stakeholders--including First Nations--and the data is shared in order to improve decision making and track progress.

Green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to reducing flood risk and the impacts of heat and drought while providing many community benefits such as carbon storage, clean drinking water, fish and wildlife, and spaces to recreate.

Meeting these goals will take strong advocacy to communicate and coordinate across jurisdictions and First Nations. Key stakeholders include the ministries of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Environment and Climate Strategy, Finance, Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Municipal Affairs, and Transportation and Infrastructure, the AVICC, UBCM, First Nations communities, the BC Products Stewardship Council and the CRD interprovincial working group.



Buildings: getting to net zero through retrofits and new builds

Resilient and zero-emissions buildings can help achieve climate goals, reduce home-heating costs, and enable new skills-building for construction workers. Both emissions reductions and adaptation to changing climate conditions need to be accounted for when planning new builds and upgrading existing infrastructure. This is critical for mitigation.

GOAL 1:

By 2030, existing buildings will reduce energy usage and GHGs by 40%. All new retrofits must consider resiliency and adaptation.

- Develop retrofit financing tools (like PACE - Property Assessed Clean Energy) that work for everyone and cover all types of buildings (residential, commercial, industrial, institutional).
- Generate research-based metrics and targets that can be used to track progress, improved access and quality of data, and enhance capacity of energy advisors to support these targets.
- Create an advocacy, education and action plan for all local governments through AVICC, including hazard mapping to support appropriate land use and resilience planning.
- Lobby provincial government to pass legislation to ban oil heating, mandate point of sale building energy labelling and a building benchmarking program for large buildings.
- Work with communities to develop official retrofit programs plans, including a retrofit builders training program, one stop retrofit program for homeowners, and regional teams to facilitate, educate and support public uptake of rebate programs.

GOAL 2:

By 2030, all new buildings will be net-zero and resilient to the localized impacts of climate change.

- Alter the step code to include GHG emissions.
- All VICC Communities adopt step code by 2025.
- Local governments require low carbon heating and cooling systems through building bylaws (Greenhouse Gas Inventory, GHGi).
- Advise and offer training to local developers and builders to meet this goal.
- Adopt hazard lands development permit areas (sea level rise, wildfire interface, steep slope).
- Adopt development permit area guidelines for energy efficiency.

GOAL 3:

By 2025 (at the latest) we have the capacity across the island to support net zero and resilient buildings.

- Develop enough expertise to achieve goals 1 and 2 through increased training programs and green qualifications and licensing of trade.
- Ensure that a broad cross section of community is recruited (better representation of women and other equity seeking groups), including potentially workers from the fossil fuel sector.
- Ensure that funding and capacity for retrofits is in place and that building owners are aware of who can do the work in their communities.
- Develop programs and networks to support net-zero and climate resilient buildings, including energy auditor programs available remote communities, and net-zero and climate resilient building awards.

Switching to low-carbon technologies and increasing energy efficiency of buildings can move us forward to a future where buildings produce no emissions at all.

Regulatory changes, advocacy initiatives, and financing tools can help communities save money on heating, create new 'green' jobs, and be prepared to resist upcoming climate-related natural hazards.

Decarbonised transport

Transportation is one of the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions in the region. In line with the provincial CleanBC strategy, the region needs to move to a zero-emission vehicle future with widely available charging infrastructure. We also need to connect all communities via transit, railway, and biking to allow for decreased reliance on driving and complete streets development of communities across the region.

GOAL 1:

By 2025, have accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure for personal & commercial transport in all VICC communities in all sectors

- Build EV infrastructure including acquiring land that can be used for Level 3 charging.
- Collaborate with the private sector including partnering with car share and ride sharing companies to electrify their fleets.
- Develop a secure written agreement with all regional districts (RDs) to build and coordinate the charging system with support from BC Hydro and the provincial government.
- Increase broad education on the benefits of electrification, existing policy and costs of installing stations—use data and technology to increase support for EVs.
- Prioritize areas with greater density of apartments to have more access to public charging infrastructure—this infrastructure placement should be informed by good transportation data and projections.
- Provide rebates for charging infrastructure to home owners and developers.
- Use provincial post-COVID and other funding (e.g., CleanBC) to invest into EV charging stations in existing attached buildings.
- Develop regulations/bylaws for new developments requiring installation of EV charging stations.



GOAL 2:

By 2030, connect communities via biking, transit, and railway corridors and EV rentals in VICC

- Create an intergovernmental task force to model interconnectivity infrastructure.
- Develop public-private partnerships to enable collaborations between BC Transit, BC Ferries and the private sector (i.e., car share, e-mobility, rental companies).
- Enable full cost accounting/economic analysis of different transportation options and communication to public (i.e., account for co-benefits including safety, benefits for tourism and environmental benefits).
- Develop zoning requirements to enable EV rentals in appropriate places.
- Lobby BC and federal governments to develop a regional transportation plan and to receive their support/buy-in.
- Learn from leading jurisdictions on how such interconnectivity can be achieved and what policies and governance institutions need to be developed.

GOAL 3:

By 2025, allow for only complete streets design approach including transit-oriented development, densification and access to services

- Provide education to governments (i.e., elected representatives and staff) and developers about the benefits of this design approach and how it can be implemented.
- Write these principles into Official Community Plans (OCPs).
- Offer tax incentives or benefits to projects/developments that use this approach.
- Enable municipalities to buy land next to future transit/railway corridors to build housing, and then use money and profits to fund sustainable transportation projects.
- Lobby the provincial government for legislation mandating the implementation of these approaches by every level of government across the province—BC's Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure can be used an active partner.

Electrifying vehicles and connecting communities via zero-emission transportation modes will lead to substantial environmental and socio-economic benefits.

To accelerate the transition, the region needs to have an integrated regional transportation plan. The plan will enable conversations with the provincial government to seek funding for EV charging infrastructure in all types of buildings, implementing new infrastructure to connect communities by rail and biking, and developing communities in a transit-oriented manner.

Active Transportation

Active transportation is central to health and wellbeing. Active transportation is any human-powered transportation like walking and cycling; it can be combined with other modes like transit. Investing in infrastructure to support active transportation protects the safety and wellbeing of friends and family and creates liveable spaces. Increasing active transportation can reduce trips made by vehicles and help us to meet our climate goals. Presently around 80% of GHG emissions in the province are from energy of which half are from transportation.

GOAL 1:

Two-thirds of trips to be made by active transport by 2030

- Mandate Vision Zero: No traffic fatalities.
- Update provincial road construction guidelines using Vision Zero, System Safety approach to road design, AAA (all ages and abilities) lens, prioritizing vulnerable road users and active transportation.
- Support cultural shift to active transportation in education and training.
- Reallocate street space for active transportation.
- Secure reliable, stable multi-year funding to implement Active Transport planning.
- Ensure that there is a rural lens on Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) road guidance. Rural communities face different constraints and needs.
- Establish a VICC platform for shared policy learning.

GOAL 2:

Implement integrated regional transportation planning (inclusive of active transport) by 2030

- Jointly address Interregional planning gaps and identify priorities.
- Develop regional Memorandum of Understanding to convene municipalities and Electoral Areas at the Regional District Level to conduct regional transportation planning.
- Advocate for the Province to invest in inter-community connections for active transportation and transit. Ensure Province and BC Transit prioritize active transportation and inter-jurisdictional connections.
- Advocate for dedicated funding for integrated transportation planning across functionally connected areas. Establish fiscal incentives for joint planning and transportation infrastructure delivery.

GOAL 3:

Ensure dedicated, stable, long-term funding for active transport by 2025

- Advocate for safe pathway maintenance to be covered in maintenance agreements and contracts to reduce barriers for small communities.
- Adopt fiscal incentives for employees who commute by active transport.
- Advocate for 1% of sales tax to municipalities.
- Advocate for a usage-based insurance system for vehicles in order to incentivise a reduction in vehicle use.
- Advocate for an increase in Federal Gas Tax funding.
- Advocate for green infrastructure stimulus for active transport from the federal government.

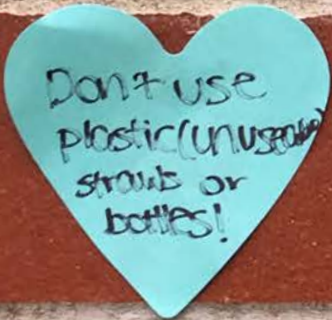


We have the vision and the will. We know what to do. We need the capacity and agency to pull it off!

Upper level governments, in particular the Provincial government, set the incentives for investment in active transportation. This includes regulatory and implementation guidance that is often out of date or contradictory when it comes to active transportation. Too often incentives are set against active transportation. We need solutions that work for communities of all sizes—rural and urban.



Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities: Youth Summit Outcomes



Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan (VICC-CLP) Steering Committee
viccclp.com

We respectfully acknowledge that the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region is located upon the traditional unceded territories of many different Indigenous peoples.

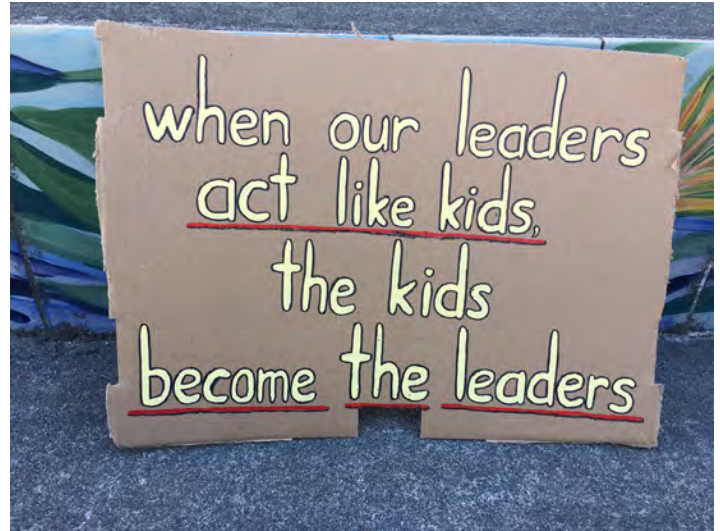
Our climate change challenge

Climate change is a complex and ongoing challenge facing communities across the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Region (VICC). By 2050, it is anticipated that British Columbia will experience:

- Temperature increases of 1.3 to 2.7 °C;
- Increases in average annual rainfall from 2% to 12%, with summers being increasingly drier;
- Loss of glaciers resulting in changes to fish habitat, declining quality and storage of drinking water; and
- Continued rising sea levels along most of B.C.'s coast, more frequent wildfires and rainfalls.

Climate change will impact all sectors of society and the economy now and in the future. Communities large and small, rural and urban have adopted a range of initiatives and there are a growing number of regional plans that aim to scale up these efforts to promote co-ordinated actions. Climate change impacts are experienced at a local level, yet existing municipal and regional district governance structures can constrain climate action plans, making planning at a broader regional scale essential. This is why we need to plan at a Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities wide scale.

Our communities are connected in tackling this challenge. Our overarching goal is for all our climate actions to increase community resilience across the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities region, which in turn will better prepare our communities to navigate climate challenges.



Young people are leading the charge.

Today's young people are crucial to building a fairer, more sustainable future.



The plan

The **Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan Steering Committee** (VICC CLP SC) was convened by three Vancouver Island Mayors—Lisa Helps (Victoria), Josie Osborne (Tofino), Michelle Staples (Duncan)—to catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation throughout the region. The VICC CLP SC includes representatives from each of the regional districts on the island and the Sunshine Coast (urban and rural), working together to produce a regional plan that will catalyze climate mitigation and adaptation projects and activities throughout the coastal region.

This document shares the **VICC's Climate Action Goals: Youth** across several thematic areas. These goals were jointly developed with participants in the VICC's Youth Climate Forum which took place May 8th, 2021. This event brought together youth and young adults between the ages of 13-26 to collaborate on visions, goals, and actions for the region.

Theme 1: Equity, Healthy Communities, Social Justice, and Social Resilience

Resilience is the ability to *persist, adapt, and transform*, and is a characteristic of healthy communities. In everything we do, we must support the health and well-being of our most vulnerable populations; this will increase overall community resilience and a community's ability to better withstand the shocks and disruption that climate change will bring.

Equity and social justice principles strive for a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognized and protected, and decisions are made in fair ways. This includes Accessibility (what programs or services are truly accessible, particularly to those without financial means) and Choice (who has the agency to choose and what impacts the ability to choose?).

GOAL 1:

Live according to the principles of UNDRIP

- Ensure that the principles of UNDRIP are upheld;
- Ensure that communities are connected and that they work together to protect the environment;
- Recognize and acknowledge reconciliation and Indigenous knowledge in planning and decision-making from the beginning. Reconciliation involves recognition of history and centering Indigenous priorities within the planning process;
- Develop principles and legislation so that lands and waters have the opportunity to be recognised as living beings with rights.

GOAL 2:

By 2030, a social justice and equity lens must be placed on all climate change decision making

- Ensure that no one is unhoused in BC by 2025 and ensure that everyone has enough food;
- Ensure there is equitable access to mitigate climate emissions for everyone;
- Develop better mental health resources and education in schools, universities, institutions, and workplaces;
- Research barriers to taking climate action and ensure that these are considered in climate mitigation and adaptation policies;
- Implement Green New Deals across municipalities.

GOAL 3:

Promote more education and equal opportunities for people to act and live in harmony with land, waters and people

- Develop more resources and educational materials for individuals to be sustainable, ensuring throughout that people feel empowered through the educational system;
- Develop alternative economies so that people do not have to choose between a healthy environment or a healthy economy;
- Develop more opportunities for outdoor education schemes for all age ranges;
- Establish more opportunities for people to spend time outdoors to aid health conditions;
- Ensure that climate science is included in every school's curriculums;
- Diversify voices and facilitate equal participation: de-stigmatize those in the community needing support, encourage youth voices and participation, remove barriers for youth, BIPOC, LGBTQ, and women to have a say at the table and get into leadership positions, and design policy for all working and/or planning tables that clearly identifies who has to be represented.

All of the actions to achieve these goals require a culture shift and transformation from the way projects are funded to the way we develop policy. We think it is important that a diversity of voices inform decision making.



Theme 2: Food Security and Sovereignty

Healthy food systems and ecosystems are the foundations of healthy communities.

Food security entails universal access to safe, healthy, culturally-appropriate food all year round and across the region. An overarching goal is the achievement of food sovereignty, in which communities are taking an active role in co-managing their food systems to ensure that these systems express their values.

GOAL 1:

By 2025, most of our food is from the island and grown sustainably

- Grow food in public areas wherever possible and equip communities with the policies and financial means to get this started;
- Work with the province and federal government to support the development of kelp farming;
- Develop a programme where every school can set up a community garden;
- Advocate that local universities and institutions invest in and research cultivated meats;
- Encourage the phasing out and banning of fish farms;
- Establish forums for sharing community knowledge.

GOAL 2:

By 2022, all communities have access to resources to support embedding food policy into their policies and practices

- Ensure First Nations can harvest important food sources;
- Reduce cost barriers for the new generation of farmers (ecosystem service enhancement).

GOAL 3:

By 2030, land and water-based ecosystems that are essential to food production are protected and restored region-wide

- Ensure Agricultural Land Reserve (ARL) is protected and increased its productivity;
- Encourage landlords to allow (and encourage) renters to grow their own food;
- Ensure that food systems are part of all land use planning and management;
- Advance the creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and co-management agreements for important growing and harvesting areas.

To be resilient, food systems need to be supported and organized across a variety of scales (household, neighborhood, community, regions) and they both require and support healthy lands and waters.

They also have the potential to help mitigate climate change and increase the resilience of communities to adapt to it. Prioritizing healthy lands and waters in all actions is essential. We need to recognize, respect, and develop synergistic relationships across First Nations' and Settler approaches to food systems. We can build upon the extraordinary variety of work that is already underway towards enhancing local, sustainable and resilient food systems.



Theme 3: Circular Economy

A circular economy aims to eliminate waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, and regenerate natural systems. To minimise the use of resource inputs and the creation of waste, pollution and carbon emissions, products of non-biological “technical materials” such as metals, plastics and synthetic chemicals are kept cycling in the economy through the design of systems that facilitate reuse, sharing, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling. Organic-based biological materials are managed to ensure that at end-of-life they are properly decomposed to return nutrients to the environment to support the regeneration of natural systems.

GOAL 1:

By 2025, reduce 50% of food waste and divert 95% of organic material from landfill and incineration

- Legislate to ensure that businesses dispose properly of their waste;
- Learn from and build upon existing models that work for reducing and redirecting food waste;
- Develop efficient and effective composting systems that are required in all schools;
- Establish better educational materials on how to manage food waste and compost for residential and commercial properties;
- Provide greater access and funding for recycling depots in more parts of cities and rural areas;
- Coordinate with forestry, restaurants and grocery stores to create new collection streams;
- Ban organics from co-mingled waste streams;
- Coordinate compost audits with farmers;
- Discourage ‘throw-away’ culture, and where it exists, ensure that there are means for people to re-use safely.

GOAL 2:

By 2023, ban all plastic packaging and mandate that all sellable goods are either recyclable or reusable

- Develop alternative materials which are less energy-intensive;
- Legislate that packaging be compostable or re-usable (see Good Natured Products Inc);
- Develop regulations to decrease packaging waste/ban single-use items;
- Establish a strategy to manage ‘bioplastics’.

GOAL 3:

Support communities via education and opportunities to grow more, compost more, and promote circular economies

- Support more education programmes around composting, recycling and reusing;
- Create programmes for students to connect with farmers;
- Encourage institutions, workplaces and businesses to promote multi-use products and/or compostable items;
- Devote sufficient funding so that local circular businesses can thrive;
- Encourage more food growing areas in urban spaces.

There is great potential for impact.

According to a 2009 US EPA study, 50% of total Green House Gas emissions are from the provision of food and goods (products and packaging). These emissions are accrued at each step of the item's value chain from material extraction, production, transportation, consumption and disposal. By systemically addressing how we manage materials by reducing extraction of raw materials, re-localizing supply chains, designing materials for re-use, repair and recycle, and reducing waste, large reductions in GHG emissions across sectors can be achieved – by some estimates, up to 2/3rds of the emissions in the provision of food and goods.



Theme 4: Green and Resilient Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise; infrastructure resilience is the ability to reduce the magnitude and/or duration of disruptive events. The effectiveness of a resilient infrastructure or enterprise depends upon its ability to anticipate, absorb, adapt to, and/or rapidly recover from a shock.

Green infrastructure incorporates both the natural environment and engineered systems to provide clean water, conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide a wide array of benefits to people's health and wellbeing. Green infrastructure solutions can be applied at the scale of a building through to the broad landscape.

GOAL 1:

To preserve, protect, fund and restore 80% of essential natural assets and carbon sinks by 2030 (e.g. wetlands, salt marshes, old-growth, kelp forests)

- By 2022, all old-growth forests and sensitive ecosystems are protected and their health is continuously monitored;
- Expand co-management of natural areas with local First Nations;
- Develop conservation and restoration of native ecosystems (e.g. Garry Oak meadows, wetlands, forests);
- Develop regional care of marine ecosystems for local seafood;
- Monitor populations of key species;
- Host invasive species removal and native plant propagation in collaboration with First Nations.



GOAL 2:

By 2030, ecosystem-based management underpins all land use in VICC to maintain and restore healthy aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems and to optimize the rebuilding of carbon stores

- Expand the protection and restoration of natural areas and ecological features;
- Develop water sustainability plans for all watersheds;
- Ensure local communities and First Nations are part of forest management decision making;
- Design and manage ecological connectivity on the local and regional scale.

GOAL 3:

By 2030, all infrastructure is climate-ready

- Ensure BC is net-zero by 2035!
- Develop adaptation mechanisms such as sea walls and rain gardens;
- Ensure resilient water management;
- In coordination with the goals set out for active transport, ensure an increase in safe bike lanes.

We need new ways of working to support infrastructure resilience.

We need flexible and scalable projects. We need to support and celebrate the leaders and champions and to develop community education and consultation. We need better resources and information sharing. We need to collaborate with industry, trades, communities, volunteer groups (e.g. streamkeepers), First Nations, labour unions and youth.

Green infrastructure is a cost-effective, resilient approach to reducing flood risk and the impacts of heat and drought while providing many community benefits such as carbon storage, clean drinking water, fish and wildlife, and spaces to recreate.

Meeting these goals will take strong advocacy to communicate and coordinate across jurisdictions and First Nations.

Theme 5: Buildings: Getting to Net-Zero through Retrofits and New Builds

Resilient and zero-emissions buildings can help achieve climate goals, reduce home-heating costs, and enable new skills-building for construction workers. Both emissions reductions and adaptation to changing climate conditions need to be accounted for when planning new builds and upgrading existing infrastructure. This is critical for mitigation.

GOAL 1:

By 2030, all new buildings are powered by 100% renewable energy, will be net-zero and resilient to the localized impacts of climate change

- Phase out fossil fuel extraction by 2027 and subsequently ban oil heating;
- Work with communities to develop official retrofit programs plans;
- Promote lifecycle costing so that more sustainable building options are assessed based on the cost throughout the entire life of the infrastructure;
- Encourage the building of smaller houses and apartments;
- Ensure that no one is unhoused by 2025 and embed social justice in all new building developments.

GOAL 2:

By 2030, all existing buildings are retrofitted

- Ensure all existing buildings are powered by renewable sources;
- Ensure there is sufficient funding and support for retrofits and that building owners are aware of who can do the work in their communities;
- Establish more heat-pump rebates;
- Encourage the re-use of building materials wherever possible and ensure greater transparency in what happens in building waste;
- Prevent demolishing buildings and start re-using them as much as possible.

GOAL 3:

By 2025 (at the latest), we have the capacity across the island to support net-zero and resilient buildings.

- Establish a legislative authority (i.e. in LGA) so that local governments can regulate fuel usage in new buildings and promote fuel switching in existing buildings;
- Have local governments 'lead by example';
- Create partnerships between communities to get to net-zero together and share good practices;
- Raise awareness in the community of what types of community energy programs are available, types of funding, contractors in the area, etc.;
- Adopt a low-interest renewable energy and retrofit program.

Switching to low-carbon technologies and increasing the energy efficiency of buildings can move us forward to a future where buildings produce no emissions at all.

Regulatory changes, advocacy initiatives, and financing tools can help communities save money on heating, create new 'green' jobs, and be prepared to resist upcoming climate-related natural hazards.



Theme 6: Decarbonised Transport

Transportation is one of the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions in the region. In line with the provincial CleanBC strategy, the region needs to move to a zero-emission vehicle future with widely available charging infrastructure. We also need to connect all communities via transit, railway, and biking to allow for decreased reliance on driving and complete streets development of communities across the region.

GOAL 1:

By 2030, everyone has access to free public transportation within and between communities

- Establish sustainable transport options: e.g. island corridor from Victoria to Courtney;
- Shift away from Victoria Regional Transit Commission model toward CRD-based transit governance with lots of voting seats for riders/stakeholders (e.g. First Nations, students, seniors, people with disabilities);
- Ensure user groups always have a say in their transport systems.

GOAL 2:

By 2025, all public transport is electric and there is at least one bike parking space for every car parking space in BC

- Electrify all public transport;
- Ensure that everyone can access free public transport: i.e. free bus, free train, with no age restrictions;
- Develop more EV infrastructure;
- Develop regulations/bylaws for new developments requiring the installation of EV charging stations;
- Develop and promote the use of bikes, bikeable cities and bikeable rural areas.

GOAL 3:

By 2025, there is an island-wide transportation plan

- Ensure that there are viable, affordable options connecting communities via (bike share, car share, bus, rail);
- Implement this system using passes, such as the Marmot card.

Electrifying vehicles and connecting communities via zero-emission transportation modes will lead to substantial environmental and socio-economic benefits.

To accelerate the transition, the region needs to have an integrated regional transportation plan. The plan will enable conversations with the provincial government to seek funding for EV charging infrastructure in all types of buildings, implementing new infrastructure to connect communities by rail and biking, and developing communities in a transit-oriented manner.



Theme 7: Active Transportation

Active transportation is central to health and wellbeing. Active transportation is any human-powered transportation like walking and cycling; it can be combined with other modes like transit. Investing in infrastructure to support active transportation protects the safety and wellbeing of friends and family and creates liveable spaces. Increasing active transportation can reduce trips made by vehicles and help us to meet our climate goals. Presently around 80% of GHG emissions in the province are from energy, of which half are from transportation.

GOAL 1:

By 2030, everyone has access to safe active transportation options

- Roll out a new 'bikes for everyone' programme which accommodates everyone's need: i.e. has a strong equity focus;
- Ensure that transport networks are connected rural-urban and between communities.

GOAL 2:

By 2030, build out more multi-use paths and bike lanes that build interconnectivity within the existing network across the island

- Ensure all major commercial and institutional centres have secure bike parking by 2025;
- Establish more bicycle hub repair centres;
- Implement lower speed limits for electrified transport;
- Promote separate bike and walking lanes and always ensure that transport is safe;
- Offer bike safety courses for all ages.

GOAL 3:

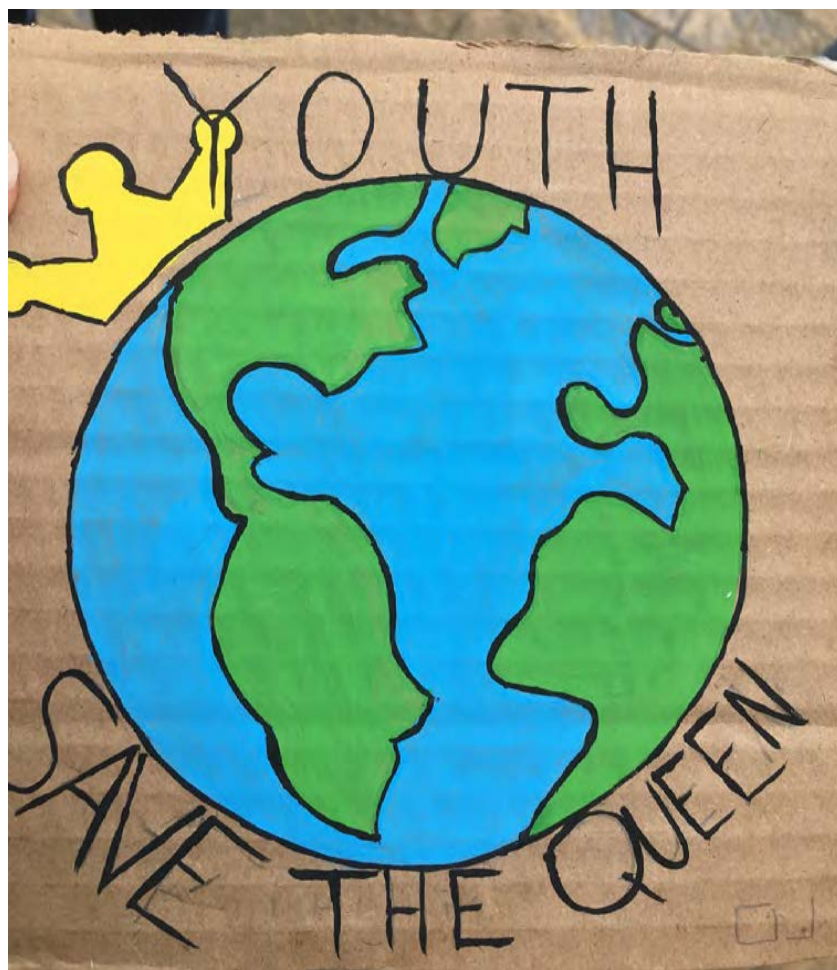
By 2030, plan active transportation and electric transit networks across the region, rather than by municipality

- Ensure that a coordinated, equitable approach is taken across all active transport planning.



We have the vision and the will. We know what to do. We need the capacity and agency to pull it off!

Upper level governments, in particular the Provincial government, set the incentives for investment in active transportation. This includes regulatory and implementation guidance that is often out of date or contradictory when it comes to active transportation. Too often incentives are set against active transportation. We need solutions that work for communities of all sizes—rural and urban.



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2022ENV0028-000761
May 16, 2022

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

B.C. launches new program to accelerate local climate action

NORTH VANCOUVER – Stronger collaboration, planning and action to reduce climate pollution and build protection for local communities will result from the new CleanBC Local Government Climate Action Program.

The program will provide predictable, stable funding for municipalities, regional districts and Modern Treaty Nations to accelerate local climate projects and build a better future for people in their communities.

“We’re working with local leaders to address the climate crisis and create new opportunities for people in the clean economy with more funding support,” said George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. “Local communities have been leaders in the fight against climate change, and this new program will accelerate their actions to cut pollution and build more resilient communities for everyone. We’ve listened to local leaders and designed a program that responds to their community priorities with funding they can count on each year.”

Through Budget 2022, the Province provided \$76 million over three years for the Local Government Climate Action Program. Funds will be distributed to eligible governments based on each community’s population and a base amount. Participating governments will be required to show funds have been invested in projects that support the objectives of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 or the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy.

“Our local government partners are facing the impacts of climate change head on,” said Nathan Cullen, Minister of Municipal Affairs. “They are also on the leading edge of climate action, building resilient communities and are preparing for the future. This new program will help communities of all sizes build a cleaner, better future for people across B.C.”

The Local Government Climate Action Program was designed considering input from local governments, the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM), Modern Treaty Nations and the independent Climate Solutions Council.

“Local governments have led the way on climate action and this new provincial program will help municipalities further strengthen their work building cleaner, more resilient communities,” said Laurey-Anne Roodenburg, president of UBCM and councillor for the City of Quesnel. “By working together with the Province, we’ve helped make sure local government priorities are reflected in the design of this new program.”

To be eligible, participating governments are required to sign on to the B.C. Climate Action Charter, complete a number of reporting requirements and demonstrate matching funding or in-kind contributions for local climate initiatives equal to 20% of their provincial allocation.

The CleanBC Roadmap is the Province's plan to expand and accelerate climate action by building on the province's natural advantages – abundant and clean electricity, innovative technology and highly skilled workforce. It sets a path for increased collaboration to build a British Columbia that works for everyone.

Learn More:

To learn more about the Local Government Climate Action Program, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/local-government-climate-action-program

To read the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, visit: www.cleanbc.ca

A backgrounder follows.

Contact:

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
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Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND

For Immediate Release
2022ENV0028-000761
May 16, 2022

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

What people are saying about the Local Government Climate Action Program

Linda Buchanan, mayor, City of North Vancouver –

“The effects of climate change are increasingly clear as we experience more extreme weather events. These challenges require all levels of government to redouble their efforts in building a low-carbon and sustainable future. The Local Government Climate Action Program will support communities of all sizes as they invest in green infrastructure that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while also improving social and economic outcomes for people. I thank the Province for this investment as it will provide local governments the means to create better communities for generations to come.”

Arjun Singh, councillor, City of Kamloops; member of Climate Solutions Council –

“This new climate program will be an important resource for the City of Kamloops to help implement our climate action plan to move away from fossil fuels toward a cleaner future with better infrastructure and amenities for everyone in our community. I’m pleased to see the Province listened to local governments and my fellow members on the independent Climate Solutions Council in designing the program so communities big and small benefit.”

Toni Boot, mayor, District of Summerland; member of Climate Solutions Council –

“The District of Summerland is very pleased with the new Local Government Climate Action Program and the \$76 million in funding over three years in Budget 2022. Summerland employs a full-time climate-action staff person and annually allocates monies for climate initiatives. In September 2021, we received the Community Energy Association’s Climate and Energy Action Award in the Corporate Operations category. The award recognizes the district’s leadership in moving from planning to implementation in the climate-action space. It’s through our previous collaborations with the Province and this new program that this work is made possible.”

Lisa Helps, Mayor, City of Victoria –

“Local governments are key partners in the Province delivering on the ambitious objectives of CleanBC. This funding will assist local governments to continue to take bold climate action. It will also enable collaboration among local governments like the work we have been doing through the Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities Climate Leadership Plan steering committee, allowing large and small, rural and urban local governments to work together and to work with First Nations. This funding will help advance that work.”

Leonard Krog, mayor, City of Nanaimo –

“The new Local Government Climate Action Program is a welcome addition to help

municipalities like Nanaimo build on the climate actions we've taken so far to improve our community infrastructure, drive down emissions and create new opportunities for people in the clean economy. The new program will provide a stable source of funding to support future planning and action as we work to meet our emissions targets and prepare for future climate impacts."

Brian Frenkel, councillor, District of Vanderhoof –

"The Local Government Climate Action Program funding will build capacity in small and rural local governments throughout B.C., to help showcase innovative new technologies, and support community-based climate action leadership. The new fund will provide important funding to secure stronger action and collaboration across governments to help rural communities reduce emissions and respond to their own local climate impacts."

Lori Ackerman, mayor, Fort St. John –

"If there is a community that understands energy from creation to consumption, it's ours. Fort St. John is a leader in reducing emissions and responding to climate impacts in our community where a real impact can be achieved. Over the past several years, we have initiated innovative projects that create energy, reduce emissions and leave a lighter footprint. The Local Government Climate Action Program will enable us to continue to invest in projects and showcase real action on the ground, in the community where we live, work and play."

Linda Worley, chair, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (RDK) –

"The RDKB is delighted that the Province is launching its new Local Government Climate Action Program and providing continued financial support for local governments to help reduce emissions and respond to climate impacts. The RDKB is committed to climate action and working with its communities to mitigate, adapt and prepare for climate change. We've taken a range of actions, from supporting electric vehicle infrastructure to implementing a region-wide organics-diversion strategy that included rural residents. These projects allowed the RDKB to successfully reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45% when compared to 2012 emissions."

Dale Littlejohn, executive director, Community Energy Association –

"Congratulations to the Government of B.C. for what might be the most strategic support for local climate action in more than a decade. Local governments influence about half the emissions in B.C., and this support comes at a critical time, as many communities work to cut those emissions in half this decade. The speed and scale of these reductions and regional nature of many solutions necessitates cross-community collaboration, particularly for capacity-constrained small communities. This program can provide the spark for large-scale and collaborative actions in every corner of the province in partnership with the Province."

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